Harvesting Tradition:

Subsistence and Meaning in the Northern Periphery

By

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eanan	the land
lea earálágan	is different
go das leat orron	when you have lived there
vánddardan	wandered
bivastuvvan	sweated
šuvččagan	frozen
oaidnán beaivvi	seen the sun
luoitime loktaneame	set rise
láhppome ihtime	disappear return
eanan lea earálágan	the land is different
go diehtá	when you know
dáppe	here are
máttut	roots
máddagat	ancestors

For Liz and Andrew.

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Ollu giitu!
Kiitos!
Tack!
Miigwech!
Thank you!

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the enduring as well as the changing meanings of wild-food harvesting traditions in the Lake Superior Region of the United States and in Sápmi (the northern districts of Finland, Sweden, and Norway), over the past 150 years. The study investigates how traditional constructions of sustainability and ecological worldview have shaped contemporary land-use conflicts. Hunting, fishing, and gathering in the modern world are complex cultural performances that are negotiated across economic, cultural, and geographic lines. Although many consider hunting and fishing to be primarily a sport or recreation, in northern peripheral regions of the United States and Europe people actively harvest as an act of food procurement to supplement wage labor. This action is a deeply symbolic form of self-expression, less connected to dominance over nature than seeing oneself as part of nature and performing one's own role within it. In the northern regions examined in this study, harvesting traditions have endured and become prominent symbols marking an identity distinct from that of the tourists and other outsiders that vacation in the area. Based upon ethnographic fieldwork with Sámi people, Finns, Ojibwe (Anishinaabe) , Finnish Americans, and Norwegian Americans, this dissertation explores what harvesting food means today in terms of identity formation, cultural worldview, informal economy, and social interactions.

Preface

Harvesting food from forests and waters is a complex cultural performance in our contemporary world. The harvest is a deeply symbolic informal economic practice, and practitioners devote themselves toward the attaining of knowledge of the woods and waters over the course of their lifetimes as an act of intellectual, emotional, and even spiritual fulfillment. So significant are these practices that obituaries frequently proclaim one's love of hunting, fishing, and the outdoors. They are a part of one's identity and sense of self, and they are how many desire to be remembered following their deaths. People trade harvested food with each other. They cook food and share it with each other to mark special occasions or closeness of relationships. They harvest these foods together, creating systems of informal rules and distribution systems that distribute the harvest systemically and equitably (according to negotiated values and power structures). They negotiate with each other over how to harvest properly, and develop strategies to cope with people who harvest in threatening ways. And they use the process of the harvest–from an outdoor excursion to the serving of food–to transmit values to their children, often in opposition to values they are perceived to learn through schools, religious institutions, and mass media. Through this process, the harvest both reflects values and shapes them. It develops interpersonal relationships and establishes relationships between

humans, animals, plants, space, and time. Fishing and hunting are sometimes described as being a religion. Often, a sense of virtue and morality is woven into the fabric of these practices, and practitioners are considered "rooted" within the earth and connected to underlying value systems upon which society is built.

In many ways, these people who harvest their own food differ from those who harvest for sport, for leisure, or for profit. The difference is not absolute, but it is felt and perceived as real by most hunters and fishermen. In part, these differences occur because of contemporary connections to cultural heritage, political economy, local ecological systems, access to wild lands, and ecological worldview. It is unsurprising that a large-scale commercial fisherman, a small-scale harvester, a sportsman, and a recreationalist fisherman would perform different values in their practice. All forms of these harvests are equally valid, equally authentic practices, and each rooted in traditions that date back centuries, and all of these forms exist–commonly side by side–across the globe. Within Europe and North America, there are relatively few areas where subsistence-based harvesting remains meaningful in economic and symbolic contexts. In the continental United States, these communities are most common in geographically disperse and somewhat remote pockets in Appalachia, in the deep south, throughout the Rocky Mountains, in smaller coastal communities, and along the northern border with Canada. In western and northern Europe, these communities exist primarily within remote coastal or mountain villages and in the peripheral northern wilderness of Scandinavia and Russia. Because of geographic and economic marginalization, people who participate in limited subsistence practices to supplement a capital income are often underrepresented in scholarship and matters of policy. In the modern

day, nearly all of these harvesters have a wage job by day, but dine upon their own harvested foods between one and three times a week.

The cultural construction of subsistence practices is even reflected in language itself. In English, “to hunt” differs than “to fish.” “Hunting” refers to all sorts of killing traditions, with connotations deeply invoking the pursuit of animals. Many European languages use a verb meaning “to seek” or “to pursue” when detailing hunting (German: *jagen*; Swedish: *jäga*; Spanish *cazar*), and the sporting hunt–reliant upon an honor code of fair chase–has been popular in Europe for centuries. In North Sámi, however, the word *bivdit* means both to hunt and to fish. Finnish, a related language separated from Sámi by approximately 4000 years, shares this root with the Sámi languages (*pyytää*), and it is also used for hunting and fishing. The roots of *bivdit* and *pyytää* have nothing to do with the chase. In context of hunting and fishing, they simply mean “procuring” or even “getting.” But their etymological roots link them to another obvious meaning: “to ask” or “to request.” In historical terms, this referred to traditional Sámi and Finnish religions, where the harvest of game and fish was related to the negotiation with spirits and localized deities. Though these religions are only currently practiced by a small numbers of revitalizers today, some of the components of this harvest has persevered as a long-lived (but not absolute) distinction between Western European and Finno-Ugric hunting traditions. As Juha Pentikäinen has shown (2007), ceremonies in Finland were performed as late as the 1940s which helped ensure the resurrection of the bear after a hunt (p. xi)

It is to be expected that hunting in, for instance, England bears little economic, ecological, or cultural relationship to hunting in the Nordic states. When both systems are brought to the New World, the system wielding more economic and political power proved to

dominate the land-use and game management policies of the United States. Yet many Americans presume that there is a single tradition of hunting. Montana-based sportsman-conservationist Jim Posewitz is but one respectable example of such popular theoreticians. His book, *Beyond Fair Chase: The Ethic and Tradition of Hunting* (1994), offers a revealing portrait into the erroneous and ethnocentric belief that hunting has merely one ethic and one tradition. My own fieldwork highlights the fact that even in the smallest communities, there are many living hunting traditions, which sometimes co-exist, sometimes hybridize and creolize, and sometimes draw firm boundaries between each other.

This dissertation is based on my own fieldwork in the Lake Superior Region of the American Upper Midwest and in Sápmi, the Sámi homeland region that crosses the northern tracts of Finland, Norway, Sweden and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. I have conducted interviews and documented Finns, Sámi people, Finnish- and Sámi-Americans, Ojibwe people, Norwegian-Americans, Hmong immigrants, German-Americans, and people of no particularly strong ethnic affiliations who work as guides, laborers, teachers, journalists, and boat-builders. From these interviews, I narrowed my focus largely to Sámi and Nordic-American harvesters and the diverse communities they live in. This study is not comprehensive in nature. My focus is exclusively mixed-economic subsistence harvesters, the relationships they have with non-subsistence harvesters, and how they understand their own world and their role within it.

The Lake Superior Region and Sápmi have much in common. Both are places of great natural beauty, with plentiful lakes and deep forests of pine and birch. Both have vibrant indigenous communities, an industrial history of mining, logging, and damming, and an emergent tourist economy in the latter part of the 20th century. Both struggle with the economic

dependency that tourist economies create and they find themselves subject to the land-management policies of outsiders. In Sápmi, Helsinki, Oslo, and Stockholm shape the laws; in the Upper Midwest, it is Madison, St. Paul, and Lansing. Most residents in the northern peripheries feel little kinship or cultural similarities to these "downstaters," who understand their northern homelands as a nice place to vacation. The cultural differences are great.

In both of these regions, where agriculture is difficult to practice, the principal reason for hunting and fishing was originally the procurement of meat. Meat-hunting lives on as a strong tradition, which only recently has begun to be encroached upon by the trophy hunt. Suomen Metsästysmuseo's [Finland's Hunting Museum's] *Hunttarit!* exhibition (2012), based in part upon fieldwork by Ilja Koivisto, summarizes:

> *Suurin ero suomalaisen ja yhdysvaltalaisen metsästyksen välillä on suhtautuminen trofee-metsästykseen. Suomessa hirviä ja valkohäntäpeuroja metsästetään useimmiten lihan vuoksi. Yhdysvalloissa monet metsästäjät tavoittelevat suuria sarvia, eivätkä pidä naaraspeurojen ampumista lainkaan metsästyksenä. Asenteen taustalla ovat peuransuojelun alkuaikojen pyyntirajoitukset, jolloin vain pukkien ampuminen oli sallittua. Suurin syy urheilumetsästykseen on kuitenkin haaste, jonka vanhojen ja varovaisten peurapukkien tavoittelu antaa metsästäjälle.*
>
> *Amerikan suomalaisalueilla kotitarvemetsästyksen perinne elää vielä voimakkaana. Siellä suhtautuminen metsästykseen ja saaliin hyödyntämiseen on lähempänä Suomea, jossa tärkein osa saalista on liha eikä sarvet. Tosin urheilumetsästys kasvattaa suosiotaan niin Yläjärven suomalaisalueilla kuin Suomessakin.*
>
> [The biggest difference between Finnish and American Hunting involves trophy-hunting. In Finland, moose and whitetail deer are hunted primarily for the meat. In the United States, many hunters pursue large antlers, and they dislike the shooting of does during the hunt. The origin of this attitude lies in the earliest days of deer protection, when only bucks were allowed to be shot. The biggest reason for sport hunting, however, is the challenge of pursuing the oldest and savviest of bucks.
>
> In the Finnish American areas, the tradition of hunting for meat still perseveres as a strong tradition. In these regions, the attitudes toward hunting and the use of game is much closer to Finland, where the most important aspects of hunting involves the

procurement of meat, and not antlers. Still, sport hunting has grown in popularity in the Lake Superior Region, as it has in Finland.]

The effects of trophy hunting not only change land-use and game-management policy, but they threaten the cultural practices and informal economic structures of the Northwoods. Land is developed for mostly-vacant vacation homes, enclosed deer farms increase the risk of epidemics in the herd, and lakes are managed to produce trophy fish–fish which by the Department of Natural Resources' own standards contain mercury levels unsafe for human consumption. With this work, I aim to examine a small but representative sampling of meat-hunters and -fishermen in the northern peripheral regions, where subsistence harvesting traditions have remained vital and strong to this date. I aim to lay the rhetorical groundwork for talking about mixed economic subsistence in a capitalist society, and looking at how to advocate for cultural sustainability in these unique, postcolonial, peripheral spaces.

This dissertation is broken down into two books. The first book is based on my fieldwork in Sápmi, the second on my fieldwork in the Lake Superior Region of the Upper Midwest. The purpose for study of these two disparate regions is largely arbitrary. I mean to represent the breadth of my research on thematically related issues in these two regions, rather than to craft a specific comparative argument between the two regions. Subsequent publications will treat these as two distinct and separate topics. However, some crucial parallels exist between the two regions, and they speak to the commonalities present in many rural peripheral spaces. Beyond the aforementioned cultural and environmental parallels, many of my informants in North America have roots in the Nordic countries. Some diasporic effects are inevitable. Finnish (and other Nordic) meat-hunting traditions migrated and were re-translated into a new context of North America, into new environments, for new game, and in new political contexts. Further,

implicit comparisons between management policies of the Nordic states and the Upper Midwest help illuminate policy choices, power and influence, and different strategies for managing game.

My introduction draws from my own experiences to outline the attitudes that contemporary northerners have of the tourists who vacation in the north. I aim to illuminate how locals react to exoteric worldviews in order to help demonstrate the marked cultural difference that is readily acknowledged by northerners, but seldom given any credence by outsiders, including the scholarly community. This inability to recognize northerners as a distinctive community with distinct values of intrinsic worth has created a palpable sense of resentment in the north, which has only intensified the sense of division between tourists and locals. In turn, this has drawn locals together across ethnic and religious boundaries. This creolization of harvesting traditions has proved vital in the contemporary construction of a Northwoods identity, history, and sense of self and place.

The first book explores harvest traditions in arctic Scandinavia. I outline the political landscape of Sámi salmon fishing rights in "Deanu Luossat: Indigenous Fishing in an International Landscape," which explores the systemic crackdown on traditional fishing, in spite of the purported improvement of Sámi rights. Pro-development, late capitalist, and neoliberal policies have not been kind to indigenous people in much of the Western world, as tourism leads to

Figure 1: Sápmi

economic dependency, resource extraction, and cultural destabilization. In "Fishing for Meaning on the Deatnu River: Harvesters, Anglers, and Negotiating Place," I further examine these issues, exploring the ways in which Finnish tourists talk about and utilize the Deatnu River valley as a place, in contrast to local Sámi harvesters. The act of the kill is minimal in importance in Sámi discourse of fishing, and its minimizing is revealing in terms of the social values constructed into the harvest. Sámi fishermen encode memory into the land, and understand themselves as parts of broader ecological systems which determine their identity. These differences are not unique to indigenous peoples, but rather cross across broad spectrums of my informants, and intensify as people live in close contact with the land over the course of several generations.

The following chapter, "Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Invasive Species and Constructing Stability in Nature," moves toward reindeer herding as an act of subsistence, and how subsistence-based reindeer herding affects the herder's interrelationships with other species of plants, concepts of biological diversity, and understanding of a sustainable ecosystem. I look at the effects of an invasive moth species on the practice of reindeer herding, and how Sámi herders' views of the moth reflect their broader understandings of the environment. This chapter suggests the sophistication of Sámi traditional knowledge and customary land-use, and reflects tensions that exist in both regions between the community of subsisters and the community of highly educated Western-trained scientists and politicians, who frequently bring their own cultural worldview and ethnocentricities into matters of peripheral land-use policy. For many indigenous people, the active human use of land is essential to the preservation of ecological balance.

The final chapter of Book One, "Mas Amas Diehtá Maid Oarri Borrá: Constructing Sustainability in Sápmi," further explores the sophistication of Sámi concepts of sustainable land

use. Returning to issues of fisheries, I explore historical concepts of sustainable fishing from cross-cultural perspectives, in particular as they concern the rights to net fish. In actuality, the conflicts over net fishing are more rooted in cultural perception than in hard science, and these debates have existed in Norway for about two hundred years, and for about a hundred years in Finland. Though no simple answer exists to quickly restore atlantic salmon stocks, paternalistic attitudes toward indigenous knowledge still persevere. With this chapter, I look at the effects of neoliberal policies that perpetuate the tourist economy in the Nordic states on indigenous harvesting practices.

The second book explores a small sampling of hunting, fishing, and gathering traditions in the Lake Superior Region of the Upper Midwest, a region that has been divided into Upper Michigan, Northern Wisconsin, Northeastern Minnesota, and Northern Ontario. This book

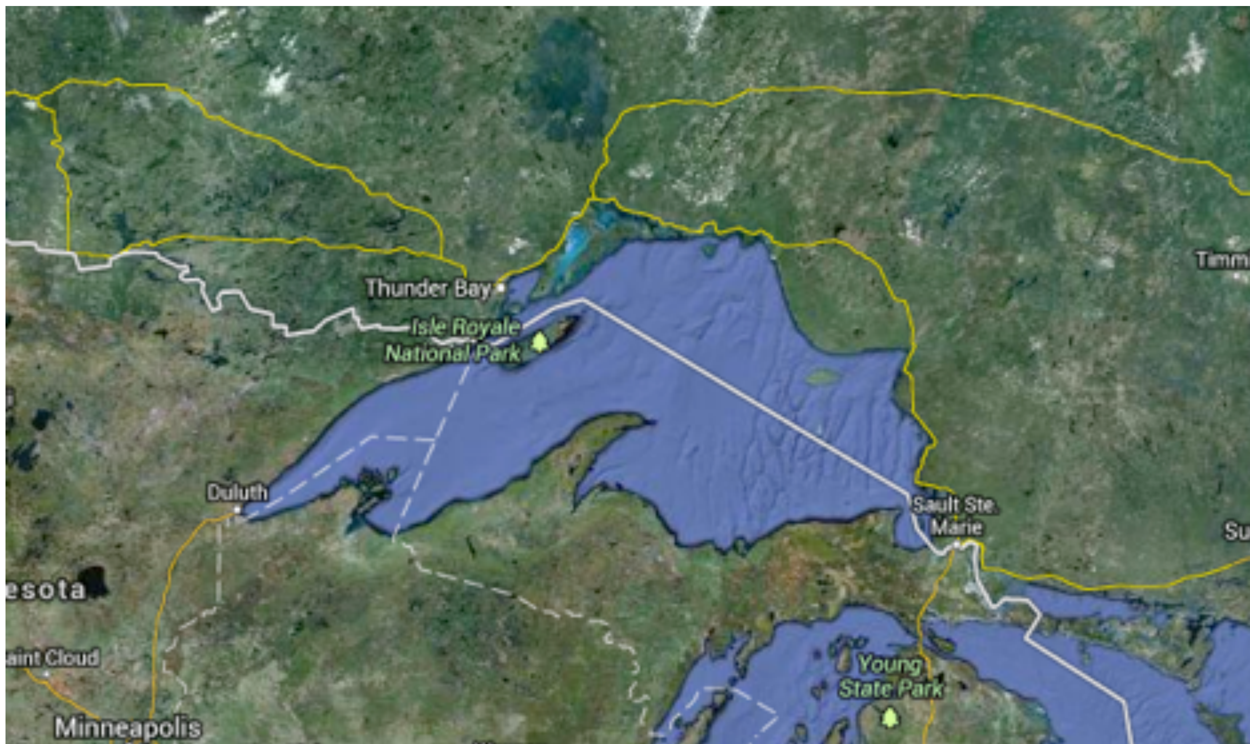

Figure 2: The Lake Superior Region

expands upon the theoretical framework I develop in Book One, as it delves deeper into the

ethnographic study of a handful of families that reside in Northern Wisconsin. Some of these informants are members of my own family. Because many subsistence harvesters are understandably unwilling to share secrets, I have worked with people close to me to help illuminate these traditions. These informants offer a representative sample of subsistence-harvesters in the Northwoods. While I have conducted significant fieldwork beyond the scope of these chapters, I have found that the inclusion of too many individuals as foci of this study detracts more than it adds to this already complex study.

Although others in the region harvest for sport, for the sake of killing, or for recreation, these subsistence harvesters have the ability to recognize kindred spirits from afar. Harvesting is a strong and living tradition in the north, but it is by no means the only tradition. No current quantitative analysis indicates the percentage of subsistence harvesters in the region, but I would loosely estimate that the numbers hover between one to two-thirds of local households, depending on the immediate environs. Remote locations, local poverty, wider access to public lands, and less tourist-influence correspond with higher rates of subsistence. Places with more tourists and transplants (who moved into the area following 1970) tend to have greater percentages of sportsmen.

Following a brief introduction that surveys the history of the Lake Superior region, and explores the critical treatment of hunting and fishing in American scholarship, the chapter, "In the Backcountry, In Search of Minnows," documents minnow trapping, a part of subsistence fishing for walleyes within my own family, who learned from descendants of French-Canadian neighbors. Minnow trapping is without any connotations of sport or recreation, yet is rife with metaphorical meanings. Minnow trapping uses unused lands, bogs, wetlands, and marshes to

attain healthy, quality dace for fishing. Ultimately, a swap from stale bread for minnows, then minnows for walleye, it serves as a metaphor for food production, cleverness with land-use, secrecy and silence, and resourcefulness in the Northwoods. This chapter establishes a baseline for the non-sporting harvest in the Upper Midwest.

The following chapter, "How to Make a Noise Like a Worm: Guides, Tourism, and Identity in the Northwoods," looks at the historical dimensions of the harvest and how it figures into contemporary identity. This chapter helps unlock how contemporary practitioners interpret the past, and why harvester and tourist look back upon a shared, intercultural past to explain their own genealogical history of their own traditions. This chapter looks extensively at the resort era of the early to mid-20th century, and explores the emergence of an identity that is constructed upon one's ability to fish, hunt, and navigate effectively in the outdoors.

The following chapter, "'He'll Never See the Wee Acorns Where the Faeries Hid their Treasure:' Deer Hunting in the North," is an auto-ethnographic chapter purposed to lay out a better way to understand the process of meat hunting in the Lake Superior Region. Paralleling the nature of Sámi discourse involving the catch and kill of the salmon, I suggest that the actual kill during the deer hunt is the least important aspect of the practice. The kill, often dwelled upon by scholars, is a small part of a much more complex process and set of interrelations between humans and animals, weather, cold, snow, and the deep hours of quietude and meditative isolation which help define the hunt for many. Talent with a knife, knowledge of deer anatomy, butchering skills, and food preparation are also a key part of the hunt, which are overlooked by scholars. Fundamentally, it is the domestic metaphor of food production and bread-breaking that

defines the hunt as a larger cultural performance of land-use, self-expression, and resourcefulness.

From this point onward, I examine how inequities of power impact cultural practice in the Lake Superior Region. “Poaching and Violating in the Northwoods: Policy, Ethics, and the Law” explores illegal harvesting as an act of resistance against the sporting hunt and against the economic injustice that is inherent within a tourist economy. Though people poach for different reasons, including for the excitement of it, it is generally a meat-hunting practice in the north, which serves as a badge for cultural autonomy, an homage to customary law, and as an act that challenges neoliberal capitalism. Bound by the rigorous ethics of the outlaw, violating serves as a boundary to define insiders from outsiders, and the illegal hunt is frequently conducted in ways that legitimize insider know-how and right to harvest game freely.

In my conclusion, “Looking into the Eye of God: The Light that Comes from Below,” I document Ojibwe muskie spearing through the ice. Although Finns and Sámi people regularly speared fish (though only occasionally through the ice), the practice was outlawed in the United States in the 1800s for all but Ojibwe people spearing on reservations. In the 1980s, Ojibwe in the Upper Midwest began legal spearing of fish off the reservation, and these issues are still contentious to this day. This chapter explores new and intercultural relationships, and how two similar traditions took two different turns: one toward revitalization; one toward oblivion. I look at issues of power and policy, and how cultural practice is shaped by ethnocentric and hegemonic forces under the guise of fair chase and sustainability. Finally, I propose a series of guiding principles which game managers could use to help resolve the difficulties of utilizing land in within a multicultural society.

While the structure of two books involving two separate regions is not without its drawbacks, I hope it can help illuminate the complexities of regional folklore, where diasporic effects, cultural revitalization, and the sharing and borrowing of traditions occur on a daily level. The ethnographic fieldwork I present in the Upper Midwest is partially influenced by the cultural practices of 19th century Nordic states; partly influenced by French voyageur cultures; partly influenced by Ojibwe traditions during the earliest waves of immigration; partly influenced by ongoing relationships with Ojibwe people; partly shaped by one's eating habits; partly shaped by one's place of residence, income, and work; partly shaped by new waves of sportsmen and recreationalists; partly shaped by capital enterprises such as *Field and Stream* magazine and Gander Mountain stores; partly shaped by the policy written by outsiders; partly shaped by the way outsiders talk about hunting and fishing; and partly shaped by one's own willingness to deviate from some traditions and opt into new ones. I hope the nuances of this process are apparent by the conclusion of this work.

Introduction

Beyond Need and Pleasure: Huntin' and Fishin' in the Northwoods

The north. Alluring, mysterious, and deep. Cold and wild. Midnight sun and winternight. Unbroken forests and untamed waters. To those that do not actually live there, the word itself evokes the mystique of a frontier and undiscovered world of snow, deep coniferous and birch forests, countless lakes and rivers with clean water and large fish, and big game traversing vast and untouched tracts of pristine wilderness. The north is where agriculture ends, where the individual becomes increasingly smaller in relation to the broadening landscape. It is the place where populations diminish, accessibility declines, and the environment becomes less and less forgiving. Those brave souls who inhabit these landscapes eke out their livelihood by subsisting on deer meat and fish, and by working legendarily grueling jobs in the mines and forests. They endure more extreme conditions, they work harder, they play harder, and many live impoverished lives. The spirit of self-reliance permeates everything, from humble woodworkers

Figure 1: Wayne Valliere using Leon Valliere's homemade wild rice hulling machine.

and rag-rug makers, to expert canners and small-engine mechanics (see Figure 1). They hunt and fish to feed their families, they butcher their own meat and make their own homes and furniture, they pick berries in the summertime, and they train their children in the field at early ages how to develop these skills.

Yet in this idyllic portrait of these superhuman pioneers, there is a dark side. Outsiders frequently charge northerners of racism, sexism, environmental neglect, violent behavior, and general "backwardness." They are blamed for cutting down the forests and contaminating waterways. They are accused of pursuing bloodsport, of killing for pleasure, and of being ignorant of sustainable resource management. They are called "hicks," "inbreds," "jackpine savages," who are ungrateful for the vast tourist dollars that have begun pouring into their hometowns over the past fifty years. Their schools are assumed to be inferior, and their homes are thought to be abusive. Young adults are often told to leave their hometowns to find good spouses and better jobs. The greatest contribution they make to their community is to ascend from it, as wave after wave of tourists sweep in to purchase the land to develop homes that break up the integrity of the forest, and to enjoy a vacation at the expense of throngs of service workers making minimum wage.

The reality of the north lies far from these generalizations. These portraits are usually painted by southern neighbors, these travelers who only vacation in the north. They have made their mark on the north in the popular imagination, even among northerners. For the tourist, northern mystique is the blank slate upon which they have scratched their rendition of the past. Before the cities in which tourists reside, before the breaking of the land into farms, there was pristine wilderness, and there were bold and individualistic pioneers within it. This mythology of human prehistory is indeed a powerful one, intertwined with theories of cultural evolution, and intensified by the fact that non-marginalized, upper-middle class, downstaters control of the productions of institutionalized knowledge in the U.S. and Nordic States. But the question at hand in the contemporary north is not one of progress, but rather one of choice, imagination, and land-use. It is not a question of whether northerners *have to* hunt for food because of desperate poverty, but rather whether northerners choose to make savvy use of their natural resources and harvest fresh and healthy natural delicacies.

As a place of imagined prehistory, supported by vast numbers of tourists and backed by large amount of capital wealth, divergent economic and ideological interests wage wars over the ecology of the north. Tourists want an accessible vacationland, frequently feeling a sense of entitlement to land access and use under the auspices of liberty and equality. Locals enjoy the tourist revenue, but most accept it only with deep reservations that their communities, their land, and their ways of life are often negatively impacted by tourism. Some understand that accepting the tourist revenue, though necessary in the present, is part of being complicit in their own exploitation and impoverishment. The tourist economy is so unstable that many pine for the hardships of the bygone industrial era, longing for the chances for stable employment that, for

instance, mines once provided, blind to the fact that the mines were a desperate last resort for their own forebears. Contested questions of industry, development, deer herd and fishery management, private property laws, and historical usage converge time and time again in the north. This raises the question of whose north the north is.

Growing Up in a Tourist Economy

Like any scholar, my work is colored by my own background. I was born and raised in Northern Wisconsin, in a small village of Arbor Vitae (population 1500), just across the county line from the tourist destination of Minocqua, the town where I attended high school. I was raised with ambivalent feelings of the tourist industry in the region, and it wasn't until I had left my small town for college that I felt any kinship with that "south-of-the-border" town. I would hear the grumblings of my family, and make them my own. Those people who lived in Minocqua had more money. They were all new residents, often having been transplanted up from that much-loathed land of Illinois. Significantly more people who lived in Minocqua would move south for the winter to Florida or Illinois. And it was clear that they had disgraced their beautiful chain of lakes, by allowing overdevelopment to ravish the shores. My grandmother, Sigrid Frandy, a good Finn who seldom said a bad word about anyone, would sometimes grumble, "Those people in Minocqua think their shit don't stink." We folks just three miles north of town were of a different lot. A substantially smaller percentage of us attended college, and most of us felt a stronger "ethnic" connection to the homelands of our ancestors than distinctly American. Most of us had families in the area for generations, and many of us had relatives in the Lac du Flambeau (Waswaagoning) band of Ojibwe, some twelve miles to the west, who had occupied

Waswaagoning since 1745, displacing the Sioux inhabitants further westward following a bloody battle on Strawberry Island.

In Arbor Vitae, we grew up in a world connected to the old, and it felt as if a wave of capitalism washed over us. In part, this wave was our own doing, our own cultivation of the tourist industry for income. Still hunting and fishing were not revived recreations for us, but rather essential fixtures of our economy until the 1960s. People in Minocqua were getting cable television in the 1980s, but we were still using party-line phones and outhouses (though mostly as second bathrooms in those years), learning woods and waters, hunting for meat, snowmobiling up to 45 miles to school, and living a life that blended day jobs with means of informal economy, like gardening, barter, handicraft, or heating with firewood. Resourcefulness lived as a virtue. We appreciated the healthfulness of a good, snowy winter, and we knew the month of rain in early summer would keep the environment healthy, even if it drove the tourists mad.

As a teenager I was grateful for the bustling tourist economy of Minocqua, my one connection to the global world. I landed my first real job selling factory-produced Minnetonka moccasins at age 13 to tourists for $4.25 an hour. My boss was a locally revered business owner, then in late 70s, who grumbled and grouched around his employees most of the day, and never bothered to mention to his workers that they were legally entitled to take breaks. He was an old-time Minocqua resident, who I later learned was partially responsible for transforming the Fish-o-Rama festival into Beef-o-Rama, even though there are no dairy or beef farms in Vilas County, and only a few in Oneida. Beef-o-Rama wasn't dependent on the seasons, he argued, and could be held to draw in tourists during non-peak season. As I was selling moccasins, my contemporaries across East Boundary Trail, like Greg Johnson, were learning to make them from

Figure 2: Greg Johnson's Beadwork on homemade moccasins. Photo: Greg Johnson

hides they tanned themselves, a practice that declined off the reservation after the collapse of the fur market around 1970. I certainly did not have a sophisticated understanding of co-option then, but I fully appreciated the craftsmanship that went into working with hide, fur, birchbark and wood. It was all around us, Native and non-Native alike.

I was grateful for the little bit of money rattling around in my pockets, so I could buy cassette tapes and compact discs, develop a coffee habit, and satiate my ravenous teenage hunger with any variety of food from the abundance of fast food chains in town. But even then, I knew that something about serving legions of entitled tourists for minimum wage was somewhat degrading. My best friend in middle school, Corey, worked at a fudge shop once called "Dan's Gay '90s" until the owner–apparently wanting to dissociate his business from anything vaguely homoerotic–changed the name in the 1980s to "Dan's Minocqua Fudge." Once a proud father vacationing with his family slipped my pre-teen friend Corey a fifty dollar bill, asking him in a whisper how to build a campfire, not wanting to emasculate himself in front of his family. We laughed about it that night, not fully understanding the nature of our scorn. This episode left me jealous of Corey's good fortune to earn two or three day's salary from dumb luck alone.

Every Friday night throughout the entire summer, long lines of cars would pour into Minocqua like migratory birds from Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago, and every Sunday they

would return south. The worst of these dates were Independence Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day, when any rational local would stay inside and avoid town at all costs. My former minister, Ray Robinson, a proud Norwegian-American with a broad repertoire of Ole and Lena jokes which he told in a Scandihoovian dialect, held annual “Farewell to the Flamingoes” parties on Labor Day to bid farewell to the seasonal residents who flocked to the American south in the winter. He would place dozens of pink plastic flamingoes in his lawn, frequently generating headlines in our local rag, *The Lakeland Times*. More than once in May during my junior high years, while riding on the school bus home, we’d affix signs to the back windows with chewing gum reading, “FIBS GO HOME!” FIBs, of course, stands for “Fucking Illinois Bastards,” the locus of our wrath and anger, and clearly the source for everything that was wrong with the world (or so we thought).

On one memorable occasion, when I met a high school friend after he was done with work, he told me that he was approached by a tourist who asked him, “So… do you come here to ‘Qua’ often?” It took more than a little effort to explain to my friend that “Qua” was an abbreviated form of “Minocqua,” and that, apparently, many people in Chicago referred to our hometown by this outrageous bastardization of our name. When my friend explained that he actually lived in the area year round, the tourist was shocked that the region had permanent residents, and–apparently–that these towns weren’t simply staffed by migratory workers for the amusement of urban vacationers. We were appalled by this. Not only did he lack the intellectual curiosity and empathy to try to understand this community from our vantage point, content to believe idly that the woods and waters and workers were placed here for his own enjoyment and delight, he had gone so far to rename OUR town into something we all found instantly terrible

and degrading. But, of course, Minocqua comes from Minwaakwaa, an Ojibwe word meaning a "heavenly place with a good stand of trees; an oasis" (Great Lakes Intertribal Fish and Wildlife Commission 2007, p. 45), speaking to the tall grove of white pine that once covered the island with a soft bed of pine needles. It was something this region has endured time and time again, tracing back through the recent housing bubble, into the gradual Anglicizing of the region, into the French fur trade era, toward Ojibwe displacement of the Lakota in the area, and beyond. Regardless, for us, this land was not to be bought and sold; it was to be known.

This phenomenon is not unique to the Lake Superior Region. Lauri Anderson is a fiction writer living in Michigan's Upper Peninsula originally from the unorganized territories of Maine, a region with many cultural similarities to the Lake Superior Region. He writes in his still unpublished nonfiction work *From Moosehead to Misery Bay; or, The Moose in the VW Bug* (2013) that

> To grow up there was to be free in a very special, age-old way. My friends and I as children often spent all day in the woods, from just after breakfast to the arrival of darkness. We knew our geography intimately. If a stone were turned over or a branch snapped off half a mile into that vast forest, we would notice and wonder why. We knew which stream pools contained trout, which small meadow had rabbits, which wild apple tree had partridge and woodcock. We carried knives and guns from a very early age and often returned home with small game hanging from our belts or with fish in our creels. (p. 15)

Like most locals of these northern spaces, Anderson clearly recognizes the distinction that exists between outsider and local hunting tradition. Anderson (2013) writes:

> When hunting season opened in November, all three [Vaara brothers] would shoot a deer for themselves on opening day. They'd de-gut it in the field, tag it, and later process it themselves. The meat, wrapped in butcher paper, would go into the freezer in the form of steaks and roasts. The hearts and tongues were delicacies and were often eaten first. They preferred large does because they thought the meat was more tender than a buck's. From

> opening day on, one of the Vaara boys would make the rounds of the hunting camps and offer a deer to anyone willing to buy. The locals were never interested and shot their own but the downstaters, out of staters, and city guys (Boston, New York, Hartford) were often willing to pay. We called these guys flatlanders or peckerwoods. Mostly these guys stayed around their camp and got drunk and stumbled around in the woods without a chance in hell of nailing a deer on their own. Back then a local could work all week in the mill or the slate pits and earn maybe sixty bucks but those peckerwood hunters were willing to pay $125 for any kind of deer and up to $350 for a hefty buck with an impressive rack. (p. 20)

Anderson's sentiments help us see clearly the differences between the locals and outsiders. The vast majority of the canon written about hunting and fishing in white American culture is written about these drunken tourists, from the perspective of the often bourgeois academics who see the peckerwoods leave and come back with hangovers, stories, and maybe some meat.

In fact, it is the uprootedness that defines these tourists in the minds of the locals, who cannot really understand their lack of a sense of place. One pleasantly warm summer evening, my parents were disturbed in the dark by loud cries echoing over their lake: "I can see your butt!" "Well, I can see *your* butt!" For whatever reason, it seems only locals understand how well sound carries over water, and any self-respecting local will know one usually needs only whisper when speaking on a lake. My father flipped on a spotlight overlooking the lake, and the two of them promptly were hushed. To this day, I don't know if he was politely warning them that they weren't alone, or just messing with them.

Thinking they are "in the middle of nowhere" is a common theme of these tourist tales, and it hearkens back to the understanding locals have that outsiders reshape their homeland in new, undesirable, and disrespectful ways. One time, when my father was ice-fishing with tip-ups right next to his house, two men drove up to him on snowmobiles and asked him for directions. They caught him reeling up a flag, and holding a northern pike in one of his hands. According to

my father, one reminded him very much of Squiggy, from the television show, "Laverne and Shirley," and he searched the lake's banks quizzically with his eyes. Finally, "Squiggy's" curiosity got to him, and he asked my father, "What sort of place is this here? Is it a farmer's field?" My father stood there dumbfounded, and looked down at the northern in his hand, as the snowmobiler's wiser friend rolled his eyes, and just said, "Lake."

I had a similar experience on the ice some years later. Two lost snowmobilers drove up to me, and I was struggling to free a tiny 10-inch largemouth bass, which had swallowed the hook. They kept asking me for directions, which I was happy to give them, but I was clearly preoccupied with getting the bass back in the water without harm. One of the two kept repeating how big and beautiful the fish was. At first, I dismissed the claims, saying it was a little on the small side. But eventually I gave in, and consented. "Yes," I said, "it's sure a beauty, eh? Ahh, God's country."

These tales illustrate not just a smarmy showcasing of superior local knowledge, but more importantly the basic incompatibility of (or perhaps simply difference between) these different worldviews which collide on a daily basis. From a local's perspective, one simply cannot be functional in the world without knowing one's place. This belief crosses demographics in the north. Subsistence-harvesters, rednecks, motorheads, schlubs, drunks, old-timers, young-bucks, losers, crooks, scoundrels, cheats and more all seem to have an implicit understanding of this basic fact. Only city-boys and fools get lost, and getting lost is a moral failure. As I see it, to not know your place is to not know yourself. Such a belief has counterparts in Ojibwe tradition and in the traditional Sámi concept of *báiki*, which will be explored in a later chapter.

Though tourists frequent the northern Wisconsin for many reasons, the principal reason is at heart the ecology, which features some of the densest concentrations of lakes in North America and large tracts of state and national forest. It draws hikers, bikers, skiers. It draws fishermen and hunters. It draws boaters, snowmobilers, ATVers. All visitors have a stake in preserving the land to support their own interests, as does every local. But it has become painfully obvious that tourism and sustainability have proven to be mutually exclusive concepts in northern Wisconsin, and the dream of retaining a pristine environment that can help sustain local inhabitants died, in its most recent inception, with the economic inequity born of Reaganomics in the 1980s. The work of Larry Nesper (2002; 2004), for instance, examines the spearfishing conflict in northern Wisconsin as a cultural, political, economic and social battle, framed through racialized discourse, as some northerners tried to take resources away from those Ojibwe people practicing subsistence in order to reap profits through a tourist economy.

The pro-development policies in Wisconsin during the 1980s and 1990s have decimated much of the lakeshores and unbroken woods of the north, whereas Minnesota and Michigan have fared much better in these policy wars for a variety of reasons. Waving a populist flag, unrestrained development has caused vast division of wealth in the north, where long-time residents face difficult property tax increases to remain living on family land, and where towns happily gobble up extra revenue from luxury lakeshore homes, that stand vacant, dark, and cold for 330 or more days a year. These issues are not unique to the Northwoods, but the palpable unease with such inequity has taken its toll on the north. Anger, bitterness, and resentment are very real and they manifest themselves in various ways within everyday life. I believe that what we are looking at is not simply a symptom indicative of a postcolonial society, but rather a

society fully enmeshed with ongoing colonial policies affecting both Native people and long-term residents alike.

In Sápmi, the situation is different. Tourism has had less of an impact because laws have prevented overdevelopment of lakeshores (along with a lower population density), though the presence of tourism has still been felt, and lives on with palpable animosities between Sámi people, local Nordic populations, and tourist populations. Some villages and small cities, like Rovaniemi or Nordkapp thrive on arctic tourism, and others, like Kárášjohka, thrive on problematic ethno-tourism, most markedly in the ethno-theme park, Sápmi, where tourists are bussed in to view exoticized renditions of Sámi culture, with laser light shows and a large gift shop. Many scholars have looked at tourism as a colonization, including Elina Helander (2003), Stein Mathisen (2004), and Kjell Olsen (2004) writing on Sámi culture.

Tourism has also been looked at critically in the Lake Superior Region, though it similarly focuses upon indigenous ethno-tourism, including Larry Nesper in “Simulating Culture: Being Indian for the Tourists in Lac du Flambeau’s Wa-swa-gon Indian Bowl” (2003) or “Historical Ambivalence in a Tribal Museum” (2005). The theme is perhaps more common in the global south, which beyond scholarship has appeared as a mainstay in literature as well. Strange commonalities exist between people living in tourist economies. When I first read renowned writer Jamaica Kincaid’s classic *A Small Place* (1988) for a graduate seminar, I felt a powerful camaraderie with her, and I was shocked to find my classmates mostly feeling guilty. Outside of the racial overtones, the self-perpetuating systems of economic inequity, ecological extraction, and physical occupation of the most valuable tracts of land under the auspices of liberty and freedom parallel many oppressive structures of colonial societies. Even the paternalism inherent

in colonialism is present within tourist economies, since it is often believed that locals ought to be grateful for the benevolence of tourists who have the freedom to spend their leisure money on supporting their economy. Systemic economic inequity and structural dependency on a dominant power is also reflective of colonial societies.

Often these economic, cultural, and social conflicts take shape through conflicts over the environment and land-use policy. Lakeshore development offers significant habitat destruction for both fish and mammals. Mink sightings, for instance, are down. And, even if a lakeside household does not use pesticides or herbicides on their lawn, its construction contributes to soil erosion, which negatively affects the breeding grounds of many large game fish, like walleye and muskie. In effect, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and taxpayers help restock the lakes with fish that homebuilders disturb. However, the DNR is also under intense pressures to generate revenue for the state. To complicate matters further, the DNR has been run by political appointees since 1995, and it is subject to the modern turbulence of Wisconsin politics, often placing their official positions at distinct odds with a vast majority ecologists, who themselves are subject to their tendencies of scientific elitism, discounting traditional knowledge in favor of their own subjective paradigms.

Why the DNR is germane to this discussion is that they determine land and waterway policy for the state of Wisconsin, and increasingly over the past half-century, Wisconsin residents have been calling for a transformation of the Northwoods into a playground for the residents of the southern half of the state. There is more access to hard-to-reach places. There are faster roads. There are more appeals for catch-and-release fishing in the Fishing Regulations booklets to give chances for tourists to find a trophy to hang on their wall. More and more lakes are

managed specifically for trophy fishing every year. And more lands are being fenced off for private whitetail herds to provide simulated trophy hunts for the wealthy interested only in shooting a farm-raised deer with massive antlers–a practice that has been linked to the spread of epidemics (like Chronic Wasting disease and tuberculosis), and a practice that most of my informants passionately dislike. A friend and informant of mine, Wayne “Minogiizhig” Valliere, an Ojibwe language and culture teacher at Lac du Flambeau, once told me his brother was invited on a hunt in Texas on such a farm. A loud bell rang, food pellets were released from a silo he sat in front of, and dozens of deer came running to feed. Wayne explained that it made his brother nauseous to think of shooting these deer, and he went home empty handed. The nausea was not rooted so much in the absence of sport as it was the unhealthiness of the deer’s lifestyle, which dined on artificial foods and lived artificial lives.

Figure 3: Wayne “Minogiizhig” Valliere harvesting pine pitch for a birchbark canoe.

Living the Seasons

For my family, the calendar year revolved around home harvest. Beginning in spring, we tapped maple trees in our yard in March to make a year’s worth of syrup for our family. In late March and early April we started seedlings for the garden. In late April we set minnow traps so

we could fish in May and June. In May and June, we would fish for walleye, and sometimes for a few brook trout in secret spring ponds. We'd also plant our vegetable garden, which would often be ravaged by deer. By late June, we turned our fishing to bass, in different waters, using different techniques. July and August were for berry picking, mostly blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries, which would fill the freezer. In the fall, we'd start fishing a little bit again for walleye, then in late October and November for muskies. November is also whitetail deer hunting season in Wisconsin, which we also participated in. In fall we'd also hunt grouse, and when the ice came on the lakes, we would ice fish, mostly for northern pike, from the house. Many of my uncles used to trap for income during the winters, but the collapse of the fur market in the 1960s put an end to this. We always had fish, berries, wild meat, maple syrup, garden vegetables and canned goods.

Figure 4: Tom Frandy Tapping a Maple Tree

There was a fluidity to all these harvesting activities that is difficult to explain. While deer hunting and walleye fishing were all but sacred to my father, and he never missed a season opener through his entire life, he would let other harvests come and go. My father, Tom Frandy, and his brother, Jim Frandy, used to smelt every year, until the smelt populations became too small in the great lakes (because of introduced salmon species to bolster tourism) to make it worth their while. They also used to seine for cisco,

but grew tired of their taste. Jim harvested his own wild rice some years in Island Lake, where his uncle Jake Nelson first planted seed rice from Minnesota in the 1950s. I revived this tradition, learning from Ojibwe friends, because it was an ample food source which I enjoyed eating. Tom used to fish for walleye on river ice, when he lived on a lake with walleye in it, but access and work eventually made this difficult to continue, so he began eating northern in the winter, which he caught using similar techniques. I also began picking wild cranberries on floating bogs, something my grandmother used to do though it was discontinued for decades. Though my father never harvested them, he knew how his mother did it, and he told me the basics of how it was done one year when he pointed out cranberry blossoms that were on floating bogs where we harvested minnows. Through trial and error, I developed my own techniques to get a year's supply of cranberries in a weekend, and in my younger 20s, I passed along some of these spots to a Finndian friend Omar Polar, who revived the tradition for himself. It seemed a natural extension of our other harvesting practices, even though as a tradition it lay dormant for fifty or sixty years. These practices are not individual traditions, separate and distinct, but rather the varied expressive forms of an ideological complex of human relations to local ecological systems. Like artists who switch between oils, watercolors, inks, and leads, these practitioners perform and ritualize their relationships with their environment in different media, mastering, playing, innovating, reviving, and inventing new means to express this relationship.

Often, as a child, when my family would visit the grocery store, my father would point out the price of walleye, then about $12 a pound, and wonder aloud in all sincerity why one would buy something that could just be caught. We would mock the high prices of raspberries and domestic blueberries, whose taste could not rival the sweet taste of the wild blueberries we'd

pick in the forest. When his brother Jim said he wouldn't walk across the street to pick a blueberry, the expression on my father's face was one of betrayal and horror. After all, my father once described an 80 year old woman, picking blueberries in his berry patch with one hand, as she clung onto her walker with the other hand, as his "hero." Plus, his mother may have been the fastest berry-picker in the small town they grew up in. She was ambidextrous, and my father–a notoriously fast picker in his own right–couldn't out-pick her until she was in her 80s. My father, Tom, explained in one of his favorite stories of my grandmother:

> This was when my mother was alive. There were good raspberries back by the school forest. It was a good year, and my mom loved to pick berries. My goal was to always pick faster than she did. She was ambidextrous. I think the first time I beat her, she was probably 80 years old and already had a stroke. [suddenly assuming a joking tone] And when I finally beat her I rejoiced! [laughter] I did it! I did it! [laughter] Then I found out she probably spilled her pail or something.
>
> This time, before her stroke, I said there was good picking over there [in the school forest]. She said, "What time do you want to go picking?" I said, "Anytime." She says, "Instead of coming to your place, I'll just park down there, then we'll pick and then have some coffee." She says, "How about 7?" "Sounds good." At 7, I walk over there, and her car's there. And there she is, out in the middle of the patch, and her bucket is almost full. She said, "Well, I just couldn't sleep." So she helped me pick my pail, and we went in and had some coffee. And I said, "Well do you want to pick some more tomorrow?" And she says, "Yeah." "Well, what time do you want to get there?" "Well, same time if you want." "Well, what time did you get here?" "6:30."
>
> Well, the next day, I go walking out at 6:30, and there's the car parked out there, and there she's out in the middle of the patch, and her bucket's mostly full! I think it happened a third time too! (2011)

For us, like many of the families in the region, our home harvest was no leisure, no recreation. My parents were both born in the mid 1940s. My mother grew up in a low income family on a working dairy farm in northwestern Wisconsin. She attended school in a one room schoolhouse, had milking chores twice a day, and lacking good insulated footwear, in the winter she would slip off her barn boots and stand in piles of fresh cow manure to keep her feet warm as

she milked. Though my father's parents both worked salaried jobs, his mother as a school teacher and his father for the DNR, his extended family was filled with fishing guides, lumberjacks, and miners. He was expected to fish, hunt, and pick berries for food. Five days a week, they ate fish they had caught or meat they had hunted. Though my siblings and I relied on fish and game a bit less (perhaps we ate it two or three times a week on average), the full process of harvesting this food was not lost on us. These harvests provided us with no capital income, though they certainly saved our family money as a means of informal economy. Perhaps more importantly, they shaped our understanding of time, space, and land-use. They marked the times of the year, they nourished us with healthy and delicious food, and they shaped our sense of place through practice. They weren't only what we did, but they quite literally defined our reality.

This simple process of working the waters and woods for food has perhaps more in common with gardening and small scale agriculture than it does with the recreational and sporting counterparts that have been historically associated with Western hunting and angling traditions. The Anglocentric traditions which came to dominate the resource management policies of the Upper Midwest are hardly indicative of the region's cultural constitution, filled with Ojibwe, French, Scandinavians, Finns, Poles, Irish, Germans, Czechs, and Slavs. For this reason, local hunting and fishing are often misinterpreted by many American scholars who misunderstand the Upper Midwest as a distinct cultural region. As Jim Leary notes in his Introduction to *Polkabilly: How the Goose Island Ramblers Redefined American Folk Music* (2006), Anglo influence over the Upper Midwest is often exaggerated, even by good scholars. Leary points out the the "usually careful" Simon Bronner blatantly misread Leary's previous

work arguing for the lack of Anglo influence on Upper Midwestern folk music, as Bronner concluded Leary's main point was to showcase Anglo dominance over the region (p. 30-31).

Curiously, whereas other forms of food production, like urban farming, household chickens, or underground urban goat co-ops are seen as back-to-the-land forms of slow food, informal economy, and local production, hunting and fishing are still often stigmatized with the stigma of bloodsport, violence, and gun culture in mainstream discourse. For my family, at least, what we were doing, what we continue to do, what we were taught to do in an unbroken but ever-changing tradition dating back to time immemorial through our own northern Finnish bloodlines, through French voyageur in-laws and our Native neighbors and cousins was something different than sport. Hunting wasn't a competition, nor a test of one's masculinity. We had no mounted dead animals on our walls. Hunting was not particularly an avenue for male-bonding (though we were short on female hunters in our family, who were more likely to fish and gather), nor an excuse to drink and gamble. Instead, we pursued what was available in relative abundance, and we discussed hunting and fishing most in terms of work, not leisure. We "really should" go fishing before the weather changes. We "need" to pick berries before it's too late. One simply does not go to the woods or waters for one's own bemusement.

Diverse Voices and New Awakenings

Naturally, many in Northern Wisconsin did not share our values. Different land-ethics sometimes tensely co-existed within these northern spaces, and people often puzzle over the meanings behind these different cultural worldviews. Tragically, my home region is well-known in recent times for the virulent racism of the spearfishing controversy of the late 1980s, a

controversy explored by Larry Nesper in his outstanding work, *The Walleye War: The Struggle for Ojibwe Spearfishing and Treaty Rights* (2002). For many of us, the values of a subsistence-based harvest existed off the Reservation, but we well knew other people hunted and fished for other reasons. On one occasion, after I had been away at college for a few years, I happened across a former high school classmate, Rob, in a local tavern. Rob's family moved north from Illinois in the early 1990s. It was shortly after hunting season, and we began to chat about our luck that year. He described in cold, calculating detail, what surmounted to a whitetail massacre he perpetrated in the woods a few weeks earlier. When a small group of six deer came into the area he was hunting, he shot every last one of them. He raised his arms up in the bar, pretending he was bearing a rifle. "Bam!" he yelled. Turning his direction to another imaginary deer, "Bam!" he'd shout again. Though his story eventually ended, my feelings of shock and horror with his militaristic description of a deer slaughter never did. He killed these deer… with anger. This did not make sense to me. Although I was able to finish my conversation with him without truly tipping my hand, Rob continued on about how he was fed up with hunting whitetail deer. He was planning a trip to Colorado. He wanted to hunt cougars. He wanted to kill something that could really kill him back.

I felt, at that time, a sickening feeling weighing heavily in the pit of my stomach. As a young man, I didn't fully understand the nature of this visceral reaction. Many of us young men in the area were struggling to understand *why* we hunted, and *why* we fished, when we were told we didn't "have to," or when mass culture suggested we hunted for sport and pleasure, a tenet many half-accepted in rhetoric, if not in practice. It created a dissonance within our community and within ourselves. Even at the time, I had little interest in hunting something that could kill

me–not so much for fear as just indifference–and I intuitively knew that for my family hunting was not about a competitive battle to the death between man and beast. I wondered also how he and his parents were going to eat all that venison in a year (he was an only child), and why his hunt sounded like a war. When I told this story to Wayne Valliere in the summer of 2012 in the parking lot of an Ace Hardware in Woodruff as we were picking up some tools for a birchbark canoe we built together, he interjected when I explained my feelings of nausea. “Do you know what that is?” he asked. When I said no, he explained, “That’s the spirits of your ancestors.” This made good sense to me, though I hadn’t previously thought about it in those terms. Those people are still around me every day in story and place, even though they passed before I was even born. When I told him about the cougar hunt, he explained, “Your friend isn’t going to live long. He’s going to make himself sick.” This made even more sense to me on a deeply intuitive level.

These points led to a series of answerless questions that I am crafting this work to better understand. Why were Wayne’s conclusions so intuitive for me? What parallels exist cross-culturally amongst people who harvest for similar reasons? To what extent does the practice of food procurement shape the belief systems and worldview of its practitioners? Have certain aspects of Finno-Ugric traditional cultures, bearing sometimes striking resemblances to Native American customary hunting practices (a topic I do not have permission to discuss in this work), lived on quietly as deep structural beliefs long after the Christianization and modernization of Norden? Or, am I simply a product of three generations of acculturation into Ojibwe and voyageur country? Is it living within a tourism-based economy? Or am I foolishly bound to my own anti-modern, animistic, and relativistic proclivities?

The harvest has been deeply etched into my consciousness, and it shapes how I behave, act, and think in everyday life. People who grow up within a harvesting tradition easily recognize this value-system within others. On countless occasions, after meeting strangers from Appalachia, northern Maine, western Montana, or the Pacific Northwest, I have developed strong and immediate chemistry, and we would marvel at how our experiences have been similar, though they might occur a thousand miles apart. At academic conferences, I am sometimes approached by other scholars with roots from northern Ontario, Michigan, or Minnesota, who feel it important to share with me that they "really get" where I'm coming from, and just felt compelled to say hello. We carry this sort of harvest with us, and how it shapes our daily performance of everyday life even outside of the limited realm of fishing and hunting, and in regions as distant as the Upper Midwest and in arctic Scandinavia.

Book 1:
From Tundra to the Arctic Sea

Chapter 1

Deanu Luossat: Indigenous Salmon Fishing in an International Landscape

I first began to take serious interest in Lapland in the early 2000s, driven in part by my own curiosity to explore my own heritage as a family of Black Finns, with an unspoken history from both Ostrobothnia and the north of Finland, where genealogical records promptly die off in the mid 1800s. By the time I began graduate school in the early 2000s, I was beginning to notice differences in my own cultural traditions, and the so-called Western tradition of environmental consciousness. With increasing interest in my own intellectual roots, I wrote a Master's thesis exploring how traditional Finnish belief systems involving the environment differed from other European traditions. Gradually, I turned my interest to Sámi people, a sometimes purported ancestry of mine (though lacking any real evidence either way) in my family. This led to a number of fieldwork trips, most particularly to Finnish Lapland, and to the Deatnu River, where I worked with Sámi people over the course of several months in 2005, 2007, and 2010, as I became interested in traditional fishing in Scandinavia, as a lifeway in and of itself but also a way to better understand my own traditions.

The Deatnu River (Norwegian: Tana; Finnish: Teno) forms much of the northern border

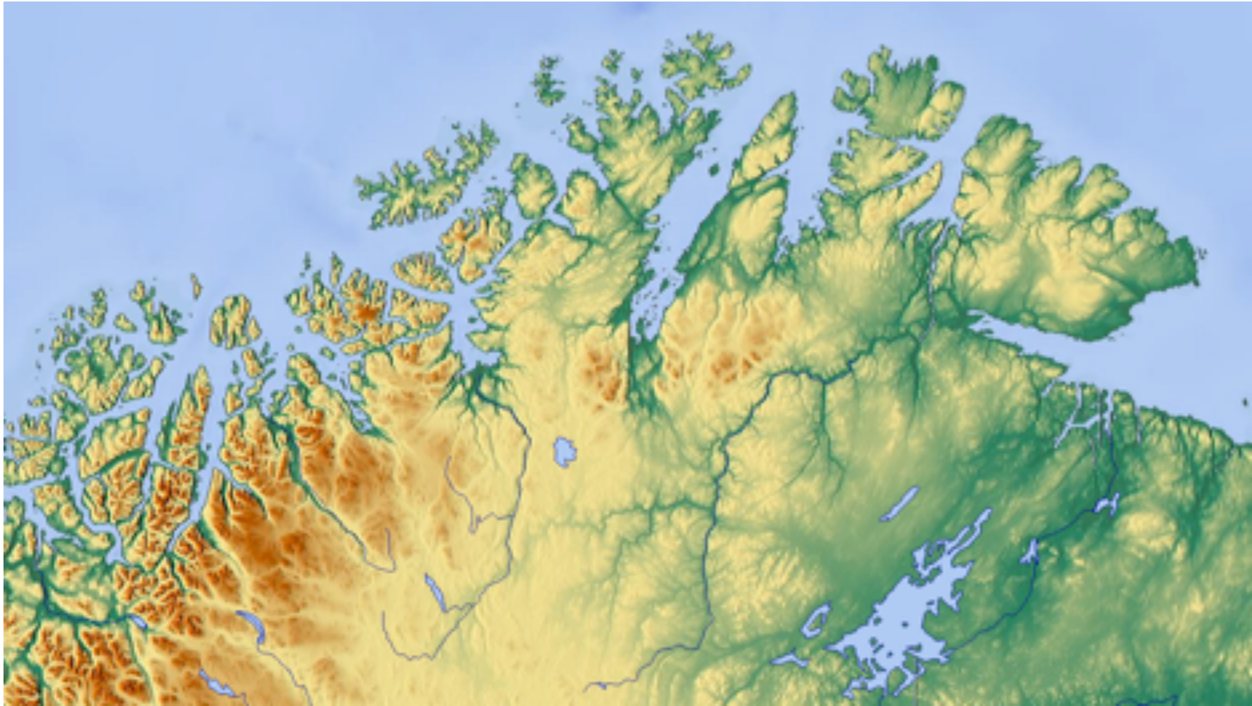

Figure 1: The Deatnu River (center-right)

between Finland and Norway. In the heart of Sápmi, the 1200 kilometers of the free flowing Deatnu river system contains water of drinking quality and holds the largest stock of the threatened Atlantic salmon in the world, which have been depleted by 82% in the past thirty years (Helander, Somby, and Boekraad, 2003, p. 3). The Deatnu delineates the boundaries between two nations, two resource management policies, and the international borders of the EU and NATO. But the Deatnu represents far more than a political border on a map. It also flows entirely through Sápmi, the traditional homeland of the Sámi people, the indigenous people of northern Scandinavia, the only recognized indigenous people in Europe, who have relied for thousands of years relied upon its salmon for food and capital, fishing by means of *buođđu* fish dams, drift nets, seines, spears, and in more recent centuries by trolling with a reel and line and angling.

The Sámi are an indigenous people who have historically resided in the interior and north of Norway, Sweden, and Finland, as well as in the Kola Peninsula of Russia, in an area called Sápmi, a region of 300,000 square kilometers (Olsson and Lewis, 1995, p. 143). As likely descendants of the prehistoric Komsa culture (Lehtola, 2004, p. 19-21), they are the original occupants of Sápmi, a region ill-suited for agriculture, where they hunted, fished, trapped, gathered plants and berries, and herded reindeer since time immemorial. Like many ethnic minorities and indigenous people, definition has proved problematic within dominant societies. In earlier times, Sámi people were defined as reindeer-owners, and even today ethnic Swedes and Norwegians cannot by law own reindeer (Lehtola, 2004, p. 43). Today, however, a Sámi person is considered to be a self-identifying person who grew up speaking a Sámi language, or whose parents or grandparents grew up speaking a Sámi language (Henrikson, 1999, p. 23-24). These legal statuses of Sámi identity continue to be heatedly debated today. Though the 50,000-100,000 Sámi frequently consider themselves one people, the development of pan-Sámi identity is a recent one among people who have approximately thirteen different living languages, perhaps a dozen different economic models, a handful of vastly different religious practices, and widely different cultural practices.

Though Sámi people have long been associated with reindeer herding, a minority of Sámi people own reindeer today, with numbers around approximately 10% (Olsson and Lewis, 1995, p. 156). This 10% figure, however, is misleading about the reindeer economy, since reindeer owners often hire herders, and rely informally upon family members to help manage their herd in exchange for meat. Large-scale herding of reindeer–the herding Sámi people are most famous for–was never universal among the Sámi. In fact, extensive herding–or the large scale herding of

hundreds or thousands of mostly untended reindeer–was a relatively recent development in the history in Sámi economy. Larger herds formed in response to increased taxation of reindeer skins by the Nordic States during the 16th century (Kvist, 1995, p. 64-65). The increased reliance upon extensive herding among North Sámi brought the owners of these large herds into frequent conflict with intensive herders–those herders who kept very small numbers of reindeer under continual domestic tending. The larger herds often encroached on the smaller herds' lichen beds, and the smaller herds were likely to break out of their pens, running off with the larger herds. These conflicts were especially pronounced between the North Sámi and their neighbors, the Ánar and Skolt.

The Deatnu Sámi, while all speakers of North Sámi, have their own regional culture which differs from the mountain Sámi to the west (with large reindeer herds), from the sea Sámi to the north (who relied on ocean and fjord fishing), and from the Skolt Sámi to the east (which possess numerous religious, cultural, economic, and language differences). They have traditional costumes that distinguish them from their neighbors (Lehtola, 2004, p. 13); they speak in a subdominant eastern dialect, different than one would find in Guovdageaidnu; and, perhaps most importantly, they relied upon rivers, lakes, and a birch and pine forest as means for their livelihoods. No symbol is more important representing the distinction of contemporary river Sámi than the wild Atlantic salmon. The abundance of North Sámi words for salmon helps illustrate the depth of relationship between the Sámi community and the salmon. Sámi scholar Nils Jernsletten (1997) has researched the diversity of nature words in North Sámi. Indexing salmon terms, Jernsletten writes:

> diddi: a small male salmon up to 2.5 kg which swims up the Tana river later than other salmon.

lindor: a small male salmon, larger than diddi.
goadjun: a large male salmon.
duovvi: roe salmon.
čuonžá: fatty salmon which has neither roe nor semen, swims up the river in the autumn.
vuorru: "winter steady" salmon which remains in the river throughout the winter.
šoaran: a vuorru which goes down to the sea in the spring and returns again in the autumn. (p. 95-96)

The Sámi lexicon for riverscapes is perhaps even richer, indicating a variety of words for river structure, moving water, and the flow of the river. Despite the length, it is worth including in long quotation, as it is so illuminative of the interrelations between the local environment, place names, and the Sámi languages. Jernsletten (1997) writes:

Words for deep water:
áhparas: very deep place in the water.
jorbmi: deep place, pool, in a river (open hole in a bog)
oalli: the main channel of a river.
fávli: the water far out, the deep water; the deep part of a river; the part near the middle of a fjord (where it is deepest).

Words for shallow water:
coagis: shallow, shallow place.
cohkolat: shallow place in the sea, in a lake or river; pond or sound which is dry in summer.
njuorra: shoal, shallow, in the sea or in a lake; fishing bank.
suohpa: shallow place where a river can be crossed.

Words for quietly flowing water:
dappal: short stretch of smooth water between rapids in a river; large deep pool (also in a rapid, near shore) with backwater.
doažži (adj.): still flowing, with little current; currentless water
fielbmá: small, slow river of even depth; slow, deep place in a (small) river.
goatnil: still water, without any current, near the bank or by a stone in a river.
savu: smoothly flowing stretch of water in a big river.

Words for current, strength, rapids, and falls:
besko: strong counter-current in a river
borsi: lit. 'cauldron fall' (of a waterfall surrounded by sheer mountain walls on three sides), now only used as a proper name of a river
boršu: eddy (white) in rapids

> *goržži*: waterfall.
> *guoika*: rapids.
> *guorvil*: rough rapids, in which the water breaks and "foams" over the rocks; a small waterfall which a boat can navigate going upstream.
> *geavŋŋis*: big rapids with falls in a large river (impossible or difficult to navigate in a boat).
> *njavvi*: small rapids in a river.
> *njielahat*: whirlpool, in which the river draws down anything that comes in its path.
> *njearri*: a shallow and comparatively large njavvi.
> *rohči*: narrowing, narrow, contracted portion of a river (with strong current or rapids) or valley. (p. 95-96)

Though many of these concepts have comparable terms even in Indo-European languages, the etymologies of, for instance, English language river terminology is not distinct, borrowed as descriptors from other concepts: rapids, falls, boils, plunge pools, eddies, stillwaters, oxbows, sandbars, channels, drop-offs.

Though great military powers of Europe never required extensive rationalizations for their own existence, the rise of less powerful nation-states in Europe was tied into the acceptance of their legitimacy by the former imperial powers, working through the discourse of ethnic nationalism, which propagated the idea that European states should consist of one ethnic people, one shared history, one language, one culture, and one land. Mid-sized powers like Sweden undertook the construction of nation-states differently than the weaker states. Roger Kvist, in "The Racist Legacy in Modern Swedish Saami Policy" (1994) suggests the Swedish nation-state is "created on the ruins of feudal society," (p. 214-15) and that the losses of Finland (1809) and Pomerania (1815) forced Sweden reluctantly into an era of nationalistic thought.

The rights to self-determination in the weakest nations were consequently linked to the inflated value of a military history, a history of internecine strife to define insiders and outsiders, and the historical or mythological uniting of people into some form of institutional governance–

most commonly a monarchy. A people were only a nation if they have united under strong, centralized governments, with some prominent tradition of militarism (either an expansionist period, or a historic defense). For example, 19th century scholars like the Danish professor Frederik Schiern and the Norwegian historian Peter Andreas Munch supposed Finnish independence would never occur, since they could not "develop a culture alone" while lacking a heroic epoch, a history of belligerence, and an "organic" community of the land–reflecting the erroneous belief of the day that Finns had migrated from the East (Kemiläinen, 1998, p. 96-98). Outsiders similarly believed the Sámi to be without military history, without hierarchical structures, and without a concept of land-ownership to divide insiders from outsiders.

The status of Sámi people ultimately deteriorated over the past five hundred years from what was perceived in Medieval times as a wealthy northern kingdom under Sweden's rule. Early Swedish policy officially recognized the legislating authority of the Sámi siida system as a legal municipality (Lehtola, 2004, p. 23). Veli-Pekka Lehtola writes:

> [The siida was a] village unit that provided for community activities, and it was the area wherein the members of the society had usage rights. The siida owned a certain area which had well defined borders The siida system was a permanent socio-economic and political institution and had been functional for centuries. Sámi were usually thought to have no permanent settlements or organizational structure before the colonists came into their area. That is why they were often referred to as 'vagabond Lapps'. According to current knowledge this picture is wrong. Sámi migrated for their livelihood, but only within their own carefully defined areas. (p. 23)

Early Swedish policy towards the Sámi was informed by the belief that Sápmi was most profitable as a reindeer-herding region. King Gustav Vasa of Sweden strengthened the borders between the agricultural and reindeer herding regions of Sweden in 1543, declaring farms were forbidden in Sápmi. Karl IX also adhered to these policies, but the so-called Lapp Placards of 1673 and 1695 opened Swedish and Finnish Sápmi up to agricultural colonization. The Lapp

Codicil, or Sámi Magna Carta, of 1751 further ensured Sámi neutrality in wartime, gave them title to waters and land, and "internal administration and justice" (Olsson and Lewis, 1995, p. 150). The Swedish Crown routinely decided court cases of territoriality and land ownership rights in favor of the Sámi until the 1780s, when this trend abruptly began to change to favor the colonists (Lehtola, 2004, p. 31; Kvist, 1995, p. 68).

Early literature about the Sámi people also recognized Sámi cultural autonomy, power, and wealth. Gustav Vasa tasked Johannes Schafferus to craft a work, *Lapponia,* to discredit the rumor that the Swedish empire's military success was attained by enlisting Sámi magical assistance. Heavy taxation on reindeer skins–in some places by three separate nations–began under King Gustav Vasa of Sweden in the 16th century, leading to increased herd-sizes to meet these demands (Kvist, 1995, p. 64-65). During this time, chief exportable goods from Sápmi, furs and dried fish, were of considerable economic value. Vasa appointed number of bailiffs to strictly implement a taxation on fish and furs (Kvist, 1995, p. 64). In addition to the fiscal motivation, Vasa also strengthened his territorial claims over the region, which he feared might fall into the influence of Denmark or Russia (Kvist, 1995, p. 64; Kvist, 1994, p. 204). The fish and reindeer were used to feed Sweden's Baltic armies in the early 17th century. This taxation was so severe that many Sámis, risking starvation, fled northward to the border of Denmark-Norway (Kvist, 1995, p. 64). This colonial era was further marked with forced religious conversion, drum confiscation, and loss of ownership over the lands. Because Sámi people frequently dwelled in *goahti* (turf huts), *lávvu* (a conical tent), and small wooden buildings, and because Sámi people tended to move with the seasons to practice a subsistence-based lifestyle, the Nordic states classified them as vagrants and confiscated their land, instituting a homesteading program after

this confiscation. After Sámi people tried to re-homestead their own territories, the Nordic states (most aggressively Norway) instituted mandatory assimilation policies, which granted permission only to Norwegian-speakers to own land.

The Deatnu Sámi communities have long relied on fishing as a principal foodway. Recent annual catches ranges around 160-200 metric tons of fish, or 30,500-38,000 salmon,[1] and oral history suggests the harvests were formerly larger. Given the combined 7600 inhabitants of the municipalities of Kárášjohka (Karasjok), Deatnu (Tana), and Ohcejokha (Utsjoki),[2] this figure ranges between 46-58 lbs (21-26 kg) of harvested salmon per capita. If all harvested salmon remained the region, the salmon harvest would comprise 5.4-6.7% of total caloric intake of these regions.[3] If all were sold, the salmon would net between $2-$4.4 million USD, depending on market value.[4] Per capita, this equates to an average resident income of $264-$580. With the numbers of active fishermen is lower than the total population, these figures further reveal the importance of salmon fishing as an important supplementary income for many in the region, especially in a region where several locals have expressed frustration at the high rates of regional unemployment (Guttorm, 2003, p. 97). During the winter season, for example, unemployment in Finnish Sápmi is around 33% (Olsson and Lewis, 1995, p. 157).

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[1] 81.4 tons of salmon on the Norwegian side, 2003. 99.55 tons Norwegian side, 90.55 tons Finnish side, 2002. Tourists catch 30% of these fish on the Finnish side, 11% on the Norwegian side. See Helander, Somby, and Boekraad (2003), “Final Conclusions,” in Helander, Somby and Boekraad, eds., *Deatnu Luossa Seminára*, 3-4.

[2] As of January 1st, 2002, Kárášjohka has 2,852 inhabitants; Tana has 3,039. “Finnmark.” http://www.fastload.org/fi/Finnmark.html (accessed 12/10/05). Uhcejohka has 1600. “Factfile: Utsjoki” http://www.helsinginsanomat.fi/english/article/1101978058890 (accessed 12/10/05).

[3] These figures are based on the approximate 850 calories per pound of Atlantic salmon, and a daily 2000 calorie diet.

[4] Based on values between $6-$10 USD per pound.

But as important as salmon are as an economic necessity to the region, they are even more important culturally. The technology and vocabulary of *buođđu* fishing are precise and complex. Ilmari Tapiola describes how to set up a *buođđu*:

> One has to measure carefully the place for a trap called buođđu. With the stick *čuoibmi* it is easier. With a string one decides where to put *vuojahat* and *buođđomohkki*. The stones are used as a weight on *oarjjuolgi*. The parts of *oarjjuolgi* are: *gáhpa*, *juolggit*, *luovvi*, *háhcagat* and *suovit*. Sometimes a man gets stuck with *háhcagat* and *suovit*. The riverboat of Deatnu is able to carry three *oarjjuolgi* and some stones altogether. Only the one who really knows the river, is able to steer a boat this full. You can´t make many mistakes before you fail. A boat motor is useful with this work. *Buođđorittat*, a wire fence, might last many years. *Doarrásat* of the trap fasten the '*rittat*'. The branches for the trap are normally collected before tree is in full leaf. One has to press *soađđemuorat* hard horizontally. *Joddu* is the net in which the fish is caught. It is not easy to get the net right. (qtd. in Somby, 2003)

The specialized terminology is perhaps better illustrated in Aage Solbakk's (2007) diagram (below).

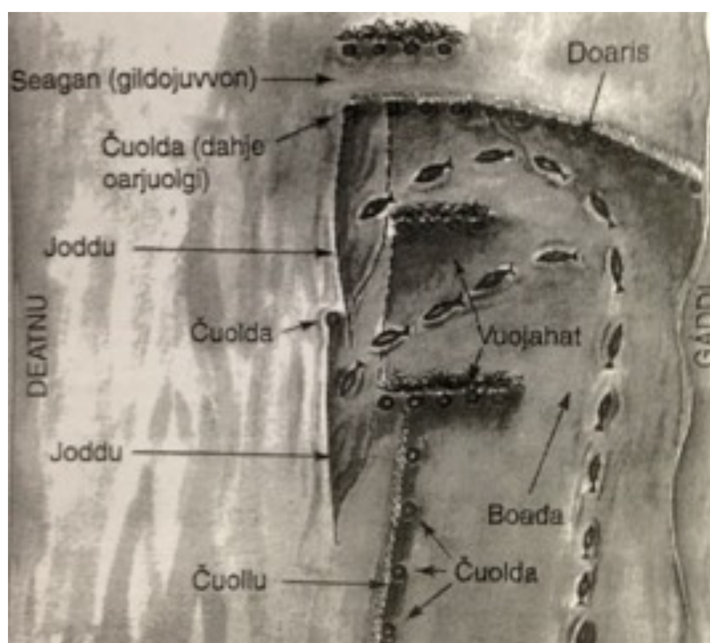

Figure 2: Buođđu Fish Dam. Image: Aage Solbakk

Though *buođđu* traps are not illegal as are some Sámi fishing methods, like the *beaŋgil* netting technique of the Kárášjohka river (Jernsletten, 1997, p. 97), *buođđu* rights are complex, and depend on whether one resides on the Norwegian or Finnish shore. On the Finnish side, though any Sámi can pay to angle for salmon–a right that now every citizen of the EU has–permits for use of the *buođđu* and other traps are inherited through river-side estates. For example, one license holder can pass his estate and license to only one heir, or buyer. Johannes Helander (2003) writes,

> In Finland special fishing rights are based in land ownership and on the Norwegian side on that, on whether an estate produces 2000 kg of hay per year. Then local residents can use a net, a trap, and migratory fishing equipment. . . . When they were established, fishing was considered an important supplemental livelihood. Above all, the mentioned fishing rights were subsequently nearly exclusively in Sámi control. Within the Ohcejohka Sámi economy, with a few exceptions, nearly everyone today are the aforementioned properties owners and their heirs. In other words, they had Sámi fishing rights. (p. 45)

Since fishing rights are connected to the estates which possess fishing rights, some of these licenses have left Sámi hands, and many license holders do not use *buođđu* traps at all.

The policies on the Norwegian side are still based in the brutal years of Norwegianization policy, during which time the Sámi were forced to assimilate into the dominant Norwegian culture linguistically, economically, religiously, and culturally. Beginning in 1888, to use the *buođđu* trap one had to own land. Given the 1864 decree on property ownership in which only individuals who could both speak and read Norwegian could own land (Lehtola, 2004, p. 44), the Sámi suddenly had few legal rights whatsoever to use the *buođđu*. Though this law was not actively enforced, it was intensified in 1911. Historian Aage Solbakk (2003) describes the change in legislation:

> [The Deatnu Salmon Law] was made stricter in the year 1911 through a king's resolution, which bound salmon fishing rights to land ownership. If they intended to net, then they had to cut at least 2000 kg of hay annually. The Norwegian authorities' objective was to Norwegianize the Sámi of the Deatnu as Norwegian farmers. Norwegian authorities, Finnmark's provincial governor tightened [the laws], and took control of those salmon fishing rights that were already possessed. Those Norwegianization laws were always severe. (p. 37)

These Norwegianization laws represented a pinnacle of the active oppression of Sámi people in Norway. Following the stripping of Sámi rights to own land in 1848, the Norwegian Land Sales Act of 1863 sold off traditionally Sámi lands to all interested parties who would actively farm it. By 1880, all Sámi schooling was required to be in Norwegian, and again in 1895, Norwegian homesteading was allowed on confiscated lands, but only if authorities certified one's "mastery" of Norwegian (Lehtola, 2004, p. 44). From 1913-1943, Sámi children were forcibly sent to boarding schools, and were not allowed to live with their own families for most of the year, thereby disrupting familial relations, the transmission of occupational knowledge, and other aspects of traditional culture for an entire generation.

The Norwegian effort to convert the Sámi to agriculturalists was at once economically, militarily, and morally motivated. While Norway had a vested interest in using farms to generate revenue, and a so-called "settled" north provided security in the event of territorial disputes, the romantic and nationalistic faith in the moral virtues of farming also played a roll in the Norwegianization laws. This period corresponds to the heights of Norwegian nationalism, and a firm Norwegian belief in the superiority of their culture shapes these harsh policies. Solbakk explains the roots of the landownership and haymaking in *buođđu* policy:

> It tied the Salmon fishing rights to the hay, to the cow and the sheep. If you wanted to do net fishing, you had to be a farmer: cut the hay and feed farm animals And it forced people to start an agricultural life. That should force the Sámi people in this valley to become farmers. Farmers were the main persons in the Norwegian society. Sámi people

> in this area should also become farmers and live on a spot of land, make fences around the property and have the farmhouse in the centre of it. The farmhouse becomes a base for the rights as in Norwegian culture. (qtd. in Somby, 2003)

By 1902, only those who could read and write Norwegian and those who used it on a daily basis could own land in northern Norway (Olsson and Lewis, 1995, p. 152). By 1911 the ability to farm–and therefore *buođđu* rights–even further were bound with Norwegian language skills. These haymaking laws are enforced even more vigorously today than they were during their inception. Only during the mid-1970s were the *buođđu* licensing laws actually enforced; before this time Sámi people were allowed to fish illegally without repercussions (Somby, Helander, Boekraad, 2003, p. 5). The sudden regard for preventing net fishing is, of course, more related to the economic boon of the rising tourist industry than to any ecological issues. Were the protection of wild salmon the principal motivator, the governments would likely be looking towards the habitat destruction caused by fish farms, oceanic commercial fishing, and hydroelectric dams.

Furthermore, new agreements for Deatnu river management are forged approximately every ten years. Johannes Helander (2003) writes that "every time a new agreement is updated or corrected, thus the Deatnu area Sámi population has to suffer losses" (p. 45). In 1938 limits were set on seine and standing net size, as well as the size of dams. In 1953 further restrictions were set on trap construction materials, and the weekly closed fishing period extended from one to three days. Fishing using baitfish, shimp, and lures imitating baitfish was banned in 1960. Baitfishing from shore was further restricted to certain locations in 1972. In 1982 fishing rights were broadened for non-locals, while restricting fishing access in historically important feeding streams. In 1989 the fishing season was shortened by 20 days, and most of the feeding streams

were closed entirely to net-fishing. Further restrictions were placed on knot size and netting weight, and nets of 29-35 millimeters were forbidden between June 16th and the end of July. Effectively, this prohibited functional *buođđu* traps in virtually all feeding streams and rivers, as well as in places with rapids (J. Helander, 2003, p. 46). Helander believes these conditions make *buođđu* fishing so difficult to legally execute, they are reducing the numbers of *buođđu* traps in the Deatnu river system. More recently, Finland has unilaterally declared its intention to ban driftnet fishing on the Deatnu, permanently ending a distinctive Sámi cultural tradition, without any stated rationale or explanation (Yle Uutiset, 2012).

The concepts of Sámi self-determination and cultural autonomy–agreed to in the Draft U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the International Labor Organization Convention No. 169–should allow Sámi people jurisdiction over their own lands and waterways. The Norwegian Saami Act of 1990 and the Finnish Saami Act of 1995 suggest instead a policy of consultation and co-management. Yet the interest of the Nordic states lies in generating revenue through the tourist economy and allowing easy access to northern peripheral lands by southerners seeking recreational opportunities. The capital revenue one can generate through tourist fishing exceeds–at least in the short term–revenue generated by harvest fishing. Like other natural resources in the north (timber, water, minerals), these salmon have been taken by the state for purpose of profit.

Although the Nordic states have all made large investments in certain aspects of Sámi culture, most particularly in the Sámediggi, Sámerađđi, education in Sámi, and the acceptance of Sámi as an institutional language, the falsehood that the Swedish government pumps money into the Sámi communities is largely exaggerated in the far north. Roger Kvist (1994) notes that

material wealth among the Sámis is frequently attributed by non-Sámis as handouts of the Swedish government. He argues further that "ignorance about Saami legal rights leads to the widespread perception that the Saamis have privileges not shared by the general public" (p. 216). In accordance with the Sámi Act of 1995, Finland drafted into their constitution a provision which Sámi people "be ensured cultural autonomy within their Homeland area, in relation to their language and culture" (qtd. in Henriksen, 1999, p. 32). Norway, too, has a similar constitutional provision ensuring, "It is the obligation of the State authorities to create the conditions necessary for the Saami to protect and develop their language, their culture and their society" (qtd. in Henriksen, 1999, p. 37). Yet in the case of fishing rights, Finland and Norway retain the right to determine what is culturally Sámi, which itself is a gross attack on Sámi cultural sovereignty. As Thomas DuBois (2007) argues, part of this problem emanates from the historical orientalization of Sámi people. Reindeer herding was protected within Sámi culture since it was seen as exotic; since all Nordic people fished, it left little mark in the mental landscapes of outsiders when thinking of Sámi culture. Janos Trosten, a Sámi politician, accentuates this point:

> I think the president of the Sámi parliament should use more courageous methods. He should say to the ministers, now boys and girls, now listen to what I have to say. I have no time to listen to you now. I'm not going to support the laws that you make in the national parliament about my people. It's because your laws impoverish, corrupt and in the end destroy the Sámi culture, if they go on like this. In the end the Sámi culture will be nothing but wearing the traditional costumes gákti and joiking. (qtd. in Somby, 2003)

The north of Scandinavia has long been exploited for the institutions of the south. Because of the fragile tundra ecology, Sámi traditional economy is firmly rooted within ecologically sustainable practices. Industrial exploitation of a region takes a drastic toll upon

traditional Sámi economy and cultural practices. Iron ore in Kiruna,[5] hydroelectric dams at Álta,[6] fish farms in Norwegian fjords,[7] and radioactive winds from Chernobyl all pose greater threat to the Sámi than to the people they most benefit. Tourism, though less ecologically disastrous than Chernobyl or fish farms, is yet another industry based on the ecological and labor exploitation of the north. These two systems of environmental management struggle to coexist within the same territories. Elina Helander (2003) details these differences:

> I found that the Sámi people in the investigated area, within the municipality of Tana, have their own rules that fulfil their needs. Sámi have traditional rules for fishing, hunting, picking berries, and so forth, how to use the land and waters. The Sámi social space is filled with these rules. There is no space for Norwegian laws in that thinking. This makes the thing a bit problematic. (p. 28).

Helander refers to the informal rules of customary practice as customary law, underscoring the continued structure of Sámi society in spite of continued (and arguably escalated) Nordic colonial policies that threaten it.

Stein Mathisen (1993; 2004) and Kjell Olsen (2004) have expanded upon Helander's critique of tourism and colonization, showcasing through case studies how tourism and tenuous alliances with environmentalists have affected Sámi people in negative and adverse ways. An avenue to capital and attention is available to Sámi people who engage in self-orientalization, which serves to perpetuate damaging cultural stereotypes. However, because of power inequity, self-orientalization allows temporary empowerment within the dominant society, which is often seen as a necessary tool to advocate for cultural agency. Mathisen (2004) connects the "nature people" stereotype of Sámi people to the 18th century emergence of the natural sciences,

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[5] The Kiruna ore mines account for 90% of Swedish ore exports. See Olsson and Lewis 146.

[6] Hydroelectric power accounts for 25% of Norway's energy supply, 15% of Sweden's, 7.5% of Finland's. See Olsson and Lewis 147.

[7] Norwegian fish farms produce approximately 500,000 metric tons of salmon a year. See Staniford 87.

suggesting "the assertion that indigenous people interpret nature and how its resources should be used in accordance with conservationist principles has no real documentation, and may also be seen as a modern mythical construction" (p. 26).

In fact, many scholars have explored human relationships to the natural world in indigenous communities across the globe. Oscar Kawagley (2006) has pioneered in the reclamation of indigenous discourse, and his *A Yupiaq Worldview: A Pathway to Ecology and Spirit* looks at the interrelations between humans, animals, subsistence harvest, and religious life. David Pelly's *Sacred Hunt: A Portrait of the Relationship between Seals and Inuit* (2001) have adopted a multimodal and poetic narrative and visual technique to illustrate the profound and living relationship that exist between times, spaces, and realms. Integrating stories of myth, the historical past, and the present into aspects of material culture, folk belief, and customary practice, we can come to understand as readers of this poetic ethnography the multifaceted nexus of subsistence folkways. Dorothee Schreiber's article, "Our Wealth Sits on the Table: Food, Resistance, and Salmon Farming in Two First Nation Communities" (2002) calls attention to salmon as a way of life to Ahousaht and Namgis people on Vancouver Island, highlighting the distinction between commercial fishermen and harvest-fishermen. She points to Ahousaht fisherman Robert Foley, who eloquently states, "It's trying to manage ourselves within the resource instead of trying to manage the resource" (p. 372). Foley's words offer an effective pathway to understand traditional ecological management and reflect the complex and mutually formative interrelationships that form between the harvester and game on a global scale.

Among indigenous peoples in the Lake Superior Region, Thomas Vennum explores the practice of wild rice harvesting as a holistic practice. Vennum details the science of plant growth,

the practice of harvest, rice as a foodway, and the changing to ricing over time in *Wild Rice and the Ojibway People* (1988). James P. Leary's documentation of muskie spearing in "Alex Maulson, Winter Spearer" (1998) similarly details the complex cultural patterns that circulate about one subsistence practice in Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin. Larry Nesper, in "Ogitchida at Waswaaganing" (2004) and *The Walleye War* (2002), looks at the political and sociological aspects of spearfishing from a dialogic and symbolic perspective during the height of the spearfishing controversy in Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin. Nesper's work details the racially-charged conflicts as he important points about subsistence, law, racism, and classism. Nesper points out how the torch symbolizes the difference between Native and non-Native fishing, noting:

> The torch condensed a class difference. It opposed Indian people who worked at fishing at night during the spawn, maximizing their technological assistance using homemade lights and spears, to whites who hunted and fished during the day after the spawning season for sport, handicapping themselves with minimally adequate mass-produced equipment." (p. 231)

Indigenous harvesting practices also figure largely into collections of oral history, including Elizabeth M. Tornes' outstanding *Memories of Lac du Flambeau Elders* (2004), and Maude Kegg's *Portage Lake: Memories of an Ojibwe Childhood* (1991).

In Sápmi, much anthropological scholarship has focused primarily on the reindeer herding economy, a visible emblem of the "distinctiveness" of Sámi culture. Abundant scholarship has been written in criticism of the recent modernization in Sámi reindeer herding. Scott Williams provides an explication of herding practice and legislation in his "Tradition and Change in the Sub-Arctic: Sámi Reindeer Herding in the Modern Era" (2003). Williams extols the virtues of reindeer husbandry, claiming it fosters a symbiotic relationship between reindeer

and herder. Williams implies the moral supremacy and contemporary sensibility of herding's symbiosis over the cruel and predatory nature of hunters. In his research in Sápmi, Tim Ingold blamed snowmobiles for many of the Sámi herders' troubles, pejoratively terming it "predatory pastoralism" (Williams, 2003, p. 238). Such critical approaches are viewed as methodologically flawed today. Ingold himself has incorporated newer methodologies into his work in recent decades (2000; Ingold and Vergunst 2008).

Contemporary scholars have begun to advocate for a more holistic model of economy, ecology, and culture. Thomas DuBois (2007) explores the historical prejudices against allowing Sámi people autonomous fishing rights. And Elina Helander (Helander-Renvall 2010; Helander, Somby, and Boekraad 2003; Helander and Mustonen 2004) has also advocated for Sámi customary law to be considered in the regulation of local fishing rights. Jukka Pennanen ("Role of Women," 2000; *Jos ei ole Poropaimenia,* 2000) discussed the fluidity between economic systems in the Sámi homeland. In Kultima, for instance, people fished, picked cloudberries, herded reindeer, and kept cows or sheep, often changing their economic livelihoods in response to government programs and subsidies. This diverse economic basis also helped reduce famine, and possessed the ability to generate revenue based on different types of surpluses. Economic diversity, more than any single tradition, has defined the cultural tradition of Sámi people.

It is in the light of Stein Mathisen's assertion that sustainability and indigenous people have never been conclusively studied, that I write the following chapters. These chapters explore salmon fishing and sustainable resource management from a humanistic perspective. I wish to look beyond the "nature people" stereotype, to look in depth at how sustainability and cultural

practice are performed in Sápmi, and to look at how they differ from–and come into conflict with–the policies of the Nordic states.

Chapter 2

Fishing for Meaning on the Deatnu River: Harvesters, Anglers, and Negotiating Place[1]

In the popular and critically-acclaimed Finnish writer Antti Tuuri's collection of nonfiction, *Tenoa Soutamassa* (2008), Tuuri sets his sights on the Deatnu River. The Deatnu is a river of many names, as it bears many meanings for the different individuals who find their way to its shores. As a legendary tourist destination, the Deatnu's reputation precedes it for Tuuri, who only reluctantly accepts a friend's invitation to fish on a river known for long queues of fishermen that line its rocky shores, who wait in fifteen minute intervals, where they cast in hopes a hungry salmon might find its way onto their hooks. The majority of these tourists are Finns, avowed "meat fishermen" who "sport-fish" at higher rates than elsewhere in Europe (Burgess, 1996, p. 47). Tuuri first visits the Deatnu in the year 2000, returning every subsequent summer for nearly a decade, where he hires guides to row as he trolls spoons, lures, and flies for the large migratory salmon, which swim up the river to spawn during the summer months.

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[1] A version of this chapter will appear in the forthcoming volume of the Nordic Literary Cultures Series, entitled *Place* (Eds. Dan Ringgaard and Thomas DuBois) Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Sometimes compared to Ernest Hemingway in style and content, Tuuri's novels and short stories of war, fishing, and rural life in southern Pohjanmaa (Ostrobothnia) feature his minimalistic prose while exposing a quiet and underlying humor and a humanistic compassion for his imperfect characters. With his prior works, Tuuri's renderings of rural life have characterized and helped constitute the popular image of rural Finland within Finland. Tuuri has been repeatedly honored for these renderings, winning The Nordic Council's Literature Prize (1985) and the Finlandia Prize (1997). Indeed, Tuuri's representation of the Deatnu has gravity beyond that of one man's portrayal; it is immediately part of the national discourse, and it is by reputation alone differentiated in part from the numerous works of Deatnu travel writing that precede it. With this chapter, I will look at how Tuuri represents the Deatnu, salmon fishing, and local life in the watershed, and compare it to a sampling of local voices from the Deatnu, most notably local Sámi historian Aage Solbakk, a salmon fisherman, a hunter, and textbook author for Sámi schools, who has written extensively on Sámi riverbank culture. Though both authors clearly understand that salmon fishing is central to the Deatnu watershed, they partake in different processes as they simultaneously lift salmon from the water and into a boat.

Tuuri soon ends up taking to one guide in particular, Mauri Kaitsalo. Kaitsalo, an ethnically Finnish resident of Inari who is not local to the Deatnu, builds boats, guides for salmon in the summer, and cuts reindeer meat in the winter to earn his living. Tuuri is endlessly impressed with Kaitsalo's sharp understanding of local ecology, and Tuuri often mentions in passing one of Kaitsalo's particular habits as he guides. Whenever Kaitsalo passes near a *buođđu* fish dam, a traditional Sámi technique for catching salmon using a series of underwater

barricades to guide salmon into nets, he motors over the netting to look for fish. Tuuri (2008) writes:

> *Väylän reunassa oli lohipato ja siinä verkot. Mauri ajoi veneellä verkkorivin vierestä ja huusi, että padossa oli muutama titti. Kysyin, kenen pato se oli, Mauri sanoi sen kuuluvan Norjan puolen saamelaisille: se oli siis Norjan puolella valtakunan rajaa.* (p. 32)
>
> [At the edge of the channel there was a salmon dam, and inside it were nets. Mauri drove the boat away from the row of netting and yelled out that there were some diddi (1-3 kilogram salmon) in the dam. I asked whose dam it was. Mauri said it belonged to some Sámi people from the Norwegian side: it was therefore on the Norwegian side of the national border.]

Something of this particular image touches the complexities of the Deatnu as a place. It is a place of sportsmen and traditional Sámi dam-fishermen, a place of guides and tourists, a place where people catch salmon and where salmon catch people–or as Tuuri writes, "*Teno on omansa ottanut*" (p. 13) ["The Deatnu has taken you for its own."] The Deatnu is a place where worldviews collide, often with such violence that several locals report that tourists have pulled guns on them during conflicts over fishing spots. In Tuuri's convergence of local Sámi harvester, guide, and tourist fisherman, the Deatnu reveals itself as a place where people negotiate and vie for control over its meanings as a place.

Most people speak about the Deatnu as a place of two types of salmon fishermen, indigenous Sámi netters and tourist anglers, but the reality is more complex than this false dichotomy suggests. Anglers *and* netters cross ethnic lines, many both net and angle, and recreational and harvest fishing often exist even within even the same nuclear family or blur together conceptually in a single person's fishing. Even among those who net salmon (most of whom occasionally angle for salmon as well), there are stark divisions, differences, and rivalries between those who use fish dams, those who use drift nets, those who use stationary gill nets,

and those who seine. Concealed in Tuuri's image of Kaitsalo peering into the *buođđu* are centuries of conflict and collaboration over access to the salmon, all leading to the point in which the tourist industry exists today as–what Veikko Guttorm terms–a political "*kuuma peruna*" ["hot potato"] in conjunction with the traditional fishery (2003, p. 96). Since the minutia of fishing technique is an expressive performance of one's own relationship with their own environment, Tuuri's example physically manifests what happens when fishermen with different ecological values come into conflict. This process of co-constructing discourse occurs on individual, group, community, national, and even international levels to form narratives of place and practice, which in turn contextualize and legitimize policy decisions that affect future generations of fishermen.

Tuuri, the oblivious but well-meaning southern tourist, ends up missing the point of Kaitsalo's action. As Tuuri marvels over the sheer fact of netting, over whose dam it is, and especially over the issue of the national boundaries, Kaitsalo's interest is in what he can learn about the salmon run. As Kaitsalo fishes, Tuuri pontificates over the liminality of the northernmost border of the economic alliance of the European Union. Tuuri is the proverbial fish out of water on the Deatnu, and he does not demonstrate the same sorts of confidence in his skills as he does, for example, in his home waters in his collection of fishing stories *Perhokalastus Pohjanmaalla*. Tuuri remarks after catching one salmon that the fish was not really his own; it was his guide who placed the lure in front of the hungry salmon's mouth (Tuuri, 2008, p. 22). Tuuri even confesses not to know what a *diddi* is in spite of the fact that *diddi* and the loanword in Finnish, *tintti,* are well known local words and important concepts to all local salmon fishermen. Tuuri writes:

Minä arvelin kuulleeni kalan nimen väärin, soutajan sanoneen sitä tintiksi, mutta myöhemmin minulle selvisi, että alle kolmekiloista lohta tosiaan täällä sanottiin titiksi tai tiddiksi. Nimetyksen ovat Tenolle kai tuoneet englantilaiset herrasmieskalastajat 1800-luvulla. (2008, p. 14)

[I guessed that I had heard the fish's name wrong, that the rower had called it a "tintti," but later it became clear to me that a salmon that weighed less than three kilograms was actually called in these parts a 'titti' or 'tiddi.' The naming was perhaps brought to the Deatnu by English Gentlemen fishermen in the 1800s.]

Though Tuuri's confusion germinates from his lack of command of the North Sámi language, the proper *diddi* (which would be written as "titti" in Finish orthography) also is known to local Finnish speakers as a "tintti." The word *diddi*, having cognates in Skolt and Kildin Sámi languages, has no apparent connection to the English gentlemen tourists of the 1800s.

The most important reflection of Tuuri's misunderstanding of Kaitsalo's practice, however, is Tuuri's obsession with the peripheral nature of the Deatnu, and it is this phenomenon that perhaps lies at the heart of the distinction between the tourist's worldview and the local's. In essence, Tuuri erroneously believes the Deatnu to be a wilderness, a place of omphaloskeptic self-discovery in a vast and seemingly empty matrix. It is a place where he feels compelled to fish in order to justify his desire to recreate, a desire Kaitsalo later derides as a futile tourist fancy (2008, p. 80). But Tuuri knows that:

Mutta niin kuin nuoruuteni Pohjanmaalla olin hankkinut haulikon ja kantanut sitä mukanani metsäretkillä, koska metsissä ei voinut kulkea asiatta, ja mestästäminen oli asiallinen asia, Tenon rannoille ei tuntunut olevan oikeuttaa ajaa etelästä yli tuhat kilometriä, jos vain istuisi jokirannalla. (2008, p. 132)

[Just as in my youth in Pohjanmaa, I had gotten a shotgun and carried it with me on my excursions into the forest because in the forests one cannot simply walk around without a purpose, and hunting was an objective purpose. It does not seem like you have the right to drive all from the south to the shores of the Deatnu, over a thousand kilometers, if you are only going to sit on the riverbank.]

Especially on his earlier visits, Tuuri's focus frequently drifts towards the national borders as if to convince himself of the remoteness of this river system, noting details like, "*soutaja kuljetti venettä taitavasti joen yli vastarannan lähelle ja takaisin, lähelle Norjan rajaa, Euroopan unionin viimeistä reunaa*" (2008, p. 8) ["The rower steered the boat skillfully across the river toward the opposite shore and back again, near the Norwegian border, the final periphery of the European Union."] Even on his second trip to the Deatnu, Tuuri still is attuned to the region as a periphery, although his attitudes clearly reflect the shift from romanticizing the marginality of Njuorggán (Nuorgam) to increased awareness of the marketing of the northern periphery: "*juottiin kahvit ja syötiin marjapiirakat Suomen pohjoisimmaksi mainostetussa kahvilassa*" (2008, p. 30) ["we drank coffee and ate berry pies at a cafe advertised as Finland's northernmost cafe"]. Yet as Tuuri uses the Deatnu quietly to find himself, many tourists in the region unabashedly import their own worldviews with little regard to the differing perspectives of locals.

Tuuri describes one early and strange encounter in Njuorggán, Finland's northernmost village. Tuuri tells of one unnamed but esteemed member in Tuuri's fishing party who had prior arrangements to give a speech at the unveiling of a monument to recognize the northernmost point in the European Union. Tuuri writes:

> *Muutama kymmenen ihmistä oli kokoontunut lähelle Norjan rajaa, missä muistomerkki oli vielä peiteltynä. En jaksanut kuunnella puhetta, kävelin niin pitkälle, että se ei kuulunut ja seisoin katselemassa jokilaaksoa ja Norjan puoleisia korkeita törmiä. Sitten muistomerkiltä alkoi kuulua yksinlaulua; joku mies siellä lauloi Finlandiaa kovaa ja korkealta.*
>
> *Kävelin lähemmäksi ja näin, että laulaja oli Sakari Kuosmanen, joka oli asetellut matkaradion kivelle ja pannut taustakseen soimaan Finlandian kasetilta. Kuosmanen lauloi niin, että rantatöyrät mäikkyivät, sen jälkeen lähdettiin porukalla kahveille, jotka Nuorgamin kyläyhdistys tarjosi kääretortun kera.*

Kun palattiin Alakönkäälle, Kuosmanen istui jo nuotiopaikalla kalakavereittensa kanssa. Kuulin, että hän oli yhtenä omistajana Lohirannan lomakylässä Nuorgamista muutama kilometri Utsjoelle päin, ja kalasteli pitkiä aikoja kesäisin Tenolla; mukana oli muusikoita ja Kanadan kaukaloissa rikastuneita jääkiekkoilijoita. Sellaista joukkoa ei odottanut juuri Tenon varressa tapaavansa. (2008, p. 25-26)

[A few dozen people had gathered near the Norwegian border, where the monument was still waiting to be unveiled. I could not bear to listen to the speech, and I walked far enough away that I would not be able to hear it, and I stood watching the river valley and the Norwegian side's high banks. Then, from the monument I began to hear a solo; some man was there singing Finlandia loud and on high.

I walked closer and saw that the singer was Sakari Kuosmanen [a famous Finnish actor and singer], who had placed a portable radio on a rock and put on a cassette of Finlandia for accompaniment. Kuosmanen sang so that the steep banks resounded after which we left with the whole gang for coffee which the Nuorgam village association was serving with jellyrolls.

When we returned to Alaköngäs, Kuosmanen was already sitting around the campfire with his fishing buddies. I heard that he was one of the owners of the Lohiranta resort located a few kilometers out of Nuorgam in the direction of Utsjoki. And during the summer, he fished long hours in the Teno; he had with him musicians and some hockey players who had gotten rich in Canadian ice rinks. Such a party one would not have expected to meet on the Teno.]

The dedication in Njuorggán is filled with overtones of wealthy southerners, orchestral accompaniments to nationalistic hymns, and a carved stone monument in a region of many great boulders of much more import that mark historical events, etymological legends, and ancient sacred sites called *sieiddit.* Quite literally, the monument marks Njuorggán as a distant outpost of a powerful state that still controls its peripheries. It alleges that the Deatnu is not the center of its own world, of Sápmi, the traditional homeland to the Sámi people. Tuuri, however, recognizes that something grotesque permeates the way that celebrity exists in the wilds, which in Tuuri's mind ought to act as a naturalizer of civilization's artifices, such as the cult of celebrity, the self-indulgent pompousness and ceremonialism of speeches, and toys like a cassette player with

plastic casing. Tuuri is a different type of tourist than Kuosmanen's group, which aggressively attempts to import their own beliefs and ideologies to the Deatnu.

Tuuri distances himself from the entire spectacle, balking at first even to go to a part of Lapland known for hosting such a brash and ugly tourist culture:

> *Olin aina pitänyt lohen soutamista Tenolla herrojen huvina tai tosimiesten tapana karata kotoa iloiselle joupotteluviikolle jokirannoille. Olin kuullut monia kertomuksia siitä, kuinka kalastusvuoroa Tenolla joutui usein jonotamaan puoli yötä, kalastuspaikoista käydyistä tappeluistakin, ja vaikka kertomuksiin aina sisältyi karskien miesten herkkiä muistikuvia siitä, kuinka kahvivesi kehui nokisessa pannussa kepin varassa tulen yläpuolella yöttömän yön valossa, ja suuri joki vakkaana virtasi vieressä, mukana oli myös vaudikkaita kuvauksia vapaapäivistä, jolloin joelle ei menty, vaan viina virtasi, laulu raikkui ja taksit veivät poikia Skipagurran kuuluisaan motelliin. Tuntui, että Tenon kalastus ei ollut minun Lappiani.* (2008, p. 5)
>
> [I have always thought trolling for salmon on the Teno to be a gentleman's leisure or real-man's custom to escape the home for a fun drinking-week on the river bank. I had heard many stories about it, how people had to line up half the night for a turn to fish on the Teno, even about the fights that happened over the fishing spots. And even though the stories always contained stoic men's acute memories of how the coffee water boiled in the sooty pot on a stick above the fire in the light of the nightless night, and the great river steadily flowed by, there were also quick descriptions of free days, when you do not go to the river, but when the liquor flows, song rings out, and taxis take the boys to Skipagurra's famous motel. It seemed that Teno fishing was not *my* Lapland.]

Tuuri refers to the type of tourism we find in, for example, Olli Kauhanen's nonfiction collection, *Kuukkelin Kutsu.* Aside from the fishing, Kauhanen dwells coldly on tourist culture: "*Ivaloon jätämme toisenkin setelin*" (Kauhanen, 1994, p. 14) ["We left yet another bank note in Ivalo"] at regional tourist shops. He takes mental note of which towns have liquor stores, points out where the famous Norwegian author Hans Lindman resided during his fishing excursions, guffaws at locals who do not remember his face and feed him the same sunny lines twice about the year's salmon run, and celebrates men who drink themselves into decapacitating hangovers (Kauhanen, 1994, p. 14-15; p. 19-21, p. 39-40). As tourists who retreat from civilization's burden

of being civil, Kauhanen's party–like Tuuri's companions in Njuorggán–bring with them an intellectual occupation of the Deatnu. They desire to overrun its rocky shores and outnumber locals for their own purposes of sport angling–purposes that are backed by the state. In this regard, tourist fishing is very much a colonial act proceeding from Sápmi's colonial history, from the forced Sámi labor in the Nasafjäll silver mine in the Swedish village of Arjeplog in the late seventeenth century, to the usurpation and homesteading of Sámi-owned lands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from the threat and occasional practice of capital punishment for the practice of traditional religion or shamanism in the seventeenth century, to the forced Norwegianization policies and requirements that land-owners speak Norwegian of the twentieth century. Though this dedication of a monument is an act of state-driven colonial staging, the boulder should not obscure the more important colonial act: the intellectual occupation of the Deatnu by those tourists who desire to outnumber locals and overrun Sápmi to suit their own purposes under the egalitarian auspices of the commons.

Perhaps most revealing in Tuuri's image of the fish dam is his neglect to understand the salmon harvest from a local perspective. Local Sámi people have a rich and complex history with the Deatnu watershed. Not simply a name, in Sámi, *deatnu* (or *eatnu*)–the common noun–means a great river, or a river that flows into the sea and not simply into another river. Hans-Ragnar Mathissen terms the Deatnu *eanuid eadni* or "the mother of great rivers," in his poem of the same name (in Solbakk, 2003, p. 7-8). Utsjoki elder Ilmari Tapiola claims, "The river is important, it gives life" (Salin, Helander, and Mustonen, 2004, p. 292). The salmon fishing culture is so prevalent on the Deatnu that it has carved out pronounced economic and dialectical divisions between eastern and western North Sámi. Following the rise of extensive reindeer

herding in the 1600s, when tundra Sámi in particular greatly increased their reindeer herd sizes in response to state taxation, the Deatnu Sámi have been somewhat less affluent than their extensive-herding neighbors, who by the nature of the land can own larger numbers of reindeer in the mountains. Even the most common North Sámi term for reindeer herders, *badjeolbmot,* refers to the "upper people," a distinction which implicitly distinguishes mountain Sámi from Deatnu Sámi. The cultural division is so pronounced that it even has sparked intellectuals like Jacob Fellman to create a spurious history of Sámi culture condescending toward Sámi fishermen. Fellman believed, incorrectly, that Sámi fishermen were former herders who lost their reindeer and subsequently became poor (J. Helander, 1991, p. 51). Increasingly for outsiders, Sámi became known exclusively as reindeer herders even though reindeer herding always only represented a percentage of Sámi livelihood. Fishing has always been an equally important mainstay of the Sámi economy and culture, which is clear in most Sámi self-representations (DuBois, 2007). So significant was this belief, that to date, only Sámi people in Norway and Sweden are allowed to own reindeer, and even though ethnic Finns own reindeer in the most of Finland's herding districts, no Finns currently herd in Ohcejohka's (Finnish: Utsjoki) reindeer herding districts, Gáldoaivi (Kaldoaivvi) and Báišduottar (Paistunturi). Whereas economic exclusivity has been maintained for reindeer herders, outsiders have always desired easy access to Sápmi's other resources, like salmon, ptarmigan, berries, minerals, and timber. The strange fact of selective resource exclusivity hinges in large part on a disagreement over the nature of ownership itself–a disagreement fueled in part by the myth of wilderness.

Geographer Philip Burgess addresses this land-use conflict by asking rhetorically whose river the Deatnu is (1996, p. 77-86). We might further question the extent to which the

supposedly egalitarian concept of the wilderness commons is used to stake claim to the Deatnu's natural resources. Such questions remain unasked by Tuuri as he sits atop the salmon dam. Western cultures have for several centuries tended to quantify ownership of natural resources by the general notion of fenceability–the physical reshaping of unowned wilderness into owned property. This concept has ancient origins in walled cities and kingdoms but it was more fully realized in Europe during the eighteenth century as agricultural-commons were enclosed and privatized while deforestation and resource depletion caused states to exert even tighter management control over the forest commons. This concept lives on in contemporary agriculture and property rights in western Europe and North America, and even in the fenced-in salmon-farms in the Norwegian fjords, farms that have been shown to be devastating to wild salmon populations. In many contemporary Western cultures, it is seemingly incomprehensible that an animal can be owned unless it is enclosed, domesticated, or killed. Yet in Sámi tradition, the salmon–much like their reindeer counterparts–are owned without the prerequisite of enclosure.

For most of the tourists, there is a moment of transference of ownership in the salmon catch, a transition from the wild salmon owning itself to the fisherman owning the salmon. In this transition are the Edenic glimmers of Izaak Walton's paternalistic angler, whose agency to own the fish is bound to his moral authority. In Sámi tradition, however, the salmon are not simply the property of their captors. The salmon belong to the Sámi community, and the community safeguards against over-harvest and has customary practices that ensure a relatively equal distribution of the fish, for example specific rules involving net-placement, mesh size, and physical composition. According to Elina Helander, Niilas Somby, and Mardoeke Boekraad,

> The Sámi have preserved the river with its rich salmon stocks and left it intact for thousands of years. The traditional fishing methods used mostly nets, no fishing rods, and

> never depleted the fish stocks. Sámi had traditionally a high sense of self-control to keep the salmon stocks healthy. Sámi possessed and partly still possess considerable traditional ecological knowledge about the fish. . . . Some examples are: Sámi traditionally did rarely walk in the river and fished from boats not to disturb the spawning grounds, did not allow their children to fish little fish, did not fish at certain spots at all to protect the spawning grounds and divided the river very carefully amongst themselves to define who could fish where. No place was over-fished in that way. They did not fish at certain moon positions because the fish was bad considered to be of quality at those periods. (2003, p. 5)

According to Aage Solbakk, as one goes backwards in time, the system becomes even more egalitarian, and sources indicate that salmon was to be redistributed and shared among community members in the seventeenth century as determined by the *goahtegearrat* (a council of elders) who also negotiated harvesting disputes between *siidas* (*Joddu,* 2003, p. 12-14). Even today, Terje Tretnes stresses the sharing of salmon as important to Sámi harvest: "*Árbevirolaš nuohttun lea álu leamaš okttasaš bargu, gos máŋggat dálut servet. Bivddus leat buohkat fárus, mánát, eamidat, isidat, nuorat, maŋit, vivat, moarsit ja buohkat. Sálaš juogaduvvo buohkaide*" (2003, p. 67) ["Traditional seining has always been community work, where many households took part. Everyone was along for the ride when fishing, children, wives, husbands, teenagers, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, everybody. The catch is shared among everybody."] Although traditional Sámi communal ownership has changed in many ways, the belief that the salmon resource belongs to the local Sámi community is still very strong. The Deatnu as the commons for the Sámi people means, in contemporary contexts, the balancing of traditional fisheries with the desire to bring some degree of tourist revenue into the community, the most profitable form of fishing revenue since the rise in farmed fish led to the collapse of the Atlantic salmon market in the 1970s. Yet, according to Elina Helander, the imposition of state law and management policies on Sámi people, specifically through the banning and limiting of traditional

harvest techniques, is nothing short of a colonial act, which trumps the Sámi right to self-determination and has turned the honoring of Sámi customary law into a criminal act (2003, p. 28-29). In this regard, the Deatnu is a place being stolen from the Sámi people.

The Sámi perspective has often been misunderstood by tourists, who at best are uninterested and at worst angry over the fish dams as being visible signs of special Sámi salmon rights, which–as they are in strict accordance with Finland's game-management policies of localized netting rights–they clearly are not. The nets are held disproportionately accountable for low salmon runs, and tourists frequently call for their removal. Burgess (1996) notes that the sports fishing magazine, *Urheilukalastus* [Sport Fishing], editorialized in 1989 after a new fishing agreement was reached:

> Once again the professional whiners have ensured that the mention of sports fishing has been left out of the Fishing Agreement. Time has changed over the last 100 years and people cannot make a living from only fishing any more. It should be clear to all that the money from tourist fishing far outweighs the value of traditional fishing, it has been proven that people can get compensation from the increase in restrictions and one would think that that would end the complaining. (p. 78)

Burgess further comments:

> When it comes to the Deatnu, far more space in the regional media is given over to the gripes and grumbles of sports fishers than is to more relevant issues locally such as the estrangement of many locals from the river, that the feeling that Finnish sports fishers have taken over the river is quite a prevalent one and that the level of debate utilized by sports fishers tends to be so one dimensional–'we bring lots of money to the place, so locals should stop complaining,' selectively ignoring the fact that many in the gielda [municipality] feel that the salmon fishery simply does not bring enough money and that the river remains a common fishing waterway. (1996, p. 78)

The anger over fish dams and nets is palpable to Sámi people, who disagree with the states' assessments that traditional fishing decimates the salmon population. Terje Tretnes believes,

Eiseváldit leat mu mielas áddetmeahttunvuođain gieldán sámi árbevirolaš bivdinvugiid, ja dieđusge buorre veahkkin eiseválddide lea maid leamaš olbmuiid gaskkasaš gáđašvuohta

[The states in my opinion have incomprehensibly forbidden Sámi traditional fishing customs, and naturally the states have been helped by the jealousy between people]

and that "*mu oainnu mielde ii leat nuohttun miige vahágii*" (2003, p. 67) ["in my opinion, fishing with seines doesn't do any harm at all."] In fact, many Sámi people assert that fishing with nets is better for the ecosystem than angling. For many, including Ohcejohka fisherman and journalist Niilo Vuomajoki, seining is the healthiest way to catch fish for the ecosystem as well as the most humane. I interviewed Vuomajoki in his home in August 2010, and he explained:

Figure 2: Niilo Vuomajoki in gákti in Tibet. Photo: Niilo Vuomajoki

Tämä [nuottaus] on inhimellisin pyyntikonsti, koska jos verkolla pyydät, kalat menevät verkkojen läpi ja ovat siellä ja kituvat. Ja samalla jos ongilla pyyditään, niin meni simojen kanssa onkien kanssa ja kaikkien nähden, ne johtuu tummaa ja ne kuolee sitten siihen vestistöön.... Ja sitten tämä on myöskin ekologisen tapaa. Ja sitten ympäristöä. Joen rantoja ennen muita, että se esimerkiksi kuljet sitä pitkin poikki kala kankaita, että sitä onko paikka leiriytyä tuonne tänne. Se on ekologisesti paljon huomattavasti muita parempi. Sitten jos ajattelee lohen lisääntymistä, että lohi saa pitää rauhassa kutea. Kun kulkutetaan vaan tietyinä aikoina, ehkä alkukesästä loppukesästä, sitten lohi saa rauhassa kutea vaikka koko kesä. (2010)

[Seining is the most humane way to catch fish. When you fish with nets, the fish go through the netting and stay there and suffer. And it's the same with a rod and reel. They end up turning dark and they die in the waterways.... And then it's also an ecological and environmental thing. The river banks mostly, so that you walk [when angling], for

> example, along or through a heath, and you wonder, is there some good place to camp over here, or over there. Ecologically, it's noticeably better than fishing in other manners. And if you think about adding to the salmon population, the salmon gets to spawn in peace. And when this all happens in at a specified time, maybe early summer or late summer, then the salmon get pretty much the whole summer to spawn in peace.]

Beyond the protection of shoreline integrity and spawning habitat, other Sámi people believe that the netting is good for the river bottom. According to Andrey Judin, a Kola Sámi,

> I have a firm belief that it is important not to forbid catching fish using a net since while fishing with a net one can catch only large fish and clean the bottom of a river by mixing the bottom's soil. That's why there used to be a lot of fish where people were fishing with a net. We always fish in these places. Not a long time ago people tried to catch something in "Staraja Tonja." The result was deplorable. They've caught only some ruffs. (qtd. in Mustonen, 2004, p. 344)

In Judin's assessment, fishing actually improves the environment in spite of the fact that it extracts fish from the ecosystem. This perspective contrasts sharply with that of many scientists, who often aspire for "pure" ecosystems, in which human interaction is seen as a contaminant, and effective resource management limits human extraction of fish more than habitat-protection. Naturally, netters and anglers alike herald the virtues of their own technique's ecological sustainability. But this disagreement over the fishing technique dates back at least to the first decades of tourist fishing in Norway, when English gentlemen sportsmen began arriving in the 1830s in pursuit of salmon.

According to outdoor writers Tero Ronkainen and Matti Särömaa (1998) in their history of fishing on the Deatnu, *Tenon Tarinat,*

> *Kuitenkin jo 1870 luvulta lähtien alkoivat valitukset lehdistössä siitä, miten lohet pyydetään verkoilla ja padoilla jokisuusta ennen kuin ne ehtivät rehellisten urheilukalastajien ulottuville.* (p. 69)
>
> [Starting in the 1870s, however, the press began complaining that the salmon are caught with nets and dams in the mouth of the river before they even can get within reach of the honest fishermen.]

Henry Pottinger (1905), an English gentleman who led early fishing excursions to the Deatnu, wrote of declining salmon fishing on the nearby Álaheadju (Alta) River in 1857:

> At last, we got all on board and dropped eighteen miles down the river, passing on the way through an enormous fence of salmon-traps built up of stakes, stones, and wicker-baskets, and known in Norsk as 'stængsler,' in Lappish as 'stanga' or 'buoddo,' and by British anglers at Alten and elsewhere as 'stengles.' They stretched, as usual, in two wings slantwise all but right across the stream, leaving a small opening, which they told us at Alten the Kvæns who occupy the valley of that river were in the habit, unless carefully watched, of illegally closing, and thereby entirely blocking the upward passage of the salmon. (p. 167-68)

Because of the suspect belief imported to Norway, in large part by the English gentry sportsmen, that net fishing was destructive, net fishing for salmon on rivers was prohibited in Norway in 1858, although enforcement was minimal in Finnmark (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 79). As an international boundary, however, the Deatnu was spared from this ban. Instead, a unique series of arcane laws designed to assimilate Sámi people still define who has fishing rights. On the Norwegian side of the border, Norway first claimed and sold Sámi lands to homesteaders (1863), then they allowed only fluent Norwegian speakers to own land (1895), and finally forced landowners to cut at least 2000 kilograms of hay in order to fish (1911) (Lehtola, 2004, p. 44). These netting-restrictions were not vigorously enforced until the 1970s, and contemporary fishermen recall days when Sámi people were allowed to fish illegally according to Sámi customary law without fear of police intervention (Somby, 2003). At points, these laws were so complex and so frequently changing, it was difficult to fish legally on the Deatnu (Solbakk, 2003, p. 33-39).

Many of the attitudes of these nineteenth century English sportsmen eventually took greater root in Norwegian and, later, Finnish cultures. The impact of these English sportsmen had

incalculable impact on resource management and cultural attitudes towards fish in the Nordic states. The English sporting gentry began to venture for summertime fishing excursions on Norwegian rivers beginning in the 1830s. These early expeditions served as arctic safaris, in which a member of the gentry would travel with small parties and local guides to pursue trophy game and fish and to reify their own status at the top of social hierarchies by returning to perceived wilderness areas to re-create their own primordial nature as conqueror. The earliest of these salmon excursions began in Scotland in pursuit of salmon, and only in the 1830s did they cross the North Sea into Norway, and creep northward up the coast as they exhausted salmon stocks in river after river. One Scotsman, John Francis Campbell, led an expedition to the Deatnu in 1838, as did Edvard and Albert Brettle in the spring of 1850, Stephan Henry Thomas in 1855,

Figure 3: Drawing of Pottinger in *Flood, Fell and Forest*, 1905.

and–most importantly–Henry Pottinger in the summer of 1857 (Solbakk, 2007, p. 48-50). These early expeditions employed locals to guide and lodge them by giving them half of the catch of

salmon, the net ranging between 1000-2000 kilograms. Pottinger's subsequent publications in the "country gentleman's newspaper," *The Field* (1858) and in the book *Flood, Fell and Forest* (1905) popularized the Deatnu river and ushered in new era of fishing traditions in Sápmi.

Following the rise of English sport fishing in Norway, notable changes took place within decades. The technique of fly fishing was brought to these salmon rivers, and many Sámi and Norwegians alike began angling for fish in addition to netting them. Fly fishing is still a popular way to catch salmon on these rivers, and certain flies utilized in the mid-1800s are popular even today. The salmon on other rivers, like the Tornio, established a reputation for never biting on flies and kept sportsman far at bay (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 114). Riverboat size decreased on the Deatnu to accommodate the popularized trolling technique at the time seldom practiced in Western Europe (Solbakk, 2007, p. 138). Other techniques, like fishing with a spool and line without a rod, were popularized and faded into oblivion. Many Norwegians started switching from nets to fly fishing as early as the 1840s. Ronkainen and Särömaa (1998) write:

> *Norjalaiset oppivat jo 1840 luvun alkuun mennessä tekemään karkeita perhoja ja seisovat kuin haikarat jatkuvasti joen äärellä hyödyntäen jokaisen tilanteen. Jos eivät saa perhoillaan kalaa, pyytävät verkoilla ja padoilla. Joka tapauksessa he karkottavat lohet toimillaan ja kalat eivät olekaan tarjolla englantilaisille herrasmiehille, jotka tuhansien kilometrien päästä saapuvat "tieteellisesti" pyytämään lohta, kirjoitti eräs lohien loppumisesta huolestunut aikalainen.* (p. 14)
>
> [Norwegians were learning already during the early 1840s to make crude flies and stand like cranes continually on the banks of the river utilizing every position. If they did not get any fish with flies, then they would fish with nets and dams. In any event they diminished the salmon with their practices and the fish were not even available to the English gentlemen, who arrived from distances of thousands of kilometers to fish for salmon "scientifically," wrote one contemporary concerned about running out of salmon.]

Many Sámi people began to angle during the 1890s on the Deatnu to supplement fishing with nets and dams, and this angling traditionally was intended to harvest food, not to engage in sport.

Regardless, the divide between anglers and net fishermen was widening, fueled by the importation of sportsmanship to the Nordic countries, an apparent result of the English tourists and an industrializing economy. Ronkainen and Särömaa write, "*Siihen aikaan kirjoittajat uskoivat vakavasti, että maailman joet oli luotu vain englantilaisten urheilijoiden huvituksia varten. Muualta maailmasta kun ei vastaavaa urheiluhenkisten ihmisten rotua löytynyt*." (1998, p. 14) ["At that time, the writers sincerely believed that the rivers of the world were created only for the amusement of English sportsman. It was as if there was no equivalent breed of people to be found anywhere else in the world."] Many of these English tourists had obscenely high standards. Ronkainen and Särömaa write:

> *Niinpä F.E.L. Morrice, joka ystävänsä kanssa veneili ja käveli Tenon vartta maaselän yli Tornionjoelle vuonna 1880 mainitsi, että he eivät yrittäneet lohenkalastusta, koska pidettiin hyvin epäherrasmiesmäisenä ruveta lohestamaan vesillä, joita tiedettiin parin muun herrasmiehen kalastaneen jo vuosikaudet*. (1998, p. 79-80)
>
> [Indeed F.E.L. Morrice, who in spending time with a friend, walked the stem of the Deatnu over the high divide to the Tornio river in 1880, mentioned that they did not try salmon fishing because they regarded it as entirely ignoble to begin salmon fishing in waters that were known to have been fished by other gentlemen anglers earlier in the season.]

The ignominy of fishing in non-pristine waters is indeed curious, and it speaks to the necessity of shaping customary practice in order to ritualize human prehistory. As is the case with Robert Pogue Harrison's interpretation of the royal hunt in medieval England, a ritual to re-create the king's primordial nature as civilizer and conqueror of the land (1992, p. 74), for these English gentlemen anglers as well, every last detail actualizes the ritual submission of wilderness and its local inhabitants to the refined and cultured gentry. Without a unique conquest and subordination of at least a symbolically undiscovered country, the gentleman Morrice is cuckolded within these supposedly virgin lands. The disgust Morrice sees in the Tornio is the discovery that his virgin

bride was simply a befouled whore, thus delegitimizing his claim of primal agency over the lowly and tainted wilds.

These English sportsmen held a clear sense of entitlement to the salmon that permeates their journals and publications–a sense of entitlement that has subsequently shaped the culture of tourism on a global scale. Considering their local Sámi guides, without whom they would be largely helpless in fishing, navigation, and even setting up their tent, (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 46) to be like "large apes," (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 73, 83), they set strict rules for the behavior of their Sámi guides and would immediately fire any guide who dared fish alongside them or even take some of the salmon without explicit permission (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 113). Furthermore, the English tourists bemoaned the fact that they needed the guides at all, since the assistance diminished their own angling prowess:

> *Soutumenetelmä oli hyvin tehokas, mutta sen haittana oli urheilun kannalta se, että ensikertalainen tohelo ja kokenut ammattimies joutuivat samalle tasolle. Myös lohen tartuttaminen riippui yhtä paljon kalastajasta kuin soutajastakin.* (qtd in Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 14)
>
> [The rowing process was very productive, but the trouble with it stemmed from the sport. It was as if even the greenhorn bungler and the experienced professional ended up on the same level. Also the catching of salmon depended just as much on the rower as the fisherman.]

They further gripe:

> *Oppailla ei myöskään ole tarpeeksi urheiluhenkeä, jotta he ymmärtäisivät, kuinka seikkailunhalu korvaa monin verroin britille mahdolliset vastoinkäymiset ja vaikeudet.... Maiseman ei myöskään voi tutustua kuin kulkemalla hieman sivussa vakioreiteistä.* (qtd in Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 44)
>
> [The guides also didn't have enough of a sporting spirit, so they would understand how for a Brit the love of adventure more than compensates for the possible setbacks and difficulties…. One cannot get to know the landscape but by walking only a little to the sides of the beaten path.

English sportsman William Bilton in his work *Two Summers in Norway* (1840), bemoans the fact that Sámi people have taken to fly fishing and have become critical of his unrestricted access to their salmon resource:

> I was also grieved to find that not only had this newly-developed passion for Fly-fishing made them [Sámi locals] unusually jealous of their supposed rights on the River, but also that those who were not employed as boatmen had begun to grudge their more favoured neighbours that were enlisted in the Englishmen's service.... Consequently, all wanted to pull in my boat: and as I had no idea of being dictated to, in a matter on which my chance of sport so much depended, as the selection of my Boatmen, I had some trouble in silencing, I will not say satisfying, their conflicting claims. (p. 8)

Realizing that his own success was bound to the skills of his guide, Bilton required a talented local who was appropriately submissive and nonthreatening to his performance of sport fishing. Bilton outright rejects trolling as not appropriately sporting. He writes:

> An English Gentleman, who fished on the Namsen in 1838, killed many of his heaviest Salmon by trolling with a small fish. I have no doubt that in certain states of the water, this may be a successful method; but I confess, I like only to take my fish fairly with the fly, and rarely will employ any other mode, even for trout. Perhaps even the "red berry," or prepared Salmon roe, might prove as killing here, as it undoubtedly has been found elsewhere. But I look upon this method as but one degree removed above worm fishing, and but two degrees above netting; and totally unworthy of any fair Angler, who fishes for sport, not for the pot. (1840, p. 144)

Ronkainen and Särömaa clarify, "*Alun perin Lappiin kävelemään lähteneet herrasmiehemme ehtivät moittia Tenon kalastusta tylsäksi, koska siinä vain istuttiin lappalaisten soutamassa veneessä*" (1998, p. 80) ["Originally, these gentlemen who had left to walk to Lapland criticized Deatnu fishing as dull since the fisherman only sat in a boat rowed by a Sámi person"].

The English sportsmen needed to go to the wilderness, to ascetically survive in spite of it and to prove their own worth though the performance of ritual subjugation of the wilderness. To complete the ascetic experience, their journals documented their "suffering." Pottinger, for instance, complains incessantly of mosquitoes (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 96-103), and

his inability to bring a veritable mountain of luggage, including two beds with frames and legs along on the wilderness excursion (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 77-79). Others likened Norwegian bread to "roasted sawdust," (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 25) and pine for English flour (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 34). In fact, the gentlemen anglers even project gentrification onto the salmon themselves. Pottinger writes:

> *Alkuaikojen kalamies ei tarvinnut kun lihasvoimaa ja kestävyyttä, sillä lohelle kelpasi mikä kuvatus tahansa.... Nyt sivilisaation ja ylellisyyden levitessä myös useimmiten kalastetuille Norjan lohijoille, ovat nämäkin lohet oppineet skotti- ja irlantilaisten veljiensä tavoin herkkusuiksi, joille tuskin kelpaavat molempien pallonpuoliskojen lintumaailman harvinaisimmat herkut perhoiksi sidottuina.* (qtd. in Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 46-7)
>
> [In the beginning the fisherman did not need anything but muscle power and endurance for any presentation at all would suffice for the salmon. Now in the spreading of civilization and luxury has even reached the fisheries of Norway's salmon rivers, where the salmon have acquired the gourmet pallet of their Scottish and Irish brothers for whom the most exceptional delicacies of the avian world of both hemispheres being tied into a fly hardly suffices.]

Although the elitist importance of validating social hierarchy through fishing has been stripped from tourism by the time Finns begin to dominate the industry in the mid-twentieth century, Tuuri's fishing still performs the simulation of wilderness for his own ends and means. Scorning the hierarchy of celebrity and money, Tuuri performs his belief in social mobility, that anyone with desire, work ethic, independence, resourcefulness, and study can become a master fisherman.

On the Finnish side of the border, the situation was quite different. Unlike Norway, Finland only possessed a handful of quality salmon rivers, and the idea of fishing as sport and as leisure was slower to take root among ethnic Finns. The northern river systems on the Gulf of Bothnia (the Oulu, Kemi, and Tornio rivers) all hosted quality salmon habitat until they were

dammed in the 1950s. Finns caught salmon in ways similar to Sámi people: with driftnets, fish dams, seines, spears, and with hook and line.[2] When the Pohjolan Voima and Kemijoki power companies began erecting hydroelectric dams in the 1940s, they promised fish ladders, which they had no intention of ever constructing, thus effectively destroying the salmon stocks in these rivers.[3] Many of the Finns, who had relied upon the salmon fisheries in these river systems, were forced to travel north to the Deatnu to fish for salmon. Not needing guides, this new generation of tourists needed only roads to reach the Deatnu (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 242). The subsequent increase in tourist pressure on the Deatnu is at the heart of the fishing conflict today. While tourists point to fish dams as cause for declining salmon numbers, many ignore the continuing reality that hydroelectric dams from the 1940s still cause perennial strain on the Deatnu by bringing tourists like Antti Tuuri to Finland's northernmost periphery to fish. Local harvest and sustainable ecology–a key point of pride within Sámi identity as well as an important tool in advocating for self-determination–are severely strained by such industrial developments and environmental degradation in the south.

The current wave of tourists began in the 1950s, following the building of the road to Ohcejohka in 1957. By 1959, the tourist pressure had already begun to alarm the local population, and advocates lobbied for changes to resource management. In 1962, Karl Nickul writes, "The fishing in the river Tenojoki ... is worrying the people in Utsjoki. The regulations regarding fishing in this river are so recent that perhaps there has not been sufficient experience

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[2] For more detailed discussions of fishing techniques and regions in Finland, see U.T. Sirelius, *Suomalaisten Kalastus:I-III*, and, for information about Kemi river salmon fishing, see Kustaa Vilkuna, *Lohi: Kemijoen ja Sen Lähialueen Lohenkalastuksen Historia*

[3] For information about the Isohaara dam project on the Kemi river, see Kustaa Vilkuna, *Lohi: Kemijoen ja Sen Lähialueen Lohenkalastuksen Historia,* 380-95. For an anecdote about the Isohaara dam, see Olli Tiuraniemi, *Hurmilo Keijaa: Pakinoita Jokivarren Kansasta,* 15-16.

in their practical application." (qtd. in Burgess, 1996, 43) Finnish tourists flocked to the river in droves in the 1950s, and lacking a developed tourist industry, these fishermen lodged for the most part in tents and barns. Since then, the tourism industry has flourished, and numerous businesses have opened to meet the seasonal demands of the migratory fishermen. Development of fishing cottages has ravaged the Finnish shore much to the disgust of many local residents, and lodging for summertime fishing has become readily available. Toralf Henriksen, a Sámi resident of Leavvajohka (Levajok), expounds upon the development of the Finnish shore:

> *Mii han oaidnit daid ollu gámppáiid dahje hyhttáiid maid Suoma bealde leat huksen Deanu leahkáii, dat han ii leat deike gežiid. Dat lea miehtá buot Deatngoátte Suomabealde. Ja dat orru gal nu ahte Suoma bealde lea lágat nu ahte ii leat nu čielggas ahte man lahkai ja gosa ožžot hukset ja gosa eai. Dál oainnán ahte dán geasi leat vuot ollu ođđa hyhttát ihtán, maiddái vilttid vuolláii. Buot leat gaikkudan dan Deatngoátti. Ráhkadan dakkár issoras geainnuid dohko daid gámppáiid lusa ahte lea gaikkudan olles dan luonddu Deatngoáttes Suoma bealde. Go mii smiehttat dieid gámppáid birra boahtte áiggis. Man ollu daid gielddaid mat gullet dán čáhcadahkii. Man ollu dat bohtet olbmot deike dáid gámppáid oktavuođas deike dán Deanu čáhcadat ala, dat lea issoras.* (qtd. in Somby, 2003)
>
> [You can see all the cabins in the Finnish side of the river that are built. It's not good. They have occupied every place. The Finnish side is full with cabins. It seems that it's not so clear where and how one can build according to the Finnish law. Again this summer, I saw new cabins next to the mountains. They have dug holes in the ground and made broad roads all the way to the cabins. They have ruined our nature on the Finnish side of the river valley. When one thinks about those cabins one can imagine how many people from outside the river valley are going to come to the river in the future. It's terrifying.]

Beyond the environmental toll tourists place on the land, Henriksen expands about the colonial nature of external management:

> *Otná dilis mis báikegotte olbmuiin mis ii leat maid jietnadit, dat leat eiseválddit dážabealde ja Suomabealde geat mearridit. Eurohpálaš álbmot dat galget beassat dáppe hervvoštallat, min iežamet Deanu čácadaga alde. Gumme biktasiiguin dat han gállet guovdo Deanu, nu mo dá mis vulobealde. Dás gállet gitta Suomabealláii meastta, dat ii leat go 30 meter Suoma gáttis. Doppe čužžodit dážat guovdo Deanu. Mis han i leat vejolašvuohta das oppa oaggutge, illá beassat vuos oppa meattáge. Ahte jos mii dás*

> *Deanu-leagis ieža Sápmelaččat morit dál de dat orru gal mu mielas ahte dat árbevirolaš geavaheapmi orru gal loahpa guvluii mannamen dál. Dat han lea áibbas bilideamen min kultuvrra, čáhcadaga geavaheamis. Sámi kultuvrra han lea nohkamen jo. Mii han oaidnit mo eiseválddit vigget cakkadit Sámi árbevirolaš bivdinvugiid. Ja leahkkut turisttabivddu.* (qtd. in Somby, 2003)
>
> [Nowdays we locals, we have nothing to say. It's the official authorities in Norway and in Finland who make the rules. Those European people rule our river Deatnu. They wade in the middle of the river with their rubber clothes. Like we see here, they wade almost all the way to Finland. It's no more than 30 meters from Finland. There the Norwegians stand in the middle of the river. We can't fish there. It's almost impossible to go by, not to think about fishing there. So, if we Sámi in the Deatnu valley won't open our eyes, I think our ways of using water are going to disappear. This is ruining our culture, which is connected to the water of river Deatnu. The Sámi culture is coming to an end already. We see how the authorities try to prevent the Sámi from using their traditional fishing methods. Instead they bring the tourist fishing.]

Conceal it as one may–as an economic boost, as general access to the commons, or as the inevitable future of Sápmi–tourist angling is in fact a colonial act that absolves individuals, even like the well-meaning Tuuri, of the guilt of overtaking the region.

Others, however, are naturally less resistant to the emergence of the tourist economy and recognize the necessity of producing capital to survive in a modern European economy. Jouni Tapiola, a salmon fisherman on the Deatnu from the village of Kaava, believes:

> [A] few years after the war first sports fishermen arrived here. It was pioneering at first since they drove to Karigasniemi and were boated on the Teno from there on. When the road reached Utsjoki the number of tourists increased. But there was not enough accommodation or boats to rent here b[a]ck then. The local people started to rustle up cabins and they were success[ful], never empty. I think we were the first ones here in Kaava to offer tourist services. We still have the house, two rooms upstairs–they were our first tourist accommodation. Children slept in a storehouse! But they were satisfied with that.
>
> Today it's different We cannot afford to prohibit the salmon fishing too much. Today the fishing tourism is the most profitable fishing we have. If no tourists, no rented cabin, no one to row on the river and no boats rented. Sure there has been quarrel over this. Those with no tourist business and cabins are against it [tourism], of course. But I feel this has

> become somewhat more peaceful nowadays. (qtd. in Salin, Helander, and Mustonen, 2004, p. 298)

Ohcejohka resort owner, reindeer herder, and salmon fisherman, Petteri Valle expands upon this point:

> *Samalla kuitenkin täytyy muistaa se tosiasia että meille tuskin tulee mitään "massaturismia". Me emme sitä kaipaakaan, vaan myykäämme ja markkinoikaamme tätä ainutlaatuisena vaikeasti saavutettavana erämaakohteena. Tämä käytännössä tarkoittaisi sitä että tekisimme laadukkaita tuotteita ja ohjattuja kalastus- metsästys ja muita turisteille suunnattuja retkiä ja siten saataisiin hyvin maksavaa asiakaskuntaa, eli pienemmällä volyymilla samaan mitä tällä ns. massaturismilla. Näin saataisiin myös luotua uusia työpaikkoja tänne.* (qtd. in Olli Tuunainen, 2003, p. 92)
>
> [At the same time however, we need to remember that really we hardly get any sort of "mass tourism" here. Nor do we need it. But let us sell and market this place as a unique but hard to reach wilderness destination. This, in practice, would mean that we would make quality products and guided fishing, hunting, and other directed excursions for tourists. And then we could get a good paying customer base or with a smaller volume than the so-called mass tourism. That way we could also get to create some new jobs here.]

Advocating for increased Sámi management of the tourist industry, Valle fundamentally supposes a world where tourism does not inherently serve as a colonial act, but rather one in which the tourist can engage in limited and appropriate community participation in ways that do not undermine, damage, or threaten the integrity of the community. According to Valle, Sámi people have too little power in determining what tourism entails. Lacking economic opportunity in Ohcejohka, it creates an exodus of the youth and undermines traditional society and community stability. Valle believes that self-determined ethno-tourism is the key to empowering Sámi people with regard to the tourist industry that is currently driven by external interests.

The nuanced history of the Deatnu, however, is largely lost with regard to the popular one, the narrative of progress, in which the implacable forces modern development that

permanently and tragically alters the nature of a subsistence-based lifestyle. Even Finnish authors, Ronkainen and Särömaa profess:

> *Lapin ylhäisimmässä perukassa lohella on aina ollut oma erityisasemansa. Tenojoen rantamaita isännöivien talojen elämään jokea yläviertaan nousevat lohet ovat jättäneet oman vahvan leimansa. Nykyajan ihmisille lohi ja sen kalastus ei enää ole elämisen perusedellytys. Tenon rantoja verhoavien tuntureiden suojaisilla rinteillä asuvat ihmiset saavat elantonsa kunniallisista ammateista. Tenolle lähdetään lohen perään vain ajankulun ja intohimon, harrastuksen vuoksi. Toista se oli elämä Tenollakin vielä muutamia kymmeniä vuosia sitten. Lohi ohjasi jokivarren ihmisten elämää. Se oli ruokapöydän tärkein aines varhaisesta kesästä aina kaamoksen verhoamaan keskitalveen saakka. Perheet etsivät itselleen kesäajan asuinpaikan suuren lohijoen rannalta sellaisesta paikasta, josta lohen kalastaminen oli mahdollisimman luontevaa ja helppoa. Vuosisatoja vanhan käyttäytymisen jälkilaineita on vieläkin havaittavissa.* (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 176-77)
>
> [In Lapland's most elite circles, the salmon has always had its own special status. The Deatnu's salmon, which swim upstream have left their own strong mark on the life of the riverside houses. To contemporary people, the salmon and salmon fishing are no longer necessary to live. On the sheltered and tundra-shadowed slopes of the Deatnu, the residents make their livelihood by honorable work. People go to the Deatnu in chase of salmon only as a pastime, passion, and hobby. Life was different on the Deatnu even a few decades ago. The salmon controlled the life of the river folk. It was the most important ingredient for the dinner table from early summer until at least midwinter. Families sought out places to live in the summer time on the banks of the great salmon river's shores, those places where the salmon fishing was natural and as easy as possible. The remnants of centuries' old practices are still perceivable.]

A powerful and poetic narrative, it is convenient for tourist writers to see fish dams and local salmon consumption as a dying remnant of the old traditional culture. The myth of progress is so powerful that it permeates Finnish and Norwegian understanding of the Deatnu as a self-serving narrative that rationalizes the river's exploitation. Before the building of the road connecting Sámi villages in the 1950s, the Deatnu was also a principal mode of transportation. So significant was the boating culture of the Deatnu, that according to Phillip Burgess:

> There was a bizarre ritual upon the completion of the last stretch [of road] on the Finnish side [in the early 1980s], in which the then President of Finland [Mauno Koivisto] sawed

> a Deatnu river boat in half…. Thereafter, the famed Deatnu river boat was no longer the sole form of transport on or across the river while the river was running. The trip from Ohcejohka to Gáregasnjárga to collect the post was abandoned once the road was completed. (Burgess, 1996, p. 43)

Smiling and sawing away, Koivisto celebrates the supposed "progress" he himself has helped bring to the north. Oblivious to the colonial overtones and the nearby struggles with the Alta Dam, Koivisto believes the bridge will offer better Sámi access to European commerce, and more access for Finland to exploit the northern resources.

Yet, predictably, this trope is only present in the writings of non-Sámi people. For locals, the Deatnu as a place represents far more than just the waterway, but rather the entire complex of life within the watershed. Local Historian Aage Solbakk's demonstrates this principle in his work, *Čáhcegáttesámiid Kultuvra* [Riverbank Sámi Culture] (2007), a brilliantly structured work that balances ethnography with an anthology, in which he suggests that Deatnu Sámi culture is a complex that emerges from its seasonal and environmental harvesting practices through historical memory. Solbakk prefaces his book with a traditional Sámi *luohti* (commonly called a *joik)*–a distinctive type of musical genre and powerful symbol of Sámi identity–from Otto Donner's book *Lappalaisia Lauluja* (1876):

> *Luossa vuodjá čázi botni miel*
> *dat gievrras guolli ja divrras guolli*
> *Mii manná*
> *Jos livččii čađa eatnan deatnu*
> *De ohpit son manná gitta geahčái*
> *Ja čáhpot nu sakka*
> *Ja de šaddá nu ahte*
> *Ii eambbo bora ge šat*
> *Ii heađis ge*
> *Ja máhccá son fas vuolás*
> *Gos lea boahtán*
> *Ábi viidodagas*

Gos leat ollu luosat
Ja fas šaddá seamma šealgat
Mo ovdal lei
Go áhpásis fas boahtá
Go silddiid oažžu borrat
De fas buoidu
Ja šaddá seamma láhkai
Mo ovdal lei (Solbakk, 2007, p. 10-11)

[The salmon swims along the bottom of the water
the powerful fish and the precious fish,
which goes
as if the great river
guides it through the land to the source
and its color tarnishes so
and it happens that
it can no longer eat
not even in distress
and then he returns again downwards
from where he has come
from the expanses of the sea
where there are many salmon
and again he changes, becoming just as bright
as he was before
when he again comes to his sea
when he gets to eat herring
so he again gets fatter
and becomes the same
as he was before.]

Stressing the cyclical nature of the salmon's life, this salmon *luohti* highlights the importance of knowing the salmon, its desires, its struggles, and its pleasures. The salmon is given agency and identity. Nowhere in the *luohti* is the catching of salmon, nor any sort of hierarchical relationship with the anthropocentric universe. Instead, it is the nature of the salmon that defines the physical space in which humans reside. Solbakk relates another story, told by Johan Balke, a minister in Kárášjohka from 1880–1888:

> *Lei čakčat, go luossa lei jo geargan gođđamis ja lei njiedjan deatnoráigge vulos guhkás. De gávnnai sáiddi bajás vuodjamin. Luossa jearrá:*
> *–Gosa don vulget?*
> *–Johkii mun vulgen, celkkii sáidi.*
> *–Don johkii vuoget? Mainna hámiin don vulget johkii?*
> *–Gal mus lea čáppa hápmi, celkkii sáidi. Šelges siidu mus lea maiddái.*
> *–Ii dus leat mihkkige buiddiid, celkkii luossa.*
> *– Mus lea buoidi vuoivasis, velkkii sáidi.*
> *–Hei, hei doinna buiddiin johkkii. Eanebuš buoidi mus lea cuohpas dalle go mŧn vulgen bajás, muhto geahča makkár hápmi mus dál lea!*
> *Saidi jurddašišgođii: –Gal ii veaje mu vuoivvasbuoidi ollet johkagierragii.*
> *De jorggihii ruoktot ii ge vuolgán šat goassige eambbo.*
> *Dat báiki gos soai gávnnadeigga gohčoduvvo ain dál ge Sáidenjavvin, aiddo Sieiddá bokte.* (Solbakk, 2007, p.124)
>
> (It was autumn when the salmon had already finished spawning and had descended a long ways down through the Deatnu. There it found a coalfish swimming upstream. The salmon asked:
> –Where are you off too?
> –I’m going to the river, said the coalfish.
> –*You’re* going to the river? How will you look, as you go up the river?
> –Well, I have a beautiful appearance, said the coalfish. –I even have a shimmering side.
> –But you don’t have any fat at all, said the salmon.
> –I have fat in my liver, said the coalfish.
> –Ha! With that kind of fat, you’ll get upstream!? I had more fat in my meat before I set off upstream, but look at how I’m looking now!
> The coalfish began to think: –Yes, my liver fat won’t be enough to get me to the river’s headwaters.
> Then it turned back, and didn’t try to go further upstream ever again.
> That place where they met is called even now Sáidenjavvi [Coalfish Riffles], right through Sieidiguoika [Sieidi Rapids].)

Balke’s story, still told to this day in many variants, is not simply an etiological legend. It presents the differences in strength, lifecycle, biology, and habitat for these two different fish. It distinguishes between two types of rapids, the weaker *njavvi* and the more powerful *guoika*, and encodes useful ecological and cultural information into language. And, most importantly, it records information and knowledge into the physical landscape. This knowledge is the basis of

the Sámi sense of place and sense of self. To know the ecology is to know one's place, which in turn is to know one's self.

For Sámi anglers, much like many meat fishermen, the competition and sport of fishing is almost comical. In an interview with an Ohcejohka resident, Niilo Vuomajoki (2010), I asked who some of the best fishermen he knew were, he laughed and retorted:

> *Minusta näyttää olevan näin että, tuota, parhaita kalamiehiä haluavat vain suomalaiset. Ja vain he vain keskenään kilpailevat, kuka on paras. Saamelaiset eivät osallustu tähän kilpailuun. Me kilpaillaan jossakin. Ehkä kuka osaa nuotan parhaitten heittää. Tai kuka tuntee parhaitten alueen. Tai, tuota, kuka osaa siirtää tietoa nuoremmille sukupolvelle. Minulle annettiin tietyn alueen. Tietyn alueen tunnen hyvin ja osaan parhaitten hyvin kalastaa siellä ... Isoisäni halusi niin kuin semmoisen laulun tehdä minulle, että minä olen se, joka se Ártnit-järven poika, joka soutelen siellä, rantojen pitkin ja koirani juoksee rantaa pitkin. [...] Mu áddja juoigga mus: "Ja de suhkalii Ártnetjár´goldi ja Luŋke vel´ ruohttá ridu mieldi ... heijjo go loillágo loillago loillá´á." [...] Ja kun minä siellä saalistan oikein minä kaivaan niin kuin kultaa. Kaivaan sieltä kalan saalista.*
>
> [I think it seems that only Finns want to be the best fishermen. It's only them who are competing over who is the best. Sámi people don't participate in this competition. We compete in different ways, as in who best throws a seine, or who knows an area the best, or who best can teach the younger generations.... I was given an already known area. This familiar area I know well, and I know how to fish this area as well as anyone.... My grandfather wanted to make a *luohti* for me so that I could be sort of an "Ártnit-lake"-boy, one who would row there, along the shores and my dog would run along the banks. My grandfather would joik me: "And then he set off rowing, my Ártnit-lake lad, and Luŋke still runs along the shore, *heijjo go loillágo loillago loillá´á."* And then I would get my harvest there just like I was digging for gold. I would dig there for my catch of fish.]

Vuomajoki's metaphor of digging up golden harvests of fish from the earth contrasts sharply with the fishing of Pottinger or Tuuri. Analogously, few ever speak of competitive tomato picking, of blueberry gathering legitimizing the primordial social agency of the picker, or of the "sport" of digging potatoes. For Vuomajoki, fishing means deeply and intimately knowing the fish, the land, and the waterways of the Deatnu. And this knowing of one's own place is an act of Sámi identity.

Figure 4: Niilo Vuomajoki and the author with Vuomajoki's seine.

Solbakk reiterates the importance of holistically knowing the salmon and the place of the salmon in *Čáhcegáttesámiid Kultuvra* (2007) by taking an interdisciplinary approach to the salmon as a way to understand the Deatnu Sámi as a people. He details the technical nuances of how salmon are dammed, netted, angled, and trolled for. He describes the arrival of the English tourists and the subsequent tightening of fishing rights for Sámi people over the past 150 years. He details the biology of salmon and the science behind salmon runs and ecological threats to Atlantic salmon. He tells of how and when salmon are traditionally eaten and preserved on the Deatnu. He describes the material culture surrounding salmon fishing from boat building, to net

mending and constructing the legs for the fish dam. Beyond these, he also illustrates that Deatnu as a place includes the reindeer forests and tundras, the game in its forests, and the cloudberries in its marshes–these other aspects of the fisherman's life that interact with the salmon fishing through seasonal folklife. Solbakk also tells about local legends who once traveled the river for a living, delivering the mail and making the 400 kilometer trip between Ohcejohka and Gáregasnjárga (Finnish: Karigasniemi) twice a week. He also includes the spiritual landscape of the region: *sieidi* stones [a type of local deity], lessons in the pre-Christian religion of Sámi people, and illustrations of an historic salmon-fishing *noaidi* [shamanic] drum head. Solbakk's narrative of the salmon culture does not represent place as a matrix in which people reflect themselves; rather its complex of sciences, histories, and geographies are that which is reflected in people.

For Solbakk, salmon fishing is a component of a broader system of holistic land use, connected to both physical space and the cyclical movements of the seasons. The salmon still are an important part of local diet. The runs mark space, measure time, and define work schedules. It is symbolic of Sámi identity, history, resourcefulness, and adaptability as well as of the locals' deep and sustainable relationship with their ecology. At once fishing is economic, social, political, ecological, historical, cultural, and spiritual, and the outsider pigeonholing of fishing as only one of these components misses its significance to locals.[4] The logic of harvesting one's own fish instead of purchasing them is nearly irreconcilable with, if not the opposite of, the logic of consumer-based tourism. Whereas outsiders see the remnants of an arcane culture and the fatalistic narrative of human progress, for Sámi people salmon fishing is a living, holistic, and

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[4] Elina Helander discusses briefly the spiritual connection Sámi people have to salmon, and argues that components of the animistic pre-Christian religious practices are still apparent today. See Helander, 2003, p. 28.

ongoing (albeit changing) performance of sustainable human integration into the ecosystem. Although opponents to traditional fishing point to the unprofitability of selling wild salmon as meat and to the fact that Sámi people no longer "need" to catch salmon to survive, such logic ultimately is self-serving and legitimizes the appropriation of the salmon resource. For Solbakk, salmon fishing is much more than the lifting of salmon from the water; rather, people and place are inseparable concepts, and the land which outsiders believe to be vast wilderness is infused with traditional knowledge and innumerable markers of personal and communal history, for example Sáidenjavvi and Sieidiguoika. But such Sámi monuments to place and history are largely invisible to the tourist's eye.

This deep structural difference in understanding the nature of the salmon harvest permeates even the nature of the way people discuss salmon fishing. Tuuri (2008) and Kauhanen (1994), for example, discuss in exhaustive detail every motion of the salmon thus filling page upon page as they heighten the dramatic importance of the "playing" of the fish. In Sámi stories, for example Konrad Nielsen and Samuel Norvang's "Goargŋun, Oaggun ja Káfestallan," ["Poling, Angling, and Coffee Drinking"] an account, which Solbakk anthologizes (2003), the discussions while working as fishermen are decentered from the actual catching of fish. The two characters, one teaching the other how to manage the boat for fishing, discuss in detail poling and rowing in rapids during different weather conditions and the physical constitution of the river:

> *–Hiljit dal galggat goargŋut, amame šieđđaluvvat vuos álggus.*
> *–Amma han lea váivi goargŋut dáidda bahás guoikkaide?*
> *–Váivi dat gal lea, muhto Kárášjohka lea vel váivvit goargŋut; das dat njearit leat nu garras goargŋut, ja čuoibmi ii bisán oppa bodnái ge. Dán jogas leat gal bahát guoikkat go Kárášjogas, muhto das leat geađgesuojit, maid vuolle beassá goargŋut, ja das*

> *savvonat ge; muhto Kárášjogas ii leat dappal ge, oval go Ráiteoaivvis bajás.* (qtd. in Solbakk, 2003, p. 35)
>
> [–You need to pole slowly now, otherwise you'll lose your breathe even at the beginning.
> –I wonder if there will be some problems poling into those bad rapids.
> –Oh yes, there will be some problems, but the Kárášjohka river, now that's difficult to pole; the shallow rapids in it are so hard to pole, and the pole won't even stick to the bottom. In this river there are bad rapids like in Kárášjohka, but in this one there are some rocks, on which one can pole, and there are some calm stretches too; but in the Kárášjohka river there aren't any large pools before you get up to Ráiteoaivi.]

They chat about when to take a coffee break, and they make a fire to prepare coffee while discussing whether the wood is dry enough to make a good fire:

> Nubbi dal muoraiguin boahtá.
> *–Gáttát go leat dan mađe goikásat daid muoraid, ahte dola ožžo?*
> *–Muoraid dáfus gal oččošeimme dola, muhto go beassi it buktán!*
> *–In mun fuomášan beassi buktit; –gal mun finan lokkasteamen.* (qtd. in Solbakk, 2003, p. 38)
>
> [*The second one now comes with some wood.*
> –Do you think that this wood is dry enough that we'll be able to have a fire?
> –The wood will be good enough to burn, but you didn't bring any birch bark!
> –I didn't think to bring any birch bark; –Well, I'll go cut some.]

And when they do eventually catch a salmon, the experienced rower directs the other to shore, and the fish is landed simply with the phrase: "*De roahkasta ja oažžu dan guoli gitta*" (qtd. in Solbakk, 2003, p. 41) ["Then it was hooked and they got the fish."] The salmon is divided and half is cooked over a fire for dinner, and one asks the other, "*Gáddat go eallit munno oaggut káfestalaheahttá?*" ["Do you think we could fish without stopping for coffee?"] The other replies, "*In de gádde*" (qtd. in Solbakk, 2003, p. 42) ["I don't think so."] It is of no small coincidence that the fieldwork I collected in the Upper Midwest has similarly deemphasized the dramatization of the moments surrounding the kill. What surrounds the harvest dwarfs those few seconds in importance.

Nielsen and Norvang recreate the instructive process by which Sámi traditional knowledge is passed on, whether learning about the character of a river, the practicalities of kindling a fire, or the behavior for catching salmon in the proper manner. In part, they highlight the fact that salmon fishing should be regarded not as ritual but as work, consistent with the traditional Sámi belief that one should go to the woods and waters only to conduct specific work (Helander, 2004, p. 303). In part, the entire process is displaced from what Western academics consider an anthropocentric outlook on ecology. In other words, when Sámi people talk about fishing, the fisherman's role is to know the river, to know the salmon, to know the weather, and not to use these fish as a measurement of one's own prowess and status. This act of silencing anthropocentric agency and of quieting oneself and listening to what the land is saying is a recurrent theme in Sámi traditional harvest. Sámi people occasionally refer to this as the "Sámi lifestyle," and it occurs within many forms of narratives, from taking hapless and chatty outsiders in the reindeer forest to watching city Sámi fail to walk successfully on top of snow crusts because they cannot place their feet as the snow requires. This theme of being shaped by the land also recurs throughout Sámi literature. Paulus Utsi writes: "Like a crooked birch tree/at the edge of the tundra/my life too/is bent by the wind" (qtd. in Gaski, *Shadow*, 1995, p. 115). Or, in *The Sun, My Father (Poem 141)*, Nils Aslak Valkeapää's poetry and artwork shows a literal refigurement of his body in accordance to the nature he lives in: "I walk on these stones / the rocky ground/my feet shaped by these stones" (trans. in Gaski, 1997, p. 115). In Sápmi, the act of listening to the river, to the salmon, to the weather is an essential and important act for the successful fisherman. I mean this quite literally, and with no neo-romantic overtones whatsoever. Visiting the Sámi village of Njeä´llem (Nellim) in March 2010, I struck up a conversation about

the northern lights with a local woodworker who kindly bought me a drink, and insisted that the birchwood that grew above the arctic circle was the finest wood in the world. The cold winters made it strong, straight-grained, smooth to the touch, and resistant to warp. Suddenly, he struck a solemn tone and confided with me, "*Jos kävisit ulkona talvella, kun ilma on helvetin kylmää, revontulit puhuvat sinulle. Jos kuuntelet*" "[If you go outside in the winter, when the weather is damn cold, the northern lights speak to you. If you listen.]" I asked what they say. He told me I needed to go out and listen for myself.

For the local Sámi residents, identity and history are bound to the minutia of the land. During a fishing excursion with an Ohcejohka resident, reindeer herder, and school teacher Niilo Kalevi Länsman, he told me an etiological story of a jealous brother who rolled a boulder down a cliff to disturb his brother's fishing. He pointed out a pile of rocks that were the hearth of a *goahti* ancient enough that nobody even remembered even its ruins being visible in a forest that has grown up and obscured a place where hay was formerly cut for reindeer. He indicated a good place to look for resting salmon and an impassable rapids. He explained how to get to a distant place where the Sámi patriarch Kadja-Nilla once employed poor neighbors–for

Figure 5: Niilo Kalevi Länsman fishing for salmon on the Geavvu (Kevo) River.

the price of one reindeer per worker–to build a stone wall for herding, and then presented the place in the river where Kadja-Nilla liked to fish. As in Solbakk's anthologizing, Länsman represents place in the unspoken relationships between these stories, the gaps of information in which interactive and interpretive knowledge lies. Knowledge, history, and identity are encoded in the land (and not in the carved inscription on historical markers), and a traditional subsistence practice–like salmon fishing–allows the transmission and reinterpretation of this knowledge.

Solbakk purposefully chooses ethnography and anthologizing to represent his home place, and the salmon fishing within it because it is bigger than any one single narrative can tell. His narrative technique is anthology: it is pluralistic, postmodern, and de-centered pastiche. Simulating oral genres (which would, for instance, occur during a fishing excursion) and the informal transmission of knowledge as an interpretive process, Solbakk demonstrates effective internal management of the fishery as he dispels the wilderness and progress myths rampant in the dominant cultures about his home. In doing so, he demythologizes Tuuri's claims of bounteous empty space and the romantic self-awakening caused by traversing to the world's peripheries, preconceptions brought to the Deatnu as early as the first English gentlemen reached its shores. For Sámi people, fishing, reindeer herding, hunting, and gathering edible plants and berries are a part of the ebb and flow of a cyclical and very modern life. Sámi indigenous identity is linked explicitly to this deep knowledge of place, the center of the Sámi people's own world, and the nexus in which the community exists and maintains relationships through. The eco-centric story Solbakk relates to his readers is larger than one that any one person can tell. It is not the story of individuals, the convention of modern literature. It is the story of the place that lies at the heart of Sámi identity and cultural preservation.

In contrast, Antti Tuuri fishes the Deatnu for salmon not knowing to look for the fish that lie beneath him in the fish dam. Tuuri does not need to defend his fishing practice by continually demonstrating its authenticity, market value, and sustainable merits; these burdens fall on Sámi people alone. He likely does not know much of the importation of sportsmanship to the Deatnu, and the subsequent impact on fishing techniques and fishing cultures in Finland following Finland's urbanization in the 1970s. He does not consider why he stops using an untalkative Sámi guide and opts for a Finnish guide, Kaitsalo, who is not considered local. He does not ruminate over the conflicted feelings locals have towards tourist fishing, nor does he mention the problems of the hydroelectric dams further south. He does not stop to question why he opts out of fishing his own local waters for the sweeter fruits of the Deatnu and how this mentality affects the world on a global scale. He even struggles to understand why he is on the Deatnu: to sit upon a riverbank? to harvest salmon meat? to fight with a mighty fish? What myths lie at the heart of Tuuri's solitary adventure as he looks at the river, the tundras, and the dwarf birch forests, not seeing the forest for the trees? Perhaps Tuuri only sees himself, as if the magnitude of the wilderness reflects the enormity of the individual that inhabits it.

Chapter 3

Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Invasive Species and Constructing Stability in Nature

It was in 2006, when Sámi reindeer herders in Ohcejohka (Utsjoki), Finland, first began talking about the winter moth, a generally nondescript insect in appearance, but of fierce reputation. The winter moth has long been abundant throughout much of Europe, its name generating from its talent to withstand the cool temperatures of a Mediterranean winter. The moth first began generating attention in the 1930s, when it was targeted as an invasive species in Nova Scotia. It soon established a reputation in these new environments for its abilities to devour much of a forest's foliage or orchard's fruits, leaving unsightly scablands in its wake. Sápmi, however, has long been spared from the effects of the moth, since wintertime temperatures below -35 C cause the moth's eggs to perish. Yet, after a series of unseasonably warm winters in the arctic in the 2000s, triggered by global warming, the moth encroached northward along the coasts, and deeper into the heart of reindeer-herding country.

According to Sámi reindeer herder Niilo Kalevi Länsman (2010), “The first thing researchers were saying was that it might be a catastrophe.” A media firestorm ensued, and the predictions were dire about the moth-pocalypse. Many outsiders believed that the moths, which fed voraciously upon birch leaves, would decimate the birch groves of Sápmi and undermine a principal food source for reindeer, leading to widespread reindeer famine, dying reindeer, and possibly an end to the era of modern reindeer herding. Such invasive moth species, however, are not new in Sápmi. In 1967, the tundra moth invaded an area between Inari and Utsjoki, eating 90% of the birch foliage of Ylä-Lappi (about 5,000 km^2), which severely and suddenly decimated the reindeer population (Santonen, 2011, p. 6; Ilmasto-opas). Sámi reindeer herder Nils Länsman (2010), a former

Figure 1: Niilo Kalevi Länsman on steering a handmade boat.

Figure 2: Nils Länsman studying a map of moth damage.

boazoisit, lost his entire herd of reindeer during the invasion of 1967, which died of famine: "*Se oli kyllä paha. Se oli niin kuin kuumaisema*" ["It was really bad. It was like a moonscape"].

Unlike the mountainous terrain of Sweden and Norway, Utsjoki is filled with large rolling tundra fells, dominated by tundra heaths and tundra birch. These birch are slow growing, and are potent and memorable environmental emblems for those who both dwell within and pass through the region. And birch leaves are an important food source for

Figure 3: The open birch forests around Ohcejohka.

Figure 4: Birch leaves drying on Antti Länsman's childhood home.

reindeer. In Utsjoki, these birch leaves are often cut and dried for preservation, in order to feed reindeer in April, when the snows form a hard crust called *cuoŋo*, strong enough to walk upon, which hinders reindeer from digging. Feeding provides a degree of security in this difficult time of the year, helping to ensure a healthy calving season in May.

Although Sámi herders vigilantly watched the moth invasion, few bought into the hype surrounding the winter moth. Most accepted, as is the norm within Sámi culture, that humans are part of the environment and cannot simply control nature itself, but instead must continually adapt to its ever-changing challenges. Asko Länsman (2010) explains, “Reindeer know how to adapt to find food. They know what they’re doing. You can’t control nature. People don’t know what’s best for nature. Nature takes care of its own, and is its own best guide.” Others, like Niilo Kalevi Länsman (2010), indicated that the traditional knowledge learned from the 1967 invasion

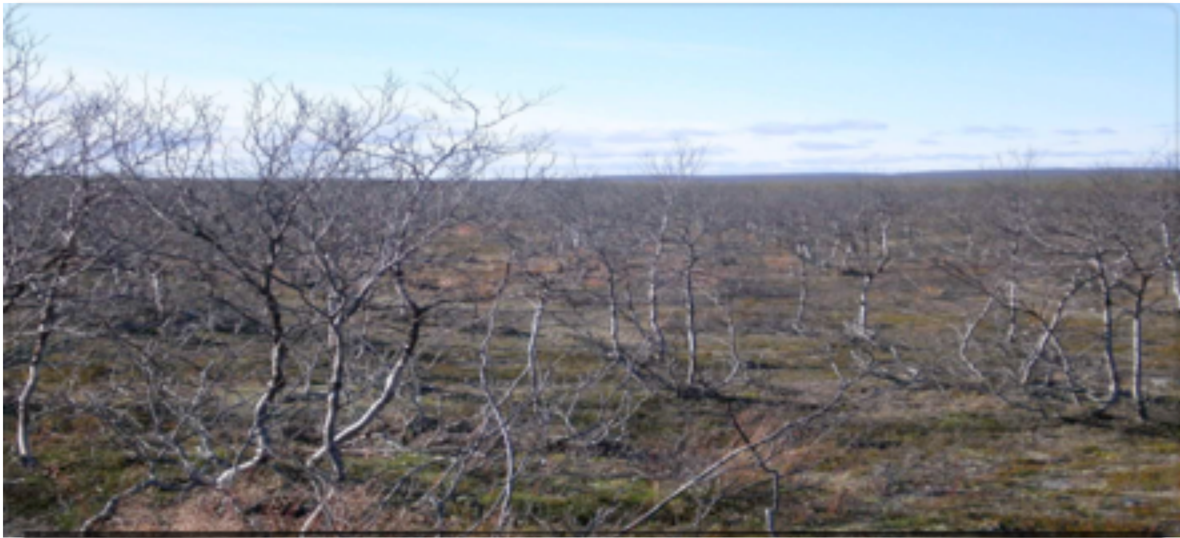

Figure 5: Tundra birch forest after a winter moth invasion.

was passed on to younger herders, which prepared them for the winter moth. Länsman explains, “Reindeer herders told of such damage. There were several years, really good for the reindeer

herd, after the damage in the early 1970s, late 1960s. And some elder reindeer herders said it has happened earlier too. It's happened again and again."

Between 2006-2008, the winter moth destroyed over 1300 km^2 of birch forests between Utsjoki and Nuorgam. Entire tundras were covered in blackened, lifeless skeletons of tundra birch. Tourists and locals alike lamented the visual metaphor of death that shadowed over their land, as a physical reminder of the consequences of global climate change: modernity, globalization, and carbon emissions brought this death onto the land. A few in the Kaldoaivi reindeer herding district, like Petteri Valle (2010) for instance, chastised the use of machinery and even hard-soled shoes upon the tundra, insisting that his Sámi ancestors would be horrified to see these effects of contemporary herding. Valle was, however, was in a distinct minority, and many Sámi suggest that such reactions are emotional in nature. Niilo Kalevi Länsman (2010) explains, "The first thing I heard was that it would be bad, but they didn't know how it would be. They had no traditional knowledge. It was only thinking we are losing something. That was the reason they were thinking it was bad, to lose birches. The first thing researchers were saying was that it might be a catastrophe. It's some kind of catastrophe. It's a catastrophe for birches."

The effects of the moth invasion on reindeer herding were not expected at all–at least by experts and outsiders. By the time I conducted fieldwork in Sápmi in 2010, interviewing reindeer herders with a colleague, Masumi Tanaka, the results of the moth invasion were clear: the reindeer were healthier than ever. Showing us the statistics collected by *Paliskuntain Yhdistys* [The Reindeer Herders' Association], Asko Länsman (2010) indicated that reindeer weights were up at the slaughter, calving weights were up, and the birthrate was up. Only the reindeer herding districts heavily affected by the winter moth saw such sizable growth in reindeer weight.

Länsman further explained that fat reindeer indicate the entire environment is healthy, since reindeer eat almost exclusively wild foods.

Nearly all herders insisted that the winter moth helped the reindeer. There are specific reasons for this, reasons that Sámi herders see clearly, and predicted accurately before the invasion. Sámi elder Antti Länsman indicated that the reindeer herding has improved because there are more grasses in the pastures, some of which remain green and nutritious even under the cover of snow. Before the invasion, the birch foliage above five feet was out of the reach of reindeer, so mature tundra birch offered little nutrition to the animals. The biologically diverse meadows that formed after the moth invasion offered the reindeer vegetation not only greater in biomass, but also with a greater diversity of nutrients. After the invasion, according to Niilo Kalevi Länsman (2010), "The [reindeer] can keep themselves in better condition. Because when all the birch are eaten, these caterpillars produce a mass of droppings, and they will fertilize the land very heavily. And then there are a hundred plants other than birch which are waiting for their time to grow. And when they get more of an open area, they get a lot of fertilizer and grow effectively."

Figure 6: Sámi elder, Antti Länsman.

With the death of the birch trees, the wintertime grazing also became easier for the reindeer. Niilo Kalevi (2010) explains, "Birch actually hold snow. Where there is birch growing, there is deeper snow. And you can't use these area in wintertime because of the deep snow. With

these open areas, the wind is blowing the snow away. So if you have larger open areas, you have larger areas to herd your reindeer in wintertime." Allowing the reindeer to dig for fodder more effectively in winter, the reindeer grow healthier. When I asked Niilo Kalevi how he knew these things, he succinctly explained, "I have traditional knowledge about it," and he indicated that before the invasion, he worked hard to use this knowledge to quell the anxieties of other herders in the area.

Contrary to popular understanding, birch leaves and lichens are not the only food sources for reindeer. In fact, Asko Länsman (2010) explains, "*Poronhoito on parasta, siellä missä on tunturi*" ["Reindeer herding is best where there is a tundra]. Reindeer can live, but do not thrive, in the birch forest, and Länsman explains that it is the *appearance* of the blackened and dead birch groves that elicits such a powerful negative reaction among people. Länsman draws connections to the decline of the lichen beds over the past 60 years. A well-known food for reindeer, lichen once blanketed the tundra floor 1-2 feet thick. Though reindeer eat lichens, their value in herding has been much overestimated. Nils Länsman (2010) clarifies: "*Ei poro elä jäkälällä*" ["No reindeer really lives on lichen"]. Lichens are not a particularly nutritious food, yet the decline of the lichen beds have been seen by many scientists as indicative of the overpopulation of reindeer and of an impending environmental catastrophe. In the case of the winter moth, scientists, even after years of improved reindeer health, suppose this to be a short-lived span of anomalous prosperity, before inevitable long-term environmental destabilization. Teemu Santonen (2011) writes:

> *Tämä on tuhon jälkeen poroille hyödyksi ravinnon lisääntyessä ja havaitsimme erikoistutkija Timo Helteen kanssa vuonna 2009 porojen olevan varsin pulleita ja hyvässä kunnossa. Porot voivat vielä lumen altakin kaivaa heinien vihreitä osia ravinnoksi (Helle 2009). Lisäravinnon vaikutus voidaan havaita vielä vuosienkin jälkeen.*

> *Lannoi- tevaikutuksen hävittyä heinät hiljalleen vähenevät ja tuhoista elpymättömien tunturikoivujen vuoksi ravinto vähenee entisestään aralla alueella. [...] Tämä vaikeuttaa entisestään poronhoitoa ainakin Utsjoen alueella. Heinien ja tunturikoivujen vähetessä porojen ravinnonhankinta vaikeutuu entisestään ja alueen kantokyky ylläpitää porokantaa pienenee edelleen sen jo nyt ollessa kapasiteetin äärirajoilla.* (p. 15)
>
> [After the destruction, this ended up benefiting the reindeer by adding to their food base. And according to researcher Timo Helle, in 2009 the reindeer were especially plump, and in good condition. The effect of the additional food will be noticeable for years. After the effects of fertilization on the hay pastures slowly disappear, because the birch cannot recover from these damages, food sources will be even further diminished in the sensitive areas. [...] This will make reindeer herding even more difficult in the Utsjoki region. The reduction of hay and tundra birch as reindeer food sources will cause even more difficulties, and the region's capacity to maintain the reindeer population will continue to be reduced, and it is already at the limit of its capacity.]

Such predictions are curious, given that traditional knowledge accurately predicted the effects of the moth, and that reindeer health has substantially improved following the invasion. It's worth considering: can such a prediction really be based on scientific methodology? Or is it a compulsion to be proven right? Is it a consequence of a subconscious belief that the death of beloved birch trees will bring about some intangible evil to the land? Or is it a fatalistic prediction that Sámi people too will inevitably modernize and destroy their own environments like other Europeans? Or perhaps it is the Western trope that "contamination" of the

Figure 7: Birch leaves.

"pristine" environment leads to "damage" and "depletion."

For their part, however, Sámi herders have approached the invasion from an indigenous perspective. The identity of Sámi people is bound deeply to land use practices, constructed in terms of the environment and not in opposition to it, and these ecological schemas affect how they have understood the winter moth as part of larger, cyclical processes. Niilo Kalevi Länsman (2010) suggests that the birch groves were essentially a mono-culture, that their dominance was part of a long-period cycle of growth, dominance, death, and renewal. He states, "When you think about birch, it's a main plant. It takes big areas. It takes nearly all the sunlight. And they will take the minerals, and other plants can't get so much. The birch wins the competition for light and nutrition. When you get more open area, and you get that birch energy back to the ground. The caterpillars fertilize the land. They take energy from the birch and give it back to the ground cover." The winter moth has neutralized the imbalance of the dominant birch.

Sámi people maintain sophisticated understandings of biodiversity's importance to a healthy ecosystem, distinct from the touristic perspectives of outsiders, who become fixated on the lichens and tundra birch as visual metaphors of the distinctively pristine environment of this other-land, so much so, they would destroy the tundra to save their birch. Though birch are much celebrated trees in Sámi culture, herders understand the problems that occur when they become too dominant. The following section details one experience I had learning about birch leaves and sustainability in Sápmi.

Seventh Generation Sustainability

It was early in August, 2010, and I was living in a tent on the outskirts of a small reindeer-herding village called Buođđobohki (Patoniva), Finland. Buođđobohki lies some 450

kilometers north of the Arctic Circle, a short 15 kilometers south of Ohcejohka (Utsjoki), Finland. And it was raining. The gentle but persistent patter of drops on my small tent roof first started when I had gone to bed, and during the night a small puddle pooled on the floor of my tent, which I would periodically mop up with a pink rag, as I made sure my laptop and cell phone were on “high ground” in my tent. I lay there, contemplating whether this puddle originated from a leak or from condensation of my own exhalations. The scene would actually have been quite tranquil, if not for my desperation for coffee and my disinclination to brave the chilly arctic rains. Later that day I was supposed to meet a new friend, Niilo Kalevi Länsman to help him with some reindeer chores. On this day, in particular, we planned to cut birch leaves for his reindeer.

When the rain finally slowed to a light sprinkle in the late morning, I decided to lumber outside from my bed upon the soft tundra vegetation, to quickly touch off a fire, and to cook up my coffee while at least partially protected by rain gear and a pine canopy. I wasn’t certain what to expect in terms of cutting birch leaves. It seemed fairly intuitive a process to cut off leafy birch branches for reindeer, who needed extra food during the months of March and April, as the snows deepen and then form hard crusts which hinder reindeer from digging for fodder. This type of snow crust has different names, depending on its weight-bearing properties, but it is called *cuoŋo* when it can bear enough weight to carry humans and reindeer on its surface. During this time, migration becomes easy and the foraging becomes difficult. *Cuoŋománnu*, or the “snow-crust month” of April, was a crucial time of the year, when migration occurred, often by night, as the snows hardened into an icy crust. North Sámi possesses dozens of words describing the ever-changing snowpack and the wintertime grazing conditions of reindeer. Even today, it’s

common to hear herders greet each other with the phrase “Makkár lea guohtun?” Or, “How’s the grazing?” I wasn’t exactly sure what the day would entail, so I grabbed my hunting knife, my camera, and my voice recorder, put on some good work-clothes over my long johns, and set off to Niilo Kalevi’s under the light of the sun which was breaking through the clouds for the first time in nearly a day.

Conducting interviews in a foreign language was arduous enough. Long sessions, sometimes dragging out to eight hours, alternating between North Sámi and Finnish, tested my focus, and my abilities to interact appropriately in complex situations. It was considerably more challenging when living in a tent. I drank from the clear waters of a nearby stream, I made fires at least twice a day, for both warmth and the smoke, which masked my smell from mosquitoes (a trick I learned from my mother, whose Ojibwe neighbors used smudge pots when she was in school in the 1950s). It was exhausting to live in a tent, but many locals seemed to respect this, and if nothing else, it was a good conversation starter. If I wanted to buy food or conduct an interview in Ohcejohka, I could catch the one daily bus towards town, a multipurpose bus which carried

Figure 8: My site at Buođđobohki.

school children and delivered the mail on its long trek between Rovaniemi and Njuorggán (Nuorgam). But the bus only went one way, leaving me with a 15 kilometer hike back to my tent. In my few spare moments, I would write an hour on my dissertation and check my email in the tent, using my laptop's short battery life.

Niilo Kalevi works as a reindeer herder and math teacher at Sámi Allaskuvla in Guovdageaidnu, Norway. I met him through a colleague, a graduate student at the University of Lapland, Masumi Tanaka, who sometimes lives in his home as she conducts fieldwork. Niilo Kalevi had built his own home, a large and beautiful house bustling with the activity of many young children. In the summer, he fished and picked cloudberries, though home renovations and the young children had cut into the time he could devote to these activities in recent years. Niilo Kalevi wanted to make sure that at least some of his children would take up reindeer herding, and continue to live full and rich lives as Sámi people, fluent in language, traditional economy, and culture. And he remained somewhat concerned that his ten-year-old did not particularly like to eat salmon, but he took solace in the fact that at least he liked catching them. We decided we should wait until the sun, now coming on strong, dried things up a bit before we set out. In the meantime, we cut some lumber for his home renovations, and he loaded up his

Figure 9: Niilo Kalevi Länsman.

reindeer van with all the essential supplies: two Fiskars brand machetes and a role of twine. Apparently, the knife I had brought along was the wrong tool for this job.

Niilo Kalevi explained that we would go to Giđajohka for this task, only a half kilometer away. Giđajohka (or "Spring River") was a traditional springtime pastureland for reindeer, and the place where his father Antti Länsman was born in the 1930s, in a humble wooden house that still stands in the valley of the small creek. Antti was one of several dozen grandchildren of the great herder Kadja Niila, a figure still venerated for his handsome countenance, his wealth, his generosity, his strength, and his talents with reindeer. Over thirty when the first road was built to Ohcejohka, Antti lived the first three decades of his life by following reindeer herds from the closed Norwegian border nearly 250 kilometers south to the northern tracts of Anár (Inari). He knew every stream, every hill, every lake along this trek, and he could navigate it in the dark of winternight, called *skábma*. And having learned of where I camped, Antti pointed out that I was camped near a worn *geres* (reindeer-sledge) trail which crossed the small brook on a small and now broken bridge, where I went to collect my water.

Figure 10: Antti Länsman and the author.

The three of us drove to Giđajohka, shortly past Antti Länsman's birth home, into a small glen of woods that was typical of the lowlands, protected from the cold that sweeps across the

tundra hills, dwarfing the birch. The grove contained birch and willow, and was rather immature, with most trees under 15 feet in height. Niilo Kalevi handed me a machete and told me to cut some branches. I asked him what he was looking for, and how long to cut them. He indicated a distance of about three feet long with his hands, but said little more. He hacked off a few examples to show me, and then began instructing Masumi on how he would like the knots tied. I set off to cut some branches, and even though I'm really no slouch of an outdoorsman (at least in the woods and waters of my home region), it was with more than a little degree of awkwardness that I uncomfortably began to swing away at branches, still somewhat unsure of how best to turn the organic entity of a tree neatly into three foot long units of reindeer nourishment. Does a four foot long branch become a long one, or two short ones? When is long too long, and short too short? I knew nothing of where they would hang, how much they would be carried, how they would be placed out for the reindeer, or how reindeer tend to eat them. Any of this information would have helped with the task at hand.

Figure 11: Giđajohka River.

This routine task was nowhere near as intuitive as I first imagined. Periodically, Niilo Kalevi would yell out at me from afar, "Don't take that tree!" or "No, no, no... take the whole tree!" Sometimes, even, Niilo Kalevi would hack off a willow tree, and told me that reindeer would eat that too, but when I cut a few nice looking willow branches, I was scolded for

mistaking it for birch. Soon frustration began to set in. I knew that it was customary among Sámi people to not give much direct verbal instruction, instead relying on what sometimes is called *čalbme* or visual learning. This method of instruction compels careful observation and emulation. But I was still baffled as Niilo Kalevi would take several steps back, study the trees carefully, and hack away, sometimes taking just a few branches, and other times hacking off an entire tree at the root with two or three great strokes. On the surface it looked arbitrary, like there was no order to that which he was taking, but his careful study of the birches, his reading of the grove, indicated that he knew perfectly, after years of experience as a herder, what he wanted to cut. We carried on for hours, and my frustrations mounted as I simply couldn't comprehend what Niilo Kalevi was seeing in the birch grove. I prodded him, but could extract little more than the fact that he wanted the forest to "look" a certain way.

Eventually, though, I began to piece together what Niilo Kalevi was seeing. As I studied his cutting, determined to figure out what he was looking for, I tried to watch with more open eyes as to what was happening. I realized suddenly and distinctly that I had been looking at what he was cutting, and not what he was leaving behind. I was looking at the birch grove in the present, and he was looking at it in the future. I was looking at the length of the branches I cut, and the shape and height of the trees. Quite literally I was seeing the forest for the trees. But Niilo Kalevi was cutting based upon how the grove would look next year, cutting the birch to maximize the leaf yield for the next summer, and to keep it as it was into the foreseeable future. This is why the forest looked immature. The small and spindly trees, filled with leafy foliage as they try to outcompete their neighbors, were cut back hard, but not so excessively that they

Figure 12: Birch leaves.

would not recover for the next year. In particular, the tops were lopped off, to keep the trees low and to encourage the growth of multiple tops. As a tree began to dominate the region, casting shadows over the grove, and sending its leaves out of human reach, Niilo Kalevi would hack it down at its base, and chop it to bits. Undesirable willow trees were removed entirely, since they infringed upon birch habitat. He was managing the land to keep the birch immature, low, leafy, and dominant. As soon as I figured this out, the task at hand became much easier as we continued to cut branches, and the corrective jibes came to an abrupt end. I had learned to see the birch grove with his eyes.

What I was viewing was seventh generation sustainability in practice, and its ordinary performance in everyday life. Niilo Kalevi would, of course, carefully manage this land. The land was rich with the history of his family, where his father was born, and where he himself had lived most of his life. Such a place is what Elina Helander (2000) would call his *báiki*, the local place to which Niilo Kalevi belongs, and through which he maintains his relationships to his family and community (p. 178). Beyond the preservation of the land's functionality as the basis for economic and ecological stability, the land itself is important as a matrix for the storage of knowledge, the basis for social relationships, crucial in the construction of identity, and a extension of one's self. Or, more succinctly, as one Swedish-side herder once told researcher

Timm Rochon: “I am *part* of the forests and the mountains” (qtd in Helander-Renvall, 2010, p. 49). So too was Niilo Kalevi, and the health of the birch grove was an expressive extension of his self, a place-based identity that he could use to cultivate traditional identity within his children.

Birch leaf cutting is a practice of education, of the transmission of cultural values, of sustainable aesthetics, and one even of identity. It is through working with one’s hands, what Tim Ingold refers to as “dwelling” within a task to understand it, that one best learns to interact with the environment in traditional ways (2000, p. 5-6). In her essay “Simple Things, Complicated Skills: Archaeolog, Practical Skills and Climatic Change from the Perspective of Anthropology,” Terhi Vuojala-Magga (2009) takes note of *dwelling* in her discussion of learning to use a Sámi knife in the forest, writing, “Only by dwelling and indwelling through practical learning and engagement can one gain an understanding of a practice and the many ways of using it and communicating through it” (p. 166). These methods are generally left out of the schools–an unfortunately overlooked but powerful tool in learning to understand pluralistic cultural perspectives. In the birch grove, I was not simply learning to cut branches; I was learning to see the grove through Niilo Kalevi’s eyes. Dwelling in the task meant learning Niilo Kalevi’s mindscape, in turn accepting and rejecting aspects of his relationship with the land as I forged my own identity within this space.

Identity is a complex concept, and one which is difficult to separate from its historical emergence in conjunction with Western European nation states in the 19th century. Unsurprisingly, Western models for identity (including language, geography, shared history, internecine strife, mono-economy) crumble with the decline of the nation state, even among indigenous people who never even were afforded the sovereignty promised under such

problematic ideologies. In March of 2010, I was in Ivalo, Finland, visiting one Sámi reindeer herder, who complained that urban Sámi, living in Helsinki, would drive north, speaking fluent Sámi and wearing a gákti, but not really knowing a thing about what life was like in Sápmi. He said that these city Sámi did not even know how to walk on snow. They break through the crust, stumbling around like fools until they tire themselves out. Knowing how to walk on snow, though a standard no government would adopt, marks Sámi identity for this herder. People are how they live in relation to the land, whether one listens to the snow crust beneath one's feet and steps gently and gracefully atop of it, or whether one, with sweat dripping from the brow, plows through the deep snow in frustration and anger. So too was the birch grove, a place which is an expressive extension of Niilo Kalevi's self, and a place essential to cultivate traditional identity in his children. In this light, it is little wonder why Niilo Kalevi was so concerned with his son who enjoyed catching, but not eating, salmon. The purpose of fishing is not simply in the catching, but rather the performance of one's own self-sustaining and regenerative relationship with the environment is what truly mattered.

We cut for a couple more hours, and then we finished tying the bundles into switches, using a particular knot Niilo Kalevi showed us. The knot was a quick release knot, with a large loop for hanging the bundles. The knot allowed for effective drying, and it was easy to release the bundles seven months later when they were needed as fodder. We filled the reindeer transport van with birch and drove up to Skallovarri, the place of the reindeer roundup for the Kaldoaivi reindeer herding district, where Niilo Kalevi had a small wooden shed. We drove in a couple

Figure 13: Skallovarri during reindeer roundup.

hundred nails and began unloading and hanging the branches to dry on the inside of the shed. It was then I recalled my backpack sitting in the van, filled with my hunting knife and camera, and in horror I realized I hadn't had a moment to take even a single photo to document our process. My right palm throbbing gently from hours of cutting birch branches, we drove back to Niilo Kalevi's home, where he put on tea, and put out the makings for sandwiches, as is the traditional way to treat visitors to one's home in Lapland. After we ate in the comfortable silence that follows hours of exhausting labor, I trekked home to my tent, where I built up a new fire, and fell asleep under the sun of a cool arctic night.

Cross-Indigenous Notions of Invasive Species

In Sámi tradition, like many indigenous traditions, one does not simply go to the forest for fun; one must go to the forest for the purpose of work, and trees like birch were long purposed for use. Perhaps these mature tundra birch forests, largely undesirable for herders,

brought the moths to them. We can find a fruitful comparison in a story told to me by Wayne Valliere (2012):

Figure 14: Wayne Valliere with a roll of birchbark for a canoe.

> A few years back, we had something happen in our northern forest. We had a beetle invasion that was killing all the wiigwaas. Pretty soon we'd be going around the forest and we'd see the tips of all the trees dying off. Especially the big wiigwaas. Our birch trees were dying at a very fast rate. And I guess the scientists told us it was some kind of beetle. I talked to one of my elders about it and he had something to say about that. He said a long time ago, we used wiigwaas for everything. We used it for our lodges, we used it for our canoes, our baskets, a lot of different things we'd use wiigwaas for. Wiigwaas was appreciated. It was harvested every year by our people. It was used for many, many things. He said that "We're not losing the birch trees. The birch trees are losing us." I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "Because of what I just said. We used to use the birch bark in a good way," he said. "People aren't doing that anymore," he said. "The Great Spirit, and especially the spirit of the wiigwaasi-mitig, the birch tree, it doesn't feel appreciated anymore. Because we're not using it as a people for what it was intended to be used for." And that was our cultural things. And nowadays, they cut the forest down and they're using it for toothpicks and toilet paper, and things like that. And so the birch tree, he said, doesn't feel appreciated. [...] So after listening to those words from my elder, it was at that time, I tried to get younger people involved with harvesting birch bark, to make baskets, to try to teach about canoes. And making jewelry, medallions, and making different things out of wiigwaas. So by using the birch tree in a good way, we hope that he will come back and he'll stay strong for the ones who come after us. So that they'll be able to appreciate these beautiful trees, and the beautiful things we can create from wiigwaas. So after we seemed to be able to get more people involved with harvesting wiigwaas, pretty soon it seemed like our forests began to get healthy again. The birch trees began to get happy again. So we don't see as many trees dying anymore.

In Sámi culture, birch was similarly used for many purposes for millennia (Ostlund, Bergman and Zackrisson, 2004, p. 278-86), including the manufacture of skis, sledges, boats, cradles, containers, and chests. Leaves were used for sheets and dyes, and the bark was used for roofing, hide tanning, and waterproofing tents. Burls were used for cups, milking vessels, and *noaidi* drums, and the roots were used for stitching and woven baskets, bowls, bracelets and containers (Stevenson, 2001, p. 29-30). And birch was a powerful and important medicine. According to Torbjörn Arnold (2012),

> The spring birch sap was drunk as a preventive medicine for upcoming sicknesses throughout the year. The sap was also good for different kinds of rashes. Birch leaves could be put on a burn, and tea made from leaves was said to purify the blood and be good for the kidneys. The inner, thin bark of the birch was used as a band-aid. Many older people have told me how in their youth that when they were injured while chopping down a tree, an older person would then bandage the sore with birch bark until they could get to the doctor. Birch bark is surprisingly free of bacteria and is said to stop bleeding. It is also reputed as having healing properties. Birch leaves could also be used to ease pain so that the part of the body, which was hurting, was covered in fresh birch leaves. If the leaves were not fresh, water was splashed on them and warmed. The sleeping place could be covered with leaves and the sick person would be covered in this way throughout the night if, for example, the person was suffering from rheumatic pain throughout the body. Even the parasite fungi (polyporus and fungi) on the birch were used.

Elina Helander (1994, 2002) similarly attests to these medicinal qualities of birch. Antti and Gare Länsman, incidentally, also harvest birch sap to drink in the spring, but mostly because it is pleasant to drink. They freeze it, so it can be thawed and enjoyed at any time during the year.

Because in part of an economic and cultural shift during the 20th century, and in part because the Nordic states seized control of Sámi forestlands, the use of birch has declined though 37% of Sámi people reportedly still produce handicraft (Stevenson, 2001). Any birch harvest gradually transitioned in the 20th century from places of customary use to places of privatized ownership. State owned tundra birch, inconsequential to the logging industry, were left to stand,

grow, and dominate public lands under the external presumption of their disuse being the natural state of the tundra. Moth invasions have always come to restore balance to the ecosystem, but their effects now have perhaps been intensified by the decline of birch use, by the creation of nature preserves, and by the nature of conservation itself.

The moth invasion is not just a tale of scientific cause and effect, but rather a canvas upon which two very different ecological belief systems are painted. Unlike the apocalyptic vision of climate change and fatalistic environmental depletion, from the Sámi perspective, moth invasions serve as part of the natural cycles of death and rebirth. And a history of traditional knowledge both accurately describes and recommends courses of action for these exceptional times. Rather than being a contaminant within an untouched environment, Sámi herders see themselves as a crucial part of sustainable ecological systems, and they play a critical role to ensure the perpetuation of the sustainable environment. If, as some scientists have suggested, the intensive damage from insect invasions has worsened in the previous century, it is perhaps not simply the result of inevitable environmental decay and the nostalgia for a primordial past, but rather from the disruption and discontinuation of birch harvesting and use-traditions that date back millennia within Sámi culture itself. Only scientists risk losing birch trees; for Sámi people, perhaps it is the birch trees that risk losing them.

Chapter 4

Mas Amas Diehtá Maid Oarri Borrá: Constructing Sustainability in Sápmi[1]

–Mas amas diehtá maid oarri borrá
[How can a stranger know what a squirrel eats]
–Sámi Proverb

Sustainability, as we understand it today, is a concept born of both antiquity and modernity, lying tenuously within the borderlands that separate economy from ecology and cultural worldview. We often speak of economic, ecological, and cultural sustainability as separate categories, but in practice these distinctions are but illusory. Ecological and economic sustainability are inextricable from cultural sustainability, which utilizes ideologies for the “maintenance and reproduction of social power” (Eagleton, 1983, p. 14-15). In turn, cultural stability depends upon at least the appearance of stable economic and ecological systems to affirm the legitimacy of its inequities of power. When we speak of this three-legged stool of sustainability, we speak to the economic and ecological conditions of our human world. In this light, it is little surprise that the Oxford English Dictionary suggests that sustainability in its current usage appears only in the 1950s, rooted in growing anxieties about industrial economies,

[1] A version of this chapter will appear in the forthcoming book, *Nordic Nature/Cultures* (Ed. Christopher Oscarson) Seattle: University of Washington Press.

including exhaustion of natural resources, which left a trail of environmental degradation and widespread economic instability throughout much of North America and Europe throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. As thus, contemporary uses of the term sustainability are frequently shackled to the neoliberal conceptions of economy: this variant of sustainability is designed to perpetuate consumption and socioeconomic hierarchies into the indeterminate future.

Yet countless examples point to the fact that the concept of sustainability long predates its recent coinage. Henrik Ibsen critiques a tannery's pollution of waters in *En folkefiende* (1882). In England, John Stuart Mill in "Principles of Political Economy" (1848) argues unrestrained economic growth led to environmental degradation the decline of non-material wealth, and Thomas Malthus explores overpopulation and economic destabilization in *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). Throughout much of Western Europe, game resources were stabilized by denying access to all but the wealthy. The entirety of the Åland Islands was designated a royal hunting reserve until the rise of private land ownership in the late 18th century (Korhonen, 2005, p. 185), and according to Robert Pogue Harrison (1992), "during the Merovingian period [c. 457-572 CE] in which the word *foresta* entered the lexicon, kings had taken it upon themselves to place public bans on cast tracts of woodlands in order to insure the survival of the wildlife, which in turn would insure the survival of a fundamental royal ritual–the hunt" (p. 69). Deforestation is a principal concern and source of conflict even in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, as Gilgamesh and Enkidu slay the forest demon Humbaba upon Cedar Mountain to stake claim to his forest, setting off a course of events that leads to the release of the goddess Ishtar's bull, bringing drought across the land.

Deforestation led to floods and soil salinization in Sumer (Diamond, 2005, p. 556); overgrazing in Greenland's Viking colony likely brought about its collapse (Barlow, et al, 1997; Ogilvie and McGovern, 2000); European style tilling of soil exacerbated the Dust Bowl in the United States (Worster, 1974, p. 79, 87, 200, 218). Concerns about sustainability date back to antiquity, periodically interrupted by famously hubristic periods of disbelief in the exhaustible nature of mother earth. Hence, questions of sustainability perhaps are equally suited for humanists as scientists, as sustainability consists of relativistic human perceptions and beliefs about the environment and its acceptable use for humanity.

Various strategies of sustainability have long co-existed in the Nordic states. Some, like binding hunting rights to land ownership, connect to Western European land management. Others are products of customary law. In Finland, burn-and-beat agriculture was deemed sustainable by locals but came under attack by proponents of stationary arable agriculture (Talve, 1997, p. 52-54). Finnish and Sámi ritual bear hunts both ensure the bear's spirit is appeased and safely returned to the Great Celestial Bear, where it can be reincarnated (Pentikäinen, 2007, p. 48-49, 63-65, 80). Many of these localized practices succumbed to the pressures of nationalization, and to the modernization which ushered in an era of enforced standardized game and land-use laws. For Sámi people in particular, the nationalization process was particularly brutal, as colonial strategies concurrently disrupted religious practice, forced assimilation through policy, claimed Sámi lands as state property, and devastated economic stability through multi-state taxation (Lehtola, 2004, p. 30-32, 36-37, 44-46). This disruption continues today, as the ecological and economic policy of Sápmi is largely dictated by politicians of a decidedly

different culture, with different social and economic interests, residing a thousand kilometers to the south.

These outsiders imported their own belief systems to Sápmi, sometimes leading to catastrophic results. For instance, Finnish hunters in search of profits from the fur trade brought the beaver to extinction on the Kemi river system, as they ignored Sámi customary laws which protected the beaver through off-seasons. Teppo Korhonen (2005) explains, "*Enimmät eivät omistaneet ajatustakaan mahdollisuudelle, että riista saattoi jonakin kauniina päivänä ehtyä; heille metsä ja yleensäkin erämaa oli ehtymätön runsaudensarvi*" ["Most could not even conceive of the possibility that the game could simply be exhausted one day; for them the forest and in general the wilderness was an inexhaustible cornucopia"] (p. 186). Despite the abundant evidence showcasing the effectiveness of Sámi sustainability, Sámi resource management remains under perpetual criticism of the Western scientific and political intelligentsia, who criticize the overabundance of reindeer, the practices of net fishing, and the use of motorized vehicles in fragile tundra ecosystems. Like other indigenous peoples around the world, sustainability is deeply engrained in Sámi culture, and the traditional Sámi harvest itself ensures the perpetuation of not only Sámi livelihood and culture, but also of the harvested resource itself. Traditionally a crucial part of Sámi religious life, the renewable harvest persists in new contexts that actively replicate the cosmic and natural order, thus ensuring human security. In this chapter, I draw from my own fieldwork to examine Sámi sustainability in the Deatnu river valley, and how rivaling notions of sustainability perpetuate conflict and the colonization of the north.

Sustainability bears different meanings for different fishermen throughout the globe. In Finland, the traditional economic necessity to fish changed rapidly during the urbanization of the

1970s, yet the symbolic meanings of the meat-harvest is still important to many Finns. According to a 1994 report, 41.7% of Finns consider themselves “sport fishers,” dwarfing, for example, Ireland, which geographer Philip Burgess targets as having only 3% of the population who self-identifies as a sport fisherman (1996, p. 47). David Finkelstein further notes, “Finnish anglers tend to be meat fishermen, as opposed to catch-and-release conservationists” (qtd. in Burgess, 1996, p. 46). Finkelstein’s remarks are noteworthy, since they do not conform to Finns’ perceptions of themselves.

Finns see themselves clearly as conservationists. In Antti Tuuri’s *Tenoa Soutamassa* (2008), discussed in an earlier chapter, Tuuri regularly hires Mauri Kaitsalo, a Finnish resident of Ánar (Inari), as his fishing guide for his annual fishing excursions. On one occasion, their conversation turns to the practice of catch and release fishing. Tuuri writes:

> *Monista asioista olimme Maurin kanssa ehtineet joella ja jokirannoilla puhella, enimmäkseen kuitenkin kalastuksesta. Olimme puhuneet merkillisestä muodista, joka oli valtaamassa maata, pyydä ja päästä –kalastamisesta, jossa kala yritetään ensin kaikin keinoin tartuttaa vieheeseen, väsyttää ja saada haaviin, jonka jälkeen se punnitaan ja valokuvataan, ja vapautetaan sitten takaisin virtaan. Mauri kertoi nähneensä isoja lohia kuolleina jokirannoilla; ne oli väsytetty ennen vapauttamista niin tainnoksiin, etteivät selvinneet hengissä, vaikka koukku oli leuasta irrotettu ja kala jätetty rantamatalokkoon odottamaan virkoamista. Näin itsekin ison, kuoleen lohen Könkäänniskansaaren rannassa; siinä ei näkynyt muita merkkejä vahingoittumisesta kuin leukaan revennyt reikä, josta koukku oli irrotettu.*
>
> *Maurin mielestä lohi oli niin vaikea kala saada, että se oli myös syötävä, jos sen joesta otti. Minä mietin myös sitä, mikä oikeus ihmisellä oli kiusata luontokappaletta joessa oman huvinsa ja jännityksensä vuoksi, ellei kalastamisessa ollut muuta tarkoitusta kuon sen jännittävän hetken kokeminen, kun kala iski ja sitä väsytettiin vedessä.*
>
> *Maurilla oli pyyntitavasta selvä käsutys: jos alkaisin vaatia väsyttämiemme lohien laskemista takaisin jokeen, minulla ei olisi häneen veneeseensä asiaa.* (p. 130-31)
>
> [We had plenty of time on the river and the riverbanks to chat with Mauri about many things, most of which however was about fishing. We talked about the strange fashion taking hold over the land, catch and release fishing, where one tries in all

> manners to get the fish to take a lure, to tire it out and get it in a net, after which it's weighed and photographed, and then freed back into the stream. Mauri said that he had seen large salmon dead on the river banks; before they were released, they had been tired out to the point of unconsciousness, and they weren't able to survive, even though the hook had been removed and the fish was left to revive itself in the shallows near the shore. I even saw a big dead salmon myself on the shore of Könkäänniskansaari; there were no other visible signs of harm to it aside from a small hole ripped into the chin, where a hook had been removed.
>
> In Mauri's opinion, salmon are so difficult to catch, that they need to be eaten, if you take one from the river. I also wondered, what right does a person have to torture a piece of nature in a river for one's own pleasure and for the purposes of a little excitement, as if fishing has no other meaning than that experience of a brief moment of suspense and excitement when the fish strikes and it's tired out in the water.
>
> Mauri had a clear mind about fishing: if I would start demanding that we begin lowering tired-out salmon back into the river, I would not have any business being in his boat.]

Meat fishing is different than sport fishing, in motives, methods, and cultural worldview. In fact, there are many reasons people catch salmon: to forge relationships with other people; to re-create, mythologize and ritualize an imagined primeval past that explains human-nature relationships today; to harvest one's own food for economic reasons; to perform resourcefulness; to–as an act of identity–enact a living relationship with one's ecological world. Tuuri recognizes this and draws clear lines among tourist anglers based on their motives for fishing. Finkelstein, however, presumes all non-commercial fishing to be recreational, a sport and pastime, and all harvesting to be contrary to the conservationist ethics of the catch-and-release sportsman who buys his fish from a store. Why does eating the fish one catches presume anti-conservationist ethics, even as dead salmon drift down the river, exhausted by a bemused conservationist's hook?

Surprisingly, Tuuri says little about *buođđu* fish dams. These dams use a system of weighted tripods, brushy barricades, and nets to corral salmon into nets, and they have become

politically contentious in recent decades. The Sámi perspective is often misunderstood by tourists, who at best are disinterested and at worst angry over the fish dams as being visible signs of special Sámi salmon rights, which–as they are in accordance with Finland's system of netting rights being connected to land parcels–they clearly are not. Netting is held disproportionately accountable for low salmon runs, and tourists frequently call for their removal. These *buođđu* dams are the focus of Niilas A. Somby's aforementioned documentary film *Gádde Gánddat* (2003), which explores the state's haymaking laws and their racial and colonial motives for limiting Sámi fishing rights. The purpose of the hay-cutting law was overtly tied to policies of Norwegianization designed to "civilize" the Sámi by forcing them to become farmers, but its actual enforcement was lax until the tourist boom of the 1970s. Guised under policies of conservation, the enforcement of this law enabled appropriation of a resource central to Sámi culture and livelihood. Further legislation has preyed upon the divisions between Sámi netters, including Finland's current attempt to unilaterally prohibit drift netting on the Deatnu (Yle Uutiset, 2012).

For Tuuri and Sámi fishermen alike, the catch-and-release conservationist is not without environmental impact. The fisherman toys with the salmon's life for a few minutes of entertainment, leaving wounded salmon in the waters, as he offers self-congratulatory platitudes of the taking of only pictures, and the leaving of only footprints. But this fisherman is blind to the footprints of roads, bridges, dams, carbon emissions, and the low-priced farm-raised salmon he purchases, which has decimated wild Atlantic salmon populations (Naylor, 1998, p. 883-884). Such sustainability efforts embrace the neoliberal cultural underpinnings of their world, redefining salmon fishing in terms of market value, allowing individual liberty to exhaust

collective resources, and bringing Enclosure to the fjords. Such ideas are based in the abstraction and opposition of civilization and wilderness, where natural resources generate meanings only in their utility to the human community. Sámi people have historically held different conceptions of human-environmental relations, in which human identity is constructed in terms of the natural world, rather than in opposition to it. It is worth repeating the comment of the Swedish-side reindeer herder: "I am *part* of the forests and the mountains" (Helander-Renvall, 2010, p. 49).

Appropriately, Sámi tradition displays the same scientific, legal, and social innovation and sophistication toward conservation of wild resources that one sees in Western European cultivation (crop rotation, manure-based fertilizers, plowing techniques, etc.). Sámi people have always used off-seasons to protect game (Korhonen, 2005, p. 186)–a concept not widely used in Western nations until the late 19th century. Sámi people have always set snares at heights to catch mostly male ptarmigan ensuring healthy reproduction (Korhonen, 2005, p. 188). Sleeping fox were not allowed be killed (Itkonen, 1948, p. 27-28). In the Deatnu, the use of gill nets ensure that only mature fish are caught, *buođđu* dams were not allowed to blockade rivers, and seines only work small portions of calm waters. Sámi people are adamant about the destructive effects of wading in the river and disturbing the spawning grounds of fish, and the popular fishing technique of river-wading is targeted as a principal source of salmon depopulation. Fish reserves protected critical habitat, and off-seasons based on moon cycles allowed for healthy reproduction (Helander, Somby, and Boekraad, 2003, p. 5).

The catch-and-release mentality of the sportsman-conservationist is inextricable from the exhaustion of natural resources in the Western world. In Western Europe, conservation efforts were first driven by the limiting of hunting and fishing rights to the elite (Harrison, 1992, p. 69;

Leopold, 1933, p. 10). In England, game birds were reared in captivity for stock replenishment as early as 1523 to supplement natural reproduction, and privatized ownership systems ushered in no-hunting/no-trespassing zones as a class-based conservation technique under James I (1603-1625) (Leopold, 1933, p. 10-11). In the United States, however, the licensing of hunters and fishermen began in earnest in the late 1800s in response to the depletion and extinction of game and aquatic species (Leopold, 1933, p. 13), most notably the American bison, which were slaughtered ruthlessly as a militaristic strategy to undermine a principal food source of Native Americans in the plains (Smits, 1994). The proceeds from these licenses were (and still are) channeled into conservation efforts, restocking fisheries, enforcing game harvest laws, and restoring habitat for threatened species. The implication of this licensing system is that harvesters are chiefly responsible for the welfare of the species they harvest, and not the general public, nor those who develop and change the land. Healthy ecosystems, however, are a greater factor in creating sustainable harvests than subsistence hunting. On the Lac du Flambeau Reservation in Wisconsin, wide-spread, year-round hunting has maintained sustainable deer herds and healthy forests at much-desired pre-European contact densities (Reo and Karl, 2010, p. 741). Wisconsin's largest reservation, for the Menominee people, famously has forests so much healthier than the neighboring territories, that its boundaries can be seen from outer space. Yet in popular discourse, ecological devastation is typically blamed disproportionately on those lowest in social class: the poacher in the king's forest, the ethnic immigrant or indigenous person, the non-land-owners, and those who need to hunt for food.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Sámi people largely disagree with the states' assessments that traditional fishing decimates the salmon population. Most Sámi fisherman

believe that net fishing is a more sustainable way to harvest salmon. The belief that net fishing is destructive is principally a belief that is imported to Sápmi. Andrey Judin's comments are especially revealing: "I have a firm belief that it is important not to forbid catching fish using a net since while fishing with a net one can catch only large fish and clean the bottom of a river by mixing the bottom's soil" (qtd. in Mustonen, 2004, p. 344). In Judin's view, humans are essential for the balance of ecosystems, and not simply a contaminant within them. In this light, contemporary resource management purposefully limits extraction of fish more than habitat-protection for cultural reasons. In terms of sustainability, we are sustaining not the resource itself, but our own human relationships with it. Or, as Ahousaht fisherman Robert Foley, explains: "It's trying to manage ourselves within the resource instead of trying to manage the resource" (Schreiber, 2002, p. 372).

Netter and angler alike herald the virtues of their technique's ecological sustainability in the contemporary conflict over fishing access on the Deatnu. But this is no recent dispute informed by the empirical methodology of sciences. Instead, this disagreement dates back at least to the first decades of tourist fishing in Norway. While it was little secret that the sportsmen have long targeted nets as the primary cause for the lack of abundant catch (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 69), net fishermen tended to blame anglers for the same low harvests. Henry Pottinger wrote of declining salmon fishing on the nearby Álaheadju (Alta) River in 1857. Ronkainan and Särömaa (1998) relay Pottinger's conclusions:

> Suurin syy lohen katoon on suomalaisissa, jotka saivat ehkä epäviisaasti ensimmäisiltä joen vuokraajilta oikeuden kalastaa kotitarpeiksi. Samat joen vuokraajat toimittivat paikallisille myös parempia välineitä, joilla he pystyivät tappamaan satoja lohiasyksyllä kutuaikaan joko verkoilla tai tuulastaen. Paikallliset pilkkaavat ajatusta, että lohi palaisi takaisin samaan jokeen. Paikalliset syyttävät lohen vähenemisestä englantilaisilta irto

päässeitten lohien ”pahasta viestinnästä” eli lohet varoittavat muita. Lohista on tullut arkoja eivätkä ne nouse tavoittelemaan perhoa. Lohen vähyydestä todistavat myös verkkojen ja lohipatojen heikot saaliit. (p. 37)

[The greatest reason for the disappearance is because of the Finns [Kvens], who received the right to fish for food from the river's first tenants, which was perhaps unwise. The same leasers of the river provided the locals also with better equipment, with which they were able to kill hundreds of salmon in the fall during the spawn with both nets and spears. The locals mocked the idea that the salmon would return back to the same river. The locals blamed the decline of the salmon stocks on the salmon which escaped the clutches of the Englishmen, and spreading the "bad news." In other words, the salmon warned the others. The salmon became timid and they didn't rise to meet the fly. The small yields from nets and fish dams also demonstrated the scarcity of salmon.]

Because English sportsmen imported the belief that net fishing is environmentally destructive, net fishing for salmon on rivers was prohibited in Norway in 1858, although enforcement was minimal in Finnmark (Ronkainen and Särömaa, 1998, p. 79). As an international boundary, however, the Deatnu was spared from this ban.

Figure 1: Niilo Vuomajoki preparing salmon with a cloudberry cream sauce.

As noted in the previous chapter, the sportsmanship that the English imported to Norway

was rejected by Sámi fishermen outright. The tourist industry, both then and now, is dominated by a number of aspects of stereotypical masculine culture. Niilo Vuomajoki (2010), for instance, notes that these groups of men who come to Ohcejohka to drink and fish seldom bring their wives and children along–a fact that he finds rightly unusual. For Vuomajoki, seining is centered around the family, and that members of his family from four generations, from age six to ninety, gathered annually during seining season to work together. The operative metaphors of fishing are domestic and rooted in understanding the relationship between one's self and one's ecosystem. Vuomajoki's own identity is rooted in intimately knowing the fish, the waters, and the land. He explains, "*Itsestään on selvää, että esimerkiksi saamelaisella minulla on vahva identiteetti kalastajana, metsästäjänä, pohjoisen luonnon tuntijana, sitä huolimatta että muun muussa minä en ole mestästänytkään!*" [It's clear enough that I–a Sámi person–have, for example a strong identity as a fisherman, a hunter, and a person who knows the nature of the north, notwithstanding the fact that that I've never even gone hunting!].

The connection between self-sustaining systems of reciprocal exchange is so important in Sámi culture, it borders the sacred. As we chatted about the science of microecology and the importance of salmon spawning habitat, Vuomajoki (2010) explained:

> *Muistan niin. Minun syntymäkotona siellä minun isä ja sedät ja ukkia ja muutamat ihmiset ne jotenkin eivät sallineet. Se oli semmoinen puolitoisenkilometrinen alue, että me lapset ei edes rannoille. Se oli joku ihana hiekkatörmä siinä jokisessa rantaa juosta niin. Ei luvanneet meitä niin siinä kuljeksi aina ollenkaan. Minä ihmittelen aina silloin, että miksi ei? ... Kyllähän ennen huomasin kun sitä kuka soutamassa on. Ja nyt minä olen huomannut, mikä siinä ollut. Se oli nimettäin semmoinen kukka suvanto. Se oli semmoinen suvanto ja se oli paljon kasvatusta kukkia. Se oli samalla semmoinen lohien hyvä kutu suvanto. Totta kai oli selvää että ei sinne päästetty ihmisiä pyri. Ja nyt turistit tämän ainutlaatuiseen lohisuvantoon niin kuin sitä kutusuvannon rantaan ne kulkevat ja kävelee. Ja onkivat siinä. Ja sillä aluella se alueen parhaimpia lohen kutualueita. Se pitää suojella. Se oli, meidän isille, minun sedille ja enoille, ja ukille ja isän ukille, se oli*

pyhä paikka. Se oli jotenkin pyhä paikka. Sinne ei saanut mennä itsekin. Ei saa liiku siellä.

I recall... at my birth-home there was a place where my father and uncles and elders and other people too were prohibited to go. It was an area of about five kilometers, and we children weren't allowed to even go to the shore. There was a lovely steep, sandy bank there in the river to run along the shore. They didn't allow us to even walk there at all. I always wondered then: well, why not? And now I have figured out what was happening there. It was a kind of flowered still-water. I had certainly noticed it before when we were rowing along. It was a sort of still-water, and there was a lot of vegetation and flowers. At the same time, it's also a really good place for salmon to spawn. Of course it was very clear that no one would try to go back there. And now tourists, right in the middle of this unique and exceptional salmon hole, and all over its shore, they trod and walk about. And they fish in it. And it's among the best of this area's spawning habitat. It needs to be protected. For our fathers, for my father's brothers, for my mother's brothers, for my ancestors and my father's ancestors, it was a sacred place. It was in some way a sacred place. You don't just get to just go there yourself. You don't get to move around there.

Consistent with Veikko Anttonen's theory of the sacred in Finno-Ugric cultures as "separate," "dangerous," and "prohibited" (2005, p. 192), Vuomajoki draws upon science to justify traditional resource management and criticize the misuse of historically protected lands by outsiders. These outsiders, of course, do not recognize their use as inappropriate, as they perform their own perceived values of *allemansrätt* and harvest a salmon resource that was stolen from them by hydroelectric dam erection in the 1940s and 1950s (Vilkuna, 1975, p. 380-95).

Figure 2: Noaidi drumhead drawings from Julev-Sápmi, 17th century.

For the Sámi, the salmon are tied into the

sacred structures of the universe, the balance of humanity, ecology, and economy that ensure sustainability and perpetuation of the cosmic order. Such evidence can be seen on the Sámi salmon fishing *noaidi* drum preserved from 17th century Julev-Sápmi (the Luleå river valley), which reveals a cosmic map in which fish can navigate between lakes, the underworld, and the celestial sphere. These pathways converge at a sacred *sieidi* site. Proper rituals at *sieidi* sites facilitate the abundance of fish. The following story is told in 1888 by Johan Kitti from Láhppi:

> *De lei boares olmmái, guhte lei hui lihkolaš guliid oažžut muhtin jávrris. Son válddii alcces ovtta nuorra olbmá guoibmin, guhte diđii ahte son anii sieiddi. Go soai bođiiga jávrri lusa, de soai suohpuiga muohti ja oaččuiga olu guliid.*
>
> *Go eahket šattai, de soai vuoššaiga guliid. Go báhti duldegođii, de válddii boares olmmái vuoja ja bijai sierra nu ahte nuorra olmmái dan ii galgan oaidnit. Go soai leigga geargan borramis, de soai bijaiga nohkkat, muhto nuorra olmmái gozii jávohaga nu ahte boares olmmái dan ii árvidan.*
>
> *Go boares olmmái lei veallán oanehaččat–ja doaivvui ahte su olmmái lei nohkkan, de njágai son olggos fatnasii ja sugai rastá joga. Go son bođii dohko, de manai son muhtun vilges, jorba geađggi lusa, maid son vuoiddai vuojain, ja son manai fatnasii, bođii ruoktot ja nohkai. Dasto njágai nuorra olmmái fatnasii, sugai rastá joga, válddii dan vuidojuvvon geađggi fatnasii ja suvddii guovdu jávrri, gosa son bálkestii, ja sugai ruoktot nohkkama várás. Go son lihkai bajás, de manai son olggos oaidnin dihtii mo olggobealde lei. Son áiccai ahte geađgi lei seamma sajis.*
>
> *Dan beaivve soai bivddiiga, muhto soai eaba ožžon olu guliid, aitto dan mađe ahte soai vuoššaiga. Dat ledge hui silit, nu ahte soai oaččuiga hui unnán vuoja. Muhto boares olmmái vurkii vuoja su lihttásis. Nuorra olmmái árvidii dan hui bures. Son bijai nohkkat, dainnago son diđii maid boares olmmái galggai. Go boares olmmái lei ruoktot boahtán, de manai nuorra olmmái olggos ja sugai geađggi lusa, maid son válddii fatnasii ja čanai nuppi stuorra geađggi dasa hui nannosit veattáiguin gitta, sugai guovdu jávrri ja suhppii dohko, bođii ruoktot ja nohkai. Go iđit lei šaddan, de manai olggos ja oinnii ahte geađgi lei gastain seamma sajis. Son šattai sakka ipmašii, muhto son orui jávohaga.*
>
> *Dan beaivve bivddiiga soai maiddá, muhto eaba soai ožžon maidege guleed, vaikko soai oinniiga hui ollu guliid álo go soai suohpuiga nuohti Muhto go nuohtti bođii gáddái, de eaba soai ožžon maidige. De dajai nuorra olmmái:*
>
> *–Heittot bai leage du ipmil.*
>
> *Boares olmmái árvidii ahte su ipmil lei billistuvvon. Son suhtai nu sakka olbmásis ahte son áiggui su goddit. Nuorra olmmái gertii báhtarit, dađe buoret mađe farggbut.*

Boares olmmái bázii okto oktan nuhtiin ja fatnasiin. Muhto son oaččui nu olu guliid ahte son ii sáhttán rádjat. (qtd. in Gaski, Solbakk, Solbakk, 2004, p. 102-103)

[There was once an old man, who always had great luck when fishing from some particular lake. He took a young person out to this lake as a fishing companion, and this young man knew that he used a *sieidi*. When they came to the lake, they put out their seine and got a lot of fish.

When it became evening, they cooked up some fish. When the stew began to boil, the old man took some fish grease and put it aside, so that the young man wouldn't see it. When they had finished eating, they went to bed, but the young man stayed awake silently, so the old man didn't know that he was awake.

When the old man had laid down for a little while, and thought that his friend was asleep, he then crept out to his boat and rowed up along the river. When he got there, then he went to a white, round stone, which he greased with the fish fat. He then went back to his boat, returned to the camp, and slept. The young companion crept out to the boat, rowed along the river, and took the greased stone to the boat. He rowed the stone to the middle of the lake, where he threw it into the water, and rowed back to the camp to sleep. When he woke up, he went outside to see how things were. He noticed that the stone was in the exact same place.

That day they fished, but they didn't get many fish, only enough that they could cook dinner. It was terribly weak stew, and they got just a little grease. But the old man saved the grease in a little container. The young person noticed this. He set off for bed, because he knew what the old man had to do. When the old man had come home, then the young man went out and rowed to the stone, which he took into the boat. This time, he tied another big stone to it with roots; he rowed to the center of the lake and threw it out. Then he went back and slept. When morning came, he went out and saw that the stone was once again in the same place. He started to really marvel about how this could be happening, but he stayed silent.

That day they fished again, but they didn't get any fish at all, even though they always saw a lot of fish when they threw out the seine. But when they pulled the seine to the shore, they didn't get a thing. Then the young man said, "Your god is in fact perhaps weak."

The old man knew that his god had been offended. He got so very mad at his companion that he intended to kill him. The young man had to flee, the faster the better. The old man stayed alone with one seine and boat. But when he started fishing again, he got so many fish that he wasn't even able to keep all of them.]

In this tale, the proper honoring of the spirits through the fish *sieidi* ensure their perpetuation, and the sustainable relationship that Sámi people maintain with both their ecosystem, their

economy, the spirits, and their way of life. Kitti suggests it is the disruption of *the relationship* between the fishermen and fish, and not simply the fish stock itself, that results in poor harvests.

The relationship between wild game, *sieidi* sites, and human behavior is reflected in another tale, collected by Isak Saba in 1918 in Njávdán:

> *De lei dolin noaidi das Njávdámis. Dat lávii ále gotti viežžat Áhkobávttis goad dárbbašii. Dušše čorvviid gal bijai ále Áhkovávtti čoarvegárdái.*
>
> *Go dat vuoras jápmigođii, de dadjá bárdnásis ahte:*
>
> *–Goas gotti dárbbašat, de galggat Áhkobávttis viežžat. Dušše čorvviid galggat bidjat čoarvegárdái, gokko oinnešat ahte vádjit lea.*
>
> *Ja de jámii áhčči.*
>
> *De manai muhtin áigi. De jurddaša gánda, ahte eallá son aiddo Áhkobávttis alcces moadde gotti viežžamin, ahte lea go doppe mihkkige. Njágai aláža ala, de oaidná ge gottiid. De bážii ovtta. Dat gal gahčai. Muhto earát eai ruohtastan báhtarussii, nu mo gottit lávejit, muhto bohtet lagabui vel. De dat olmmoš čuoččastii ja bážii nuppi gotti.*
>
> *Muhto ain bohte lagabui, eai bala. Son bážii goalmmát, dan maid deaivvai. Muhto eará gottit easka lodjo, nu ahte birra váccašit. De dan olbmui manai hirpmusin. Ii fuollan gottiin iige čorvviin, muhto čorvviin, muhto čálii stuorra ruossa bákteseaidnái Áhkobáktái.*
>
> *Golbma Sállamis ássi noaiddi leamašmaiddái suhkalan goddebivdui Áhkobáktái. Muhto go áice dan ruossa bávttis, de šadde geađgin. Geađggit gohččojit ain dál Noaidegeađggit, ja leat aiddo Áhkobávtti buohta Sállan beal nuori. Dan rájes eai leamaš eambbo gottit Áhkobávttis. Muhto čoarvegárdi gal gávdno vel, ja ruossa lea maiddái bávttis gitta.*
>
> *Áhkobávttis lea boares bálvvossadji Njávdánvuonnjálmmis. Čoarvegárdi dovdo ain dál bures.* (Gaski, Solbakk, Solbakk, 2004, p. 89-90)

> [In the old days, there was a noaidi here in Njávdán. He always hunted wild reindeer on Áhkobákti, whenever he needed them. He always made sure to place the antlers into Áhkobákti's antler cache around a *sieidi*.
>
> When the old man grew sick became gravely ill, he told his son,
>
> –Whenever you need to take a reindeer, just go to Áhkobákti to get it; just be sure that you put the antlers into the antler cache, where I have always done so.
>
> And then the father died.
>
> Then some time passed. The boy thought that he would go up to Áhkobákti and maybe get a few wild reindeer for himself. He wondered if he would see anything up

> there. He climbed up to the summit. High on the top, he saw some wild reindeer. He shot at one, and it indeed fell to the ground. But the other reindeer didn't run away, as wild reindeer usually do. Instead, they came still closer to the son. Then he stood up and shot another wild reindeer. But again the reindeer came still closer. They weren't afraid of him in the least. He shot at a third reindeer. He hit that one too. But then the other wild reindeer became so tame, they walked right around him. Then the man became terribly crazed. He didn't take care of the reindeer nor did he place the antlers at the sieidi. Instead, he drew a big cross right onto the cliff walls of Áhkobákti.
>
> Later on, three noaidis who lived in Sállan rowed to Áhkobákti to hunt. When they noticed the cross in the cliff, they turned to stone. The stones are called still to this day called the Noaidi Stones, and they are all right across from Áhkobákti and east of Sállan. After this there weren't any more wild reindeer on Áhkobákti. But the antler cache indeed is still visible, and the cross is also still on the cliff.
>
> Áhkobákti is an old offering place Njávdán-fjord. The antler cache is known well, even today.]

The story dramatizes the colonial and religious influences that divide families, blaming the crazed behavior of the son for the infertility of the land. In fact, wild reindeer stocks were depleted by the extensive herding, caused by colonial-era taxation. The depletion of these wild reindeer was caused by the colonial influence that the story aptly blames.

These notions of sustainability have parallels with other indigenous cultures across the globe. Krister Stoor (2007) draws parallels between Sámi and Native American hunting traditions, noting: "*Precis som för jägarna i Kanada är det inte skjutskickligheten eller konsten att spåra djur som är det väsentliga för en god jägare. Skytten måste stå i en god relation till naturen och till sitt byte, för djuret som ger sitt liv har bestämt vem som ska få fälla honom/ henne*" [Just like for [indigenous] hunters in Canada, it is not the skills of the shooter or the art of

Figure 3: Wayne Valliere holding an antler carving of a hunter, standing upon a turtle's back, releasing his *manidoo* in the form of an eagle.

tracking an animal which is essential for a good hunter. Rather, the shooter must be in a good relationship with nature and with the game for the animal to give its life to him or her."] (p. 166). In this context I turn to a story told to me by Wayne Valliere (2010):

> One time, a time when the spirits of the deer, they were sitting around and it was very cold, in their lodge. Somewhere deep in the forest, a huge *gichi-ayaabe*, which means a huge big buck, was sitting by the *ishkwaandem*, by the door. Another big buck sat next to him. But not as big as he was. The big prominent does were sitting next to the big bucks. And so forth and so on, different deer all the way around towards this little fork horn, who was sitting kindof in the middle of the circle. Off to the side, about halfway into the circle. This little buck.
>
> Well then something strange happened when they were sitting around their lodge. An *opwaagan*, a pipe, come floating in. An *opwaagan*. A pipe came floating in, it was smoldering, the tobacco was smoldering. It was floating through the air. That pipe went slowly around the lodge. And it stopped by *gichi-ayaabe*'s face. By the big buck's mouth. And right away the big buck pulled his face back. And that pipe moved all the way down slowly stopping by each big deer. These deer would look away. The does, they looked away. It passed them. It went all the way around to different deer. And it finally came to where that little *ayaabe* sits, to where that little buck was sitting. And that little buck spoke up. He said, "Oh! So you wanna smoke with me, huh? Okay." So he reached out and he starts smoking (making puffing noises) on that *opwaagan*.
>
> And that big buck said, "You shouldn't've did that! You shouldn't've did that! You see, the Anishinaabe, the Anishinaabe out there, they're hunters. *Giiwosewininiwag*. They're the hunters. They're holding a ceremony with that pipe. And they're asking us to give our lives. They're holding a ceremony to hunt and now, because of what you did, they're going to catch us tomorrow. You smoked that pipe. You shouldn't've did that."

> "Oh no," he said, "I can run faster than they can. I can outrun them. I can run faster than any one of those human beings. Those Anishinaabe." The big buck said, "You have a lot to learn. You have a lot to learn, little one." Nothing more was said.
>
> The next day, they headed out. They crossed a big area, and they got to their feeding grounds at the edge of a big *mitigoowaaking*, a big forest. And as soon as they got there, they caught the scent of those hunters. Right away, they took off, they started running the other direction. The hunters were closing in. And what happened was that that little buck broke off. He ran off. He broke off from the herd and started running by himself to show how fast he was. What he didn't realize was that these hunters were light on their feet. They were wearing snowshoes and they were light on their feet, and they could walk on top of the snow. It was at the time of the year when there was a crust on the snow. And as fast as that little buck ran, he was breaking through the snow. And eventually the Anishinaabe caught up to him and they took his life. They killed him.
>
> Well the next day, the next time this little buck remembered, he woke up in the spirit world. And there were some other bucks that had passed on, that lived their life out and passed on. And he told them bucks, he said, "You see," he said, "It's okay," he said, "for us to smoke that pipe from the Anishinaabe because when they took my life," he said, "they had a huge ceremony for me. They treated me very good. They gave me a lot of respect. They used everything on me. And they gave me a grand ceremony. They offered goods for my life, and they begged me a thousand pardons for my life. They made beautiful things from my hooves and my horns. Tools. And they clothed themselves, they used my hide. My hide lives forever." He said, "And it gives strength to them people. And they respected me so much, that it's okay to do that. To smoke that pipe."
>
> So from now on, from that time on, the other bucks that came to the spirit world, they learned that. Because we believe in reincarnation. So the other bucks, when they come in that way, they come back down, and they are hunted again. So they came back down. Because their *manidoo*, they remember the spirit world, so when they came back a second time, they always honored the Anishinaabe, the ones that respect them. The ones that offer goods for the right to hunt them. So that today we know that days ahead of time, before we even hunt a deer, before we kill a deer, it's not because we are good hunters. It's because days ahead of time, that deer is going to give his spirit to us, to make us strong. So we respect him a great deal for that. There's a mutual respect between the Anishinaabe and the *waawaashkeshiwag* because of it. We take care of our part and they take care of their part.

As with Anishinaabe deer hunting, Sámi salmon fishing honors the salmon and ensures its reincarnation. Sámi people do not simply extract fish from the ecosystem; instead, they have a role to play in the perpetuation of the ecosystem itself through the harvest.

Indigenous communities have pioneered innovations in sustainable land-use centuries ahead of Western policymakers. This sustainability is connected to identity itself, which is rooted in the knowledge and appropriate use of one's environment. If the environment is destroyed, so too is part of one's own self. Colonization, then, is an attack on sustainability on all fronts, and resource extraction is bound to both economic dependence and identity destruction. Although neoliberal notions of sustainability might promise a greener planet, we must remember that sustainability is an ethnocentric concept built upon cultural relationships. As we can see with Finland's ban of drift-netting, or with the continued restriction of *buođđu* netting in Norway, these neoliberal notions do not promise us traditional harvests, nor the tried and true methods of Sámi sustainable management, but rather the "maintenance and reproduction of social power" from whence they came.

Book 2

On the South Shores of Lake Superior

Chapter 5

Harvesting in the Northwoods

Subsistence harvesting has a long and complex history in the Lake Superior Region. For centuries, subsistence was the sole livelihood for the original Lakota and Ojibwe inhabitants of the region. The fur trade ushered in a new area of commodification of the Lake Superior Region's natural resources (1650-1850), and conditions generally worsened as French trappers were displaced by English traders, and then Americans (also called Yankees). In Lac du Flambeau, people still speak of each group subsequently demanding more furs in exchange for goods, and the "golden age" of the fur trade quickly deteriorated. Ojibwe people became increasingly dependent on trade items, like rifles, which in turn made the harvest of animals more efficient, thereby diminishing the market value. Animal populations were exhausted over time, and the subsequent clear cutting of the white pine forests in the region hindered the ability for the game to recover, and several animals were driven to local extinction. Suomen Metsästysmuseo*'s Hunttarit!* exhibition explores the decline of moose in the region:

> *Hirvet metsästettiin Michiganista ja Wisconsinista sukupuuttoon 1900-luvun alussa. Minnesotassa kanta ehdittiin rauhoittaa ennen täydellistä tuhoa vuonna 1922. Hirven katoamisen syinä on pidetty nopeaa metsien hakkuuta, metsästystä ja pohjoisen hakkuutaimikoihin levittäytyneiden valkohäntäpeurojen kantamaa aivomatoa*

(Parelaphostrongylus tenuis), jolle hirvillä ei ole vastustuskykyä. (2012)

> Moose were hunted to extinction in Michigan and Wisconsin in the beginning of the beginning of the 1900s. In Minnesota, the populations were protected before complete destruction in the year 1922. The reason for the moose's disappearance is believed to be the rapid deforestation, over-hunting, and the spread of brainworm, which was carried by whitetail deer into the cutover regions of the north. Moose have no resistance to brainworm.

The timbers, floated down rivers to mills, scoured out river bottoms, permanently affecting fish habitat. Even to date, the restoration of coaster book trout (a type of large migratory brook trout that migrates to Lake Superior) is said to be hindered by long-term spawning ground damage to Wisconsin's rivers. Most game animals remained in a state of decline for decades, only recovering after the forest had regained some of its health.

Widespread poverty, overpopulation, land shortages, and religious or cultural persecution led a wave of New Immigrants to immigrate to the Lake Superior Region between 1860-1910. They were drawn largely for reasons of economic necessity. In Finland, for instance, overpopulation and land shortages stretched the limits of difficult northern ecocline agriculture in the southwestern parts of the country. Concurrently, the transition from wooden ships to iron ships collapsed the timber and tar industries, while Russification policies became so untenable that Governor-General Nikolai Ivanovich Bobrikov was assassinated by a Finnish nationalist in 1904.

Copper and Iron mines around Lake Superior offered better wages than work in Europe, and logging camps provided work to many in the area. Some homesteaded these relatively infertile lands, but many purchased inexpensive land from railroad and logging companies, who were given generous allotments from the United States government. Life in the mines was arduous and dangerous, however, and most aspired to escape this work for a life of farming.

Most of these farmers actively trapped, snared, and hunted animals in any way they could.

According to Suomen Metsästysmuseo (2012),

> *Metsästys oli tärkeä osa korven raivaajien taloutta. Johan Piippo Minnesotasta onnistui pyytämään ensi vuosinaan 1870-luvulla susia niin, että saattoi ostaa nahoilla härkäparin ja lehmän Douglasin piirikunnassa sijainneelle tilalleen. Peter Lahti Minnesotan Franklinista puolestaan myi yhtenä vuonna 9 000 piisamin nahkaa saaden 10-15 senttiä kappaleelta.*
>
> Hunting was an important part of the economy for these pioneers in the northern forest. In his first year of settlement in the 1870s, Johan Piippo was able to kill so many wolves, that he was able to use their pelts to purchase a pair of bulls and a cow for his farm in Douglas County, Minnesota. For his part, Peter Lahti from Franklin, Minnesota, sold 9,000 muskrat furs, receiving 10-15 cents per pelt.

Few laws governed these early hunters, which at times was dangerous. According to Hans R. Wasastjerna in *Minnesotan Suomalaisten Historia* (1957):

> *Pyssykin oli hyvä olla olemassa. Sillä sai metsistä kaiken tarvitsemansa. Peuroja jos halusi, ei tarvinnut kuin jättää yöksi kourallinen suolaa pihamaalle. Siitä saattoi aamuvarhaisella ampua haluamansa vaikka mökin ikkunasta. Jos oli kokematon metsämieheksi, saattoi kaivaa ansakuopan tai peurapolulle paulan, niin jopa paisti tuli. Jotkut virittivät metsään 'villipyssynkin', mutta se alkoi olla jo vaarallista niihin aikoihin, jolloin naapureita tuli. Sillä tavalla vanha Heikkikin menetti henkensä, käveli toisen virittämään ansaan." Moose Lake, Minnesota, 1880-luku.* (p. 752)
>
> [It was good to have a gun. With it you could get anything you needed from the forest. Deer, if you wanted them, and you didn't need to do anything more than to leave a handful of salt in the front yard. Then you only needed to shoot what you wanted from the window of the cabin. If you're not an experienced hunter, then you could dig a pit-trap or set a snare on a deer path, and then you'd get your meat. Some even set up 'wild guns' in the forest, but it began to get awfully dangerous, whenever neighbors came by. It was in this way that Old Heikki died, as he walked along and tripped a set-gun trap. Moose Lake, Minnesota, 1880s.]

and many in the Lake Superior Region worked as professional hunters until the sale of venison was banned in the late 1800s. At this time, restaurants from Chicago would purchase hindquarter

meat for about 25 cents a pound, and logging camps bought front shoulder meat for seven cents a pound (Suomen Metsästysmuseo, 2012).

The region's flourish Finnish population, hailing first from Lapland and Finnmark and later from Ostrobothnia, had its share of professional hunters.

> *Embarrassiin oli muuttanut Juha Erkki Takala, jota kutsuttiin ammattinsa vuoksi "Hunttari-Erkiksi"... Hän oli oikeastaan ammatiltaan metsästäjä ja harjoitti varsinkin turkisten pyyntiä mutta kaatoi tarpeen tullen myös peuroja ja hirviä. Sanotaan hänen kaataneen satoja peuroja ja kymmeniä hirviä...*
>
> *Eräretkiltään palatessaan hän saattoi poiketa taloon ikäänkuin sattumalta. Saatuaan kupin kahvia tai aterian hän sivumennen huomautti vähän matkan päässä metsässä olevan lihaa, jos jota kuta halusi sen noutaa. Itse hän lähti muina miehinä jatkamaan matkaansa... Maksua ei Erkille tarjottu eikä hän sitä odottanutkaan. Korvauksena Erkille tarjotti hetken tullen ateria ja tarvittaessa yösija.*
>
> *Varsinaisen toimeentulonsa Erkki teki turkiksilla. Tähän toimintaan tarvittin susia, kettuja, majavia, minkkejä ja piisamia. Muutamia muitakin ammattimetsäsätäjiä Embarrassin alueella. Voidaan mainita John Harjunpää ja Otto Takkula." 1900-luvun alku.* (Norha, 1960)
>
> [Juha Erkki Takala had moved to Embarrass, and he was called according to his vocation, 'Hunter Erkki' ... He really was a professional hunter, and he particularly did a lot of trapping for furs, but he also took deer and moose, as he needed them. It's said he killed hundreds of deer and dozens of moose...
>
> As he returned from his excursions in the wilds, he might end up at a house, as if by chance. After receiving a cup of coffee or food he might casually remark that a short trip away, in the forest, that there was some meat, if someone wanted to retrieve it. For his part, he set off to continue on his travels... No payment was offered to Erkki, nor did he expect any. The only payment offered to Erkki was some food or a place to sleep for the night, as he needed.
>
> Erkki supported himself principally by trapping. This activity required abundant wolves, fox, beavers, mink, and muskrat. There were some other professional hunters in the area around Embarrass. One could mention John Harjunpää and Otto Takkula. Early 1900s.]

In the early days, hunting and fishing in this region were not limited to males. Near Fence Lake, in Lac du Flambeau, Ojibwe residents used a fence to funnel deer into a narrows near the

lakeshore. Men would drive the deer, and women would shoot them in the narrows. Or, Finnish immigrant Maria Keränen in Lac la Belle, Michigan, even lived as a professional hunter:

> *Siellä asuu m. m. Maria Keränen, tunnettu metsästäjä, ampunut moniakymmeniä susia ja karhuja y. m. metsän riistaa. Syntynyt Pudasjärvellä ja tänne tultuaan palvellut kymmeniä vuosia, asettuen parikymmentä vuotta sitten tänne luonnon syliin. Asuen yksin torpassaan, toimenaan metsästys, kalastus ja marjojen kokoaminen.* (Hirvonen, 1920)
>
> [Among others, that was where Maria Keränen lived, a famous hunter, who shot dozens of wolves and bears and other forest game. She was born in Pudasjärvi and after coming here she was a servant for decades, later settling for some twenty years in the wilderness. She lived alone in her hut, surviving by hunting, fishing and berry picking.]

Male exclusivity in the earliest hunts was rare in these regions, although males seem to have assumed more of the hunting work over the past century.

For Finns (and others) across this region, subsistence hunting and trapping dictated not only one's economy, but also the relationship one maintained with broad and sometimes dangerous tracts of wild land. Wasastjerna notes:

> *Johan Piippo oli innokas metsämies. Eräällä retkellä ruuti kastui Lake Traverse-järven alueella, noin 45 mailia (72 km) kotoa. Sää oli kylmä ja myrskyinen. Nälkäkuolema uhkasi. Piippo onnistui kuitenkin saamaan kiinni pesukarhun, josta söi puolet heti nuotionsa äärellä. Toisen puolen, jonka hän suolasi kastuneella ruudillaan, hän käytti ravinnokseen vaivalloisella kotimatkallaan. Holmes City, Minnesota.* (1957, p. 115).
>
> [Johan Piippo was an enthusiastic woodsman. On some trip his gunpowder got wet in the Lake Traverse area, some 45 miles from home. The weather was cold and stormy. Starvation was a threat. Piippo succeeded, however, to catch a raccoon, which he ate half of right away, roasted over the campfire. The other half, which he preserved with his wet gunpowder, he used to sate his hungers on his arduous trek home. Holmes City, Minnesota.]

Because of the infertile lands, many of the earliest generation of farms on cutover lands failed, which were gradually recolonized by the forest, and granted back to the state, before being consolidated into the National Forest System and various state forest systems in the early

20th century. Following the collapse of the logging boom, and during the decline of the mining era, Franklin Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps employed many in this region for reforestation and other public works projects that still scatter the landscape with distinctive masonry work and groves of non-native Norway pine.

Early tourists exploited the railroads designed for use by logging and mining companies to vacation in the north, and resorts sprung up in semi-remote lakeshore locations across the region. New employment was procured through these resorts, and the skills required for subsistence living and professional hunters easily translated into the new occupation of guiding. According to Dave Osborn (2011), old-time guiding bears little resemblance to the guiding of today, where technology and self-promotion reigns supreme. Then, as it is now, few could live from guiding alone, and they used guiding income to supplement other odd jobs or seasonal employment in logging camps harvesting new-growth forests. Most lived by many means, in part because wages were low, grocery stores were sparse and offered little more than dried or canned goods, and because a mixed-economic strategy was more stable than relying on one source of income alone. Subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering existed alongside logging work, guiding, and other paid work. I saw Leon Valliere (2013) once explain to a group of Lac du Flambeau school children that during his childhood, "We didn't go to the store if we wanted food. The forest was our grocery store."

Others trained in outdoor skills further embedded themselves in the emerging tourist industry. Guides sold knowledge of local land and water for profit. Lumberjack shows emerged, stylizing lumberjack skills for the amusement of tourists who marveled at their feats. In Lac du Flambeau, the Indian Bowl opened, where secular powwows adapted (or some claim

appropriated) traditional dances, putting on a cultural spectacle for predominately white tourist audiences. Local Ojibwe in Lac du Flambeau were savvy at exploiting the ignorance of the tourists. Larry Nesper alludes to this in "Historical Ambivalence in a Tribal Museum" (2005), where he details totem pole carving in Lac du Flambeau–an art developed among Ojibwe people only after they realized that tourists would pay good money for these objects:

> George Brown, Jr., after whom the museum is named, recalls that his father, the aforementioned "Chief Big Wind," who owned a sign-painting business, would ask the kids at the supper table or as they visited him in his workshop, "What should I carve on the totem pole next?" and the kids would suggest "Owl!" "Bear!" "Eagle!" "Pig!" He would set out to do it. When he sold the item to a tourist or a resort owner in the area, he would make something up about having a dream of what the pole should look like. (p. 10)

As tourism rose, increased attention to insider/outsider dynamics became more prevalent, especially since tourists were becoming further removed from rural or agricultural roots, and their outdoorsman skills frequently proved lacking. The role of tourists in the north became more influential in policy-making within the region, and the impacts of an emerging postindustrial economy were showing more of an impact within the Lake Superior Region. Because Northern Ontario never received the tourist pressure as the south shore, the singular cultural region began a slow process of diverging into two separate cultural spaces.

The 1960s represented a period of rapid change in Upper Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Because of the impact of animal rights activists, the technological advances in synthetic fur production, and the effectiveness of "fur-farms" (including one in Lac du Flambeau), the bottom dropped out of the trapping market. Before the 1960s, illegal hunting to feed one's family was regularly permitted by all but the cruelest of wardens. Only the sale of illegal meat would be considered criminal. In the 1960s, wardens began stricter enforcement of

all kills, and illegal hunting and fishing had to be done with great secrecy. In part, this change was brought about as the needs to craft policy to advance the needs of the tourist economy began to outweigh the needs to sustain a mixed economy. A new wave of transplants and seasonal residents gained much influence over the land and its management.

Though shooting a large buck or catching a large muskie always perhaps had some prestige attached to it, sportsmanship began to take hold of the region for the first time. Old-time meat-fishermen had little time to chase after giant but uncatchable fish. The custom of weighing and measuring fish is a new one, and old photographs of record-size large muskie and sturgeon reveal the relative disinterest in this recent phenomenon. Beyond this, many non-sporting vacationers frequented the region to swim, relax, boat, and snowmobile. They too have had impact on the region. A marked divide began to be apparent between the newer transplants and the families that had roots going back into the subsistence-era. Newer residents were often interested in sportsmanship, and sometimes not particularly interested in food production.

The 1980s and 1990s saw an explosion in tourism in the Northwoods, and a great wave of home-building filled up many lakeshores with homes pressed into tight lots which stood dark throughout most of the year. Some tourists are hunters or fishermen. Some are interested in silent sports involving traversing, like paddling, skiing, or hiking. Others prefer louder sports involving ATVs, jet-skis, and snowmobiles. Many locals partake in a variety of these activities as well, for both function and for leisure.

Yet many of these older European families in the region have sustained their relationship to subsistence as a cornerstone of their identity, and as the center of their family life. Environmental protections from the 1970s and re-introductions of predators have worked to

improve the health of the forests, though the development of lakeshores has taken its toll on waterside mammals, and the impact of motorized boats has compromised the region's aquatic health. For those people who harvest their own food, they have less competition with their neighbors to worry about, but more law enforcement, more "No Trespassing" signs to contend with, and more places of historical use developed into vacation homes.

Subsistence in the contemporary world continues the mixed economic traditions that have lived within the region since the time of the Fur Trade Era, yet in new contexts it elegantly embraces the values of sustainability, local foods, and cultural distinctiveness which are so highly esteemed throughout contemporary American society. There are longstanding traditions in the Lake Superior Region involving harvesting food, and they are worth sustaining through measured economic and ecological policies.

Because this practice is of widespread cultural importance within the Lake Superior Region, many locals have made effort to document and preserve these traditions in print. Ruth Olson, in "Up North: Regionalism, Resources and Self-Reliance" (1997) notes:

> Local People hunt … more for food than trophies. People also fish to eat…. While many need to harvest resources in order to eat, Northerners also place a high priority on producing their own food because they have high standards for what they eat–what they put on the table is better and fresher than what they could get at the store. The combination of avocation and vocation–using sportsman skills, or what have come to be identified as recreational activities, for self-sustenance–is a distinct feature of the North. (70)

Inverting the discourse of necessity, Olson's perspective helps illuminate the systemic problems that persist in representing the northern hunt to outsiders. Marsha Penti's essay, "It's in Us: This Berrypicking" (1991) argues for the indivisibility of people and the berries that they pick, highlighting some of many ways Upper Peninsula residents live their life for and about berries.

On the Canadian side, Jean Manore and Dale Miner's *The Culture of Hunting in Canada* (2007) offers a multidisciplinary collection of essays which highlights the broad and sweeping significance of hunting within Canadian history and cultural practice. Exploring economic, ideological, and multicultural perspectives, these essays dig into hunting's connection to identity and community-creation for both First Nation and non-indigenous persons.

Drawing on the regional storytelling traditions, a number of popular collections are in print which have collected or rewritten hunting and fishing stories for a local audience. Robert Hruska's *Humorous Fishing Stories from the U.P.* (2000) and his *More Humorous Hunting Camp Stories* (2001) offer faithful but stylized renderings of real hunting experiences of Hruska and his cohort. *Tioga Tales*, a series of memoirs by Cully Gage (a pseudonym for Charles van Riper), documents his own experiences growing up in Champion, Michigan during the depression era. Gage's collection paints a broad picture of everyday life through short, often comical, anecdotes, and fishing and hunting play a major role throughout his collection. William Robinson's *Fishing with My Uncles* (2004) is a more nostalgic and warmly comical collection of fishing stories during the Depression era, and Leon "Buckshot" Anderson's *Growing Up Isn't All Fishing and Hunting* (2003) similarly explores the 1930s from the contemplative vantage point of a seasoned writer who contemplates the passage of time and cultural change and continuity. The work of Walker D. Wyman, including *Stories About Hunter and Hunting in Wisconsin and the North Country* (1987) and *Wisconsin and North Country Stories About Fish and Fishermen* (1986), focuses more on hyperbole in narratives, looking at tall tales and "whoppers" which are sometimes swapped by outdoorsmen.

Robert Willging's *On the Hunt: The History of Deer Hunting in Wisconsin* (2008) chronicles the history of deer hunting in Wisconsin, exploring historical debates and conflicts over deer herd management. Mert Cowley's *A Hundred Hunts Ago* (1996) compiles a series of writings, stories Cowley has collected, deer-hunting poetry, deer shacks, and recipes for wild game. Cowley, a teacher and local historian in Chetek, Wisconsin, is perhaps best known for his light, humours folk verse about deer hunting, including *In Camps of Orange* and *The Ultimate Stand*. Cowley's work offers an elegant snapshot of northern Wisconsin subsistence hunting, while representing to his audience how contemporary practice situates into an historical context within the region. Cowley's collection of stories and ethnographic images help illustrate a local discourse about hunting, which extends into all aspects of everyday life. The culture of hunting permeates all aspects of life, and in turn human relationships are maintained through this cultural practice with a shared history in northern Wisconsin.

Collections of stories told from the perspective of game wardens are also popular with local audiences, who gain somewhat voyeuristic access to a region's illegal activities, and perhaps learn a few tricks along the way for avoiding arrest. John Marcon's *The Brush Cop* (1983) details his experience as a warden in Vilas Country, Wisconsin. John Walker's similar collections, including *From the Land Where the "Big" Fish Live: Stories from a Game Warden* (2001), *A Bucket of Bones: Stories of a Game Warden* (1994), and *Whatdaya Mean! A Bad Attitude?: Stories of Game Warden* (2000) relate a number of violating stories from Michigan's Upper Peninsula from a warden's perspective. These stories differ dramatically from the tales of experienced poachers, which are written of earnestly by Cully Gage and Lauri Anderson in their semi-fictionalize accounts.

Many folklorists have previously explored the hunt in terms of sportsmanship. The 2004 special issue of *Western Folklore* focuses intensively on the symbolic act of killing and camp culture. Food preparation, for instance, is largely neglected in this edition. Eric Eliason in “Foxhunting Folkways Under Fire and the Crisis of Traditional Moral Knowledge” (2004)–like Pablo Mukherjee in “Nimrods: Hunting, Authority, Identity” (2005)–demonstrates how contemporary fox hunting in England is, in part, an extension of nationalism, and ritualization of continuity between the royal and imperial traditions and the contemporary nation state. Simon Bronner’s psychoanalytical reading of gendered performance in this issue explores deer camp customs in Pennsylvania, and Jay Mechling contributes a piece exploring the vernacular photography genre of hunting photographs.

Mary Ellen Greenwood, in “Hunting for Meaning: How Characterization Reveals Standards for Behavior in Family Folklore” (2004) points to sources which suggest hunting is about “re-enacting the romance of being in the wilds like famous outdoorsmen and pioneer ancestors” (p. 80). Greenwood states that her informants feel that they do not need to hunt for the meat, and that they hunt exclusively for other reasons. She suggests that “hunting allows its participants the chance to assume new identities in removing themselves from the daily monotony of work and duty” (p. 80). Greenwood’s reading further explores oral culture of hunters and their performance of identity within groups.

Dennis Cutchins and Eric A. Eliason’s outstanding *Wild Games: Hunting and Fishing Traditions in North America* (2009) expands upon the special issue of *Western Folklore*, building upon the previous ethnographic studies by Eric Eliason, Dennis Cutchins, and Simon Bronner. The collection of essays in *Wild Games* assumes an interdisciplinary approach to hunting,

employing a number of theoreticians who explore the ethics of killing for pleasure (Christian Diehm; Jeffrey P. Cain), man-human relations (Jacqueline Thursby; Eric Eliason), production and transmission of knowledge (Dennis Cutchins), and masculine and gendered culture (Simon Bronner; Diane Humphrey Lueck; John F. Bratzel).

Other folklorists have written eloquently about wild harvests in other regions of the country. Mary Hufford's *One Space, Many Places: Folklife and Land Use in New Jersey's Pinelands National Reserve* (1986) explores seasonal harvests in the coastal regions of New Jersey. Many residents in the meadowlands build community identity through "working the cycles" of local ecosystems, economic practices, and community cycles (meadowlands, woodlands, agriculture, and community life) (p.44-45). Hufford has also written on the relationship between storytelling and cultural practice among fox hunters in New Jersey's Pine Barrens in *Chaseworld* (1992). Eric Eliason (2009), in his study of coyote hunting, explores human interrelationships with hunting dogs, calling attention to the anthropocentric views that Western cultures maintain toward animals, which have their own agendas and agency at play.

In "'The River's Like Our Back Yard': Tourism and Cultural Identity in the Ozark National Scenic Riverways" (1994), Erika Brady explores problems of touristic land-use overtaking a region traditionally used by hunters and trappers. Alternatively, Rachel Hopkin (2012) links cultural sustainability with environmental sustainability in Appalachia, where locals have taken to use the term "cultural strip mining" to reflect the changes felt in the mountains and in their communities. Mary Hufford also works in Appalachia in "Context" (2004), where she explores the commodification of ethnohistory, and the relationship local populations have toward capitalist enterprises that are perceived as outside threats to a traditional way of life.

My own ethnographic fieldwork which I present in the following chapters is representative of broader subsistence patterns that exist in the region. These patterns help characterize the "distinctiveness" of the Lake Superior Region, yet they are not intrinsically unique to the region, having counterparts in rural, forested communities throughout the nation. As economic and cultural conditions change in the Northwoods, it is worth measured consideration of the cultural, economic, and ecological future of the region. Younger generations, including myself, have inserted new meanings into cultural practices. These new meanings both define an emergent cultural tradition, and help create structures of meaning that defend its preservation in changing time. This continued reinterpretation of history, of meaning in practice, in self-expression and intergenerational negotiation of continuity within a tradition should be apparent in this work.

Chapter 6

In the Backcountry, in Search of Minnows

It was May 4th, 2008, and I was in a 50 year old 14 foot Alumacraft with my father, then a 64 year old retired math teacher, flying across the choppy surface of Island Lake. It was opening walleye season, but we weren't going out to fish. It was already mid-day, and we had fished twice on Saturday and again on Sunday morning. Saturday had been windy and snowy, and navigating the small boat was a struggle through the whitecap filled waters, which would crash over the bow, dowsing me in cold water. When the sun finally broke through the clouds, it warmed the air ever so slightly, but these same clear skies brought a cold night. We've ice-fished in warmer weather than we saw Sunday morning, the temperatures dipping into the mid-20s, leaving a thin layer of ice and frost in the Alumacraft. At least the wind had calmed. We had left our morning catch of walleye in a small, lakeside cabin on family land on the lake's south shore. It was a good haul for a morning. We had even caught "Grandma's limit" of fish. No, we weren't going fishing right now. We were going to Minnow Lake, to trap minnows, so we could fish again.

We boated past two large floats, a hundred yards apart, which we assumed was a gill net set by some Ojibwe residents in Lac du Flambeau, about 15 miles to the south. No one had ever

recalled having seen Island Lake gill-netted before, and it was the talk of the south-shore neighborhood. Everywhere we went, people were anxious about the net, asking if it was being tended, worrying that "some redneck" would cut the floats and leave a net filled with dead walleye at the lake's bottom. The blue and white floats bobbed seductively in the waves, an alien sight on these waters.

When we reached the north shore, we passed into a small, shallow, triangular bay the south-shore folks call Ellis's Bay, named after Bob Ellis, a guide in the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame, and his family. The Ellis family still resides there. Because of the Rest Lake Dam, a dam built in 1887 for logging and reconstructed in 1926 which lies several miles downstream, Island Lake's water level is moderately affected by the modest drawdown for winter and raising for summer (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 2011). The dam's construction has left several fields of underwater stumps in Island Lake, simply termed "snags," referring to snagged fishing lines or hung-up boats (Fig. 1,3). The white pine, in cold water, simply doesn't decay. Tom remembers Jake Nelson cutting stumps at the ice-level in the wintertime with Bob

Figure 1: Ellis's Bay. Note the snags on the bay's east (right) half.

Figure 2: Tom Frandy rows into the snags. As always, he rows "backwards" for better visibility. Behind him is the south shore.

Ellis, when the lake is at lower levels, and the efforts to help Bob Ellis make a clear channel between their land and the lake to launch boats.

Figure 3: The snags. The "swamp" or cattail bed lies between the navigable water and island behind.

Deep in Ellis's Bay the snags become dangerous to an outboard motor. From there, Tom tipped the outboard up, and he rowed up to the "swamp" (Fig. 2). When the water level

is raised at the dam another foot or two, one can push one's way directly up a shallow channel directly to Minnow Island, but in early May this is impossible. With a motor, these snags would be treacherous. Without one, running the boat up onto a submerged snag is still a normal event. The fluctuating water levels make finding the best channel an ever-difficult task. From the snags, the boat is pulled up onto the cattail bed (Fig. 4), and anchored in place. Tom had already set out three minnow traps earlier when the ice went out, and he had visited them once, to find only about dozen minnows. "It's still too cold," he explained. "The minnows haven't moved into the shallows yet." Tom grabbed two styrofoam minnow buckets from the boat (Fig. 7), one of which contains some old, stale bread, and we headed out into the cattails. In early May, there's not yet new growth in the "swamp," Frandy's term for this cattail wetlands, and its color is still deadish-yellow. The name is linked to the poor walking conditions, and one needs "swampers," usually black, knee-high rubber boots (Fig. 5), to get through the swamp. In some places, however, one can still step in

Figure 4: Frandy anchors his boat at the edge of the swamp. "I'd just as soon not come out here on the weekend," he says, "and have people know that I'm monkeying around back here."

muck too deep, and have cold water spill into a boot. This happened to Tom the last time he went to Minnow Lake, a few days earlier.

Though the walking was surprisingly decent as we crossed the swamp, as the dam rises, the cattail beds flood, and the walking becomes increasingly difficult. As we walked through the swamp, Tom (2008) pointed down, asking, “See these logs?” Buried within the tangled mesh of cattails, were thin saplings, about 4 inches in diameter, laid carefully in parallel and three-wide, making a hidden path through the cattails. “In the early ‘60s, [my brothers] Jack and Jim laid down those [driftwood pieces] for footing.” This pathway was virtually invisible. Between the far end of the swamp and Minnow Island is a slow creek, about three feet deep. Some scavenged logs and old pine roots have been thrown in the water as a makeshift bridge. The log bridge is always evolving, decaying, and getting rebuilt by Tom and his brother Jim. Tom thinks Jim built the bridge initially, but doesn’t really

Figure 5: Wearing swampers, and toting a minnow bucket, Frandy high steps through the swamp.

Figure 6: Tom Frandy jumps off the makeshift bridge across the unnamed creek to Minnow Island.

recall. The crossing is a little treacherous, involving balancing on a slippery log while carrying gear and hopping past a mucky, silt shore.

Minnow Island itself is not really an island; rather, it's a long steep esker ridge that forms a steep cape between two wetlands, and is largely surrounded by two spring-fed, slow moving creeks. On its east side is a beaver dam, and on the west side a large floating bog, where the LaFave family used to pick wild cranberries, though it has not been used as such for sixty years. After Saima Nelson married Jack LaFave in the 1930s, the rest of the Nelson family eventually moved from Upper Michigan to the Manitowish Chain, where the majority of them worked summers at the resort. Jack LaFave sold

Figure 7: Frandy descends from forest of Minnow Island to Minnow Lake, on the right.

the land to the Gensbergs (a wealthy family of Las Vegas casino owners who vacationed in the area), who then donated Minnow Island to the Boy Scouts years ago, but it has not been used for camps for decades. While the land would be adequate for trapping or deer and duck hunting, it simply is not used by many. Two emptied, blue shotgun shells have lain on the soft, pine-needle covered slope for at least two decades. There are no trails, and Frandy traverses a different path through the pine and balsam forest each time he walks the 2/3 mile to Minnow Lake (Fig. 7).

Minnow Lake is a shallow muddy lake, surrounded by a floating bog with wild cranberries, pitcher plants, and other native vegetation. It is small enough that it has no official name, but large enough to appear in Gazetteers and plat books. Northern Wisconsin has many such lakes, most formally unnamed, and few large enough to warrant mapping, but this is one of two minnow-trapping spots of the LaFaves. The floating bog has a slow creek that cuts through it, as well as small water holes and an old creek channel which has been largely filled in with root systems. Underneath the bog, Tom speculates that there must be channels, or beaver tunnels, with which minnows can swim from the main lake to landlocked puddles in the bog's center. From this bog Tom sets his traps. He uses three

Figure 8: Frandy and the creek. The branch leaning into the water to Koski's right is one of his traps.

commercially purchased traps, which has always sufficed to supply minnows for him and his family's springtime walleye fishing. He has used traps of various metals, plasticized metals, plastic, glass, and wire mesh. Some traps, like an old antique glass one, have proven entirely unsuccessful, though Tom and Jim believe it to be intended to catch mud minnows, which likely behave differently than the dace they catch. Other traps, like one particular plastic one, floated to the surface, and for its ten year lifespan, Tom had to place a large rock inside the trap. Tying a rot-resistant synthetic rope to a small dead tree limb, he winds the rope up several times around the branch to make easy adjustments for trap depth. He tends to use the same branches year after year, laying them carefully aside for the offseason, though he has torn out dead trees from the bog when old ones become "punky." Frandy has relied upon a hundred years of family trial and error to determine where to set his traps. This year, one is in the creek, one is in a hole in the bog, and one is in the lake. Tom lifts the trap from the water (Fig. 9), empties the minnows into a minnow bucket, resetting the trap with a slice or two of the old bread, making

Figure 9: Frandy lifts one minnow trap from the creek.

some depth adjustments, or moving the trap entirely to a new location if it's not catching minnows. The traps all have similar, inverted-torpedo design, and both Tom and Jim remark how they seldom catch any minnows their first year in use. Tom explained:

Figure 10: The coated metal frame trap. Not successful in its first year, in its third year, it's catching the most minnows.

> This one I have now, it's metal but it's coated. And I thought, well, coated. But I caught fish in it now, so maybe it takes a couple of years. Maybe there's something on that coating that they sense. Last year I didn't even use it, because I figured this never catches any fish. This year I only brought it out because that [other] one got broken. (2008)

There are three types of minnows in the lake, but the traps will also catch leeches, tadpoles, and sticklebacks, a small fish with a prickly dorsal fin. Frandy releases the tadpoles, sometimes keeps the leeches, and consciously throws the sticklebacks on the bog to die, explaining that it's important to let the sticklebacks die because throwing them back could upset to minnow-to-stickleback ratio of Minnow Lake. He fears that releasing sticklebacks, over the course of decades, could cause them to dominate the lake. Even though Canadian walleye are well known to dine on sticklebacks, and Tom (2008) insists, "Up in Canada I've caught fish with sticklebacks in them, but they might be the only ones there," local walleyes don't like to eat them. Jim (2008), a former high school biology teacher, comments,

> I remember those minnows, I used to take them to the high school. I'd trap them and bring them to the high school to feed the muskies. And sticklebacks, and sometimes we

used to fish with cause that's all we had left. I'd throw a bunch of minnows into there, into that hundred gallon tank. And sticklebacks would always be the last ones. A fish can tell. That muskie could tell. Somehow. Or maybe the stickleback was just so fast…

Figure 11: A "Slippery Jim" and another with a "racing stripe."

The three types of minnow species aren't known by any scientific name, but Jim describes a yellow striped variety as a "Slippery Jim" (Fig. 11), and Tom refers to the red stripe on another kind as a "racing stripe" (Fig. 12). A third type, which weren't yet found in the traps, Tom refers to as "the type that looks like a dogfish." Jim explains that all the minnows from Minnow Lake are both "lively" and "hardy" compared to commercially bought minnows, like shiners, which Tom calls "tender." Occasionally, a crawfish will find its way into the trap and start eating the minnows, leaving a collection of severed minnow heads. Or, a few days earlier, a mysterious hole appeared in the third, a mesh trap. Jim saw a large turtle in the area, and suspected it had ripped into the trap (Fig. 12). Afterwards, Tom patched the holes up with a sponge, though the lack of minnows in the trap made him wonder if they were escaping.

We put the minnows in our pails, and retraced our approximate path back from Minnow Lake to Minnow Island, we crossed the stream on the makeshift bridge, hiked across the swamp,

Figure 12: The place of the turtle attack. This trap uses two branches to rig the trap.

and returned to the boat. We rowed out of the snags, motored across the lake, and transferred the minnows into live-buckets, which are left in the lake, tied to a dock or boat. The whole process always takes about an hour, and Tom and Jim check the traps about twice a week from early May to at least mid-June, when the water warms, the walleyes turn off, the minnows become less plentiful, and the bass start biting hard on worms.

People, History, and Meanings

Among minnow trappers, minnowing doesn't have any romantic associations with it, nor does it have the symbolic weight of fishing for food. There's no euphoria of catching fish, and there's no particular challenge to trapping. It has no strong ethnic associations, and there are no strong cycles of jocular narratives about minnow trapping that are so popular with fishing and hunting. There is no status or prestige in being a good minnow trapper, and there's no real recreational or admirable aspects involved. Even berry pickers are commended for their back-breaking endurance.

Barre Toelken, in *The Anguish of Snails* (2003), suggests that with American Indian narratives of the West, suggests that we "will not ask, 'What does this story explain?' but rather, 'What does this story dramatize?'–a quite different question altogether" (p. 15). So too is minnow trapping averse to certain existential questions. When I first explained my intent to write about minnows, Jim Frandy looked at me quizzically, stating, "Uh... okay... I hope it's going to be a short paper!" The activity is remarkable in its mundanity, and the fact it is still practiced is revealing in itself as a pronounced counter-symbol for the sportsmanship of tourist anglers. Why trap minnows? Every possible explanation is as unsatisfying as the last: for thriftiness, for fun, for tradition, for community, for knowledge of place. As Jim (2008) explained, "Well... you just go and do it. That's all." But, for folklorists, that's not all. In many ways, minnow trapping is symbolic of the larger practice of fishing, and the culture of subsistence in the Lake Superior Region. It is practiced because it is emblematic of the broader desire to "live off the land," to be resourceful, and to use land in a sustainable and purposeful way.

John "Jack" LaFave taught Jim and then Tom how and where to trap minnows, and he visited Minnow Lake before Tom and Jim.

> Jim: I don't know when we started trapping.
>
> Tom: Well, Uncle Jack [LaFave] used to do it for us, and we'd go get minnows from him, and then he showed you, I think…
>
> Jim: I guess that's high school almost [the late 1950s]… but as far as knowing what to do, I guess, you just do it, that's all. At first we used oatmeal.
>
> Tom: I've never used oatmeal. Well, how'd you keep it in the trap?
>
> Jim: You didn't. To bring 'em in.
>
> Tim: Oh, you chummed 'em.
>
> Jim: Yeah, and we put bread in the traps like we always do, but Uncle Jack used to throw out oatmeal, and that's what I always used to do.

Tom: I’ve never done that. (2008)

In many ways, minnowing is more a symbolic than a practical part of walleye fishing. As we will more extensively discuss in the following chapter, one’s understanding place, the past, and individuals are inseparable concepts for rural populations. Island Lake, as a space, is encoded with Tom and Jim’s family’s history. Some have fished for walleyes in the same spots for more than fifty years. Bays and shores mark the terrain of living and deceased family members and their favorite fishing haunts: Forrie’s bay, Marie’s spot, the Boys’ Island. Cookstove Point marks the old camp’s cookstove, which has been gone for more than half a century. Pig Island contains a historical narrative in its name. Pig Island is one of three other islands near the half-acre Main Island, the original location of LaFave’s Island Lake Resort. John LaFave recollects:

> We used to keep two to four pigs on what is now Pig Island. Not having the help to butcher early in the fall, dad kept the pigs in the early months of winter. We had a big steel kettle about three feet across on top, sitting over a fireplace. Each time we took feed over to the pigs, we were supposed to slightly warm their drinking water in their kettle before giving it to them. This was quite a chore. One day the pigs got out of their pen, walked over to the waterhole on the ice and, because of the rounded slope around the waterhole, slipped in and disappeared under the ice. It was thought someone stole the pigs, until the ice left the lake in the spring and the pigs were found floating in the lake. It did, however, lighten our pig-feeding chores.
>
> Another time, a pig got out of the pen in the summer and, apparently being hungry, swam for our main island about a quarter of a mile away. Dad found it later, floating in the lake with its throat ripped over from its front hooves. It was so fat that each stroke it took would tear its throat with its sharp front hooves. (p. 32)

For a family of fishermen, guides, and resort owners, the water systems are as intricately understood as a farmer understands the land. Tom’s uncles and aunts were all known for their fishing abilities, and each is represented in narrative by how, when, and where they fished.

Ruth Olson in her article “Up North” argues that traditional reliance upon the land’s resources have continued into what we see now as self-reliance and identification with the land (1997, p. 76). The LaFaves, Nelsons, and Frandys demonstrate this stewardship because they predominantly construct identity in terms of land-use and identification with the natural world. To destroy the land would be to destroy oneself, one’s family, and the matrix of one’s social relations. The depth of their relationship with the land is reflected in their vision of the land and waters. Unknown to the legions of sportsmen and recreationalists who vacation in their backyard, they maintain a complex and nuanced relationship with the land through a network of coded symbols. Each space marks a story, a person, a sighting, a change in the landscape. And as they named the land, they reshaped it without damaging it. They laid a walkway to Minnow Island, invisible to an outsider’s eyes. Tom Frandy recalled once reading in a local newspaper that the wild rice beds at the mouth of the Manitowish River at Island Lake had been harvested by local Ojibwe people for generations. Tom (2008) laughed, “Uncle Jake planted those beds in the ‘50s! I remember there was no rice there when I was ten.” When I was out ricing on Island Lake with Wayne Valliere (2012), he told me that there used to be no rice in that lake, but according to his elder Joe Chosa, a white man planted some there many decades ago. He asked me if it was a relative of mine. He knew us well.

John LaFave describes stocking these minnow-filled lakes in the old days, a common practice in the area:

> In that early life, there was little law enforcement and few laws. However, we knew we were not supposed to catch trout, walleye, or musky minnows. At times, we would, however, return with a pail of pike minnows, dump them into a small inland lake, never to see them again. In this manner, we hoped to stock several private lakes. Occasionally, we would put several small muskies (two to three feet long) in small inland lakes. Most

> of these lakes had only minnows–sticklebacks or shiners–in them. Somehow our efforts were never rewarded–we never caught a fish from these muddy, boggy stocked lakes. Only once my brother shot a big six-pound bass in what we called Moss Lake. (p. 16)

Tom (2008) jokes about these stocked, boggy minnow lakes, “What’s the probability if you’re fishing with a minnow, that it’s going to bite that minnow? Better use a Daredevle, or something a little different.” John LaFave, who learned to guide when he was about 14 years old, said that before people learned to guide, they were responsible for catching minnows and suckers to use for guiding. LaFave writes, “We made almost daily trips up Rice Creek, Round Lake Creek, Papoose Creek and Boulder River for bait. Rice Creek was our best source of supply. This was in about 1912. With an old Evinrude motor, which sometimes wouldn’t start, we would make the trip, which usually took all day” (p. 16) .

Storing suckers proved exceptionally difficult, since, like minnows, suckers were only plentiful in the springtime. Jack LaFave writes,

> We had a torpedo minnow container. The first one was made of wood laths or cleats with a wood plug at each end and an eight-by-twelve-inch door on the top side. The bottom of the torpedo was weighted to keep it upright in the water. It was about 5 to 5½ feet long with a tow rope on one end.
>
> Since almost all except the door was submerged under water, it would hold about 1000 minnows. We would anchor the tow box or torpedo in the stream, and as we caught minnows in our net, we would transfer them to the tow box or torpedo. Occasionally, the door would unsnap accidentally, and on several occasions we lost an entire day’s catch. Once, as we quite for the day, we lost the snap with which we locked the torpedo door and substituted a stick in the hasp, only to have it hit a snag as it rolled over and over as we walked downstream to our boat. After it righted itself in less turbulent water, we discovered the open door and all the bait gone. Needless to say, we received a severe scolding from Dad. About 60 guests were without bait the next day, and about 16 guides had to fish with artificial bait as we returned to minnow catching for another try.
>
> Since minnows were plentiful in the spring, Dad would try many ways of storing minnows for later resort use in the summer when they would become scarcer. . . . On two different occasions, Dad made big wooden boxes 8 inches deep and 10 by 12 feet or

> larger in size. He placed these containers in the lake to store bait. One was located in Moss Lake and was a big floating box with a log dock to support it. We stored several thousand musky suckers in it in the spring. Within a couple of weeks, the wooden cleats warped, creating openings; after all our many days of work, the suckers were gone before we had use for them. There was an outlet at that time from Moss Lake into Rice Creek.
>
> On another couple of occasions, we dug out earth by hand, big areas around a spring, which fed into Rice Creek. We stocked it with thousands of choice minnows without a cover, only to find days later that it was a haven for minks and otters–and some red mineral which surged from the cold spring water had killed most of the bait.
>
> Another time–the last–Dad figured if he could use the spring at Big Lake landing, we would dig out a big area, log the sides, and feed some warm water from Rice Creek together with the spring water into the area. We worked for several days in water so cold, we couldn't stand the pain in our legs as we dug laboriously with shovels. We then covered this area over with lumber, making a floor roof, secured a door and lock, and loaded it with thousands of choice minnows. After a few weeks, we found that some jealous individual had found it and busted the lock, released the bait by chopping the log sides, and all our supply of bait was free again. Probably it was a warden who did this. It may not have been legal. (p. 17)

Tom Frandy, not needing to store minnows for months, traps minnows only as long they feed near the shores, in May and June, storing them only as long as he can until the water becomes unpalatably warm for them in the shallows. Jim, however, used to trap minnows in the wintertime while ice fishing for walleye.

> Jim: I remember trapping them in the wintertime.
>
> Tom: I've never done that either.
>
> Tim: Well, how'd you do that then?
>
> Jim: Just cut a hole in the ice [with an ice chisel], and drop the thing through.
>
> Tom: Deeper, maybe?
>
> Jim: Yeah, and I remember one winter, going over there, and they were so full of minnows that I wasn't sure what to do. But I dumped them in the minnow pail, and filled the minnow pail with snow. I mean, it was like solid minnows. And I thought, they're going to die by the time I get back. And I thought, well so they'll die. I'll just use them that way. And by golly none of them died. It slowed the metabolism down, so that they all survived fine. They came from water which was just above freezing, and I threw them into snow that was just below freezing, and it wasn't a shock or anything, you know. It was Christmastime, probably,

because I was probably fishing, and I thought, well I'll go try it, you know, and I chopped a hole in the gal-darn ice…

Tom: A lot of work to go get minnows, but it probably was a time that the closest place you could get minnows was out there on H by Lac du Flambeau.

Jim: Might not have been able to get minnows in the wintertime, although…

Tom: I think LaFaves used to get shiners there on H and 47. (2008)

Both recalled when they worked at LaFave's Resort the amazing abilities of mud minnows to survive.

Tom: Mud minnows would sometimes freeze right in their minnow tanks. They used to have a big wooden minnow tank at the resort. Three compartments, and it'd have probably have suckers in the one, and different small minnows and large minnows. And in the fall of the year, they'd empty it out and drain it down, so it'd be just a little bit of water in it that wouldn't drain out. And, at least there were some years that the next spring when they'd fill it back up again, that when it thawed out, there's a couple of minnows swimming around in there.

Jim: I think up in Alaska too there's actually some minnows that freeze right in the solid streams. You know, some of those streams actually get so cold they freeze from the bottom up. (2008)

While the biological marvel is fascinating, Jim's counterpoint highlights the way that people talk in the Northwoods. Like most ordinary conversation–not marked specifically as a storytelling session, or as purely informative/instructional–this conversation reveals a series of interrelated concepts, which are used quietly as symbols overlaid upon expressive identity. The conversation bounced freely from minnows to prospective logging sites in the area, to locations of deer stands, to the gill net, to the depth we caught walleye yesterday, to the torn minnow trap, to why the minnows aren't in the traps yet, to new fish transportation laws, to a grain shovel's effectiveness in shoveling roof-snow and mulch, to floating log sightings that present danger to boaters, to the albino deer in the area, to a floating island of roots and vegetation that had been dug out of Rest Lake after floating around the lake for decades. The ebb and flow of the conversation mirrors the

community's pattern of expressing identity through stewardship. A panoply of forces vie for power over the management of the area, and these conversations help to refine one's own identity within the unstable nexus of a complex ecological system.

The laws regarding transporting minnows and live fish have changed in recent times, although this hasn't had much of an impact on the Frandys because they take minnows in waters that connect to Island Lake.

> Jim: There's some laws about minnows too, about moving them from lake to lake.
>
> Tom: This year. We could not catch minnows in this lake and go fish on Big Arb.
>
> Jim: But yet isn't that strange that you can buy 'em from a minnow place.
>
> Tom: Because they're from a dealer.
>
> Jim: Yeah, but still, where do they get the minnows? They could get them anywhere.
>
> Tom: Are they raised? Do they have to be raised now in ponds?
>
> Jim: I don't know.
>
> Tom: And maybe certified for …
>
> Jim: I bet they could spread disease just as easy. Maybe more so.
>
> Tom: And it's the water too, that you put 'em in. I'll tell you, the big boats with live have done *no favor* for these lakes in Wisconsin. They brought around the zebra mussels and all that stuff and the different weeds, purple loosestrife.
>
> Tim: And what's that other stuff called… that nasty weed?
>
> Tom: Milfoil.
>
> Jim: And you can't fish with a goldfish, or something like that, remember that? We've always had those laws, but these new ones coming in…
>
> Tom: And this might be a little questionable because of the beaver dam, there's no water running from there to the lake.
>
> Jim: Yeah, well, I don't know. That beaver dam is in there sometimes. Sometimes it's not.
>
> Tom: Yeah, well, you can walk across it without getting your feet wet now. Maybe after a good rain it'd spill over though. (2008)

In perpetual interaction with Wisconsin game laws, the Frandys–like all regional outdoorsmen–endlessly interpret, abide by, and occasionally reject the validity of game laws. Any experienced outdoorsman understands how frequently game laws and personal morality clash, and there is a lot of ethical gray space between the supposed black and whites of a regulation pamphlet. The interpreted intent of the law is the crucial component, and as an act of interpretation it is subject to the outdoorsman. When a problematic beaver dam combines with a drought to perhaps separate the lakes into two separate bodies of water, the guiding principle of whether this could contribute to the spread of Vital Hemorrhagic Septicemia helps guide the legality of the customary practice. In the following years, concerned about the legality of their practice, they kicked a little at the roof of the dam to ensure some water was trickling over the top. It is certainly curious that one can legally use explosives to remove beaver dams in Wisconsin, at risk of draining an entire wetland, but that transporting healthy minnows across a beaver dam to fish is of questionable legality.

Although most outdoorsmen feel that their own practices are sustainable, and often blame others for environmental degradation, there is still little doubt that the spoils of wealth inequity, geographic mobility, and the state interest in developing a tourist-economy is largely to blame for the spread of invasive species and the degradation of the health of the forest and waters. Wild rice beds are damaged by motorboats. Diseases and invasives are transmitted from lake to lake predominantly via live wells which exist in only luxury fishing boats. Expecting capitalist economies and sustainable subsistence economies to co-exist is like asking a wolf and a deer to take a road trip together. What could possibly go wrong? Ecological disasters are less of a threat with reduced technology, but the state inexplicably has little interest in restricting technology to

protect the environment. Such a belief would threaten the dominant construction of liberty in the United States. But for those old-fashioned fishermen in the Northwoods, there are natural values by harvesting in the old way that are not easily replicated with the use of advanced technology and consumerist fishing. With technology as a crutch, one does not so intimately learn the land and water personally, through powers of observation and memory, and the entire complex of human-ecological relations as formative in identity construction and transmission is disrupted–at least in small part. Tom sometimes praises Forrie Johnson's new, expensive fishing boat, only to add that fishing wouldn't be quite the same without clanking around in his old 1950s Alumacraft. The process is important; it reflects and shapes the meanings of the practice.

The minnows are then used for walleye fishing in May and early June. Typically, the process involves fishing with bobbers, sinkers, and treble hooks in the hours around dusk (or less frequently dawn), as the walleyes hang in the shallows. After the water warms, they retreat to deeper waters, and new techniques and different equipment are required to catch them. Most of the Frandys prefer simple closed-bale fishing reels (often derided by sportsmen have having poorer performance) because dark conditions with open-bale reels make for wicked tangles. Mastering a rod and reel requires years of practice. Each rod responds differently based upon its material composition and length. Each reel is different, and many modern innovations (like star drag) are criticized sharply, since they place control in the hands of the machine, rather than relinquishing more control to the fisherman to manage line tension. The fisherman must be attentive to weather, wind, cloud cover, and barometric pressure to be successful. And without fish-finders and maps, one must learn to read the shoreline and gain experience by reading the bottom of the lake by feeling how lines pull through it.

The technique of angling is not one of choice but of necessity. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, nets and seines were common ways to take fish, until enforcement of game laws prohibited them. Frandy's own ancestors, in northern Finland, would have speared salmon and pike by torchlight, and caught them in nets and by use of fish dams (Sirelius, 2009). Likely, were netting legal, Frandy would net walleye. If one wants to catch fifty or a hundred walleye a year to eat, what difference does it make whether they are harvested by a line or a net? The harvest and environmental impact is essentially the same, and some of my Native friends argue netting gives people more control of the size of the harvested fish and is therefore better for the environment. Netting is not an option in Wisconsin. In Finland, locals have right to net fish on local waters, if they have fishing rights. The tradition was forcibly broken by emigration to a country in the process of writing Anglocentric game laws, constructed from their concepts of sport and fair chase. Netting requires daily work, checking the nets, repairing tangles, harvesting and processing the fish. In this regard, the netting-subsistence tradition is continued from generations past in Frandy's tradition, yet it has been forced to move forward without the nets. It is not an acculturation to the Anglocentric tradition of sport.

Fishing perhaps 4-5 nights a week over the course of five or six weeks provides enough annual fish for several families. Often these products are informally bartered for other foods. Individuals tend to specialize in their harvests and trading helps create a diversity of wild foods in one's diet. The fish are brought home and cleaned in the Canadian style, boneless and clean. Walleye, muskie, bass, and trout are eaten immediately or frozen. Northern pike are sometimes pickled because of their Y-bones. The water quality affects the taste of the meat, and fish like northern and bass readily take on the taste of the lake, and are best from cold water. Walleye are

typically dipped in egg, breaded with a mixture of cornmeal, flour, and seasonings (salt, pepper, garlic salt, paprika) before panfrying. My mother would prepare fish and game for my family, but my brother and I both cook both new and old recipes from these wild foods. My native friends often use commodity foods (like potato flakes and condensed milk) in these recipes, trends which sometimes left the Rez and spread out through the region. Occasionally, the fish is boiled with celery and onion, or we prepare *kalamojakka* (a Finnish-American tomato-based fish chowder). Periodically, for variety, we bread fish in crushed graham crackers and grated lemon zest, and bake it in a very hot oven of 500 degrees. The purpose of these recipes highlights the simple taste of the fish, and concealing the taste with excessive flavorings is often perceived as disrespectful to the fish. In the event of freezer-burn, which seriously compromises the fish's flavor, seasonings are acceptable to use to help make the food more palatable. I have salvaged fish preparing fish tacos, but my parents would perhaps rather eat freezer-burn.

The process of minnowing can help us see that the values implicit in the process of hunting and fishing for the extended network of my informants is about food production, resourcefulness, and domesticity. The process shapes gourmet dinners from scraps of moldy bread, beginning and ending in the kitchen, in the heart of the home. Contrary to the body of literature suggesting that outdoor traditions involve escape from the home to an othered space for the purpose of personal renewal and restorative activities, the process of subsistence fishing begins and ends with the kitchen, with the family, and with perpetuating the household's informal economy. Or, as my father explained, "Why buy your fish from the store, when you can just go out and catch them?" This tenet is a guiding principle of the respectable life. There is sugar in the trees, wild rice on the water, berries in the forest, fish in the water, and animals in the

woods. These gifts must be protected and cared for, so they can sustain us. There is no human world, but only ourselves as part of a greater, natural world.

Chapter 7

How to Make a Noise Like a Worm: Guides, Tourism, and Identity in the Northwoods

The Lake Superior Region of the American Upper Midwest is known for its deep forests of white pine, paper birch, and maple, with tens of thousands of freshwater lakes in greater densities than anywhere else in the world. The region is famed for its recreational opportunities, and city-dwellers from Chicago, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee use summer weekends to vacation in an area of immense natural beauty: boating, hiking, swimming, and especially fishing. Locals in this region maintain a special relationship to hunting and fishing, in particular for those whose families have inhabited the region for several generations. Fishing, hunting, and gathering are not simply done for pleasure. They are regarded as work, they represent a way of life, and to know the land and waters well (and the creatures that inhabit it) is a life's work of personal, intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual fulfillment. For those of us who grew up in this region, our heroes weren't the intellectual elite nor the wealthy, they weren't musicians or artists or athletes... no, they were fishermen and hunters.

Growing up, we all knew stories of famed fishing guides in the region. The stories of legendary guides from the 1950s–like Porter Dean, Bob Ellis, Louie Spray, and Ray Kennedy–

are still told in the area even decades after their deaths, by people who never knew them. Porter Dean was called the barefoot fishing guide, legendary for his fishing talents, but immortalized for his personality. Bob Ellis was an innovative row-troller, who popularized the technique across the region. Louis Spray, a bootlegger and speakeasy owner, whose catching of record-sized muskies was tainted by his reputation as a scoundrel and a cheat (Detloff, 2002). Even today, some believe his record fish were a scam, as was actually quite common in those days. Ray Kennedy was a prankster who targeted anyone off his guard, and his famous 50 pound muskie was mounted and has hung in a locally-owned Minocqua restaurant where it served as a symbol of the town.

Porter Dean

Porter Dean, called "the barefoot fishing guide" (since he never wore shoes), drank famously, and ended up living his last years as a hermit with dementia with his beloved dogs which he allowed to defecate inside his home. Local canoe restorer and fishing guide Dave Osborn explains:

Figure 1: Statue of Porter Dean in Boulder Junction, Wisconsin.

> Porter Dean was kind of a rough and tumble guy and I guess the only [story] that I heard that was probably worth repeating was his brother was a guide as well and they had made some arrangement to fish on the same lake on the same day, in order to show their clients how good they were. It was going to have something to do with how they were *the* guide on that lake. They had made some arrangement to meet up for a shore lunch together and get into an argument about who was the best, and they had some kind of a mock fist fight. [...] You know, word on the street

was Porter Dean was quite a heavy drinker as well, you know got in trouble that way, but still must have managed to get up and take his clients out every day. Lived in a ramshackle house with a house full of dogs and later in his life I guess you know the dogs never went outside to crap, or you know – so he just kind of became a hermit toward the end. [...] He was still alive and we used to drive by his house in Boulder Junction when I was a kid and he must have done some boat repair, maybe similar to what I do. He had lots and lots of boats out in his yard, and I heard he did boat repair and I guess some of his guide boats were pretty well customized with little drawers and little things, you know where nooks and crannies where he was able to keep tackle and all that. (2011)

Figure 2: Forrest Johnson in his garage with a muskie rod.

But Forrest Johnson, an 84 year old Norwegian-American retired schoolteacher and DNR employee, remembers Porter Dean fondly, speaking of him affectionately through his insults:

I still remember Porter Dean, old Porter Dean, with Bill Gleason and me over on Fish Trap Lake. And Porter was the laziest slob you've ever seen. So we put him on a sunny bank up at Fish Trap Lake, and Bill and I said "Stay here now. We're going to make a drive and we'll try to kick out a deer to you." So Porter sat down, his old 30-30 on his lap, burping. He had been drinking all night and eating. And he's sitting there half asleep. "Stay awake now, Dean," we said, "because we're going to be coming through in about 20 minutes." So Bill and I go way up around this swamp and we come driving through. And sure enough we kick up this nice, like, 8 pointer and we could see it moving toward a perfect funnel where we had planted Porter sitting. And he's not any father than 50 feet from the road, which was near Fish Trap. He's sitting on the bank with his gun. We could actually see him the last hundred yards of the drive. And Gleason said, "That deer's almost on top of him!" Porter kept sitting there and sitting there and we see the deer trying to mince its way around Porter, because it had to get off this point to escape. Finally, we got within 30 yards of Porter, and he's still sitting there,

> hat pulled down over his eyes. And all of a sudden, he brings up his rifle, and goes WHAM! And the buck dropped and rolled right down maybe fifteen feet from the road. And Bill Gleason says to him, “What the hell were you waiting for!? Jesus, we had that deer a hundred feet away and you were still just sitting there.” And Porter says, “You didn’t think I was going to drag that thing that far, did you?” “You didn’t think I’d drag that thing all the way to the road, did you?” Oh, he was something else, old Porter! (2011)

Porter Dean has been memorialized with a wooden statue located in downtown Boulder Junction, with emphasis naturally upon his bare feet. His feet are a curious symbol of the region. They still spark the imagination. Did Dean tough out the pokes and prods of sticks and thorns in the forest, or did he not feel a thing on account of thick callouses? Whether toughness or callousness, whether his earthiness or his slovenliness, whether backwoods eccentricity or clever marketing, the title of the barefoot fishing guide is used as an honor for this unusual man.

Bob Ellis

Bob Ellis was another famous fishing guide from the Manitowish Waters area, who was

Figure 3: Bob Ellis Row Trolling. Image courtesy of Bob Ellis Classic

credited with popularizing a row-trolling technique, and he ended up losing his wife who ran off with a minister because Ellis simply couldn’t stop fishing. Forrie explains:

Forrie: He had a sad divorce with his wife too. I remember it was April. I've always been over in April because he'd come to open his little cottage. His wife's name was Marge. And I remember I could see from this side that his little station wagon was parked over there and I knew he was getting his cottages ready. So I motor across from LaFaves and I walk up on the property and I looked around, and it was quiet. And he's a big strong... he played football with Ben Bendrick at the University of Wisconsin, and I walked around looking, and I couldn't see anything. So I walked up to the cabin he stayed in. And I looked inside the kitchen and he's sitting at the table. Bawling his heart out. Crying. Tears coming down his face. And I thought, "What the hell happened here?" I said, "Bob, are you okay?" And he says, "No, I'm not okay, Forrie." And he's sitting there, a great big husky guy. And I says, "Well, what's wrong? Are you sick or something?" He says, "Marge left me." Just like that. I says, "What do you mean, she left you?"

Ollie: You didn't mention his lifestyle.

Forrie: So I sat down and I thought maybe she'll... trying to find out what to say... so I sat down at the table, and he had a letter. He had the letter she had written saying it's all over. I'm going away with, there was a minister from Minocqua, that she had, yeah. There was a minister, and I can't remember what his name was. Reverend somebody, that she had been having an affair with and she took off with him. Never came back. And he never got over it. He was just absolutely devastated by it. And I kept saying things... Well, maybe, it's just a fling. She'll come back. Or, just keep up your life. Just trying to find the right things to say. It's just... Then I remember saying to him, "Did you have any idea?" He said, "Forrie, honest to God, I had no idea that there was someone else in her life like that." "This is what I got," he said, "There's a letter but I didn't read it." It was a Dear John, you know. He never remarried or anything like that... he became very removed from society, and fished all the time. And she was a very nice lady. I don't think she ever really liked it up here though.

Ollie: They had totally different interests, so you can understand why that sort of thing happens...

Patty: Maybe she didn't like being second place to a fish.

Forrie: That could be. So when we fish, we'd better be careful.

Ollie Johnson and Patty Frandy both see the problems that exist in the culture of masculinity which can result in a destructive obsession, a concern Forrie is initially dismissive of. They have seen this before. A detailed exploration of women's narratives of the Resort Era, however, will

need to be a focus of a separate study. I suspect women of this generation will prove supportive of fishing only insofar as it supports the family, and is not used as a purpose for neglect or escape from it.

Ray Kennedy

Ray Kennedy was guide and a prankster who targeted anyone off his guard, and spent his day-job hours working as a custodian cleaning ducks and fish in the boiler room of Minocqua High School, where he disposed of the offal in the fires of the giant furnace. Forrie Johnson and Ray often managed to make time together before school for fishing and hunting, and to balance their hunting and fishing with their day-jobs in creative ways. Forrie Johnson, who worked as a teacher in Minocqua High School, describes duck hunting with Ray Kennedy in the 1950s:

> We'd be in the blind by 4 in the morning. I'd leave here about 3. And be in the blind with Ray Kennedy around 4. Shooting ducks and we'd get a bunch of bluebills and mallards and whatever until they got complicated, and you'd only see one of this, or one of that, or whatever. And we'd come into the boiler room and hurry up and shave, so I could get to my first hour class. Put a tie and shirt on, get my waders off. And rush upstairs. I don't know how I didn't get fired in those days. But I always made my first hour class. But anyway, Ray was just sitting there, cleaning the ducks. There was a big boiler in the old school. A big roaring boiler, I don't know if it was coal or oil. He'd sit there with the door open and feathers flying, guts everywhere, throwing guts and feathers in. When I'd go home, he'd have all my ducks cleaned and packed and ready to go. And he'd sit there, on janitor's time, cleaning... (2011)

Ray was a highly regarded guide in the Minocqua area, and once caught a 50 pound muskie, which hung in a multi-generation family-owned restaurant, Bosacki's Boat House (recently sold) on the island in Minocqua. Forrie recalls the story of the night this happened in the 1950s:

> Ray'd fish with a 26-inch inboard launch on Lake Tomahawk. And he knew that lake like a hawk. The biggest muskie I ever caught was with him. That was 32.5 pounds on Lake Tomahawk. And I still remember the night, and Ollie remembers it too, when he kept working for a huge fish on Lake Tomahawk. He says, "I gotta get one 50 pounds before I

die. I want to catch one fish that's 50 pounds." And one night, it must have been 2:30 in the morning, the phone rings here. And he's on the phone, Ray Kennedy. I used to go out fishing with him from 4-8 in the morning, and then hurry into the boiler room and shave and then go into my class. And he'd run in and start getting his broom ready to sweep because he was the custodian in that little school. Your mom [Tom's mother, Sigrid] was teaching with me at that time. But anyway, the phone rings: [slurring] "Heeey, you ol' son of a bitch!" I said, "Who is that?" I thought it was my brother again, drunk, from Milwaukee. He says "Ray Kennedy! Guess what?" I says, "What?" He says, "I got him." I said, "You got what? A disease? Or what?" He says, "It's over 50 pounds." And I said, "You've got to be kidding." And ... did I drive in that night? He had been at Bosacki's. He was drunker than hell. He caught a 53 inch, 50.25 pound muskie on Lake Tomahawk. And he had kept it and had brought it in. And the bile had started in the afternoon. They made a big wooden box and filled it with ice and put it in the box, and they had cars backed up watching, looking at this fish. And he had been drinking and showing this fish. This fish is still mounted, by the way, in what is Bosacki's. That big muskie is that fish. I think I actually drove in to see it. (2011)

Not all fishermen are measured by the size of their catch. Many inexperienced anglers pull in massive fish by luck alone. Still, many of the most avid fishermen want to cement their legacy through the catching of an iconic fish.

Kennedy was a notorious prankster, and everyone around him eventually fell victim to his practical jokes. Forrie describes one incident that occurred after he went smelting with Ray Kennedy on Lake Superior, by Ashland:

Figure 4: Ray Kennedy with his 50 pound muskie.

> Oh, I got another story for you now. Ray Kennedy again, this big guide that I fished with. We went smelting up to Ashland. We took my car, a '53 Buick, big beautiful wheels on it, hubcaps like they had. And we got a load of smelt. And the trunk on those big Buicks

> you could put garbage cans in there, and we hauled our fish home and Ray Kennedy took his smelt, and I took a 5 gallon pail home and I would say, this would be like April, when the smelt are running, and I'd say maybe 2 weeks late into April, I came out and I got in my car, and I thought, "Oh my god, what is that stink in here?" I got home, I took the floor mats out, I looked everywhere in this car, I couldn't... I opened the trunk, I looked at the mats, I looked. I could not. And the stink kept going and going. And worse and worse. So I came out of school at Minocqua one night, walked out to my Buick and thought "What, that car died or something?" Something horrible, dead fish.
>
> This is the honest to god truth. I walked out and looked, and the Buick had great big hubcaps, and there was a cat up against the tire of my car, licking the hubcap. I thought, "What the hell is going on?" That cat. On my hubcap. So I didn't think anything of it until I got home. And I start to think, dogs'll pee on your wheel, but cat's licking on it? And I got home and I started to think, uh oh. I got the tire iron out and I pried that big hubcap off. It was packed with smelt mush. Ray Kennedy had filled that hubcap up with smelt and put it back on the wheel while we were up in Ashland. And he let it there in the hot sun for two... he wasn't going to tell me. And could you imagine how he laughed, he's watching me go out every... you wonder if we ever did any teaching around that school? Oh, but that cat was licking on that wheel. That was the only clue. I never would have known. Who'd think of looking under there? When I walked around the car, I thought it was in the trunk because it'd be by that left rear wheel. I'd look and took out the spare tire, nothing. Then I sprayed and I hosed down the car. I thought I must have spilled some fish somewhere in the car. The trunk. But there was nothing there. All in the hubcap. He had about 20 of them packed in there. (2011)

Kennedy's pranks, whether in the woods or the workplace, often tested one's sense of awareness of one's immediate environment.

In the workplace, Kennedy similarly looked towards people's inattentiveness as the avenue for his pranking. Forrie tells one story about Ray Kejack, a social studies teacher, who always tried to beat the rush of students out of the building:

> It was Ray Kejack, the social studies teacher. Great big gruff Polish guy. He couldn't get out of school fast enough. One of those like Bill Gleason. Bell rang, and get the kids out of the way, or he'd kill them in the parking lot going out! And he had these great big galoshes that he pulled out in the winter. And the teachers were all in the boiler room, that was our lounge, that was all we had. Dirty stinky old boiler room. And he'd take off his coat, and hang it there and his overshoes. And Ray Kennedy was always pulling dirty jokes on teachers. One night, he told me what he was going to do. He said, we're going to get Kejack tonight. What we're going to do is fill his overshoes half full of water. Cause

> he'd rush down to get out, he'd slam them on like this (thrusting his feet into a boot), and he'd go right out the door for his truck and home. So Ray and I are hiding behind the boiler, waiting. Because I was free the last mod, I could watch this. And Ray and I are standing behind the boiler, hiding, and here he comes, thundering down the stairs, big old elk, sat down in the little chair in the boiler room, grabbed his galoshes, he pulled them on, and of course he got hosed, all the way up with the water. Just like a plunger, and he starts to swear. Kids are still coming out of class, ready to go home. He goes after us, and Ray and I run for our life, cause... We were running up the stairs in the old Minocqua school and Kejack behind us. "You son of a... you! You!" (2011)

Awareness of your environment, whether in the forest or the office, continually resurfaces as a crucial value that is reinforced in local discourse.

In part, this value is related to the large tracts of wilderness within the region. A few moments of inattentiveness can be disastrous in the forest. Forrie reflects on a time he got lost in the woods, and how technology in the woods has changed that aspect of hunting:

> Well, your dad [Tom] and I have seen a lot of change in the time of the hunting and fishing from the earliest days to right now. Sitting there with a GPS so you don't get lost. Speaking of GPS hunting now, it's amazing to me that you can set your target and walk into the woods and come out right on, and find your car without a blink with a GPS. I remember hunting with George Schraeder... Ollie's uncle that was married to an Indian on the reservation. We hunted the north side of the lake and he put me on a stand up north by the Manitowish River, and he said make a drive. And he said, "I'll be way down at the other end toward Rice Creek." So I started... we had walked across on the ice, so I was all alone, walking through there and I thought, "Oh my god..." There was no homes there at all at that time. None of this development that we see on the lake now. And I was walking, looking, and no sun to guide myself, and I thought, "God, I'm lost... where am I?... How am I going to find... I'm going to have to go south and hit the lake." And you know, I'm walking out back there in a swamp out back of Wangaard's, and as I was hiking along this, what looked like an old trail. I got about maybe into an hour, where I was starting to worry a little because it was like 4:00, and getting dark, and I heard this voice say, "Hey Forrie! Are you lost again!?" And it was Georgey Schraeder, sitting in the woods with his .220 Swift Rifle watching me come out, lost, looking in all directions. I was more embarrassed than hurt then. Nowadays, my goodness, the equipment they have is amazing. (2011)

Technology deeply affects how a hunter understands a forest, since a hunter does not need to rely on a detailed knowledge of a landscape to navigate. Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst's collection

Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot speak to the diversity within one's sense of self and environment given differing modes of traversing space. In a thick woods, one can get turned around even a couple hundred yards in from a road, and eventually getting lost happens to even experienced hunters. The value of attentiveness to one's environment, it seems, has left the forest and permeated all aspects of life.

History of Tourist Fishing

Though they are perhaps the most esteemed, this generation of legendary outdoorsmen, however, certainly weren't the first great fishermen in the area. The south shore of Lake Superior, for centuries a borderland between Ojibwe and Lakota territories, saw waves of French missionaries and voyageurs as early as the 17th century, though widespread European New Immigrant and Yankee settlement did not begin until the late 19th century. Industrialists moved into the region to exploit its rich copper and iron deposits, as well as its white pine, which was razed to the ground before the turn of the 20th century, leaving unsightly scablands of barren stumps and poor topsoil in its wake. Unsuitable for prosperous farming, a few homesteaders eked out a living, but gradually the forest recolonized the region (with the help of the CCC and National Forest Reservation Commission), as industry migrated west in pursuit of easier fruits.

Many of these homesteads remained enmeshed in small-scale agriculture for a few generations, but many of these were abandoned, repossessed by the state, and transformed into federal and state forests. And many homesteads transformed into resorts as early as the late 19th century, catering especially to city-dwelling tourists from Milwaukee, Chicago, and the Twin Cities. These cities grew rapidly in the early 20th century, fueled by a land shortage for a

generation of farmers, coupled with an abundance of industrial work in automotive and harbor cities along the Great Lakes. This emergent middle class lifestyle led to the need for recreational opportunities within the monotony of wage labor jobs. Many, a short generation or two away from their own agrarian roots, turned toward these northern expanses for their leisure. At first, these northern resorts catered to wealthy tourists (including gangsters Al Capone and John Dillinger), who could take rail-lines into the area, which were at first used to transport mineral ore and timber. Later, with improvements to rural roads and with the emergence of the automobile, such vacations became accessible for the emergent middle class beginning in the 1920s, and tourism intensified further following the Second World War.

Though the earliest generation of white settlers were undoubtedly talented fishermen and hunters, they are infrequently remembered that way in oral narrative. Instead, they have been characterized in other ways: their strength, their daring to live in dangerous new environment, their ability to endure the harsh northern forest. Ollie Johnson's grandfather, Abe LaFave, was one such homesteader. He was born in Canada, probably around 1860, and he died in the 1930s. In Canada, Abe had been a fur trapper before walking down to northern Wisconsin in the 1880s, where he opened LaFave's Island Lake Resort on

Figure 5: Abe LaFave in 1888.

homesteaded land. Abe was a man of both great size (6’4” tall) and legendary strength. Forrie tells a story about one of his feats, as told to him by his father-in-law, John LaFave:

> This is one on the island. They used to chain huge white pine logs all around the edge because the water would eat away... the island was getting smaller and smaller. And so they hauled in huge white pine logs, and they would chain them. And every now and then during a storm they’d kindof wash up on shore, and the boys’ job, John and Frank, Charlie, or whoever, was to go down there and pry these with big maple poles, to get these big logs back in the water. Where they would buffer the water. One big one washed up on shore, John said, one day. And Abe was watching them and he said, “Boys, get down there, get that log back in the lake!” And John said that thing was at least 25-30 feet long and like this (gesture with his arms, indicating a large circle), floating, but it had washed up on shore. And it was up there on the rocks. And he said he was down there and Frank, and he said Frank’s ears were snapping, they were trying, and they could not get this log off. They were prying and grunting and pushing. Charlie, Frank, and John. The three of them. And Abe came down there, half... they said he was cussing half in French and half in English. He came down there and he pushed the boys out of the way. And this is the way John told the story. He said, my dad got on the one end of that one white pine log, which was angled up on the rocks. He said he wrapped his arms around it and he started to whip it. He said, “I’ll show you how to do ‘dis, you no good nuttin’” and he got that log bouncing he said, and flung it right back into the lake. Huge white pine! Back down in. I could never believe the strength of the old man. He said it was unheard of. (2011)

It is most likely that everyone of the earliest generation was a good hunter and fisherman, so these skills were not particularly noteworthy. Additionally, the increased specialization of labor as tourism emerged in the area created a gap between talented and ordinary fishermen.

Abe LaFave never shied away from fights, either. Forrie recounts one story that John LaFave told him:

> Over at Kerner’s Resort, which was Kerner’s in the old days, right at the bridge over by 51, he got into a brawl over there at the tavern one night. And there were some “pugs,” your dad called it. A boxer from Chicago. He got talking, and he heard this old guy over here (Abe) is awfully tough. “I wonder how tough he really is” They started this way at the bar. And Abe was in there. He was drinking too. And he ended up throwing the first one completely out the door. The two of them. Then the boxer came after him, the “pug.” And Abe almost killed him. In fact, they got into a fight, and the boxer got hit down,

> down on the floor, and he bit off part of Abe's nose. Which to the end of his life was sawed off, right to the end. Guy bit him on the nose when they were fighting. But that was the end of the fight because then Abe had just cleaned his clock like he ever saw. (2011)

Forrie then pontificated, "[John] looked like his dad in many ways. Your dad was a little handsomer guy than him... he didn't have his nose bit off." The strength and violence of the earliest generation was seemingly already on the decline after one generation, and as tourism took hold in the area.

Following the decline of the industrial era in the north, those Northwoods outdoorsmen and farmers put their knowledge of the outdoors to profit in the tourist industry. Subsistence hunting and fishing was central to indigenous and early settling populations up until 1900, and remained a crucial supplement to meager incomes until the 1960s. Many locals say that in the 1950s a third to a half of their diet was wild-harvested food. Up until the 1960s, the only commercial food source in Manitowish Waters, for instance, was one small, full-service grocery store that sold canned and dried goods from behind a counter. With the emergence of tourism in the area, the fishing guide straddled these worlds. The guide was an expert outdoorsman, well versed in traditional knowledge and new technologies, more knowledgeable about fish than leading scientists of the era, a cultural ambassador who mediated between locals and tourists, and definitely not someone to share secrets with. Good guides were like rockstars of the Resort Era, brilliant, hungover, and filled with swagger. This is why we knew about old Porter Dean, Louie Spray, and Ray Kennedy. They were the best of us, and the worst of us as well.

The popular image we have of non-commercial fishing today is actually the product of centuries of changing techniques, technologies, and legalities. Many of the innovations we take

for granted today were first emerging in popularity during the 1940s and 50s. No detailed lakebed maps existed. Outboard motors were just starting to be used, and the low horsepower made them only slightly more practical than rowing. Forrie Johnson tells of the first large outboard motor he saw:

> Speaking of outboard motors, I still remember most motors are 3.5-4.5 horse at the resort. Earliest days here. And up comes Mr. Louie from Chicago. In his Cadillac. And he opens the trunk and he had a 25 horsepower Johnson. I almost fainted. I said, "I've never seen a motor that big." And I was strong and he said, "Can you help me get it outta there?" I reached, and I looked at it and it was a big new green 25, and I thought, "They don't even make outboards that big." And he had called ahead and John had bought a new Thompson, a 16 foot, a nice boat just so it could carry that big a motor. Now they use them for trolling motors on canoes! Oh, 25 horsepower! And when we put it on we all went down to the dock to watch it. He cranked it up. No electric starter, just manual. He got it fired up and took off across the lake, and I thought, "Oh my god... I'd seen big inboards go, but I'd never seen an outboard of 25. Now you see twin 350s on these big drum boats that go... the Yamahas or whatever they are. (2011)

Boats were wooden, often homemade, and demanded their owners have sufficient woodworking skills to maintain them. Rods were mostly made of split bamboo and baitcasting reels were just beginning to displace cane-pole fishing or simple centrepin reels. Angling itself was relatively new to the region, emerging in congruence with the tourist industry. Between 1900-1915 a series of laws restricted the inland netting and seining of fish, banned the dynamiting of fish and the use of set-lines, distinguished game fish from rough fish, and began limiting and banning the sale of inland game fish. Though law enforcement was sparse in those days, the changes in harvesting technique gradually took hold as the norm.

With the increases in commercially available outdoor equipment in the 1950s, many changes took place in the way people fished, not all of which were for the better. According to Dave Osborn,

> When the wooden boat went out of favor in the ‘60s, when that miracle composite called fiberglass and aluminum took over the world, wooden boats fell out of favor at the time. In fact a lot of times that I’ve noticed in my boat restoration is that wooden boats–like in the ‘50s–would be painted aluminum color, just to look like one of those new aluminum boats that everybody was raving about. (2011)

But Jake was always pushing himself to think like a fish. Forrie tells about how Jake used to paint his aluminum boat, even though one crucial selling-point of an aluminum boat was that it did not require painting and maintenance:

Figure 6: Dave Osborn inspecting an oarlock.

> Do you remember that little MuralCraft he had there? We had it here and I gave it to Linda and John. But he got it brand new from your mother and dad [Jack and Sai LaFave], and he flipped it upside down and he’s painting the bottom of it a dull, flat green. Painted the whole bottom, right to the gunnel. And I says, “What are you doing? You don’t have to paint an aluminum boat, Jake.” And, “Oh yeah?” he says, “You realize what that looks like to a fish, under that big silver hull going by? Aluminum boat...” he says, “You gotta flatten them out. They’ll see that boat coming.” And I’ve thought about that too, you think about a silver aluminum hull underneath like that. And he had a nice flat neutral dull green, not even enamel. Just flat. Like a big lily pad. (2011)

Awareness of one's surroundings was crucial to the guides of this generation, considerably more than to contemporary anglers who can use more sophisticated technology to compensate for their presence.

For this generation of outdoorsmen, silence was a rule, and crucial to spending time in the outdoors. Forrie explains how he was taught about this:

> I fished a lot with George [Nelson] in the evenings on Allequash Lake. When we both were working here at the resort and guiding. We got into fog that one night there, and we didn't know where we were. And there was no traffic on M, so we couldn't hear. The fog was so thick there, it was 4 in the morning, and we didn't know which way to row to get back to shore. And finally, we began to hear highway 51 way to the, whatever direction that was there. We managed to find our way to the channel. And it's not that big a lake. But we used to fish it at night for bass and muskie. [...] I caught some nice muskie with George in there. That's when I first learned that you don't knock your pipe on the gunnel of the boat when you're fishing for muskie. We had one of LaFave's boats in the back of the truck. And when I got done smoking, I'd (knock knock knock knock) on the gunnel, and knock the tobacco and crud out of my pipe. Did he chew me out. You don't do that. We might as well go home. Fishing's over for the night if you knock on that. That carries for a mile underwater. It does.

Silence has persevered in this region as an important outdoor custom, even though its effectiveness is debatable in an era of fish finders and massive fishing boats. Tom Frandy explains of how this would irk a neighbor, Marie Kazmarek:

> Marie used to always complain. She'd fish with some of, I don't know if it was Butch's kids, but they go up and they'd want to motor right up to the spot, then throw out the anchor, and then start fishing right away. And a few minutes later, motor someplace else, and stop right there.

These debates and conflicts over fishing as a cultural practice live on in this region. Many contemporary anglers with roots in the Resort Era grow frustrated with noisy anglers and anglers that frequently change locations. It's not just that they are outsiders; it's that they conduct themselves improperly in the woods.

Jake Nelson

Though several of my relatives (all of whom died before I was born) “did some guiding” in the 1950s, we had one truly special angler in my family: my great uncle Jake Nelson. Born to Finnish immigrant parents in 1906 on a farm in Gogebic, Michigan, Jake served in World War II

Figure 7: Jake Nelson with unidentified Native friend.

under Patton, who–as the story goes–he once met when he was interrupted by Patton while he was sitting on the latrine. As he explained, he wasn’t sure if he should stand up and salute. He returned to northern Wisconsin where he lived a life of little means, sharing a house with his sister Saima’s family for most of his life. In the summer he guided guests at LaFave’s Island Lake Resort in Manitowish Waters, Wisconsin. In the winter he worked in logging camps that cut second growth timber. Forrie Johnson explains:

> There was a salt-of-the-earth guy that one. A wonderful fisherman. If I were to rank guides in the world, up here, if I were to rank guides... You know they give Porter Dean all these accolades, and he was good, Porter, I’ve fished with him many times. But the

best fisherman I've ever known was Jake. Absolutely. (2011)

Though many guides (especially today) are regarded as shameless self-promoters (the used-car salesmen and second-rate real estate agents of the tourism industry), Jake's modesty and good-natured quietude set him apart from many other guides, even of his own era. If he caught a muskie (which are notoriously difficult to catch), he wouldn't say a word unless someone forced it out of him at the end of the day.

Figure 8: Jake Nelson.

Jake's presentation of lures was so realistic, he could get stubborn fish to strike, and on occasion even jump out of the water. Tom Frandy tells:

> Jake was quite a fisherman. One time he was out casting for muskies, and you know when you cast for a few hours, you kindof get into a routine of casting and reeling, casting and reeling, and your mind starts to wander. So as Jake's reeling one back, he pulls his lure straight out of the water over his shoulder to cast again, and a nice muskie jumps out of the water and lands right in the boat! It must have been following his lure, and when the lure went flying out of the water, the muskie jumped for it. (2006)

On a separate occasion, Jake caught a loon when he was muskie fishing, after it mistook his Suick for a fish. And believe me: nobody wants to unhook a barbed treble hook from an angry, frightened ten-pound bird. As Tom Frandy explained, "It's easier to get it in the boat than to get it out" (2011).

Row-Trolling

The convergence of limited netting rights, an emerging tourist industry, new rod and reel technology, and the lake-filled geography of the region made guides like Jake Nelson to turn to row-trolling, the dragging of lures behind a rowed boat to catch large and aggressive game fish. Relatively little is known about the spread of row-trolling through the United States, but the technique is adapted from big-water fishing techniques using sails (and later motors), and trolling with motors was banned in Wisconsin in 1923. In the Northwoods, trolling was uncommon before the 1940s, but the practice was established in Finland and Norway since at least the early 1800s in harvest of salmon. Nelson was among the first established trollers in the area, and his technique demanded a mastery over his boat. Forrie Johnson notes:

Figure 9: Bill Frandy row trolling.

> He'd go out, when he was done guiding, he'd go out and row troll just by himself, just check the waters, and stuff like that. He was beyond outboard motors. He'd just use those oars. (2011)

Admiring the grace in which Jake mastered his craft, Tom explains "The oar would just clear the water on the way up, just like a feather going through the air." These sorts of aesthetics–

simplicity, grace, mastery–came to define the conduct of the proper outdoorsman in the mind of the generations that followed these guides.

The aforementioned Bob Ellis learned row-trolling from Jake, who lived across the lake and was instrumental in popularizing row-trolling throughout the region. Forrie explains about the relationship between Jake and Bob Ellis:

> I think Bob Ellis always wanted to emulate him. You know, Bob Ellis became famous because of Jake. Jake taught Bob Ellis how to row troll from a small lapstrake boat, and work the rock bars trolling with a rod locked under your foot, and rowing, and taking the bait over rock piles and weed beds and so on. And Bob Ellis became one of the best muskie fisherman. And I've seen him long after Jake was dead, row-trolling all by himself all along the shore. (2011)

The popularity of row-trolling faded for several decades for a variety of reasons, including increased use of outboard motors, improved casting technology, and the destruction of cabbage weed beds, it has enjoyed a modest resurgence in recent years among sport anglers, in part because of the Bob Ellis Classic row-trolling tournament, which began in 2003. For sportsmen, the rise of the silent sports movement, the reaction against expensive fish-finding technologies and continued commercialization of fishing, and a sense of nostalgia doubtlessly have contributed to this resurgence. Yet for many locals, trolling remained an effective, low cost technique that combined the best aspects of fishing, traversing and exploring, and healthful living.

The Resort Era saw a heightened awareness over the differences between tourists and locals. Guides often had fun at the expense of the guests of the resort. Forrie often speaks about the Louies, wealthy annual guests at LaFave's Resort who worked as jewelers in Chicago:

> Remember what Jake told Mrs. Louie, when she was waiting impatiently at the dock for the Louies to go fishing? And Mrs. Louie spotted a robin there, and she wanted to get the

> robin's attention or something, and she said, "Oh! How can I get the... I want to get a picture of me and this bird. How how can I get the bird's attention over here?" And Jake's standing there waiting patiently, and he says, "Make a noise like a worm." (2011)

Jake's one liners are almost as legendary as his fishing. Tom Frandy tells another, which pokes fun at tourists' inability to understand the most basic of fishing concepts:

> The story, I didn't hear him say this, but the story I heard was that some of the guests had been talking about fishing, and they asked how things had been going, and he said, "Well, I've been having a lot of problems because the fish are always striking short. They'd make a pass at it but they're always hitting short. They not getting the bait. And they ask Jake if he had any suggestions, and he says, "Well, put a longer leader on it." [laughter] And the guy says, "Yeah, that makes sense!" (2011)

These pranks reflect the tensions inherent in having wealthy tourists hire poorer but vastly talented fishing guides to allow them to live out their fantasies as proficient outdoorsmen. Often these greenhorns frustrated locals with their mistakes. Tom and Jim Frandy tell one of their favorite stories:

> It was legal to shoot the fish... more than one person shot a hole in the boat bringing a muskie in. Blub blub inside the boat and pow! Forrie tells a story about one person at the resort complaining that his boat leaked and wanted to get a different boat. And Forrie knew that he had shot a hole in it. What do you mean get another boat, you shot a hole in this boat! (2011)

Sometimes, these jokes crossed the line into aggression. Jim Frandy tells another:

> I remember dad telling about that, dad worked for the DNR, and they have VIPs coming up, big shots from the DNR coming up, and dad would guide them on some of the lakes that they used for rearing, Trilby lake. This Ishenbach was another guy with dad and Ishenbach went out guiding with these VIPs in the other boat and one guy caught a Muskie, and the VIP was reeling it in, and another VIP in the boats says, "Oh my god, is that a muskie?" Ishenbach says, "What the hell do you think it is, a chipmunk?" [laughter] That's the last time Ishenbach guided the VIPs. (2011)

As tourism expanded following 1980, with unhindered lakeshore development, class tensions escalated in the region, reframed into a new and increasingly angry discourse between locals

who knew the woods, and those southern city-folks who bumbled their way through it and purchased land of historical use. The cultures were actively diverging from each other, and increasing numbers of outsiders caused escalating disruptions in the lives of the locals.

Though fishing and subsistence were always part of this world, their symbolic importance grew during the Resort Era, even as the economy shifted toward tourism. The intercultural experiences of the tourist economy created these rockstars, created the proliferation of these comical stories that have for generations defined boundaries between tourists and locals, and served to concretize value systems and identity performance in the Northwoods and beyond. Part of this emergent regional identity occurred in opposition to the wealthier tourists who were uncomfortable in the woods. The relative disconnection from the land proved to be crucial in the way locals understood tourists. In turn, the connection to the land became how locals understood themselves: as people *of* the land. Consequently, drawing boundaries between these groups led to a complex and tense relationship with many of the values that later came to define America in the post War economy: consumerism, the rat race and keeping up with the Joneses, the rise of the nuclear family, and the culture of leisure. That wasn't us. We never vacationed and had little money, we could manage without work by harvesting our own food if we needed to, and we recognized kinship five generations back. We recognized the values that were taught through these stories of Resort Era guides. We aspired to match Porter Dean's ability to endure the wear of the hard and cold earth beneath his feet. We checked our admiration of Bob Ellis with the realization that he was a man obsessed. We recognized the values of being attentive and listening to one's surroundings, to avoid pranks and real dangers, and we adapted that into a virtue of deep importance in all aspects of life.

Today, lacking popular and culturally sanctioned narratives by which these Northwoods locals can understand the history of the region that so markedly deviates from conventional American historical narratives, these animosities have been transformed into a variety of vague resentments against downstaters (and what they are perceived to symbolize), who are seen to have disproportionate power and influence over the management of the region. And the discordant lineages of fishermen today all look to the guides of the Resort Era to legitimize their own practices: whether they are consumerist sport anglers, tourists who have frequented the area for generations, or folks like me who were quietly passed down the values of resourcefulness, gracefulness in the woods, and the ability to harvest fish using the elegantly minimalistic technique of row-trolling.

Chapter 8

"He'll Never See the Wee Acorns Where the Faeries Hid their Treasure:" Deer Hunting in the North

The autumn had been warmer than usual, but had cooled down considerably by the time I planned to drive north on November 18th, 2011. I blamed the warm weather for the bad fishing that had plagued me in recent weeks, the temperatures proving erratic enough that the lakes had somehow turned over twice in the fall. During these dramatic actions, which generally occur once in the autumn and once in the spring in deeper lakes, the waters at the top of the lake reach their densest temperature at 39F, and they suddenly sink to the bottom, forcing the bottom water and murky semi-decayed organic matter up toward the lake's surface. The waters become murky and one just might catch as many fish sipping coffee at a pinewood kitchen table, as sitting in an aluminum boat in sub-freezing temperatures, the November winds licking their cold tongue underneath a fisherman's coat. I was direly disappointed, since the walleye and muskie was thinning in my freezer, and I would have to restock it with the slightly inferior-tasting and much bonier northern pike in late December. But such disappointments are an inevitability of life.

I raced out of the classroom from my final class, around 3:30, hastily dismissing myself from the final group of students who lingered 15 minutes after class to discuss a course project. I suggested, “Uh... you guys don’t need me anymore, right?” as I rushed out the door to get to my car, which I had under these exceptional circumstances driven to campus. I had somehow muddled through a labyrinthine day of meetings and teaching, even teaching two discussion sections in two different adjacent rooms at the same time, subbing for a co-worker who was at away at an academic conference. The WIAA prep state football championships at Camp Randall Stadium filled the streets with teenagers in letterman jackets walking a noticeable distance away from their parents who kept them in sight. The traffic near the stadium was mired with mini-vans and station wagons with “Go Red Raiders!” signs filling the vehicle windows. Go Red Raiders, indeed. Traffic was thick, like mosquitoes in June, and although I nearly always hike the four miles to and from campus, I needed that hour to beat the hunters’ rush to the forested public lands that occupy much of the northern part of Wisconsin. I fought traffic out of town, through endless corridors of businesses and houses, and onto the heavily packed interstate around Madison. There’s no place to hunt in Madison, the thin strips of public land already dangerously overcrowded. On this weekend, every year, high school football fans and hunters were crisscrossing the state between the rural and urban centers. Telling them apart was little challenge: a blaze orange foamy baseball cap with fuzzy orange ear lappers sitting on the dash of a truck; or, enthusiastic teenagers bouncing around in the backseats in a rush of adrenaline and caffeinated soft drinks.

For me, anyway, this trip north is a return home. Though I haven’t been able to live in my home region since I needed to leave home for college and work, nearly 15 years as I write this

now, my home, my family's home, has always been on the south shores of Lake Superior. Like many ex-pat northerners, I live two lives. One is the busy life of a graduate student, overcommitted, overworked, living hand to mouth, dabbling in leftist politics and activism. The other life, the self I consider to be the real me, lives in the woods, hunts, fishes, and gathers, chops his own wood by hand, and builds by hand the things he needs. These dual lives are both very real and both very much coexistent. People who grows up in the forest bring the forest with them wherever they go in life. It is still my home, and I belong to those woods and waters, as do many others who live in the region.

As I approached Portage, the sky turned blood-red in the west, reflected on the wispy canvas of clouds, and the dark settled over the road. Pairs of red taillights glistened up and down the road, winding in streams up and down hills, around corners. All things considered, the road was not terribly crowded. Not by coastal standards. But the hunters were on the move, a band of migratory predators, twisting like a great serpent toward the north. This tradition that dates back into the 1920s and 30s, to the origins of automobile transportation and Northwoods resorts. The deer herd used to be thicker in the north than the south, although this is no longer the case. Today, Wisconsin's public lands lie mostly in the northern third of the state. Though much of Wisconsin is known nationally for its agricultural and dairy production, the northern portions of the state suffer from poor soil. During the last ice age, about 10,000 years ago, a massive sheet of ice reached as far south as central Wisconsin, scraping all the topsoil from the northern third of the state, and washing it further south in its massive melt. Sometimes northerners joke that they should send the residents of southern Wisconsin a bill, or have the right to repatriate some good black dirt for their gardens.

After the great forests of white pine were logged off, it left a post-industrial nightmare-scape known simply as “The Cutover,” the land was inhospitable to farming, and many homesteaders failed to establish farmsteads that were self-sustaining. The forests gradually reclaimed these plots, and the bulk of these failed homesteaded lands were reclaimed by the state and federal government in the 1920s and 1930s order to establish a stable forestry industry. The economic situation that emerged during the later part of the 20th century certainly did little to help or stabilize the communities in the northern part of the state. The emergence of transportation infrastructure, increased disparity of wealth, and the ability of bourgeois and elite to afford a culture of leisure in turn transformed tourism into a major industry in the north.

The emergence of these exploitative tourist economies is operatively gentrification and colonial in nature. Many postcolonial thinkers make this case, including author Jamaica Kincaid in her classic *A Small Place* (1988) or Sámi scholar and mentor of mine, Elina Helander-Renvall (2003), but there remains a strangeness and foreignness when trying to speak in such terms to locals–at least off the reservation, where racial and cultural tensions are less overt. But locals certainly sense something is wrong. Few who live and work in the north can afford to buy land or lakeshore property these days, and class tensions–though they are often perceived as regional tensions–inevitably exist, as minimum wage adult workers serve vacationing families from, among other places, Chicago. Vilas County, in northern Wisconsin, was recently declared the United States’ #2 “ghost town,” with nearly 55% of homes standing vacant, as desolate and cheaply constructed symbols of the housing bubble (Rivedal, 2011). Lacking adequate public and wild spaces in the state’s southern regions, southerners are forced to travel north to simply have a place to sit in the woods with a rifle. I drive north to hunt. Others drive alongside me.

Many Hunting Cultures, One Region

The various hunting cultures around Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest have always been in dialogue with, rather than observance of, the game management policies of the state. The illegal harvest of deer was famously common into the middle of the 20th century, and poaching is still culturally accepted providing one is in need of meat. There have been endless variations in the past beginning with the first regulations in 1851, marking the first closed season for deer. Hunting with dogs was banned in 1876, salt licks prohibited in 1905, and shining made illegal in 1917. The herd suffered so severely after deforestation, that hunting was prohibited in 1927, 1929, 1931, and 1935. In 1937, hunting season was only three days long, and–rumor has it–it was a wild three days in the woods. For the most part, the hunt was allowed for antlered deer only (a sustainability measure), excepting 1943 and 1950. Since 1986, Wisconsin has a nine day gun deer season, beginning at dawn the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Since 1986, there have been doe permits regularly available to at least some hunters. In 1997, the Department of Natural Resources created some regional early and late seasons, at that time called T-Zones. And following the discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease in 2002, the formation of Disease Eradication Zones to dramatically reduce the herd size took effect (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 2011).

Now deer seasons are more complex and locally based than ever before, but the focus for most hunters continues to be the nine day hunt, which became common in the 1980s, with crucial emphasis on the opening weekend. These policies dramatically affect a given individual's hunt, and the cumulative effects of the hunt on the state. Unlike, for example, Michigan, which has a

16 day long season and begins on November 15th, regardless of the day of the week, Wisconsin's season is currently customized for travel, tourism, and the orgiastic frenzy of those two opening days, where 600,000 hunters don blaze orange and descend upon the woods at 6:00 am.

As I drove into Central Wisconsin, I flipped through the radio dial in the dark, both a bit bored from the tedium of the drive and still stressed from the frantic day. At 5:00, I came across an FM radio station from Appleton playing classic deer hunting songs. Some were familiar to me. Some were new. Everyone knew Bananas at Large's classic Wisconsin hit: "Da 30 Point Buck," a jackpine savage rap, which came out when I was in middle school in the early 1990s, and would be played religiously in November on local radio stations. In particular I associate these hunting songs with middle school. They played on the yellow school bus on my 40 minute ride from school to home. They marked my pubescent years, when the ability to go out deer hunting (at that time, one needed to be 12 years old to hunt) was tied into a eagerness for being validated as an independent individual. We listened to these songs religiously. For us, these songs weren't just local novelty bands that were put on regular rotation for three weeks a year; rather, they were the best things we knew on the radio. Somehow, even at a young age, we understood in our naive ways that they were not like the other pop music we heard. These songs came from us and were made for us, and contrasted with commercial fare. Following is "Da Turdy Point Buck:"

> Lemmie tell you dat
> and you know it's not so much the heat as it is the gosh darn humidity.
> You know dat
>
> You know when you sit there in the bed, and you're just sweaty, you know, and you go to reach for the water on the nightstand and you slide right out of bed, and the wife says, "Stop making so much noise, you're waking me up! go to sleep!"

Well lemmie tell you,
times like that make me feel like movin up north, you know.
Good idea.
Yeah i'd do it too.

‘course then I couldn't watch the Packers, you know. The Packers are...
Gosh I like the Packers, I'd do anything for the Packers.
Who can forget Vince Lombardi, you know, back in the glory years. Not me boy, you know.

Yeah well anyhow,
gettin’ to be that time of year, eh?

Yeah i'm a deer hunter, how do you do?
I got this deer huntin’ rappin’ tale for you
I'm so excited, it's my favorite time of year
I love to freeze my buns chasin’ trophy deer
but don't clap your hands to the stompin’ of the feet
cause he's like me he can't keep a steady beat... no.

I got this great big knife cause the hunting is my life,
it's my chance to drink beer and get away from the wife.
It's the boys night out acting stupidly
say now baby baby, don't you think maybe how bout you and me, yeah?
Well we partied all night, never made it to our bunks, and
I was sittin’ in the tree stand on the tree dead drunk.
Windmill blowin’ 45, temp thirty below. I was freezin to death, then it started to snow.
So I got down from the tree stand, start headin’ for the truck,
and thats when I seen it there. The turdy point buck
The turdy point buck?
Turdy point buck (5x)

Well he was eight foot tall, weighed twelve thousand pounds, with every step there was a shakin' on the ground.
He was so rutiful, so beautiful.
Strutted right out of my dreams, he was created by God just for outdoor magazines.
Now i'm not much for thinkin’, no I don't do it often,
but I had an idea
to put that turdy pointer in his coffin.

Turdy point buck
Turdy point buck

I couldn't get to my grenades,
the howitzer was in the shop,
my stomache was tied into a monkey knot.
Ya, my only hope was Betty Lou,
she was da one,
a combination AK-57 uzi radar laser triple barrel double scoped heat-seaking shotgun.

Turdy point buck
Turdy point buck
Turdy point buck

Ya dat the women clappin' the the back dere, I gotta make dat.

Well he was comin' for me gettin' bigger and bigger, but my fingers were so frozen I could not pull the trigger.
I kicked off my boots fired with my big toe,
I was Dirty Harry, John Wayne, and G.I. Joe.

Ya, dat turdy point buck was only 10 feet away,
still I couldn't seem to hit him, and he wouldn't run away.
And after 20 minutes when the smoke cleared,
there were hunters on the ground and the world's biggest deer
standing tall and proud. He looked at me and yawned (ohhhhhhh dear)
and then a flash of white, and there he was, gone

[cryin and burpin]

Well seven men got up, and then one fell down,
a big lump of blaze orange, shakin on the ground.
At first I thought he was one of the boys,
but it was a no brother good in-law man from Illinois.

Only cheese-heads in here, right boys?
Send him back on the next plane ya know

Did you see the turdy pointer?
Did you see the turdy pointer?
Did you see the turdy pointer?
Did you see the turdy pointer?

As we jumped into da truck,
sayin' i'm gonna get that turdy point buck,
yeah, i'm gonna get that turdy point buck.

Turdy point buck (5x)[1]

Even in my youth, I never liked this song as much as some of my friends did. I felt it was campy and working too hard for the yucks. And the spoofing and lampooning seemed grotesque, especially in light of the co-option of hip-hop as a gimmicky and non-sensical musical choice. I could laugh with my friends, and I still stop and listen to it, but it always seemed off-the-mark for my hunting camp. Though antlers were always somewhat of a prestige item, the obsession over them missed the point of the hunt: the meat. Though on many levels I could respect the song's humanized portrait of the hunter's clumsy failure to achieve his goals, I still feel it's not the portrait I would paint of my own hunt. For us, hunting was never about excess nor haplessness, it's not about partying, not about overpowered semi-automatic rifles and shooting a cloud of smoke. Those were the hunters we could hear in the distance as we sat silently, as they would shoot five, six, seven times in rapid succession. When I was a teenager, I confused these people for good hunters who were likely dropping deer after deer. Now I suspect they are either missing repeatedly or just bored senseless and shooting at stumps. Who does that sort of thing?

Worse yet was the song that followed, an unidentified artist's parody of Queen's "We are the Champions," called "We are the Hunters." I was not terribly impressed. There was something unsettling about singing about "putting deer in their coffins." I could have taken this song as a way to escalate the tensions between behavior and rhetoric of the hunt for comedic effect, or perhaps a confrontation of one's own mortality. But I was crabby, and for me, this celebration of killing and power is not what happens during a hunt, and it makes light of the death of the deer, which I find in my periodic bouts of curmudgeonry to be not particularly amusing. Perhaps at

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[1] These lyrics are adapted from http://www.uulyrics.com/music/bannanas-at-large/song-turdy-point-buck/.

some point as a young adult, I would have held these novelty songs up as examples of creative regional expression, but on this night in particular, I just didn't really care to hear beer and fart jokes, or about how "hunting widows" take the occasion of their husbands' absences to to shop in malls and see male strippers.

That is, at least, I felt that way until Da Yooper's song, "Da Second Week of Deer Camp" came on the radio, a song for which I've always held a soft spot in my heart. It represents an early awakening as a pre-teen to regional culture, and Jim "Hoolie" DeCaire's pure clean voice and elegant Yooper accent is strangely reminiscent of Gene Autry, had he been born in Ishpeming, Michigan. It's clean, pure, and timeless sounding. It has not been taken seriously musically, perhaps because of the comic context of a mock-amateurish accordion lick and overdubbed farting sounds.

> Hey there goes one (BANG!) Hey you shot my cow!
> It's the second week of deer camp
> I got a swollen head
> I'm lying with the dustballs
> Underneath the bed
> An icy breeze is blowing
> Into the tongue and groove
> My pants are frozen to the floor
> And I'm too sick to move
> I didn't drink so many
> Just durty (thirty) cans of beer
> It musta been that last shot
> That put me under here
>
> REFRAIN
> It's the second week of deer camp
> And all the guys are here
> We drink play cards and shoot the bull
> But never shoot no deer
> The only time we leave the camp
> Is when we go for beer
> The second week of deer camp

Is the greatest time of year

I remember playing poker
That weasel musta won
He's wearing my new swampers
And sleeping with my gun
He's snoring like a chainsaw
The camp smells like a dump
Someone's dirty underwear
Is hanging on the pump
Mickey's in the woodbox
Weener's on the stove
His flannel shirt is smoking (sniff)
I wonder if he knows (YEOW!)

REFRAIN

Beadle's crawling through the door
I think he got frostbite
He passed out in the outhouse
And he's been there since last night
Goofus stumbled through the door
He says he got a buck
He was coming from the wayside
And hit it with his truck
Musty cracked a beer and said
Let's celebrate
Goofus caught the first buck
Since 1968

REFRAIN
fade while repeating refrain [Da Yoopers]

Though I feel somewhat ridiculous pointing to the semantic differences between Da Yoopers and Bananas at Large in order to concoct some meaningful differentiation between the two, Da Yoopers always felt more home-grown, using specific local symbols, regional English, and musical genres to convey their point. Their polka refers to outhouses, flannel shirts, and regional Finnish nicknames (Musti). It’s not the white hip-hop of Bananas at Large, riddled with random

references to hunting objects and popular culture. It derives its humor from the overlaying of the grand images of G.I. Joe and John Wayne onto the hapless hunter, not–like Da Yoopers–by drawing on a wealth of local expressions and jargon to reify locally constructed hunter identity. The two are different beasts altogether.

The songs ended. But I still had two hours left to drive to reach my parents' house. We never used a camp, as is the custom in many parts of the state. As my paternal uncle Jim explained to me, camps made sense historically in places where people owned land far enough away from the home that overnight stays were impractical. When resort-culture was at its peak, the resorts would host guest hunters, and many locals employed at these resorts would have to balance their own hunts with serving guests. Even today, locals residing these former resort districts are less likely to hunt from camps. There really is no need for a camp when a hunter lives in the same woods he hunts in. And there is no particular need to escape to camp, if one is hunting for food, and not to play with "da boys." The exodus to camp usually signifies the entering into a new social order. Hunting from the home does not carry the same shift in social order into an othered space.

Hunting, for us, has always been a home- and family-centered tradition. Bringing deer home from the forest requires work from every family member, whether one hunts or works to prepare food for the tired hunters who emerge from the woods. My mother and father pick wild apples in Upper Michigan together in the fall to use for deer bait, and everyone plays a role in butchering, processing, and cooking the meat. We currently have no female hunters in our hunting party, but this was not always the case. My grandmother, Sigrid Frandy, a full blood Finn born in the United States, hunted for many years until her husband, Bill, was inadvertently shot

at in the forest. She resumed hunting later in life. Fishing, however, was her real passion. Sigrid had three sons and no daughters, which I believe made hunting more male-centered a practice in my family. My one female cousin in the area was encouraged to hunt, and she often sat in deer stands with her father before she could legally hunt. But the 12-year old age restriction for hunting occurs at a time when middle-school peer pressure is at its peak, and she never came to the forest to hunt on her own.

We generally prefer to take three deer a year, if we can, and it is enough for three families to eat venison about once a week for a year, some 150-180 pounds of high quality meat. The economic value is hard to estimate since one cannot sell wild game meat in Wisconsin, but prices of domestic raised whitetail deer is nearly $13 per pound, but other red meats like beef are still less than $4 per pound. Suffice it to say, the value of the meat is not inconsequential, especially when living on a low income. Because the whole family is involved, because it bridges outdoors with household, tradition with economy, and because it gives opportunity for us to perform the values we share as a family who works together, deer hunting is the center of our year, its beginning and its end, and its traditions are less mutable than even Christmas or Thanksgiving.

We weren’t alone in practice of meat hunting. This type of subsistence hunting had old roots in the Lake Superior Region. In Suomen Metsästysmuseo’s *Hunttarit!* exhibition (2012), the early experiences of Finnish immigrants in the Lake Superior Region are described:

> *Elämä maatiloilla ei ollut sen helpompaa kuin kaivoksissakaan. Ensimmäiseksi tiettömään korpeen nousi sauna ja sen jälkeen karjasuoja sekä päärakennus. Ruokavalion muodostivat villiriisi, peruna, erilaiset marjat, metsälinnut ja kalat, maissileipä ja -puuro, suolattu sianliha, peuranliha, maito ja voi sekä kahvi tai viljasta paahdettu korvike.*
>
> *Metsästys oli tärkeä osa korven raivaajien taloutta. Johan Piippo Minnesotasta onnistui pyytämään ensi vuosinaan 1870-luvulla susia niin, että saattoi ostaa nahoilla härkäparin*

ja lehmän Douglasin piirikunnassa sijainneelle tilalleen. Peter Lahti Minnesotan Franklinista puolestaan myi yhtenä vuonna 9 000 piisamin nahkaa saaden 10-15 senttiä kappaleelta.

[Life on the farm was no easier than life in the mines. First, a sauna was built in an unknown wilderness, and after that a cattle shed and main house. The diet consisted of wild rice, potatoes, assorted berries, grouse and fish, cornbread and porridges, salt pork, venison, milk and butter, and coffee–or substitutes for it made of roasted grains.

Hunting was an important part of the economy for these pioneers in the northern forest. In his first year of settlement in the 1870s, Johan Piippo was able to kill so many wolves, that he was able to use their pelts to purchase a pair of bulls and a cow for his farm in Douglas County, Minnesota. For his part, Peter Lahti from Franklin, Minnesota, sold 9,000 muskrat furs, receiving 10-15 cents per pelt.]

Hunting, trapping, fishing, berry-picking, harvesting wild rice, making maple syrup were essential parts of life until the 1960s, when the markets for furs collapsed, and tourism began to explode in the north. It was also at this time that wardens began enforcing laws preventing poaching for the home. Up until this time, wardens only were interested in preventing those who sold meat for profit. One Michigan hunter remembers in the beginning of the 1900s:

"Monet naapurit ne tappo syksyllä monta...talven lihat. Ne tappo monta peuraa."

IK: Enemän kuin oli lupa?

"Ei ollut lupaa. Mutta... paikan riistanvartija sillä oli paikallisia sitten joku maanviljelijä joka riistanvartija sano, että he tullee huomenna ja mennään ympäri kattoon onko ketään joka laittomasti. Niin se tuli ja sanoo naapureille, että se tullee huomenna. Elkää mennä nytte!"

IK: Tieto kulki.

"Joo. Ku ne niien jotka riistanvartijan oli apulainen niin tappo peuroja ite. Ja sillon oli paljon peuroja." (Suomen Metsästysmuseo, 2012)

["In the fall, many neighbors killed a lot of meat for winter. They killed many deer.

IK: More than they were permitted to kill?

> "There were no permits. But... the local game warden had these locals, some farmer, who the warden would tell, that they're coming tomorrow and they'll go around to look to see if there's anything illegal going on. Then they'd go to the neighbors and let them know that tomorrow a warden would be coming. Don't go out now!
>
> IK: Word spread around.
>
> "Yep. Those game wardens were helpers to kill the deer. And there were a lot of deer at that time." (Suomen Metsästysmuseo, 2012)

One distinguishing marker of the Lake Superior Region (in the northern parts of three states and in Canada) is that hunters use venison, fish, game, and harvested vegetation to feed their family. That said, sport and recreational hunting have begun to carry more influence in the region. Often they are seen as transplanted, and usually they are the practices of people who have moved to the area after 1970 or 1980. They aren't old blood in the region. There's a difference, and it's clear and tangible to most locals.

The snowflakes started to fall as I drove. It was a thin snow, of sparse and small icy crystals that would have, if I were already in the woods, have made a hissing sound on the brown and dried fronds of ferns, half collapsed in the varies shades of brown and yellow on the forest floor. I could tell, as I drove, that I still was not in the right mind to hunt. I had only visited the hunting lands twice in the fall, and I felt ill prepared to be out there for the hunt. I felt disconnected from the forest. Worse yet, my mind kept flittering back to the bustling of a nighttime drive that could not end quickly enough. The worst thing of all was that in my backseat there sat a canvass bag of exams, essays, and interview transcriptions to grade. I had, by this point in the semester, stopped measuring my grading work in numbers, but rather in pounds. Was it really ten pounds of grading, or was it the weight of my downtrodden spirits that added that

extra five? My mind everywhere but on the one important task at hand, I was nowhere near ready to begin the hunt.

To "hunt" is very much a misnomer, even worse than other Germanic and Romantic languages, which suggest the hunt to be a chase. I have long preferred conceptually the Finnish "metsästää," which conceptualizes "to hunt" as "to forest," or the Sámi "bivdu," which like the Finnish "pyydys," simply means "procuring." For me, anyhow, the presumption that while I'm in the woods as an active player seems somewhat of a misconception. It's not the largess of the hunter that matters, but rather the ability of the hunter to uncover the oblivion of self in the wide world. As my friend and colleague Krister Stoor once explained about Sámi hunting, the good hunter does not find the animals, but rather the animals choose to come to him. After years in the woods, I've found this to be true. Deer do not behave by chance. And the best hunters are not simply those who are the best shot, have read the most about deer foraging, or bear the uncanny ability to sit in the woods the quietest. The deer will find the hunter. One cannot force or rush such things. The hunter must be present and in harmony if he ever expects to consistently bag any deer. I changed the music on my car stereo in a desperate attempt to find something that would help get me in the right frame of mind... something to recenter myself.

In Merrill, Wisconsin, I stopped for gas, and having filled my tank and rushed into the store to purchase a snack of gas station junk food, my car refused to even turn over, which I later identified as being caused by some corrosion in the electrical system near the battery. Bad news. I begged for a jump from a kind-enough looking man in a large Dodge truck wearing a work jacket which identified him as working for the Department of Corrections. Still feeling the anxious energy still coursing through my veins from a frantic month of work at the university, I

missed my turn onto Highway 51, having to pull a U turn on a country road to return to the interstate. I just don't usually make these kinds of mistake, except under the highest levels of stress. My mind was on the ungraded stack of exams, the health of my 1998 Saturn with 170,000 miles on it, and a rejected fellowship application from earlier in the day. And I'm supposed to hunt like this? I needed to drop this baggage.

Deer Hunting and The Passage of Time

I knew what tonight would entail, and I knew what tomorrow would bring. Tonight I would gather with my brother and father at my parents home in Vilas County. My father will have separated out our hunting clothes, which we keep at my parents' home, and have put them into matching cardboard Macintosh SE series computer boxes from 1991, with our names written in my father's clean handwriting on this lids with a Sharpie. The boxes, taken from my father's work at Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua, Wisconsin, long outlived the shelf lives of the computers. Every year, he rakes up oak leaves and places them in boxes, in which we store our clothes for a couple weeks in order to mask the scents present in a home. Many people keep their clothes outside to similar effect, and others use pheromones and deer urine. Wayne Valliere (2012) has critiqued the use of pheromones after the rut, saying they're pointless and sold to gullible hunters. One old-timer he knew used to carry a skunk tail in his back pocket whenever he'd go hunting: "People would laugh at him, but he got his deer every year. The deer would smell the skunk, and think there's nothing to worry about." Once when I was young I asked my father why oak leaves and not, for example, maple. He explained that deer like to eat acorns and

might be attracted to the scent of oak. He conceived of this idea himself decades ago. The risk that a deer might mistake us for oversized acorns poses, of course, grave danger to us all.

I successfully arrived at my parents' house with a barely functioning car around 8:00 that night. My brother had already arrived, and he and my father had already dealt with the leaves and their clothes. Generally, after retrieving our clothes from the leaves, brushing off the detritus, and sweeping up the leafy mess we've made in the basement, we typically try on all of our hunting gear. This is always a curious undertaking. It involves putting on absurd numbers of layers of clothing in a warm house, sweating profusely for a couple minutes, and hoping that those wool pants we haven't worn for a year still fit. I stripped down and swiftly started layering in a specific order I figured out as a teenager: sock liners, wool socks, long underwear bottoms, long underwear tops, cotton shirt, wool shirt, wool pants, my grandfather's hunting vest, orange bibs, Sorel boots, hunting jacket, orange baseball cap with fuzzy ear lappers, and orange gloves. By now, it's clockwork. This order was the best way to prevent bunching or exposed skin around the ankles or waist. The wool pants were a little tight this year. It's always hard to not feel disappointed by that. I cursed my sedentary job, my unpaid hours, my low wages, the crummy academic job market, and resolved to be in better shape next year. Some years are better than others, but I still fit into clothes I wore hunting when I was 12. Immediately after putting everything on ("yep, works..."), I stripped down again and readied the gear for tomorrow morning. I dress lighter than, for example, my father, who wears two coats into the woods to stay warm. My brother teases him for resembling a marshmallow or a toddler in a snowmobile suit, unable to fully move one's limbs, which when trying to aim a rifle can be somewhat of an

obstacle. For me, though, it's a sign of his age that he cannot handle cold like he once could, and the realization that more responsibility is on my shoulders as a hunter as he ages.

I then readied an orange backpack with the necessities for tomorrow: two clips which contain four shells (though I don't recall ever firing more than three times in a day), a bag of hard candy, a bag of chocolate chip cookies, a walkie talkie, a bag of sunflower seeds to attract chickadees and nuthatches, and we placed thermoses for coffee and soup in a long line upon the kitchen counter. Beyond that, there was little to do but visit and to try to sleep, knowing we'd be waking at 4:30 in the morning to dress, prepare thermoses of coffee, pea soup, and chili, drive north for a hunters' breakfast at my uncle Jim's at 5:30, and then trudge out into the dark shadows of dawn just before 6:30. I went to bed around 11:00 or 11:30 that night, and slept easily and deeply. Unlike my father, who usually lies awake most of the night and riddled with anxious deer-hunting dreams, mine was a dreamless and tired sleep.

For years, I have felt this to be the single most important time of the year. Surely something has happened since the last time I stepped foot into the hunting forest. But the volume was turned down on whatever it was. "It feels like we were just here," I remarked to my brother in the early 2000s as we entered the forest, "How has a year passed?" The hunting season is always here, only fragmented by the inconvenience of time and modern life. The season is always happening, in an unbroken progression from birth to death, the measure of all things in our lives. The re-entrance into the forest marks the new year, in girth, in measure of wealth, in our aging, in our identities. It is the singular reliable measure of long-term change in our lives. My father sometimes pines for the days of a more stable climate in the Northwoods: "We always used to have snow on the ground the week before hunting season. Now: sometimes yes,

sometimes no." How much do we huff and puff dragging the deer out? What was on my mind last year in the stand? How tight *are* those wool pants? It is, for us, a marker of time in ways that can only–in terms of a late capitalist economy–be compared to New Years.

We are not alone in this feeling. Michael Perry, a Wisconsin writer heralded for his depth of knowledge of local culture and life in the northwestern corner of the state, wrote in his blog during the hunting season of 2011:

> Deer hunting is my New Year. I sit out there resolving to get my life in order, lean things out, do better as a husband, a dad. I find myself deep in the brown weeds swearing to trim the literal and figurative lard. Nature is ruthless in this sense: you hunker there on the cold ground or in the bare tree and feel what it's like to be stalked by your own deficient soul. (2011)

Time is marked by these moments. Year after year in the abstraction that sets the hunt aside from daily life. This is where we begin, in solitude, in contemplation, as a meditative awakening to ourselves as reborn and aging individuals. What hunts the hunter in these silent times? These thoughts, intensely personal, are never discussed. When one is alone in the woods, one needs to be alone in the woods. We lose ourselves deeper and deeper into layers of thoughts and zen-like nothingness until something snaps us out at a moment's notice: "Oh, yes... I'm in the woods, and I am watching for deer."

Though it may seem like nothing, to simply sit and be, such a skill is too often neglected in the hyperreal multimedia frenzy of contemporary American life. During my first hunt, at the tender age of twelve, I lumbered out to an old smokehouse, built resembling an outhouse. Though not used for decades, it still bore the vague scent of smoked ham, used to feed guests at LaFave's Island Resort, a family run business which ran from the 1880s until the 1970s. This ham scent drew in porcupines, who loved to nest and defecate in the stand's smoked and salted goodness. No matter how we tried to blockade the door, the porcupine would find its way into

the stand. The porcupine is a stubborn critter, very clever, and its will cannot easily be denied. Perhaps such a characteristic is cultivated by any creature of the forest who is virtually immune to harassment by the forest's fiercest predators, save for the tenacious fisher who will turn the porcupine onto its back and rip into the mess of soft quills on its belly for its tough and pungent meat. My mind turns to poet Galway Kinnell (1982), who in his work "The Porcupine" memorialized the porcupine's insatiable love for the salts and oils of humanity that it assumed cosmic resonance, as the slow, implacable, and gnawing force of nature that slowly reclaims humanity's salty stains on the earth:

> 1
>
> Fatted
> on herbs, swollen on crabapples,
> puffed up on bast and phloem, ballooned
> on willow flowers, poplar catkins, first
> leafs of aspen and larch,
> the porcupine
> drags and bounces his last meal through ice,
> mud, roses and goldenrod, into the stubbly high fields.
>
> 2
>
> In character
> he resembles us in seven ways:
> he puts his mark on outhouses,
> he alchemizes by moonlight,
> he shits on the run,
> he uses his tail for climbing,
> he chuckles softly to himself when scared,
> he's overcrowded if there's more than one of him per five acres,
> his eyes have their own inner redness.
>
> 3
>
> Digger of
> goings across floors, of hesitations

at thresholds, of
handprints of dread
at doorpost or window jamb, he would
gouge the world
empty of us, hack and crater
it
until it is nothing, if that
could rid it of all our sweat and pathos.

Adorer of ax
handles aflow with grain, of arms
of Morris chairs, of hand
crafted objects
steeped in the juice of fingertips,
of surfaces wetted down
with fist grease and elbow oil,
of clothespins that have
grabbed our body rags by underarm and crotch...

Unimpressed – bored –
by the whirl of the starts, by *these*
he's astonished, ultra-
Rilkean angel!

for whom the true
portion of the sweetness of earth
is one of those bottom-heavy, glittering, saccadic
bits
of salt water that splash down
the haunted ravines of a human face.

4

A farmer shot a porcupine three times
as it dozed on a tree limb. On
the way down it tore open its belly
on a broken
branch, hooked its gut,
and went on falling. On the ground
it sprang to its feet
and paying out gut heaved
and spartled through a hundred feet of goldenrod
before

the abrupt emptiness.

5

The Avesta
puts porcupine killers
into hell for nine generations, sentencing them
to gnaw out
each other's hearts for the
salts of desire.

I roll
this way and that in the great bed, under
the quilt
that mimics this country of broken farms and woods,
the fatty sheath of the man
melting off,
the self-stabbing coil
of bristles reversing, blossoming outward –
a red-eyed, hard-toothed, arrow-stuck urchin
tossing up mattress feathers,
pricking the
woman beside me until she cries.

6

In my time I have
crouched, quills erected,
Saint
Sebastian of the
scared heart, and been
beat dead with a locust club
on the bare snout.
And fallen from high places
I have fled, have
jogged
over fields of goldenrod,
terrified, seeking home,
and among flowers
I have come to myself empty, the rope
strung out behind me
in the fall sun
suddenly glorified with all my blood.

7

And tonight I think I prowl broken
skulled or vacant as a
sucked egg in the wintry meadow, softly chuckling, blank
template of myself, dragging
a starved belly through the lichflowered acres,
where burdock looses its arks of seed
and thistle holds up its lost blooms
and rosebushes in the wind scrape their dead limbs
for the forced-fire
of roses.

My father, like the farmer, knew the one unfortunate solution to porcupine persistence is to spray it with lead shot, which eventually resolved the problem of our squatter, one crisp autumn day as I walked out to the woods with my father. “There,” he said stoically, as he carried the limp mesh of quills into the woods. There was no more to be said.

At twelve, I had no idea what I was in store for when I first entered the woods. I had practiced walking in the woods, leading my father and growing embarrassed as he let me make wrong turns, leading us to nowhere. In this way, I learned the land, bit by bit, learning the trails and the general orientation of the land. Only after a few years did this become an intuition, when I was able to read where I was in these woods simply by its “look.” I reached my stand around 6:30 that first morning when I first began hunting. I recall thinking, “Okay, any time now. Anytime a deer will come out of the woods. Anytime... any time now.” I stared deeply at the woods, expecting, apparently, herds of deer to jump out before me and present themselves broadside. Of course, this was not the reality. And slowly the reality began to sink in that when in previous years my father brought home one or even no deer, that it meant that he was simply not seeing many deer. Eventually, I thought I had better check my watch and look at the time. How

long had I been sitting, waiting, silent, staring intensely and transforming every shadow and stump in the woods into a deer-shaped figure in my imagination? Surely, it had been an hour already. My watch read 6:40. Was it broken, I briefly wondered, as I watched the second hands slowly tick forward, as if in slow motion. I knew then it would be a long day. By 9:30 am, I was frantically eating jolly ranchers and lemon drops, leaving a suspect feeling in my stomach, trying to pass the time. I had my head buried between my legs and was rocking back and forth out of boredom, when I looked up. A doe stood there looking at me quizzically. I frantically grabbed my rifle, and she easily bounded into the woods. Within two seconds, she was gone. I did not see another deer in the hunting forest for two years.

At some point, after I had passed the milestones of shooting a few deer, the dread of the long agonizing days alone in the woods became more tolerable, and as I became an adult, I grew to crave them, even "forgetting" to bring a watch outside, sometimes to the chagrin of my time-conscious father. In turn, this led to my parents buying me watches for Christmas for a span of several years. I figured the information one needs while hunting is all sensory anyhow. It is the light, the wind, the temperature, the snowfall. A clock will only remind you at midday that you should be hungry and that it is time to eat some pea soup. For sitting in a well-known woods, where worrying about getting lost after dark is no risk, it is simply unnecessary.

Dawn

I woke up at 4:30 to the sound of an alarm. Not hitting the snooze button, instinct kicked in, and I groggily pulled on my layers: sock liners, wool socks, long underwear, t-shirt, wool shirt, wool pants, hunting vest, belt with a hunting knife. By the time I got upstairs, the coffee

was on and the soup was heating up. I made myself a venison sausage sandwich with colby cheese. We packed our lunches up, downed a quick few cups of coffee, grabbed our computer boxes of oak-leaf scented clothes, and headed up to my Uncle Jim's house for breakfast. Only a short 25 minute drive, Jim lived directly across from our hunting land, on a street along the south shore of Island Lake, populated mostly with relatives, some of whom I'm still unsure how I'm related to. This land was all homesteaded in the 1880s by Abe LaFave, a fur trapper who came down from Canada, who was the founder of LaFave's Island Lake Resort. Until 2006, we ate breakfast at my grandmother's house, but after she died in her 90s, we moved the breakfast across the street to Jim's. The transition was sad but not difficult. The hunters' breakfast itself was never fancy (coffee, orange juice, scrambled eggs, fried potatoes, bacon or sausage, and toast), but required the devotion of someone to wake at 5 am to cook a full breakfast. This year, in particular, my Aunt Jane prepared a fancy baked French toast, which was surprisingly gourmet for a hunters' breakfast. But it was delicious and well eaten.

We visited a little, and talked about the land and deer that had been recently spotted in the area. An 8 pointer had been hit by a car only two weeks before less than a mile from our land, and we shook our heads in disappointment, as is the custom to do. The albino deer, a number of which live on our land, were getting large, which–off limits to hunters–is about the only thing they can do until they meet their untimely end, often by automobile collision or by ignorant hunter. One man, about a decade ago, dropped a 12 point albino deer, and brought it to a Registration Station, only to be levied a hefty fine. This story is topped only by the incident of a man near Clam Lake who shot an 800 pound elk and attempted to register it, thinking it was a deer. Such people should perhaps not be allowed in the woods with firearms. Around 6:15, we

threw on our outdoor clothes and drove down to the hunting land, where my father and I were dropped on the east corner, and my brother parked near our cabin, the small 1-room shack without power or running water where my parents lived for several summers while raising my sister as an infant. This is where he walks in.

We trudge out slowly and quietly into the woods in the dusky hours of morning, where phantom deer lurk in the shadows of trees and our imaginations. Time has passed. And the land contains memory. Remnants of former deer stands, like ruins clinging to trees marking the hunts of our previous generations. A few piles of trash, and a cabin collapsed in itself after being left to neglect by one of my uncles. My troubled uncle. They are markers of the misuse of land, and periodically we insist we will rid of them this next year. And there are other markers too, the important ones. Twin Pine: a place whose name ties to a towering tree that has long since been gone since the 1970s. The Potato Road: once a logging road, now barely a trail, which happened to catch the noontime sun well enough that the LaFaves used to grow potatoes down the soft soils of its bulging center. Many Tops: a specific large white pine with two towering trunks. The High Line: the one

Figure 1: Remnant of an old hunting stand.

powerline that feeds the neighborhood which was cut right down the center of the land. To know the land means to know these places, to know their names, to recognize at least some of the differences in the infinite permutations of the forest which will affect deer and their motions. Stories are encoded into the land, and knowing the land means knowing one's own family history and oneself, as well as containing useful and memorable anecdotal information to be successful in hunting.

My brother, John, who now works as a physics professor at a technical college in southeastern Wisconsin, was raised with an intuitive sense of this too. Being forced to live in southern Wisconsin for work, as so many of us are, John took special effort to cultivate the same values in his children that we were raised with in the north by living there, by our parents' measured calculations, and by immeasurable chance. John, a talented woodworker and writer, integrated these deeply held beliefs into a number of his projects. And he put this sense of place into text. Shortly before the birth of his first son, Gray, in 2004, John sat down to write a book of nursery rhymes for him, rhymes that helped convey the people, places, and values that we have held close to us as a family. He has added to it following the birth of his two subsequent children, Silas and Elsa. His poems are filled with organic and

Figure 2: John Frandy with a buck.

natural imagery, with an emphasis on the playfully mystical and with a high priority upon the centrality of the localized human experience within this supernatural world. Vacillating seamlessly between local references and the otherworld, John's works encapsulate the sense of place that we have cultivated as a community of hunters. Here is one of his works:

> Grandpa went a-hiking
> And what did Grandpa see?
> Grandpa saw a red fox
> By old Twin Pines Tree
> Grandpa saw a partridge
> Under Many-tops
> And cottontails on Potato Road
> With jumpy and bumpy hip-hops
> He saw a bear cub by the Smokehouse
> On the High Line saw some coons
> Watched pure white deer near Jim's stand
> Glow like two full moons
> Of all these sights that Grandpa saw
> Which was his favorite to see?
> 'Twas when he came home from his hike
> And saw Grandma and you and me (2011)

The land rich with animals and places, as it plays upon the way we discuss the land. Though these descriptive place names are not for whimsical fancy, there is the specialization of knowledge which, to a neophyte, must be learned to be functional in a good outdoorsman conversation. John bends reality too in order to stylize the verse. Cottontails don't live on our hunting land, only snowshoe hares; and "Grandpa," my father, does not hike. Like a good northerner, he goes to the woods with a specific purpose (Helander, 2004, p. 303). One day, when Gray begins to learn the land, these places will be established for him, and the mythic

otherworld the unseen world of Twin Pine will converge with the physical landscape that he uses to harvest deer.

I arrived and climbed into my tree stand, a new structure that I built with my father two years ago, up against a hundred year old white pine. I abandoned my previous stand, a concession trailer dragged onto the land, in 2008 because my father and uncles agreed to allow some logging on the land, and my stand was suddenly in the middle of a field. I was not pleased that my small and dark nook of woods, enclosed in a grove of jackpine and balsam, which produced multiple deer sightings year after year, was suddenly devastated. But such land-management decisions are not yet mine to make.

Figure 3: My old deer stand, prior to logging.

I climbed up my ladder of my new stand, loaded my rifle, removed my thermos of coffee for easy access, and took out my ziplock bag of sunflower seeds, and sprinkled a handful on the railing for the chickadees and nuthatches. And I settled myself back, at first restless. No deer will come around in such racket. Then slowly calming, calming as I settled myself back into the tree. The minutes melt away in the dusky light of dawn, where things are not quite as they seem, and

where every shadow could be a silhouette of a deer. My brother had written about twilight in a similar way in one of his poems.

> Twilight's the hour that everything changes
> And nothing is what it seems
> Dark's not quite dark and light's not quite light
> When sunlight mixes with moonbeams
>
> The fishes all fly while the birds swim
> The rivers flow upstream
> The rabbits all crawl while the turtles all hop
> It's so much like a strange dream
>
> So we'll shoulder our blessings and count all our burdens
> In the twilight hour's spin
> And watch the clock tick slowly backward
> Until all is normal again (2011)

Here John Frandy overlays a complex and semi-mystical view of time over the appearance of non-sense children's verse. Time is re-conceptualized as not simply linear, but a winding backwards, as a cyclical progression, tangible and rooted in both the real and fantastical. Coming from this tradition, I have often thought that the belief that Western people conceptualize time as linear is a simplification of the historical reality, though not entirely inaccurate. How can one work with the seasons, as either a hunter or farmer, and possibly see linearity within time?

It takes only a nominal glance to recognize the importance of cycles and timelessness within the work of my brother. Here, on a footstool he made for his wife, Jenny, in 2010, he inked in four sets of characters, one on each face of the footstool. A wolf, a bear, and a fox chase a sheep, a duck, and a chicken. The predators are chased by two male hunters. Women and children chase the men with a pot, as if to prepare a meal from the game. The woman in the rear bears a slightly torn bag of grains, which leaves a trail of grain behind her as she walks. The chicken and duck follow the grain trail, and the chicken can be seen pecking up the grain. So too do we march in our endless progression, returning to the woods to harvest that which harvests us.

Figure 4: Livestock eat grain

Figure 5:Predators chase livestock

Figure 6: Hunters chase predators.

Figure 7: Cooks follow hunters.

Midday

The sensations of being alone in the woods wash over me in the stand. It is still brown in the woods, but snows might be coming later in the day. We were nervous about the possibilities of rain. A cold rain is the most brutal of weather, weather conditions which caused my father to catch cold and develop walking pneumonia in the late 1960s. And I have sat out on these opening days, with weather as varied as one can conceive. One year, the temperature soared to near 70. And only two years back, in 2009, it was -20 for nearly the entire deer season. That year was

rather chilly. But hunt we did. Worse though, we barely saw any deer, who were prudently bedded down. Seeing a deer will quite literally warm a cold hunter up for hours. In 2010, it was 10 above, but the winds gusted at 30-40 miles an hour, stinging the face as they robbed the heat out right through all the layers of clothing. But one learns how to cope with the cold. At a certain point, it is inevitable that the high motor functionality of one's fingers declines. Most years, I struggle to regain the dexterity in my thumbs and fingers necessary to button up my wool pants. Most people I know carry two pairs of gloves and periodically rotate them by inserting one pair into their coat for warming. But I find it is much more efficient to simply dip frozen fingers into hot coffee for a few seconds until feeling and mobility are restored in a sudden flash of a burning sensation. My family teases me for this, which I don't fully understand, since my father warms up his venison sausage sandwiches by putting them in his armpits. We all have our oddities in the woods. On the bitterest of days, a short walk is in order to get the blood flowing into cold feet, especially since I have not yet taken to dunking my frozen toes in my coffee. No amount of wiggling will truly warm frozen toes. But, of course, nothing warms you up better than seeing a few deer. If you happen to shoot one, you might not feel the cold again for the rest of the day.

There are hundreds of sounds in the quiet woods to learn, and every hunter in those parts knows that an 8 ounce red squirrel will make considerably more noise than a 150 pound deer. The red squirrels hop through leaves and their claws clack and scrape against the brittle white pine bark. They are fiercely territorial, and will not let a hunter alone with incessant chattering, if he happens too close to the squirrel's tree. This year, I watched a red squirrel take a bold six foot leap onto a distant twig, merely to frighten off a nuthatch that had invaded the squirrel's territory.

Figure 8: A red squirrel forages.

The squirrels will eat birdseed, but never if a hunter is around. Once I convinced one to eat part of a chocolate chip cookie, but it must have been too sweet for the squirrel's pallet. It did not come back. In recent years, for whatever reason, the squirrels let me be in peace, which I take as a sign that I have become a better hunter, with a less disruptive presence.

Wind can have many sounds, whether with its distinctive whistle through white pines or while rattling red oak leaves, which do not drop completely until spring, against each other. There are winds that are high, above the canopy, and winds that are low to the frosty ground. Today it was still. And sometime in the early morning, two ravens chased a crow, fiercely, angrily, through the sky, croaking after it. I listened as their wings made whooshing sounds through the air, as the crow made elusive maneuvers, trying to put distance between him and his harassers. I did not understand what the conflict was over. Wayne Valliere sometimes says of birds that they know more of creation than man will ever know.

Random cracking sounds in the brush bring me suddenly to attention. Still to this day I sometimes guess wishfully yet incorrectly that this is the sounds of antlers crashing through a thicket. Perhaps it is another squirrel. The nuthatches and chickadees have not yet begun to

gather. They are not shy when people sit in tree stands. They will routinely fly and land within inches of a person, often directly on the barrel of a rifle, or right on a hunter himself. Sometimes I persuade some to sit on my bare hand, cupped full of sunflower seeds, if the weather is warm enough to go without gloves for a spell. It is rewarding and fascinating to feel the lightness of their weight, and their minuscule but sharp pointed nails and bony fingerlike talons as they rest delicately on your exposed skin. On one occasion, when I was still in high school, I felt a heavy weight suddenly land on my head. I turned my head a bit, and a huge pileated woodpecker flew away. I told the story with great enthusiasm after the day's hunt, even though I knew I would be teased for being a "blockhead." The chickadees and nuthatches come so close, one can distinguish between the different individuals, their habits and distinguishing features come into full light: their fluffy, fine feathers and the imperfect lines of their stripes, their black bead-like eyes, and lightning-quick motions. Or, the way they distinctly hop and pick out a seed, invariably fly to a different tree, and wedge the seed between the crevices of the bark, where they peck open the shell with their beak in sets of three (tap tap tap... tap tap tap). I wondered briefly why on my GRE I was tested on my

Figure 9: A chickadee holds a sunflower seed in its beak.

vocabulary and knowledge of Latin and Greek etymological roots, when there was not a single question about the secret language of birds.

Figure 10: A nuthatch snatches up a sunflower seed.

Around 9:30, two deer caught my attention, as they walked in on my right side, walking south. The wind was from the east, and I was east of them. From the start, they were nervous, heads bobbing up and down. They smelled me. Or maybe someone, or something, had spooked them earlier. I remained motionless, and squinted my eyes in search of antlers. Were there tufts sticking up between the ears? They could have been nub bucks, still not legal for our bucks-only zone, until the antlers were three inches long. I waited and watched them for maybe three minutes. Were they looking behind them? Bucks will often trail a couple does in the fall, walking tentatively behind. Patience is often a great reward in these situations. I tried to move my rifle up slowly, so I could peek through the scope, in desperate hope I might witness three inches of antler through the magnification of the scope. In trying to lift it, either the motion or the sound of me moving startled the already nervous deer. They ran, white tails bounding up and down, flashing through the brush. And then they were gone.

I was alone. Had I messed up? Should I have been more patient? Should I have been more aggressive in getting my scope on them? Such questions have no answers, but they can haunt a solitary hunter for hours and days. Perhaps they would come back, I thought, for some food, as deer sometimes do after a small scare. But they did not.

And I set out to waiting again. Around 10:00, the first chickadees and nuthatches found sunflower seeds. The chickadees make a squawk-like peep to alert other birds that they have found a food source. They are good birds, who seldom mind sharing food with their nuthatch cousins. Watching the birds is an enjoyable pastime, as their tiny wings make fluttering sounds as they land alongside you, and a small breeze from their wing-flapping brushes against your face. They do on occasion alert a deer to our presence. I have long assumed, however that the incessant tweeting of birds would likely indicate to a deer that there is food in the area. This seems to be a good thing. And I've seen enough deer in the woods to feel confident in my conclusions.

A light and icy snow begins to fall from the sky, and it falls on the grey fronds of brown dead ferns making a hissing sound. Perhaps it is time for some soup to combat the cold. I unscrew my soup thermos, and the taste is distinct and vivid in the cold air. Food's flavor always seems more distinct when eaten in the outdoors, as if the stimulation of indoor, modern life is so intense, our senses dull from over-exertion. Chili or pea soup? Chili. Coffee. And maybe a few cookies. They're gone in a flash. There hasn't exactly been much shooting this morning, but as always, it tapers to a near stand-still around noon. Few deer move around the noon hour, but we have sometimes had luck in the past. Finally, I have calmed completely, and I lose myself in my

thoughts, as my inner self merges with that around me. My eyes no longer need to look for deer. If a deer walks by, I will see it. Now, finally, I am hunting.

A white flash in front of me, and hopping with a long tail, flowing like a wave through the brown underbrush. It darts into a brown pile of felled brush. A head pokes up. An ermine. We often see animals: ruffed grouse (which most locals–ourselves included–call partridge), field mice, snowshoe hares, owls, eagles, fishers, or just the prior year, an otter, who apparently lost and far from the lake dragged its low belly through the snow, leaving a curious track behind it. Wolf tracks, coyote tracks, bear scat, frighteningly large bald eagle talon prints in the snow feeding on a deer's gut pile. I feel ambivalent about bringing modern technology into the forest, but now I am glad I have my smartphone. I take it out and snap a few photos. Why not?

Figure 11: An ermine in the woods

The ermine hops about a bit, as I click numerous poor-quality photos and videos of it. No, it won't get closer. It scurries to circumnavigate my stand, and disappears to the east. And I am left alone in the quiet again. I shift my eyes back and forth, swiveling my neck as little as possible. Leaning against the tree, I might put my feet up on a bench opposite me, or even throw an arm up over a rail and lean against the wall of my stand. That feels heavenly, though it means if a deer does come out, I will need to make several extra motions before I can lift my rifle up to shooting position.

I watch as snow falls from the sky. Snow is usually a great asset during hunting. One can see the brown outline of a deer so much clearer against a pure white background. One can see perfectly clearly how deer are moving through the woods with snow by their tracks, running or walking, wandering or eating. There are no secrets in the snow. We traipse around the periphery of our land if we want people to know the land is occupied, or if we want to conceal our wanderings, we step cleanly into a pre-existing boot tracks. Even as I wander in Madison, without reason I still step in the boot print of another, as if I need to keep my identity but a whisper in the city filled already with too many footprints. For some reason, this feels to be a virtue. My brother once told me that he happens to do the same thing, and we marveled at how odd it was we would both do the same thing, without ever having discussed it. A light snow falling from the sky will mask perfectly the scent of a human, literally pushing the in-flight and rank predator molecules down to the earth before they reach a deer’s sensitive nose. And snows also muffle our noises as we move, open a thermos, or unzip a zipper. A crust on snow alerts a hunter to a deer’s motion, tiny crunching sounds, though significantly quieter than those of a red squirrel, are audible, especially if it is warm enough to keep the ear lappers up on your hunting cap. When a hunter’s hands are filled with blood, they can be washed by rubbing snow on the bare skin, and the deer’s blood sopped up from a field dressed animal and removed to preserve the freshest possible quality of the meat. It cleanses the meat, if the bladder happens to tear as it is removed, or when the colon must be cut. Snow will clean a knife with hardened tallow caking the blade like wax on a candle. And dragging a gutted deer on dry ground for a quarter mile will leave your glasses fogged and sweat running down your brow. With a few inches of snow, the friction is reduced, and the deer slide, almost as if they’re on a sled.

But the snow today is maybe not gentle enough. It does not float in the sky, but falls abruptly and suddenly to the ground as tiny, circular balls of ice. In a blizzard, in particular, the deer bed down, usually under pines. And the pine branches will get heavy with snow, and sag down under its weight, blocking a hunter's vision. Yet snowy pines are still better than red oaks, whose stubborn insistence on clinging to their leaves all winter long obstructs vision and has resulted in shooting fatalities around the state. When snows get deep in the winter, the deer will sometimes stop moving nearly all together, and they will herd up and eat only the food in a trampled down area. Even as their food grows scarce, they will rather risk starvation that brave the deep snow pack. I sit in my stand, snow coming down, as the ground changes slowly from brown to pure white. When was the last time I heard a shot? It had certainly been a while. Perhaps as dark would approach, the deer would begin moving, as they customarily do after 2:30 and before sunset at 4:30. I adjust my position, put my legs up, lean my head back against the bark of a gigantic white pine, and stare out into the white forest.

Dusk

After a while, I pour my final cup of coffee. It fills 2/3 of my thermos lid, and it is more lukewarm than hot. It's chilly enough that my thermos has been annoyingly squeaking for hours, as air is pulled into the rapidly cooling liquid. Squeak! Squeak! No wonder I haven't seen any deer, I think, as I loosen the lid to a hiss of rushing air. It's getting close to 4 pm, and the low-level of the sun casts a very specific and urgent light within the interior of the forest. It's tense. The shooting is starting to pick up a bit in the distance, but it's still less than it should be. Am I a little excited to leave the woods for the comforts of a house? I'm not sure.

Within my family, my heroes have always been fishermen and hunters, who performed legendary feats in the outdoors which I will never match. My grandfather, Jaakko Wilbur (Bill) Frandy, once caught a muskie a day for the entire month of August, which everybody knows is the worst month of the year for muskie fishing. My great-uncle Jake Nelson was such a good fisherman that he once had a muskie jump into a boat with him. Jake would fish with my father, and was so talented at reading the water that he would would tell my father seconds before northerns were going to strike his lure. My grandmother, Sigrid Frandy, would sit out in her yard with a rifle every hunting season until she was 80 years old. Our cousin Marie would hunt voraciously, and possessed such great talents for butchering, she would take deer carcasses and strip them of their scraps, so thoroughly she could find 10 pounds of scrap hamburger on a discarded ribcage. My great uncle Lauri Nelson would fish for trout with my uncle Jim, and sit on the riverbank, smoking a pipe and watching Jim fish, until he somehow knew it was time for the fish to bite. He'd tamp out his pipe, walk to the shore, and catch a trout on his first cast. And when people gather in the fall and begin the winter visiting season, people talk about the hunt.

I never hunted with Forrie Johnson, a retired high school teacher in his mid-80s, and a relative of the LaFave family through marriage who helped run LaFave's Island Lake Resort, but we would always pay attention to his hunt. Forrie had a reputation for being a masterful storyteller. A very social man, Forrie connected the resort to the larger community of guides and outdoorsmen, and he possessed the magnificent talent of turning any ordinary event into an unforgettable and often uproarious narrative. Forrie tells one of his favorite hunting stories from the 1950s, when he used to hunt on land later purchased by Tom Frandy:

> Forrie: Well, Tom knew enough to put his tree stand right where I killed all those deer over the years, anyway! It was a funnel. Like, I could hear them coming from all sides.

All the guests would start out down here, and I'd be waiting for them down there. Or they'd start out up beyond Harry's and they'd come this way. And I could just stand there waiting for one to come... and I made sure I was close to the road so I wouldn't have to drag them too far.

Well, right where your cabin is, that was my spot. In the corner. And the guests at the resort, at LaFave's, would bet on how soon after 8:00, after the season would open at 8:00. And I'd hike out alone with a borrowed shotgun from Aunt Ollie, and I didn't even have a rifle, a 12 gauge, single shot with a slug in it. And they'd bet on how soon I'd be coming home from hunting with a buck. And usually it wasn't more than 8:20 or 8:30, then I'd come dragging down this road in front of our house. And they'd pay up based on how soon after 8:00 that Forrie got his buck.

But the funniest story though, this one is... this is going to be good for Tim's paper here. I went out by myself like that. And I headed down here, to right where your cabin is. Right in that area is where I had... probably where your tree stand is, Tom. I would be standing there, alone, waiting early. I'd be out there before daylight standing, waiting. And I heard this sound, naturally, crashing through the brush. And I thought. And I look, and here comes a beautiful 10-point buck. And I thought, my god, that deer's got an arrow right through his head! And I'm looking in the early dawn, and I see this shaft just right through it. And it came out, just shaking its head, and I thought, oh my god, some archer wounded that poor thing. And the closer he got, the more I realized it was a branch. A straight branch that had gotten tangled in its horns. He had been rooting around and this stick was sticking through his horns, right back to his skull. Then to add to the... oh, I didn't tell you, I shot the buck. And when I got over to look at the buck that was lying there, and I'm looking and the horns had at least 10-12 feet of telephone wire, twisted in the horns. And I thought, oh my, and I tried to pull it out. I thought I can't drag that thing in like this!

Tom: It looks like you had it tied up!

Forrie: Well, that would happen. I drag the buck home, and I'd put it by grandpa's shop, you know the wood one, and I'd get the wire cutters and get that damn wire out of the horns before the guests... the place was full of guests and hunters, and sure enough here comes a whole flock of hunters out from breakfast, and I'm out with the wire cutters cutting this telephone wire! Remember the dump off of the town road going out toward Michael's Parlor? There was a dump there. That's where the deer had been in there, and he had crossed from there into your stand, and I shot him in there and dragged him home and I couldn't even get the wire out. And I'm out there pulling, and oh! For two weeks after I got the burn. Where'd you have him tied up? Did you have a lightbulb tied up to him so you could see him in the dark? What tree did you have him tied to? I suppose you're out there in August, and you have him tied up and full of corn. But I knew it was going to happen, so I'm out there trying to get the horns... well, I didn't make it. Some of

> those guests at your dad's resort, they were... Well, it was a nice buck anyway. Eat your heart out, I told them. Oh lord, those were the days...

These stories immortalized and honored friends, family, and events, and their annual renditions kept these individuals alive long after their deaths. They connected us to the past, invoking characters and timeless values shared by the larger family and community. Hunting, fishing and harvesting were the center of this world.

Dusk falls into the woods, and the day fades back into the shadows from which it was born. Shots intensify, but it's clear that compared to previous years, the deer aren't especially active. How long does one wait until it is time to leave the woods? The light is reflected by the newly fallen snow, and the woods are considerably brighter now in the dusk than they were in the morning. Sometime after 4:30, when I realize I can clearly see only 30-40 yards in front of me, I leave the woods, walking toward my father's stand, and we walk out together, exchanging information about what we saw that day. I explain I saw two doe. He saw nothing. We walk back through the woods to the truck, and speak with my brother, who saw several does, but no bucks. We unload our rifles, and pack into the truck, which–when wearing endless layers of clothes–is no simple task. I ride on the tailgate back to Jim's house.

Jim saw no bucks either, but saw three doe. It's always an unsettling feeling to have no deer to register after the first day, the best bet to bring home a deer. We remove our layers of hunting clothes, which we leave in boxes in Jim's basement. We each make ourselves a mixed drink, visit for a little bit about the day, and the three of us head home for dinner. The day in the cold produces some strange sensations in the body. To manufacture heat, the body craves food, and it is easy to eat food until one is uncomfortable. My face and hands burned a bit in the

evening from exposure to the elements. Around 10, I catch myself falling asleep on the floor of a crowded living room, where we visit and watch television. I dismiss myself and go to bed.

Sunday

The alarm clock rings at 4:30 again, and I sigh and groan before shutting it off. After a brief minute in bed, with a slight nausea in my stomach, I collect myself, and start pulling on my layers of hunting clothes. The second day of the hunt is much like the first, although usually fatigue sets in from the previous day, and hunters always struggle a bit to wake, eat, and get into the woods. Usually, the deer are spooked from the excitement of the first day, and they tend to seek more secure locations. We always hear fewer shots in the woods. We pack up our gear, make lunches, fill thermoses, and drive up to Jim's for our hunters' breakfast. Snow has now changed the look of the woods. We trudge in, looking for tracks. There were alarmingly few tracks in the night. The bait we had dropped Saturday morning near our stands was left untouched. This is a rare and very bad sign. Was the snow keeping the deer hunkered down?

I climb into my stand and immediately drift off into thought. I knew I had to be in Madison on Monday for work. But I could turn around on Monday night and drive north again to hunt. We also had permission from my uncle to hunt on his farm in Danbury, Wisconsin, in the northwest side of the state, where we usually spend our Thanksgiving. We were allowed to shoot does there, which greatly increased the chances of procuring some meat. We usually see some six does to every legal buck in the forest. And I still hadn't touched my stack of grading. Already the panic began to set in of a season without venison. My brother, with three children, usually only hunts two days. This was not going to be an easy season.

The morning slipped away, and again it was cold. Periodically, I would wonder how long it had been since I heard a shot. Had it been an hour? This was not a good sign. The chickadees and nuthatches remembered the seeds from yesterday, and fluttered around me all morning. We had planned to go in to Jim's house around noon for lunch. Around 11:30 we left the woods, and nobody had seen a thing. Jim's wife, Jane, put out some snacks, and we ate as we watched some of the Green Bay Packer game on television. This was a welcome break from the cold. John, who had a sick son at home, lost his confidence in the hunt, and decided to call it quits. My father finally chimed up, "Well, I s'pose..." and the two of us set off back into the woods around halftime, 1:30.

It was much more pleasant to be back in the woods after a lunch break, and although I was a little sorry to miss the second half on an exciting game against Tampa Bay, I knew it was the right choice. Besides, with my smartphone, I could sneak guilty peeks at the score, in the moments when my phone got reception in the woods. Being tired, I kicked back, and put up my heels, throwing an arm over the rail of my stand. Nothing was happening in the woods still. No shots. As the game drew to a close, I glanced at the score again. Then a deer walked out. And it had clearly visible antlers.

It wasn't a large buck, a fork, but I carefully and silently shifted back into an upright position. The deer was upwind from me, to the west, and it didn't know I was there. It walked forward. I lifted my rifle, and double checked its antlers through my scope. I found a shooting lane in front of the deer, and let it walk into a clear shot. The deer jumped, but fell again within yards. No doubt about that one, though I could not see where exactly it fell. A wave of relief swept over me. That's one. One more, and we'll have enough venison to scrape by this year.

As I always do, I poured myself a cup of coffee with shaking hands from nerves, and I drank it more hastily than I wanted to. I learned to let the deer be at peace during this stage. I poured a second cup, and when I drank that, I walked down to look for the deer. Finding it only took a minute. I whispered a humble thank you to the deer for giving its life, and to the forest spirits for providing food for me and my family–a matter personal enough that I only very reluctantly mention it in print. Rather than field dress the deer on the spot, I dragged it a few hundred yards away, to the High Line, where the scent of death would be less likely to contaminate my hunting area. Though most people do not take this precaution, I recall watching deer spook at the scent of death on one or two separate occasions and run off into the forest. A small trail of blood from the bullet wound trailed behind me, but this blood carries much less scent that that of the deer's organs.

Quickly, I got to work. Field dressing is a messy job. When gutting a deer, you usually get blood up past your elbow. It requires skill with a knife and decent knowledge of a deer to dress it effectively. My father is incredibly talented at this. He can have a deer dressed in 10 minutes. I only recently reached the 15 minute mark, but I had noticed my speed increasing greatly in recent years. In the snowy cold, I removed my coat, and rolled up my sleeves to expose my bare arms. I took my *puukko*, a Finnish hunting knife, and slit open the deer's belly upward, then along the pelvis bones, as I learned as a teenager from watching my father gut my first couple deer. When a deer is opened, the extreme heat of its entrails are nearly overwhelming

against the cold air. The scent is distinct, earthen and pungent, but not unpleasant. I removed the intestines and cut out the bladder and colon carefully, so as not to contaminate the meat. With the lower cavity cleared, I punctured the diaphragm and removed the heart, lungs, and stomach. My shot went through the heart, which I sometimes eat. This heart was too damaged to eat. I cleaned out the pelvis and cut the esophagus high, and tipped up the deer to drain out any remaining blood, with a heaving motion that requires most of one's strength, which vaguely resembles an embrace, as the deer's blood drains downward inevitably staining one's pants with red splotches and streaks, which contrast with the browned blood stains from years past. Using snow, I sopped up the remaining blood. I dragged the deer off into the woods, out of sight, and I propped a stick between its abdomen walls to keep it opened, to allow rapid cooling of the meat. I took handfuls of snow and scrubbed my hands and arms that were caked with blood. The cold was invigorating, though not entirely pleasant, even though I was warm enough from the labor that I was sweating. I uneasily took a photo of the gutted deer, specifically for this chapter which I had started writing the night before, with the knowledge that nobody ever takes photos of gut piles. I hoped that I was not offending the deer by sharing this with others, and I remain embarrassed that this gut pile was not as clean as I prefer it to be. I returned to my stand, satisfied. I would sit

Figure 12: Gut pile and deer opened to cool.

the last hour of the day, knowing it unlikely that with all the new scents in the air that a deer would walk by. But I was filled with the sense of satisfaction that one deer was harvested. I was pleased.

Cleanup takes time, and I used snow and my finger nails to clean my knife blade, which was now thick with deer tallow, which cakes to metal and one's arm hair once it hits cold air. For some reason, we always are careful to call it tallow, a specialized (but somewhat misused word) which serves as a marker of respect. Taking good care of one's knife is important, and when field dressing deer, it's easy to misplace in the snow or ground cover. For us, like many hunters, the knife is a symbolic instrument of the hunt, and not simply a tool for cutting. We choose knives with "northern" materials in the handle: antler, bone, birch wood, alder wood, and northern animal motifs. The knife is generally used for one function only, for dressing animals, and it is replaced with a new knife only under exceptional circumstances. In the Finnish-American community, as in Finland, knives are rife with symbolism, worn proudly to mark that one engages in outdoor work, and has purpose of wearing such a tool. During hunting season, we wear our knives at the breakfast table, and we will wear them in the gas

Figure 13: Removing deer tallow from a knife blade.

station where we register our deer. Only when we are done with our work do we take them off. Customarily, knives in much of Europe were not given as gifts, as they symbolized severance, cutting, or violence. For Finns, however, knives are tools and aesthetic objects which represent one's relationship with the environment, and highly honored as gifts. To give someone a knife means a base level of understanding about their functional relationship with the forest.

The knife is a luck object too, and incredibly symbolic of the hunt for us (probably even more symbolic than the rifles we use). Tom Frandy, whose *partiopuukko* knife broke in 2005, switched to a new knife in 2006 to a new *leuku* style knife gifted to him three years earlier. Interestingly, he brought both knives out into the woods for that first hunting season in 2006:

> Tom: I used this knife until last year. Yeah. Last year's the last year I used it. I brought it this year ... I brought it along *in transition*. I brought this along hunting this year, but I used a new one. [laughs]
>
> John: That seems good ... that makes sense. Just in case.
>
> Tom: Also my compass was tied to this one. [laughs] (2006)

Though luck can be attributed to all kinds of material objects, and hunting has a long history of luck-procurement (Virtanen, 1988, p. 7-12, 123-24, 137-38), the specificity in Tom's "transitional" period is worth a closer look. His knife must be transitioned into field use. Though Tom makes light of the risk of bringing bad luck onto himself, John understands that the symbolism of transitioning knives and the anxiety of bad luck are largely determining factors in bringing two knives into the woods. Or, alternatively, perhaps the transition period was for Frandy himself, who needs to transform *a* knife into *his puukko*. This process of transformation from ornament or collectable hanging on the wall or hiding in a drawer to a functional object in a

highly ritualized context is rigorous and–in this case–demands a formal time of integration as the meanings surrounding the *puukko* changes.

The nicest *puukko* I ever purchased was from a local craftsman in Lapland, with hand-forged steel blades, and dyed aspen highlighting a curly-birch handle, symbolizing the Northern lights washed across the northern sky. For years I felt like I was not adequate enough a hunter to use such a beautiful knife, a knife of power. When I finally earned the right to command such a knife in my 30s, I knew it right away, but I had already established a relationship with a Marttiini *leuku*, a knife with a strong back that can be used for splitting. It is a great knife, with sharp and polished factory steel that does not dull, and a simple curly-birch handle. On the blade is an impressionistic figure of a Sámi driving behind a reindeer in a *geres* sledge. By now, it was my knife, and I was bound to it. One does not simply switch knives.

It was serene to clean up. I poured some coffee, and used it to wash up my hands, where the snow failed. I drank the rest of the coffee, rather than let it cool. When dusk came, and no more deer passed by, I left my stand to meet my father. I slipped a rope around the deer's neck. My father saw me pulling a deer down the High Line, and he met me. We dragged it out together. With two people dragging, as is possible with a rope, it goes quickly. We loaded the deer into the back of the truck, and drove back to Jim's. We discussed the day, had a drink, and brought the deer to the nearest registration station, 10 miles away, where we flipped through the registration log of deer to look for familiar names.

At Home

After getting back home, we did not bother to snap any photos, but got straight to work unloading the deer. We used our knives to cut open the skin around the back legs, then sawed through the bone to cut the back legs off. We punctured the leg above the knee, and put two meat hooks into its back legs, which we hung from railroad ties that were pounded into the rafters of my father's garage. Most Novembers, the deer keeps a long while in the refrigerator-like temperatures of the garage. On warm years, we need to butcher fast.

The next morning, I left early to drive to Madison. By the time I was back, my father had already butchered our first deer. To butcher, we use only a *puukko*, a filet knife, and a bone saw. First, the deer is skinned by cutting the skin open along the back legs and hind quarters and pulling it downward. The tenderloins and loins are removed and cut into "meal"

Figure 14: Tools for butchering.

sized packages. The deer is then quartered, and each leg is processed individually, first the front legs, then the hind quarters.

Figure 15: Tom Frandy filleting out a loin.

The front shoulders have a lot of sinew, and only a few large pieces that suffice for a roast. The meat is mostly used for stew and hamburger. The hind quarters produce better meat, and many large roast cuts are taken from the hind quarters. The carcass is then cleaned for scraps of meat, which is added to the hamburger, which will be ground later that night. This hamburger is used to make two types of sausage, and saved for a few recipes that call for venison hamburger. The lack of fat in venison make it difficult to substitute venison hamburger for beef hamburger in most recipes. The meat is carried to the kitchen

Figure 16: Tom Frandy removing the front shoulder.

where it is double-wrapped and labeled with freezer paper, which gives the venison a freezer life of about three years.

Though there are no statistics reflecting what percentage of hunters butcher their own deer, anecdotal evidence suggests most hunters pay others to process their deer. Others prefer to save the unnecessary expense, and risk the loss of meat due to hasty processing. Unlike most Wisconsinites, Tom Frandy does not make venison steaks. He explains (2006), “My dad always did the butchering for us, and I should have paid more attention. Then after he died, I had to start butchering my own, and I couldn’t really remember, so I made up my own method. Lots of people steak them and saw through the bone to make steaks. But we didn’t have a lot of freezer space, and I thought, why take up all that freezer space by freezing bones? We don’t eat the bones. So I just tried to get all the meat off of there.”

The meat is used for a number of recipes, and both men and women are active in the cooking. Our venison is stewed, roasted, and fried. It is used to make breakfast sausage and summer sausage. My brother, John, decorates it with gourmet sauces, and I substitute it in my favorite Sámi

Figure 17: The meat from one deer, ready to be packaged and frozen.

reindeer recipes, and season it to make Indian tacos. The hamburger can be thrown into pasta sauce or stew as a nice treat, but my brother learned the hard way that it does not go well in pasties, an important and symbolic dish from the Lake Superior Region.

My brother and I learned to cook from our mother, who was the primary cook in our house and who had her own repertoire of venison recipes hearkening back to 1970s cuisine. Though she fries tenderloin and breakfast sausages and bakes roasts, most of her recipes are stews, involving prepackaged, time-saving seasonings popular in recipes of her generation. Below are two of her favorite recipes for venison.

Pop Venison

> Take a piece of venison the size of 2 fists. Cut it into cubes, dip in flour, and brown in a frying pan with oleo.
> Mix the following ingredients for the sauce:
>
> 1 package Lipton onion soup mix
> 1 can cola (not diet)
> 1 can golden mushroom soup
> water
>
> Add water to cover. Put in crockpot to cook for several hours.

The recipe for “Crockpot Venison” is as follows:

Crockpot Venison

> Take a piece of venison the size of 2 fists. Cut into cubes, dip in flour, and brown in frying pan.
>
> Mix the following for the sauce:
>
> 1 c. ketchup
> 1/2 c. water
> 1/4 c. vinegar
> 1/4 c. chopped onions
> 1/4 c. green pepper, chopped

1 1/2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbsp mustard
2 Tbsp brown sugar
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper

Mix in sauce pan, and boil 5-10 minutes. Pour over meat and cook in crockpot.

I haven't made either recipe for years, favoring slow-cooked roasts with potatoes and carrots or paper-thin *poronkäristys* slices in a crockpot or on a slow stove. My brother and I cook food perhaps unintentionally under the influence of slow and natural foods, unprocessed foodstuffs, and simpler and less muddled tastes which have become popular within the modern palette. We've both left the church basement with our cooking. In my early adulthood, I first found a basic *poronkäristys* recipe in a Beatrice Ojakangas cookbook, then another in Finland (which included ridiculous amounts of butter and beer), but I perfected it on my own, after experimenting with varies cooking times on a stovetop, and using various stocks and spices to help enhance the flavor. My current recipe (though it is not written down anywhere) is as follows:

Poronkäristys

Take 1-2 pounds of partially defrosted venison and use a butcher knife to cut paper thin slices. Put in a crockpot. Add water to cover. Season with salt and pepper. Optionally, other herbs can be added. Stew on low heat for 6-8 hours. Serve on mashed potatoes with a side of cranberry sauce.

Though it is simple, it requires little effort and produces a tender delicacy, which turns heads. Any leftover gravy I freeze for soup-stock. For my part, I have largely abandoned written recipes, and doing so has improved my cooking dramatically. My brother and his wife both cook with wild meats equally, but I tend to cook them for my family. This is more a result of my experience of cooking them than connected to any gendered role (a fact which my fiancé

confirms). In some families, only men cook game–including in families where women are squeamish of eating “cute” animals or simply do not like gamey meats–but there is a wide variety of gendered performance in the Northwoods in terms of cooking wild foods.

While many people find venison to be an inferior substitute for beef, or complain about its gamey taste, we prefer the taste of venison to beef. Perhaps the commercial processing or delayed processing affects the taste, or even overly hasty cooking. For us, anyhow, venison is as good a meal as one can find. We never let any venison go to waste, and we use it both as a weekly staple food as well as a special meal to mark appreciated visitors. The labor and generations of knowledge that go into this sort of food production are not treated lightly, and being served a wild dish signifies being invited into a very intimate and personal relationship our family shares with our environment.

Conclusions

Jay Mechling, in his essay “Picturing Hunting” (2004), explores hunting photographs, comparing them to lynching and war photographs, and connecting the plentitude of hunting photos to American expansionism. Mechling argues that during the American colonial era hunting was seen as symbolic of disorder, and only in the American South did a gentrified, elite hunt persevere. Elsewhere farming displaced hunting traditions. Not until the mythologizing of the pioneer in the late 19th century did hunting start to flourish as a sport, drawing from the political and social influence of sportsmen-conservationists, like Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir. Mechling contends that animal rights groups, environmental protections, and gun control laws have made hunters feel “like an endangered species themselves” (p. 70). He suggests that

even though hunters claim they care for the meat, that principally contemporary hunters no longer hunt for subsistence, but rather to "enjoy entering a past world" or a "transportation into an imagined past" (p. 70). Mechling alludes to the spirituality of hunting, suggesting even a co-option of Native values in an anti-modernist fervor, as the hunter seeks a pleasurable experience through the process of "fair chase."

Mechling seems baffled, however, by the fact that the oral testimony of hunters does not conform to his reading of the hunt. Dismissing their concern for the meat, dismissing their spiritual experience in the woods, dismissing their sincere word about what is important in the hunt, he writes:

> Even the conventional holding of smaller dead game or of holding up the antlered head of a slain deer conveys little emotional attachment between the hunters and the game.... But this reading of the hunting photos may put us at odds with the testimony from hunters that they have great respect for game animals they kill, so it is time to see these hunting snapshots in the broader contexts of the meanings of hunting, animals, and mortality. (2004, p. 67-68)

Mechling suggests:

> If hunting is about the experience of flow, about the fair chase, and about the process over product, then the snapshot is a poor piece of evidence. With rare exceptions, hunting snapshots seem to be taken at the start of the hunt, with the hunters and sometimes the dogs posing in anticipation of the day, and at the end of the hunt, with the day's bounty displayed. (2004, p. 72)

Suggesting video of a "shot not taken" might better represent the process of the hunt, Mechling supposes hunting photography ultimately is a meditation on mortality. In this light, Mechling feels hunters' testimony is vindicated as truthful, as he suggests that fieldwork done by ethnographers would perhaps better expose the process and values of the hunt than vernacular photography.

Mechling's article is compelling, and he accurately describes the Anglo-centric traditions of the hunt which dominate broad swaths of the country, including the East Coast, the American South, and at least some portions of the West. And these traditions that Mechling describes do in fact live in the Lake Superior Region, although I suspect that this tradition is no larger than the meat-hunting tradition in the region, and quite unimportant among descendants of the early European immigrants to the region. Mechling seemingly struggles at times to intuitively understand the diversity and complexity of hunting traditions in North America, and he certainly overlooks the cultural differences that exist along America's north coast–a region he has never worked in–and the rest of the country. He clearly distinguishes between Native and white traditions, but traces white hunting directly to early colonial periods and to only westernmost Europe, neglecting large swaths of New Immigrants, whose hunting traditions are equally as European and largely distinct from the hunts in England, France, and Germany. In Scandinavia, for instance, hunting was always more prevalent than in western Europe, and much more accepted socially as an appropriate activity of the commoners. Mixed economy had much bigger hold in the Nordic states, where agriculture was a less stable source of food because of the climate and terrain. Hunting, fishing, and gathering always has supplemented agriculture in these places, and today it supplements wage-earning employment.

In a region like the Upper Midwest, where the descendants of New Immigrants are a strong majority of the population, one would expect a history distinct from Mechling's Anglo-heavy reading. Even Mechling's vague accusation of co-opted Native traditions is complicated in the region, since long-standing white families in the area have naturally integrated many customs and beliefs from Ojibwe cultures into their own. There is a long-standing history of cultural

interchange in the Northwoods, dating back to the first French fur trappers who assimilated into Ojibwe culture, dwelling in wigwams and migrating with the seasons. My family has roots from northern Finland, where forest spaces do not carry the same dichotomous baggage as much of the rest of Europe, and deep cultural influence from the LaFaves, who trace directly from the French voyageurs, whose impact can still be felt in the Northwoods. I've spoken to many hunters, who live on or near reservations, who might not identify as Christian, choose to respectfully and quietly adopt components of the second most prominent religion in the area. Thanking Mother Earth is a very widespread and ancient custom across the globe, and a very important and meaningful acknowledgment of one's worldview, not some mere contrivance or fancy.

Mechling sees the hunting photographs, and he hears the voices of hunters contradicting him, as they fumble to explain that hunting is about meat, the outdoors, and spirituality. Mechling is unable to *hear* what they are saying; he is speaking in the same language, but with a different symbolic system. What does deer meat mean to Mechling? Is meat simply a commodity for sale in a store? Is meat something for production, purchase, and consumption, a facet of a consumptive and capitalist society? Or, perhaps, it is a tool for cultivating social relationships between friends over a backyard barbecue, as a sort of agrarian and Christian "breaking of bread." Or is it bound intrinsically to a sense of self, identity, labor, and sacrifice? Does meat strengthen and reify the complex of deeply personal relationships with nature and delineate boundaries of a concept of extended family? How could Mechling understand the hunt without having sat in a deer stand for decades, without having felt the economic and social anxieties of years with too little, or even no venison?

Mechling ascribes predominantly suburban, capitalist, and bourgeois motives to these hunters, despite their loud and consistent objections. He represents the hunt in terms of the killing and the snapshot, not really understanding the complexities that make up our symbolic landscape. This is why I present this chapter as narrative auto-ethnography. In our tradition, any nondescript and ordinary day in the forest awakens knowledge, memory, and interpretative patterns within small groups, rich enough to fill much more than this simplified chapter can offer. This is what the hunt is about, not the moment of the kill, the "fair chase" of game, nor the glorification of the hunter.

As hunters try to explain, they fumble over vague terms like spirituality because no clear way exists to explain to the non-hunter what the hunt is about. The language of hunting cannot be captured in photographs, nor in words. It is hidden symbols, and the interrelationship of the cosmic world which manifest themselves in the hunter's forest. It can be heard in the whisper of the wind through the white pine. It is in knowing the cold intimately, in losing the ability to move one's fingers, and the burn it leaves deep inside at the day's end. The chickadees carry it under their wing as they come to visit the hunter. It is stashed in the sensation of the warmth, the alarming warmth, of placing one's hands inside the entrails of a freshly harvested deer. The hunter can smell the language in the secret scent of death. It is in the hiss of snow on ferns, and it is in the thoughts that chase the hunter as he fades into the oblivion of selflessness.

These are secret things, and for many they are sacred things, unspoken and acknowledged only in code. The symbolic landscape of the hunt, the materials brought into the woods, the foods that are eaten, and the process of meat production in the forest all bear deep significance of one's own social relationships to family, friends, economy, ecology, time, place, and the spiritual

world. No photograph will ever be able to capture these things, and no interview will really be able to represent their power. This is the underlying basis of John Frandy's poetry, the poetry of the secret knowledge of otherwise ordinary people, people who see things others do not, people who know things others do not. John Frandy (2011) writes:

> If you're in the forest
> And you come across a gnome
> With a long black basswood pipe
> His name is Tom Trombone
>
> He wears a leather belt
> And has a red felt cap
> He totes a copper shovel
> And owns a birchbark map
>
> He's looking for a secret place
> Where fairy gold is hid
> He knew the spot so long ago
> At least he claims he did
>
> He'll ask if you've seen the gold
> He won't ask for your name
> He'll rush off on his endless search
> It really is a shame
>
> His thoughts are always on his map
> And riches beyond measure
> He'll never see the wee acorns
> Where the fairies hid their treasure

There are secrets in the forest, right beneath our feet. In this light, the hunt is not a quest for masculinity or conquer, but rather it involves the seeing of the secret world in front of us.

After grading frantically for two days, I resumed hunting on my uncle's farm in Danbury from Thanksgiving Day until the following Sunday, from a small commercially purchased 1-seat tree stand. I hunted three or four hours each morning, and two or three hours in the afternoon–a

pace much easier on the body. I was able to take a doe in the middle of the afternoon on Friday, which we registered, quartered, and packed up in a tarp to bring back to my parents' home, about 200 miles to the east. This would provide an adequate but not abundant yield of venison for the year. Though I continued to hunt for a third deer, there were only flashes of deer, passing from open space into the thick of the woods. I took no more shots. But three households would have venison for the year.

Chapter 9

Poaching and Violating in the Northwoods: Policy, Ethics, and Law[1]

On Christmas Eve, 2001, I attended a holiday party with some friends of mine in the Lake Superior region of the American Upper Midwest. I'll call them the Koskinens. Like many Finnish-American families of the region, the Koskinens sometimes discretely poached deer or fish. That night, the Koskinens invited a neighbor, Harry, to join them. Harry was a coarse Polish-American, recently retired, who spent most of his time boasting, lying, and poaching. The last time I saw Harry, he asked me if I had fishing luck on the opening weekend for walleye. He griped how this would be the last time he started fishing in May. Last year, he said, he had the bottom of his freezer already lined with walleye before the season opened.

When a few Koskinens started talking about their good ice-fishing luck earlier that day, Harry blurted out that he was still fishing when he was at the party. He had illegally left tip-ups out unattended, which he'd check only a couple times a day, sometimes–if a hooked fish swam off–having to wind up hundreds of feet of line with the tip-up's tiny hand crank. As people began exchanging gifts, Harry stood near the television, watching a gunfight in the movie *Romancing*

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[1] A version of this chapter appears in Eds. Dennis Cutchins and Eric Eliason's *Wild Games: Hunting and Fishing Traditions in North America*.

the Stone, sizing up the draw-times of the different cast members, muttering loudly to himself, "Pretty good draw on that fella." Eino Koskinen had bought million-candlepower spotlights as gifts for his brothers, commonly used for illegally shining deer at night. Tongue in cheek, Eino explained their many practical legal uses, like watching tip-ups at night from inside a house. Harry piped up that he had one too, except it was two million candlepower, and that he'd used it just last week when he was hunting by the state border. When Eino Koskinen asked him if there was an early T-Zone deer hunt there this year, Harry blurted, "What the hell's a T-Zone? We got a couple of nice bucks though."

Though fewer people need to hunt and fish to avoid starvation today than in the early and mid-20th century, poaching traditions have continued partly because of a belief in self-reliance and in the sustainable utilization of forests and waters. These traditional lifeways are not simply done for fun; rather, they are treated and discussed as work, and for many people they represent valuable subsidy to the terribly low incomes and high unemployment which still plague the region. Fueled by local poverty and recreational-based ecological management, the small-scale poaching of deer and fish has always been relatively common in this region. Though poaching is neither ethnically nor regionally distinct, it has within the Finnish-American community become something of an ethnic symbol. Finnish-Americans have long been regarded as some of the region's most notorious poachers, and many popular Finnish-American writers like Lauri Anderson (1990; 1995; 2002; 2012) and Joseph Damrell (1997) have used poachers as protagonists in their short stories and novels. Anderson even titles one of his tales "The Poaching Hall of Fame" (1995) which involves his repeat character's dream of using Carl Pellonpää's local

broadcast television show, *Suomi Kutsuu*, to promote the development of a museum to honor the region's legendary poachers.

There are as many types of poachers as there are reasons for poaching, from Robin Hood to ivory poachers (Keen, 1961), from wolf-shooting ranchers in the American West to traditional Sámi fishermen on the Deatnu river whose indigenous rights were stripped to promote tourism Helander, Somby and Boekraad, 2003). However just or unjust the lawbreaking, poaching is nearly certain to be a form of political dissent and resistance against dominant ecological management. This dissent manifests in various forms. Harry's poaching is boisterous, public, and self-serving, as his anti-social boldness affirms his lofty station in an individualistic world. Part outlaw, part frontiersman, Harry's poaching is bound to his sizing-up of movie gunslingers. Both establish agency through anti-social behavior. The Koskinens' poaching, on the other hand, barely surfaces in this Christmas Eve episode at all. Not only does Eino Koskinen try at great length to conceal the principal use of the spotlights, but that day's "good fishing luck" also brought in considerably more northern pike than the legal limit for that day. Unlike Harry, who calls as much attention as possible to his illegal activities, the Koskinens rarely speak openly about doing anything illegal, and many of the Koskinens' poaching exploits sound exactly like their hunting or fishing counterparts.

Poaching in Finland was already a well established tradition by the mid 19th century, during the beginning of the first large emigrations from Finland. The legal aspects of hunting and fishing rights became even more important in the 19th century, fuelled by a drastic population increase (390,00 in 1720; 863,300 in 1810; 1,768,800 in 1870), as well as the increase in landlessness and sharecropping following the wars and famines of the early 18th century (Talve,

1997, p. 18, 25). Under the Swedish model of fishing rights, employed in Finland since the Middle Ages, landowners were given the rights to fish in communal fishing waters, yet forced the landless to pay fees equal to half their catch (Talve, 1997, p. 79). Following the steep decrease of landownership in Finland, which had fallen from 81% in 1754 to 35.5% in 1901 (Talve, 1997, p. 26), the steep fees for fishing contributed to the poaching culture. In Richard Dorson's *Bloodstoppers and Bearwalkers* (1952), Finnish immigrant Frank Valin mentions poaching in Swedish-dominated Ostrobothnia, remarking "The lakes were full of fish but we could not fish in them; neither could we hunt game, except by stealth, for the land was owned by our 'betters.' Is it a wonder that we left Finland to come here?" (1952, p. 129). Valin tells one humorous anecdote of stock character Jussi the Workman, who clashes with his master who refuses to allow him fishing rights because "fishing is the sport of the gentry" (1952, p. 130). Finally allowed to fish for bream, Jussi plays the simpleton and tricks his master by paying his fee in fish heads and tails. The rapid gentrification of hunting and fishing rights in southern and western Finland deviates dramatically from the tradition of community-based ownership, a reality that is evident in Valin's commentary on emigration, and reflects the mentality which many Finnish immigrants brought to North America.

The Lake Superior region, however, was subject to exploitative resource management during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The rapid clear cutting of the region's vast forests contributed to the decimation of native fauna, leaving many species extinct, displaced, or struggling to survive. It also affected many of the residents who deeply relied on the woods and waters for food through the 1960s. Even after the ecology began to recover, locals faced a new set of challenges in the region's emerging tourist economy. Finnish-American dialect singer

“Hap” Puotinen laments the mismanagement of the wilds in his “Home, Oh How Strange (The U.P. that Used to Be),” a parody of the idealism of “Home on the Range” found in his chapbook *Kool Kat from Kopper Kontri* (1962):

> I karra home vhere ta teers juusta roam,
> Vootsiis full from ta kames an vile faul;
> Vhere alvays vas herd ani kine-uva pird,
> Like tat hoo-hoo tey kalling a aul.
>
> Home, in tat Juu Pii,
> Vhere ta teers anta kames juusta blay;
> Nau seltom vas herd ani kine-uva pird
> Anta vootsiis vas qvite nite an tay.
>
> Nau vhere vas ta teers tat ve kaarit for ‘ears,
> Anta pirtsiis tat flooing ta koops?
> Tey pin manets so vell tey vas aal kaanu hell,
> If juu lissen I kiv juu ta poops!
>
> Home, in tat Juu Pii,
> Vhere ta teers anta kames juusta blay;
> Nau seltom vas herd ani kine-uva pird
> Anta vootsiis vas qvite nite an tay.
>
> O tem kane orken siifs tey vut vant us piliif
> Hau to raising tat lotsu teers more
> Vas to soot aala toes vit ta kun anta bows,
> Aint tat vas riil kreisi for shore?
>
> Home, in tat Juu Pii,
> Vhere ta teers anta kames juusta blay;
> Nau seltom vas herd ani kine-uva pird
> Anta vootsiis vas qvite nite an tay.
>
> O ta rikkiis ron try anta fiss kaaru tai
> Kas ta piivers tey koin liminate,
> An ta vise kais tey soot piiver dams yet to poot,
> For tat las piiver kins tey kant vait!
>
> Home, in tat Juu Pii,
> Vhere ta teers anta kames juusta blay;

> Nau seltom vas herd ani kine-uva pird
> Anta vootsiis vas qvite nite an tay. (p. 4)

After noting that the woods are too quiet, and that many animals have died off, Puotinen assesses blame: “Nau vhere vas ta teers tat ve kaarit for ‘ears, /Anta pirtsiis tat flooing ta koops? / Tey pin manets so vell tey vas aal kaanu hell.” (“Now where were the deer that we carried for years/ And the birdies that flew the coops?/ They been managed so well, they was all going to hell.”) The shift in the latter half of the twentieth century to transform the Lake Superior region into a tourist economy has brought about strain and competition over fishing resources as “downstaters” are encouraged to go “up north” to fish. The ability to legally sustain a mixed economy–or an economy in which traditional, sustainable lifeways significantly supplement a principal occupation–is jeopardized when tourism drives land-use policy and conservation efforts. Unlike Finland’s regional approach to fishing rights, all the waters in the Lake Superior region are managed by states, and they clearly reflect the state’s immediate interests in promoting different kinds of revenue-generating tourism, like trophy fishing, which is sustained by imposing harsh bag limits and extremely high minimum size requirements on specific waterways. Such state control, Puotinen alleges, manages the game to hell, destroying local ecology for the profit of some faceless few.

Concealed among the fish lining the bottom of Harry’s freezer and the rhetorical reticence of poaching in the Koskinens’ public narrative is a complex system of political resistance to these dominant recreational ecological values. The discourse shaped around this political issue is not simply two-sided, it is seldom direct, and it remains inextricable from learned behavior patterns which date back generations. Like many poachers, the Koskinens have their own strict harvest ethics. They believe deeply in taking only what one needs, and wasting

fish or game is considered deeply shameful. They are also perpetually vigilant for signs of over-harvest. This "good poacher" tradition is, in fact, an international phenomenon. Upper Peninsula memoirist Cully Gage frequently writes about poacher Lafe Bodine, who had a reputation for delivering poached deer to the hungry and leaving a birchbark calling card (1993, p. 22). In his *The Confessions of a Poacher* (1890), 19th century English poacher John Watson insists, "The successful 'moucher' must be an inborn naturalist–must have much in common with the creatures of the fields and woods around him" (p. 8). Yet if a poacher is a sort of naturalist, what then is a hunter?

The Koskinens' poaching tradition can perhaps be best understood by looking at the concept they reject, that of hunting as recreation and sport. In an fascinating treatise on recreational hunting, *Beyond Fair Chase: The Ethic and Tradition of Hunting* (1994), Montana biologist and hunter-conservationist Jim Posewitz offers ethical and moral instruction for sport hunting. Posewitz writes:

> Fundamental to ethical hunting is the idea of fair chase. This concept addresses the balance between the hunter and the hunted. It is a balance that allows hunters to occasionally succeed while animals generally avoid being taken. This would be a simple concept if it were a single hunter pursuing an animal in massive wild country. . . . When the hunter with spear in hand stalked wildlife in the primal forest, the pursuit was well within the bounds of fair chase. (p. 57-58)

As Posewitz conjures the primeval hunter, he reminds readers that sport is largely contingent not only on recreation but on re-creating the ritual staging of human prehistory. Such staging is entirely ordinary in many Western hunting traditions, and the increased primeval symbolism of the hunt often corresponds with decreased importance for the daily role of hunting, fishing, and gathering in regional folklife. In his book *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization* (1992), Robert

Pogue Harrison explores the English tradition of the royal hunt, a heavily symbolic hunt which followed the regal assertion of forest ownership and the closing of the forests to peasant hunting. Harrison writes, “The hunt ritualizes and reaffirms the king’s ancient nature as civilizer and conqueror of the land, . . . [which reenacts] in a purely symbolic way, the historical conquest of the wilderness” (p. 74). Despite this symbolic return to our perceived primeval roots, both royal and sporting hunt ritualize our *distinctiveness* from these imagined ancestors. Harrison stresses that the king is not simply a hunter; rather, he is the bringer of social order, a creator of civilization, through subversion of the vast and undifferentiated amalgam of wildness and wilderness. Likewise, Posewitz’s emphasis on fair chase reminds us that in spite of the technology that distinguishes human from beast, the greatest distinction is our own ethical prowess in an uncertain modern world–the benevolence of the hunter who chooses the “fair chase” rather than the indiscriminate slaughter, a contrast he suggests our ancestors could not fathom. A ritualized re-creation of civilization’s birth, this hunting embodies the belief that civilized people no longer *need* to hunt for food, thus reinforcing the human-beast dichotomy by returning to its symbolic moment of genesis, the subversion of wilderness.

Though Posewitz speaks accurately of the hunter-conservationist ethic, this transformation from necessity to sport hunting relies upon a strong sense of the wilderness-civilization dichotomy. Whether a continuation of long-standing Finnish communal ownership of forest and waters, or a result of social circumstance of living in close proximity to forests, the Koskinens, like many of Finnish-Americans, downplay the importance of this dichotomy. Like others in the region, the Koskinens sometimes hunt from the home. Eino Koskinen describes one such technique:

> This is what my brother and I would do, when we were younger. We'd put a hay bale right outside of my bedroom window. Now my window was directly above a window in our basement. We'd take out the glass from the basement window, and replace it with a translucent plastic. This would have been December, during bow-hunting season. The deer would move in to feed on the hay just after dark. Now I'd be up in my dark bedroom, and my brother would be down in the basement with a bow. I'd shine a flashlight out the window, onto the deer. He couldn't see the deer because the plastic was translucent, but he could see the bright illumination of the flashlight. So I'd point the flashlight towards where he should shoot, and he'd shoot at the beam. Then the next morning, we'd go out and track. (2005)

Hunting from the home is an important symbol for Finnish-Americans suggesting how the ecological world might be constructed–without borders between these two supposedly diametrically opposing regions, domicile and wilderness. Finnish-American writer Lauri Anderson picks up this theme in his *Heikki Heikkinen* (1995) collection. Anderson (1995) describes Heikki, an 80 year old Finnish-American, hunting from his kitchen while sipping coffee in the early morning. Anderson (1995) points out, though, that Heikki did not always hunt from the home:

> Heikki used to be a real hunter–every bit as daring as Frank Buck or Ernest Hemingway. When he was younger, he would dump the deer bait in his back field. Then he'd wait in a blind constructed from an old picnic table. He'd even wear the appropriate orange jacket and an orange hat with ear lappers. (p. 28)

Comically, Heikki's wilderness experience is defined most explicitly in terms of the civilized world: picnic tables, back fields, and orange ear lappers. But while Anderson supposedly mocks Heikki's ignorance of what it means to be a "real hunter," he actually suggests that Heikki has never accepted the civilization-wilderness dichotomy at all, satirizing those who place faith in its credence.

In regions where a mixed economy remains active or within historical memory, deviations from Posewitz's model of sport are perhaps inevitable. Whereas Posewitz asserts,

"The ethical hunter never chases or harasses wildlife with a machine" (1994, p. 61), Eino Koskinen clearly violates these ethics:

> Here's something I learned from my dad. Partridge like to hang by the sides of the road, and if you spot one when you're driving, you try to straddle the car over the top of the bird. It's just high enough to knick the bird's head, killing it instantly, and that way you don't damage any of the meat. The only problem is if it flushes straight over the car. Then you'll hit it dead on, and you'll have an awful mess. You've got to be moving pretty fast too, maybe 30 miles an hour, so this doesn't really work on old logging roads. A few times I've driven across the state hunting the whole way.[2] (1995)

The limitations Posewitz would place on technology prove highly problematic under scrutiny. How does one draw a line between Koskinen's car-hunting and fish finders, outboard engines, magnifying scopes, or ATVs? All are regular components of many sportsmen's gear, and all are undoubtedly part of the "chase." While I suspect that Posewitz remains relatively unconcerned with these latter sporting tools, I trust he would turn a wicked eye toward Koskinen's practice. Upon closer inspection, however, the subtleties of Koskinen's practice, his concern about a clean kill and a painless technique, seem to run counter to the supposed barbarism of poaching. Why, then, does Koskinen's practice endure such stigmatization?

The eating of road kill is a popular topic of jesting and ridicule, as well as the subject for Buck Peterson's popular *The Original Road Kill Cookbook*. Though many find the idea of eating car-killed animals revolting, others see little difference between a shot animal and one killed following a collision. The Koskinens have eaten road kill, including the fresh road kill of others. The origin of this intense stigmatization is less related to bacteria than to the powerful *economic* distinction made between those who eat road kill and those who do not. Had the partridge been killed "sportingly," it would be a delicacy. Disgust and revolt emanate from the *need* to eat

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[2] For a parallel literary example, see Lauri Anderson, *Hunting Hemingway's Trout* (New York: Atheneum, 1990), 23-26.

unsportingly killed animals, a practice apparently below the noble mind of the sportsman, for whom the fallen partridge represents not a vulgar food source, but rather human mastery over the wilderness. Proudly engaging in a stigmatized behavior, Koskinen sees through the illusion of sport, dismissing its reductive claims about technology and fair chase, while exposing its elitist attitudes toward non-sporting hunters.

For the poacher, cleverness and innovation are central components to survival. Though most poaching occurs without incident, many poachers understand their own ritualized role as the "prey" of the warden. The sport between poachers and wardens is very real and cannot be dismissed as mere rhetorical play. If sport means little to a poacher's hunting, it figures centrally as they place themselves in vulnerable positions while competing publicly with wardens. Though the Koskinens maintain clean reputations and know the woods and waters well enough to avoid wardens, they are well-versed in concealment methods. Eino Koskinen describes one such strategy:

> Another trick poachers use for fishing is when they catch too many fish, they'll hook a stringer onto their anchor and lower the first stringer to the bottom of the lake with their anchor and then they can put another stringer on there. (1995)

A warden's own ingenuity is the key to catching these poachers, and by pretending to have nothing to hide, the poacher can escape the reputation he or she might otherwise establish through suspicious behavior. The poached fish on the anchor are present, and not detachable from the boat, linking emblematically the fate of the fish to the fate of the fishermen, leaving the warden engaged in a contest of wits with the poachers, based on an immediate knowledge of the local environment.

Without this sporting element, without the game of the chase, the relationship between poachers and wardens can change its nature entirely. Eino Koskinen's son, Mike, tells a story of his grandfather, or Eino Koskinen's father, an occasional poacher who also worked for the Department of Natural Resources:

> Oh, and don't forget the story about the old-timer who showed up on opening morning when Grandpa was manning a registration station. The deer's eyes were all sunken in and it had severe rigor mortis. The body cavity looked all dried up. "Just shot him this morning?" asked Grandpa? "You bet, first thing" was the reply. Grandpa nodded and registered the deer. (1995)

The old timer's inept poaching does not fool the registrar, but he is still allowed to poach without consequence. Without the illusion of sport, the registrar has no will to fine the old-timer. His poaching attempt was so pathetic and ill-conceived, that nothing can be gained by prevailing in a pairing of wits. In this episode, the absence of fair chase causes a breakdown in the prescriptive relationship between warden and poacher, a relationship which by nature is less legal than it is ecologically schematic.

Poachers equally participate in the sport between themselves and wardens. The hiding of illegal game in plain sight serves as both security to divert suspicion, as well as a self-satisfying means by which an individual poacher can assert greater authority over the ecological landscape than a warden. When the poacher knows the land and regional ecology better, the poacher fools the warden, whose formal education and training are subordinated by local know-how. The poacher therefore creates a sense of agency and entitlement to poaching–thus affirming his own notion of non-sporting hunting–through his ecological deftness, his inborn naturalistic prowess. Koskinen thus describes another technique:

> This is what some ice fishermen do, when they catch fish they don't want to have a warden see, maybe a walleye after season or if you pull up more fish than your limit. This

> was done when people were using ice chisels to break through the ice. They'd chisel into the ice a little reservoir hole, maybe a foot or two in diameter, without breaking into water. Then, they'd chisel a real small hole completely through the ice, just a couple inches in diameter. The reservoir fills completely with water, and you put your illegal fish in there. Then the top will freeze up, and you can cover it with snow. The fish will stay fresh too, that way, and not freeze up. (1995)

Hiding the catch when ice-fishing is usually not difficult because of the region's plentiful snows. However, this technique is especially useful when fishing for extended periods of time on waters that are heavily patrolled by wardens. To rebuild the necessary ice takes time, and the poacher still must remove and transport the catch without being caught. Yet this technique perhaps serves less of a practical function than it does a sociological one. Here Koskinen offers a red herring, noting that the fish will stay fresh and not freeze up, instead of offering an explanation that explains the elaborate holding structure. Though it is practical not to have one's fish freeze through, snow insulates adequately on all but the longest or coldest of days. The creation of this tank is symbolic, a demonstration of a superior knowledge of the immediate ecology, steering poaching from its solely pragmatic roots and establishing a tangible naturalistic poaching aesthetic. The agency generated by the cleverness of such a structure far outweighs its practical aspects.

"Form-a-Buck," a practice used by a pair of Koskinen's brothers during the 1980s, not only exhibits the aesthetics of hiding an illegal deer in plain sight, but it also demonstrates the unwillingness to comply with laws based on values that tightly regulate gendered kills. Originally used to increase the deer population, the recovery of the deer herd left many questioning the continuation of buck-only laws. Koskinen takes credit for thinking up the following technique, but has insisted he has never tried it.

> They called it Form-a-Buck. Form-a-Buck recipe: 1. Cut off the horns of a spike or small fork. 2. Drill ¼ inch hole into the base of each antler. 3. Use toilet anchor bolts or double-ended screw. Thread one end into the horn. 4. When a doe needs to be converted into a buck, use a nail and hammer to puncture the skull and screw the horn onto the head. This was used by a couple of my brothers in the U.P. They had a couple sets of antlers. They were in their 40s, old enough to know better! (1995)

The methodology in creating bucks is subtle yet demonstrates a refined set of skills about how deer are gazed at and handled by registrars, neighbors, and strangers. The late November cold freezes the screws firmly in place, so that the antlers would not pivot if they were handled gently. Unlike similar techniques I've heard about in Minnesota which use larger antlers, Koskinen's antler choice attracts less scrutiny than a larger set, which would be more closely admired; likewise, a smaller antler provides significantly less torque on the screw if the antlers were to be manhandled. Registered and conscientiously hung high on a buck pole, these deer proudly maintain a poacher's best work within the public domain, secretly celebrating open defiance of the law. This silent public persona recalls the Koskinen's Christmas Eve episode; it is the silence which marks communities, codifying insider-outsider dichotomies, which divide and define an ethnically transmitted discourse about ecology, and people's place within it.

Many of former DNR Warden John Walker's collected tales involve such deceptions from a warden's perspective, though most highlight the triumph of a game warden over the poacher's tricks: noticing the boys in the backseat of a car are sitting on two deer carcasses (2001, p. 77-78); thinking to search in an old pair of waders for beaver pelts (2001, p. 49-50); or noticing, when chasing a party of shiners, that upon the barrel of a discarded rifle is an engraving of a driver's license number 2001, p. 80-81). Though certain necessities mandate the snaring of the poacher, the lack of animosity in many of these contests are striking. In "Justice Prevails" warden Len Schmitt convicts a multiple violator, Emil, after a bag of illegal beaver hides were

thrown out of the window of his truck. A clear case, one juror resists convicting Emil, saying he cannot convict his neighbor. Only after being assaulted by a pair of "big Dutch farmers," also on the jury, is consensus finally reached, and Emil is sent to jail for a year. Schmitt continues:

> About two years later, I was up in Tomahawk at noon and went to a tavern where they served sandwiches; I walked up to the bar and ordered a sandwich. Emil jumped up from a card table and came up to me, and said, "I bet you don't know who I am" and I says "Oh yes I do–you're Emil Gutsdorf." He says, "that's right," and he kind of smiles and says, "You know you gave me a rap once but I forgot that. To show you I'm a good fellow let me buy you a drink." I says, "Well, alright, Emil, I don't mind if I do have a drink with you." I added, "By the way, Emil, that neighbor of yours almost saved you that time. He held out 'til the very end." And Emil says, "Neighbor, nothing, Len! That's the man who threw the furs out of the car window!!" (2001, p. 52-53)

Though the relationship between warden and poacher is often strained, at the end of the day, over drinks they both sit down as hunters over drinks. Emil's confession to the warden reveals the trust he gives to the respected warden. Emil knows that Len will not harass the other poacher; he knows that Len will respect the cunning that nearly freed Emil. If fair chase is an active principle in the naturalist poacher's life, it is in his relationship with the warden.

Wardens are known for various techniques of ensnarement to catch poachers. My brother, John Frandy, explains:

> When I was in high school, the DNR near [Lac du] Flambeau [Wisconsin] were putting up deer silhouettes with glass eyes to catch light for poachers shining at night. One of the students in my class was caught by that DNR trap. (2005)

These stuffed deer are often use to catch shiners, and they are especially used actively near the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation during the time of the tribal hunt, before the general nine day rifle season. Ojibwe people have the right to hunt deer at night by shining, and shining by torchlight is a traditional Ojibwe way to hunt deer, and the etymology of the general word for

deer, *waawashkeshi* is derived from the concept of shining eyes. Ojibwe artist Greg Johnson explains:

> I should probably knock on wood because I've never had any run-ins with wardens myself, but I know a lot of people have. I always hear these stories about, you know, they're putting out.... stuffies they call them. They're fake deer. They're hanging out here and there. And I never saw one until this year. I went off the Res line one night and there was a deer. And I sat there for like 10 minutes, and I watched this deer and he didn't move one muscle. He just sat there and watched, off to the right of me, where we were in our truck. That's the first time I ever seen one. We don't appreciate that kind of stuff around here. To us, that's food. To the wardens, or anyone else, that's something else. A lot of us don't appreciate them trying to trick us that way. It was like 10 yards by the Reservation line. You know, what if one of our younger guys, who really didn't know the boundaries, shot it from the line, you know? Then what would happen? He would get in trouble. It'd make us look bad or whatever. There's a lot of stuff like that that happens here in Lac du Flambeau and the outside area. There are a lot of outside problems. (2011)

This ensnarement of Ojibwe hunters is tragically common in the north, and its racist overtones are undeniable, rationalized under the auspices of the moral certainty of the law. Johnson continues:

Figure 1: Greg Johnson with muskie.

> One example is that a couple years back I was spearing on one of the flowages out east of here, out with a friend of mine. It was Rainbow Flowage off J, and we had a guy. There was only one little resort on that lake, and that just happened to be right where all the walleye were, I think they were spawning in the rocks. So we were up there, we were taking our quota, and we had guy threatening us, calling us the "timber-nigger," throwing rocks at us. One night a few years back we were on Lake Nokomis, and one of our brothers got shot at out there, from one of the summer homes out there. And they were firing over the top of his head in his boat. I was on Island Lake one night and I had a guy yelling at me. There's a lot of stuff around here. (2011)

Yet white people face little of this pressure and surveillance as they engage in routine harvest.

The surveillance attached to the most famous of tribal harvests still is used as a deterrent and intimidate tactic to date. Johnson was in his early teens when the spearfishing fight occurred in northern Wisconsin, and his mother wouldn't allow him to be directly involved. Johnson explains, "I had a mother who said just stay out of it, because they're fighting over fish and that's something you should never fight over. And so I stayed out of it." Johnson continues:

> I remember there were these STA, Stop Treaty Abuse, signs in windows of local businesses, that supported Dean Crist. It was almost like, it reminded me of the segregation days, you know. And there was, and when you saw those signs in the windows of stores, you didn't feel welcome in, so you didn't go to those stores. So there was a number of stores in Minocqua and Woodruff and the surrounding communities, that they were supporters of the new kind of hate or whatever you want to call it. But there are still people sour over it, even though their own courts voted in our favor. They have all these ideas that we just go and take thousands and thousands of fish, which isn't true. We just take 2% of what's allowable for that year, for all people. Fishermen and the natives. I don't even think it's 2%. Think of all the people who come up from Chicago, and all the walleye they're taking out. And we're subject to... when we go out spearing we have a creel team. They measure and weigh and sex the fish, and every single fish when we're out. And all summer long, when non-natives are out there, nobody's keeping track of what they take. And we have wardens present, and if we have a fish that's over the limit, we get fined right there. We're under a lot of pressure to keep our off reservation rights. And that turns people off. And I think that was one of the geniuses behind it all, to make it as difficult as they can for the native people, so we'd give it up or whatever. But we rely on that food. Because we know the fish sticks you get out of the store isn't that good for you! And then there's the question of mercury content in our lakes. Some of the creel teams test for that, in some of the muskies we take. (2011)

The vigilant and selective enforcement of quota laws during spearfishing season plays on the reality that in the field, accidental over-harvest sometimes happen.

These accidents occur in many manners: shooting at one deer and hitting another; shooting an undersized or wrong-gendered deer; unsuccessfully tracking a deer at first, only to find it later, after all the tags have been filled; killing two deer with one bullet or arrow. A Norwegian-American friend of mine, Robert Johnson, told me the following story:

> Just this year, my uncle was hunting in Minnesota and he took a shot at a doe, but accidentally he dropped a fawn standing right next to her. He didn't want to register a fawn, so they butchered it that night, and the four in their party ate the whole deer in three days at camp. (2005)

The method of concealing the illegal kill, however, serves as a penance for the wrong-doing, appropriate for the nature of the legal–and therefore ethical–transgression. Instead of registering the legal deer, butchering them all at camp, and mixing the meat (a very safe though time intensive strategy), these hunters decide to eat the whole deer in a short time, the gluttonousness of their punishment recalling the wastefulness of their crimes.

The following anecdote assumes a quite different view toward over-harvesting. Whereas Fix's tends to evoke sympathy for hunters in a bind, cautiously calling attention to their moral repentance and the belief that sometimes bad things happen to good people, Eino Koskinen tells the following in high-spirits, celebrating in the hunter's virtue of efficient hunting, accurate shooting, and his good fortune in his ignorance:

> My brother Toivo is the quickest shot I've ever seen. A few years back he was hunting down in [omitted] and he sees this buck jump out from behind a bush. He takes a shot, and it quick jumps back behind the bush. A second later, it jumps out again. Toivo, thinking he maybe missed, or didn't get a good shot off at it, shoots again, and it jumps back behind the bush again. Then a third time–it jumps out from behind the bush, Toivo shoots, and it jumps back behind the bush. When Toivo gets down from his stand, and walks over to where he shot, behind that bush he finds three dead bucks. (2005)

In this comical story, no attention is paid to whether the three bucks were legally tagged or not (nor does anyone ever ask about it), and this story is told as a hunting–not a poaching–story. Any wrongdoing is overshadowed by Toivo's apparent reversal of fortune: instead of missing a deer with two consecutive shots, he ends up shooting three bucks. His good fortune results from his quick shot, and his inability to see behind the bush. There is neither blame nor guilt involved

with the poaching, and the illegal act proves to be a reward. Even though this tale eliminates the matter of ethical choice, Finnish-American poaching tales rarely offer rationalization for the kill, ignoring the might of institutional law. Lauri Anderson delves into this concept in *From Moosehead to Misery Bay* (2013), relating a story of his boyhood, when he and a friend shot a deer out of season. Repentantly, they went to his friend's father, explaining they has "accidentally shot a nice doe" and they saw another deer too. The father scolded them, but not for poaching. He asked them why they did not shoot the other deer as well.

Because the poacher and the warden are intrinsically connected through both the poach *and* the hunt, it is perhaps fitting that Lauri Anderson's character Eddie Maki would first find his Finnishness in poaching, only to rediscover it in wardening. Spending his youth trying to act like a Finn and often failing, Eddie heads out one night shining for deer with an older professional poacher, Paavo–a night that helps him behave more like a Finn is supposed to. Though Eddie only shines one night, he finally is able to "become a Finn" by going to school and getting a job as a warden. Shortly after jailing one esteemed local poacher, Eddie overhears an old pair of poachers talking in a café:

> "Young Maki will be a good warden," one of the old men said from the next booth. "He's smart, and he'll be fair. If he catches us, we'll know where we stand."
> "*If* he catches us," said the other old guy, laughing. "He's not that smart yet." (1995, p. 22-23)

Many poachers in the Finnish-American tradition relish the symbolism implicit in being prey. As they are out poaching, Paavo explains to Eddie,

> Poaching is my hobby. . . . I'd do it even if those damned fools didn't pay me. I guess it's the thrill of the hunt. I don't mean the hunt for the deer. That part's easy. I mean the warden's hunt for me. I like breaking the law. I like being the quarry. It makes me feel good. (1995, p. 18)

Whereas in sporting hunting, “love of exercise, excitement and danger has to be artificially stimulated and satisfied by ‘the image of war, without its guilt, and only five and twenty per cent of the danger,’” (Trench, 1967, p. 9) in poaching the poacher’s role as *game* behaves similarly. The ritualized connection between game and poacher reaffirms the poacher’s role as a non-dominant, though predatory, figure in an eco-centric cosmos. Not surprisingly, the Finnish-American poacher often respects the earthen nature of the poaching trickster more than the hierarchical and divine regality of the hunter.

Lauri Anderson’s stories are filled with characters who resent smarmy, Waltonian fly-fishermen. When Heikki Heikkinen’s “smartass nephew from Lansing” goes fishing with Heikki, his nephew infuriates Heikki by immediately catching on a fly-rod “a big trout that Heikki had been trying to catch for years” (1995, p. 64). Anderson continues:

> The nephew used a skinny little pole and the lightest of lines. It took him twenty minutes to bring that trout to shore. That really ticked off Heikki, who used a thick pole, thick line, and worms. When he hooked a fish, he hoisted it ashore with the same swiveling of hips and shoulders that he used to heave stove wood onto a truck bed. “That kid’s been watching one too many of those fishing shows off Channel Six!” said Heikki, referring to the fact that the nephew then released the trout back into the pool. Heikki said he went nuts watching that fish dance across the pool “like Baryshnikov.” Heikki wouldn’t fish with the nephew again. He said he wanted that trout for bragging rights at the Monte Carlo. Plus he wanted to pickle it and use it in his favorite dish–a mixture of cubed cooked beets, raw onions, pickled fish, and mayonnaise. (1995, p. 64-65)

Rejecting any artificially inflated justifications for trophy fishing, Heikki cannot comprehend surrendering a free-dinner, as well as the prestige associated with such a big fish. His labored motions that heave even the smallest trout ashore are motions of hard labor, not of his nephew’s play. Later, the narrator explains the fate of the large trout:

> Some anonymous person dynamited the pool where Heikki’s smartass nephew released the big trout. Heikki said he just happened to hear the explosion and found the trout

> floating on the surface on its side, its eyes glossy. Heikki said he would show it to guys at the Monte Carlo, and then he would eat it for supper. (1995, p. 65)

Dynamiting the pool, then fabricating a transparent lie, Heikki responds to the perceived elitism of catch-and-release fishing in the most violent and dramatic rejection of its values as he can muster. To Heikki fishing is neither sport nor recreation, and he saw “no sense” in catch-and-release fishing, explaining to the narrator, “If it’s big enough to catch, it’s big enough to eat” (p. 54). Though crude, Heikki makes his point.

Though the Koskinens participate in one poaching tradition among many that co-exist and interact within a poaching community, they utilize poaching as an activity which defines them ideologically, economically, politically, and historically from the sportsman. This conflict is one of cultural clashes, one in which the wealthy and powerful in a late-capitalist economy controls ecological and economic management policies of regions in which they do not reside. For many in the Finnish-American community, poaching is a continuation of 19th century tradition, rooted in a complex of individualism, poverty, and traditional reliance upon the local forests and waters for food. The tradition of mixed economy differs from that of the sportsman in many ways, most centrally their incorporation of the notion of sport. While both poacher and sportsman incorporate the concept of sport into their hunting and fishing, and both use the notion of sport to justify the fairness of their actions, only the sportsman is competing with the animals; the poacher’s game is entirely different.

Epilogue

Looking into the Eye of God: The Light that Comes from Below

The first time I ever went spearing for muskies through the ice was in January 2013, when Wayne Valliere invited me out to fish on a lake, just north of the Rez line. We met at his house around 7:00, and then drove north together. Turning off the paved road, we headed a bit down a snow-covered trail towards the lake. Greg Johnson also showed up at the same time in his Jeep, since he was spearing that same spot that day, and we ended up heading out together. Wayne had his system for ice-fishing down. We loaded a sled with a three-person, pop-up, Clam-brand tent, a gaff hook, a bag of fish decoys, ice scoops, a shovel, spear and rope, a piece of canvas with a hole in it, a gas-powered auger, two simple folding chairs, and a thermos of coffee. We dragged the sled through the woods, down a steep bank, and across the lake to a place he sometimes goes for muskie. Of all the woodsmen I know, Wayne's knowledge of the woods and waters is perhaps the deepest. He was given extraordinary traditional knowledge from his father and grandfather, which he supplemented with knowledge from other of his elders. But beyond that, he makes effort to keep scouting and learning about new places in the deep woods. When he needs birchbark, black ash, or cedar, he has dozens of places to go. He has fished on hundreds of

waters, and has dozens of deer stands scattered throughout the deep forest, which he uses in conjunction with the weather, wind, and season.

We test-drilled a few holes to find an area about 10-12 feet deep on the edge of a drop-off, which we measured with the weighted decoy and line. When we found a suitable spot, Wayne used the auger to drill out a big hole, about two feet in diameter, which he beveled the edges of, flaring outward. As he did this, I shoveled snow from the area where the tent would be. We set canvas (with a cut-out spot for a spearing hole) on the ice, moved the tent atop it, and re-shoveled snow up to the edge of the tent, to darken the ice. Wayne's tent was commercially produced, but he had made modifications for spearing. He had blackened all the seams and zippers with tape, ensuring no light would get in. Darkness is important while spearing, but I didn't understand this until I went inside the tent.

I was still pushing snow to cover the ice as Wayne loaded the tent with gear. As always, we work efficiently together, and though I didn't know his system for spearing, the whole process took maybe only 15 minutes. Wayne used to use traditional, homemade tents which covered one's head, as one lies on the ice wrapped in blankets, but the long set-up time made this technique frustratingly slow to use regularly. When he said he was ready for me to come in, I entered the dark tent. The darkness was absolute, especially after working in the early morning hours in the brightness of a snow-covered lake. I fumbled to see where to go, but Wayne pointed me to my chair. We sat side by side in the tent, on two corners of the hole, which was positioned in an extreme corner of a tent. Gradually, my eyes adjusted to the light, and I could see the gaff hook to my left, the spear positioned directly in front of me, and the bag of decoys just behind me. The rope tied to the spear extended straight upwards, looped slightly between the wall of the

tent and a tentpole, as an efficient way to deal with the problem of a slack line. When the spear was thrown, the line would release without knots or tangles in the line. The spear had been constructed for him by his brother Scott. It had six tines with long sharp barbs, and it was customized to fit Wayne's height and strength. He could make throws that most fishermen could not with that spear.

But the most striking aspect of the tent was the hole. It glowed, as if it was a second sun. As first it was difficult to see, but as my eyes adjusted, I could see the bottom of the hole, and sandy bottom, with a small bit of weedy vegetation just shortly off the bottom. We offered tobacco. Greg had recently dropped a cellphone into a spearing hole, and posted on Facebook on January 20th:

> Well, it's official! The lake spirits take another one of my phones! So I can tell you firsthand that you should always offer a little sema even if you don't get anything, that's the 3rd one I've lost to the water in the past 5 years. I would like to think that those who know me would expect this.... ;) (2013)

Figure 1: One of Wayne Valliere's decoys, painted to look like a small northern.

Wayne put on a decoy resembling a fat perch, and he began jigging it, just under the surface of the ice. The decoy danced in the hole, and with three quick flips of the wrist, it would circle the hole a single time. Hand-carved from basswood, hand-painted, these decoys are designed to

perform and swim like fish. Wayne's decoys are customized to have a bend in the tail. The bend ensures that the fish will swim in circles, gliding in the water in a natural way, like a darting fish. Their motion was beautiful and life-like in the water.

I was reminded of one of Lauri Anderson's stories, called "Uuno," about a soul-sick World War II veteran who lost his faith in Lutheranism during the war, only to heal himself through spearing a sturgeon through the ice. When stationed on the Marshall Islands in the South Pacific, Uuno falls in love with the culture, learning how to forage for forest food, canoe deep into the ocean, and read the stars, currents, and migrations of birds. Uuno marries a Marshallese woman and has a child, integrating himself deeply into the culture, but following an American "accident," in which nuclear bombs are detonated so that the fallout intentionally blows into the Marshall Islands, Uuno is commanded to evacuate, leaving his family behind. Returning to the U.P., Uuno grows bitter and spends most of his time fishing commercially with his father and drinking at shady local bars. Uuno exorcises his demons only after he performs two earthen deeds: he and his father build a new sauna from materials of their own land, and he ice fishes for Lake Superior sturgeon. Cutting cedars from their own land, picking rocks from Lake Superior, and digging their own spring-well, they build an old-fashioned sauna–the most sacred of Finnish spaces. Its initiation cleanses Uuno of his past, but "Uuno's healing was not yet complete" (2002, p. 139). At first reluctant to try ice fishing for sturgeon because of his years of commercial fishing, Uuno is invited by a friend who instructs and teaches him, fishing for perch nearby Uuno. They bring a shanty out onto the ice of Lake Superior, chipping a large, round hole, and they ready a long and heavy spear with a long line attached to it. After dumping a bucket of bait down into the hole, Uuno waits for days, staring into the hole, "the eye of God" (p. 141) while

eating hot dogs and beans that his friend cooks for him over a Sterno canister. After five days of soul-searching and isolation, Uuno sees a sturgeon swim under him. He spears it, and after many hours, he is able to pull up the giant fish. Uuno falls backwards as he pulls the fish up, striking his head hard on the ice, and the sturgeon demolishes the shanty with the forceful thrusts of its tail, leaving nothing but a pile of kindling.

The giant sturgeon, which one drunk ice fisherman calls "the soul of Lake Superior" (2002, p. 142), represents more than sport and conquest. It is a story of healing, even though Uuno never fishes for sturgeon again. Uuno's sickness is brought on by disillusionment with the U.S. government–touting itself as a beacon of civilization and reason–who yet willingly and knowingly commit crimes against humanity. As Uuno stares into the eye of God, he does not look toward the God of the sky–the creator of Reason, culture, and empires–but rather toward the depths of the sea. The soul of Lake Superior rises toward civilization and obliterates the shanty, the nearest sign of civilization. As his head smacks against the ice, Uuno begins to understand the failure of the capital: reason, profiteering, capitalism, the government in the U.S. capital. The great Platonic mind crashes to earth and feels pain, suffering, emotion. In catching the spirit of the lake, Uuno finally lets go of his rage. The sturgeon's death leads to the restoration of Uuno's life, and Uuno rediscovers that the fish is not simply a commodity–something he has learned from commercial fishing and years of subscription to the dominant discourse of capitalism. Tragically, the U.S. government, which willingly sacrifices the Marshallese for the commodity of Baconian knowledge, never learns this lesson.

The peace and comfort which Uuno finds in the Marshall islands is the peace he rediscovers in the U.P. Uuno learns that northerners, like the Marshallese, read the earth, find

meaning in isolation, and fish for strange creatures in the depths of mystic seas. The so-called "simple life" of the Marshallese, which "blended into their environment and used the natural wealth of the islands and the lagoons" (2002, p. 130), is not so greatly removed from the life of many Finns. Acknowledging the traditional life of the Finns, he tells his Marshallese son, "The blood of fishermen flows through you from your mother's people and mine" (p. 133).

Wayne handed me the stick and let me jig for a while. At first the motion was awkward for me, and the decoy swum like a sedated, half-injured fish around the hole. After a few minutes though, my body learned the tool, and I was instinctively able to give the fish action. Though even after a few hours, I couldn't replicate the speed in which Wayne could make the fish dance, and I couldn't eliminate what was too much of a jerking motion as the fish launched into its next glide. These things take time to learn. We casually chatted about work, life, and family, drifting off between conversation and long moments of silence which one can hardly notice when one is occupied with fishing. I was dancing that decoy around the hole around 9:30, when the big head of a muskie crept forward just beneath the ice. I saw it before Wayne. "Muskie!" I burst out and tapped his leg to get his attention, now realizing I was still focusing in on the dancing lure, while I should have explicitly asked him what action to use with the decoy when a muskie comes into sight. Within a second, he had the spear in hand and was throwing it into the water, hard, at a

Figure 2: Wayne jigging a red decoy.

back-angle, almost underneath him. We pulled up the muskie with the rope, gaffing it from under the ice, and bringing it up. It was about 36 inches. We offered more tobacco, and we returned to work.

Drifting off into jigging, conversation, and the quiet silences that punctuate life in the Northwoods, perhaps another hour passed before another fish appeared in the hole. This was a large muskie, and it crept along the bottom of the lake, 12 feet down. Wayne held the decoy, and the muskie was not particularly interested in coming up to the decoy. It stopped, directly below the hole for just a second. A flash of electricity charged through my body.

Wayne grabbed the spear and hesitated only a second before taking a full throw, with all his strength, releasing the spear as his hand must have touched the water. Water splashed up onto me, but I barely noticed. He grabbed the rope, and his eyes got big. “We got it!” He pulled it in gently, hand-over-hand, until that big muskie sat under the ice, where it was gaffed and lifted from the water. We celebrated and whooped a little, and called over to Greg who I noticed was now using a very old cellphone. Greg had speared a couple muskies for himself already. It was a good feeling. Wayne explained that was the longest throw he had ever made at a muskie. He’d never hit a fish deeper than ten feet before, but he had no other option... that muskie was otherwise going to leave. He aimed a full foot in front of its head, anticipating its surge forward. We guessed it might be around 45 inches in length, and maybe 30 pounds in weight, but we didn’t measure it.

We returned to the tent, where we offered more tobacco and thanked the muskie for its life before we returned to fishing. But as we settled down into quietude again, I began thinking about that those exciting five or ten seconds, from the muskie’s appearance until it was raised

from the water. And I started wondering about that charge of electricity that flowed through me. That charge was not simply the excitement of seeing a large muskie. No, there was something more within it. I nearly grabbed the spear myself and threw it into the hole, as if my body knew what to do without ever having thrown a spear at a fish before. I felt like I had done this before, and my body knew what to do.

Figure 3: Wayne removing the second muskie from the tent.

In Sápmi and Finland, spearing fish was a common technique for harvest until the turn of the 20th century. U.T. Sirelius writes an entire chapter on spearing fish in Finland in his classic *Suomalaisten Kalastus*. Even spearing by torchlight was common. Sirelius notes:

> *Tuulastus on atrainkalastuksen vanhin muoto. Se suoritetaan useimmiten rannalta, harvoin veneestä pitäin. Sopivimmat tilaisuudet sen harjottamiseen ovat kudut. Hyvin käy se myöskin kalain lämpiminä, aurinkoisina kesäpäivinä "paisteella" ollessa. Erittäinkin pitävät tuulasmiehet vaarin hauen ja lahnan kuduista. Edellinen kala näet nousee aivan matalaan, jälkimäinen taaskin on kovin juro ja–jos vain hiljaan liikutaan–antaa yksi toisensa jälkeen iskeä itsensä hengiltä pakosalle lähtemättä. Hauvit monasti sulloutuvat kudulle niin liki toisiaan, että niitä voi yhdellä ainoalla pistolla, jos atrain on tarpeeksi leveä, saada kaksi, jopa kolmekin lävistetyksi. Väitetään ennen vanhaan hävitetyn kutuaikana tuulastamalla pienistä lammista muutamilla seuduilla hauvit ja lahnat moniksi ajoiksi miltei sukupuuttoon. Eipä ihme siis, että laki tämän pyyntitavan, kuten soihdullakin käynnin, on kieltänyt.*

Tuulaskalastukseen kuuluu myöskin Oulujoella harvotettava lohenpisto. Se on ollut ja on edelleenkin eritoten Pyhäkoskella käytännössä. Päästäkseen ylös kovista ryöppypaikoista tulee lohi aivan liki rantaa, josta sen kirkkaassa päiväpaisteessa voi helposti nähdä. Pyytäjät eli pistäjät asettuvat atraimineen sopiville paikoin kosken partaalle ja odottavat lohien saapumista rannan kohdalle. Paremmin nähkäkseen he tavallisesti asettavat valkean laakakiven kosken pohjaan sille kohdalle, josta lohen on tapana kulkea. Niin pian kuin tumma varjo, kalan selkä, näytäikse valkealla pohjalla, syöksevät he väkäisen aseensa veteen ja tuossa tuokiossa tempaisevat lohen ilmaan. Ollakseen varmat siitä, ettei jo piihin tarttunut saalis ruihtaudu irti ja putoa takaisin kuohuihin, varustavat he atraimensa kaarella, joka samassa tuokiossa, kun ase on syösty loheen, kiinnipitimeksi nyäistään kalan alle. (2009, p. 42)

[Torch-fishing is the oldest form of spearfishing. It is performed mostly on the shore, and to a lesser extent from a boat. The most suitable opportunities for this practice are during the spawn. Also, spearing works well on the warm, sunny days of summer. Spearing men specially take note of the spawn of pike and bream. With the former, you would see fish rising into the shallows. For the latter it is again very delicate and one must move cautiously to allow one to strike fish after fish down, without having them escape. Pike so often crowd together to spawn, as close to each other that they can be of a single stitch, if the trident is wide enough then two, or even three can be pierced. Some say that in the old days spearing by torchlight destroyed during the spawning season destroyed small ponds in some areas, and pike and bream periodically became nearly extinct. It's no wonder, then, that the method of this fishing method, as well as the use of the torch, it is forbidden.

In the same category as spearfishing is also the customary practice on the Oulu River of salmon spearing. It has been and continues to be practiced, especially in Pyhäkoski. To get to the headwaters of hard torrents, the salmon comes quite close to the shore, where one can easily see in in bright sunlight. Fishermen (or spearers) settle down there with their spears along suitable places at the edge of the rapids, and they wait for the salmon to arrive near the shore. To see better they usually put the white flat stone to the bottom of the rapids at a place where salmon tend to pass. As soon as the dark shadow of the fish back flashes upon the white background, they plunge their spear into the water, and suddenly they lift the salmon into the air. In order to be sure that the stuck salmon does not fall loose back into the churning water, they equip their spears with a barb, which is the same moment when the weapon has been cast into the salmon to hold it tight, lifting the fish from below.]

Sirelius further notes that wintertime spearing was practiced in some parts of Finland:

Soihdulla käynti tapahtuu niihin vuodenaikoihin, jolloin öitten pimeydessä on edellytys keinotekoiselle valaistukselle. Sitä harjotetaan pääasiallisesti syksyin ja alkukeväästä, mutta myös, vaikka harvoin, talvella. [...] Talvella sitä toimitetaan Oulujoella ja sielläkin vain suojasäillä lohen pyyntiä varten. (2009, p. 51)

> [The use of torches happened during those seasons when the nights were dark and required artificial light. It was practices mostly in the fall and early spring, but also, though infrequently, in the winter. [...] In the winter it was practiced on the Oulu River and there only in warm spells for and in pursuit of salmon.

Spearing by torchlight was common throughout Finland, and I come from a family that once netted and speared for food. Yet this history remains curiously forgotten, displaced by the angling traditions that took hold of the region during the early 20th century.

Yet this legal structure remains culturally problematic. It suggests Anglo dominance over the region, perpetuating models of sustainability that preserve recreational fishing and overdevelopment. It disenfranchises Native people, who have always maintained cross-cultural adoption practices. It is inconsistent with other regulations across the state and region. Sturgeon can be speared on Lake Winnebago, but this tradition was apparently spared because a group of especially effective and fiercely organized citizens in the Fox River valley were able to persuade legislators to allow them special harvest rights in the late 1800s (Kline, Bruch, Binkowski, 2009, p. 28-31). Minnesota and Michigan allow spearing of northern pike through the ice, but Wisconsin does not even though northern pike are not native to many of northern Wisconsin's waters. Presumably, this stems from a belief that anglers cannot distinguish between muskies and northerns. Fundamentally, inconsistency is prevalent in these game laws, despite their noble intentions to keep the environment healthy. They remain rigid and positioned to perpetuate a specific vision of environmental use. This has created an intensification that has divided Native from non-Native harvesters in practice and occasionally in the meanings behind the harvest.

Whereas in the United States treaties designed originally to restrict Native rights have been useful in reestablishing indigenous harvesting rights, in Sápmi there are no such

protections. Sámi harvesting rights continue to shrink at the whims of policymakers from a colonizing culture. Yet both of these systems of management reflect old-fashioned and static notions of cultural identity, reliant on blood quotients in the United States and on expectations of assimilation in the Nordic states. I believe a better model can be reached that favors local empowerment, recognizes harvesting as an important cultural tradition worth preserving, and does not detract from indigenous communities' rights to manage their natural resources in accordance with their legal rights for cultural self-determination.

To accomplish such an ends through policy may be difficult, but not impossible. To better reflect in land-use policy contemporary understandings of identity formation, historical land-use, indigenous rights, the systemic patterns reminiscent of colonialism in contemporary peripheral spaces, and to improve ecological health, I propose the following ideas as guiding principles.

Indigenous communities need to have increased abilities for self-definition and more control over their own harvests. As blood-quotients, language skills, and race become increasingly problematic identity-markers in a global world, new definitions are needed to describe our changing realities of identity-performance. These definitions of identity can be used to strengthen indigenous position through principles of inclusivity and political alliance with indigenous agendas. Because the technique of harvest is crucial in cultural expression and identity, the prohibition of indigenous harvesting is an overtly colonial act. The act of self-definition and autonomous land-use management will level the playing field with powerful forces that desire to re-purpose these food resources.

Non-indigenous local harvesters should have greater local access to local resources than non-local harvesters in terms of cost and extraction. This will help counter the aspects of

economic inequity within the state and encourage people to make use of (and care for) their own local resources. These same non-indigenous local harvesters should have greater voice in determining allowable techniques of harvest. This would permit a variety of cultural expressive forms through the harvest, and allow changing ethnic demographics of communities to be represented locally. For instance, Hmong immigrants would have greater power locally than statewide in sustaining their traditional harvesting practices if such decisions were allowed in smaller management units.

Tourism should be used as a force to empower and sustain local cultures. Tourism is a powerful and not necessarily negative force. When tourists outnumber and out-power locals in terms of local policy, however, it becomes problematic and the source of anger. Tourism can, however, be used as a way to strengthen local cultures, local empowerment, and the local base of wealth. In Sápmi, for instance, tourists are required to hire guides on certain days of the week if they will fish for salmon from a boat. Such a requirement props up the local economy, and some individuals like Petteri Valle advocate for increased local control over the experiences of tourists. With strategic planning, a cultural renaissance could be at bay, which in turn could strengthen the economy and local cultures of the Northwoods.

The state should assume a holistic approach toward balancing harvest limits, habitat protection, and subsistence harvesting. Subsistence harvesting is an important cultural tradition of the Lake Superior Region, and simple steps can be taken to ensure its long-term adaptation and survival. Increased habitat protection, tax incentives to protect fragile shoreline areas, restrictions against lawn fertilizers, more (perhaps rotating) fish sanctuaries, bans on motor boats, or limitations on hunting and fishing technology all would help rapidly improve the

environment and level the playing field between harvesters and recreationalists. Alternatively, a "master outdoorsman" program (mirroring the successful "master gardener" program) could attach increased harvesting rights to public service, transmission of traditional knowledge through workshops or mentorships, conservation effort volunteering, or museum work to protect and re-value this important tradition of the region.

Wayne, Greg, and I took some photos of each other with the fish, some with Greg's flip phone, which looked about a decade old, and we left the lake with five muskies. I thought of Jay Mechling's essay about vernacular photography. Wayne gave me his two muskies, which is legal to do (but when driving with meat procured through treaty rights, I am extra cautious to not violate any traffic laws). We headed back to Wayne's house, where I played with his young children the rest of the afternoon. We drummed and sang, and they danced. We also recorded a few stories on tape. We took two muskies home, but he said he would not take more than three. Three is enough for the day. One never should over-harvest, and he told me the story of a man who met the head deer:

Figure 4: Wayne Valliere holding the 45 inch muskie.

> I'll tell you another story about an old timer. I was with Joe Chosa one time when I was a young guy. Ozawaabig is my elder. He's 96 right now, and he's still alive. I went to see him at the home the other day. He gets to come home. Anyway, we were hunting during gun season, we had our blaze orange on. And this was the early 80s, I was a young guy then, about 17. There was this old man, his name was Jimmy Armstrong. [Assuming a gravelly voice]: *A guy who talked like this.* That old man, Joe said, "Oh, Jimmy, aren't you going to go out hunting?" It was like big for us... we got to go off the Rez then. For the Indians, deer were hard to get on the Rez in those days because everybody lived off them, you know. We got to go off the Rez, and we thought we'd make use of it.
>
> So anyway, he says to Joe, "I haven't been hunting for many years," he said, that old man. He said, "When I was young," he said, "I did something really foolish," he said. "I went out," he said, "and I was killing deer one summer, one after another. I'd go out. And the way I was getting them," he says, "I'd take a light out in the woods at night and I'd night shine 'em. And I'm walking different parts of the Rez. Walking out there, and I must have gotten 12-13 deer that summer. I killed a lot of deer back in those days. And pretty soon," he said, "them old people, my grandparents, said 'You need to stop doing that. What are you doing with all that meat? We don't need no more meat. We don't need to go out harvesting deer for that anymore. Something's going to happen to you. You stop doing that.'"
>
> "I didn't listen," he said. "The next night," he said, "I went out, and I was walking, and the moon was out. And I come to a clearing," he said, "And the moon was shining over there, and I could see two of the biggest set of eyes. Right by this big oak tree," he said. "So I knew what it was, so I start sneaking over there. As I got closer," he said, "I can see them big white horns, a big buck," he said, "by that oak tree in the moonlight. So I snuck closer. I went through the woods and I came around, and got within thirty yards of it. And I was going to jump up and shoot it. I got up there and I put my light on it. And there," he said, "sitting," he said, "was an old man," he said. "With pure white hair. Covered in a blanket. And he looked up at me. And I was like shining my light, and his eyes lit up." He said, "I was so terrified I dropped my gun. I ran out of the woods," he said. "And I've never hunted again. And the old people," he said, "they told me I'd met the head deer. So out of respect for the deer, for what I did," he said, "I don't do that anymore. I don't hunt anymore... I put away my gun." I was standing there when he told that story. (2013)

Wayne explained to me that he shares this story with young people as a way to remind them to take only what they need from the woods. Wayne knew my family never over-harvests, but it was a powerful story to illustrate his point all the same. It is often believed that Ojibwe people

are guilty of over-harvesting, yet their woods and waters are healthier than off the Rez. I understood him well. It was a stereotype we both were working to dispel.

Harvesting for food creates patterns of meaning which resemble each other across cultures, that in part define one's own relationship with the environment, with animals and plants, and with the way one understands sustainable ecology and economy. Identity and memory are encoded into the land, and the act of exploitation and destruction are acts that threaten one's own perceived identity to its core. Such value systems are not the values of the market; rather, they are stolen by its merchants for sale. Such value systems are not a romantic longing for a perceived past, but rather they represent a very real and very old system of constructing meaning in the world, a system naturally misunderstood by the legions of tourists who cast their colonial gaze over the landscape for the purpose of self-restoration.

I ate those muskies after we processed them in his basement. I deboned them with my 12 inch Marttiini fillet knife, with a razor sharp and flexible blade, and cubed them, soaking the cubes in milk. I boiled them in water, with a stalk of celery and a quarter of an onion, with a splash of vinegar and salt and pepper. When they rolled at the top of the kettle, I skimmed off the foamy fat, and strained them. Served with drawn butter and lemon, they were better than lobster. I prepared a dish of wild rice and chopped morels I had also harvested from the previous year, as well as some hand-picked cranberries. I feasted with my family, eating these wild foods, speaking aloud our sentiments of how wonderful it is to eat so many foods we harvested ourselves, a purposeful reminder to our 12-year old of the values which we plan to gift to him.

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