

Editorial

This second issue of MAST contains six articles. It addresses problems of customary rights, job satisfaction, migration strategies, and resource management in fishing. The regional emphasis is on the East Coast of North-America, while one paper pertains to West-Africa.

In his paper on Newfoundland's banks schooner and dory fishermen, Raoul Andersen draws relationships between material and reputational rewards, usufruct customs (and their violation), and risk taking in this fishery. More specifically, Andersen compares the two basic incentive schemes used in these fishing operations, viz. the 'count' and the 'share.' He points out that the count reward scheme plays an important role in occupational hazards.

John Gatewood and Bonnie McCay present a quantitative analysis of job satisfaction in different categories of New England commercial fishermen. They compare clammers, scallopers, oystermen, draggers, longliners, and baymen with regard to thirty-three components of job satisfaction. Though all fishermen find their work intrinsically rewarding, there are also important group-group and intra-crew contrasts with respect to job satisfaction.

Paul Jorion describes the risk-minimizing, seasonal movement, and migration strategies of fishermen in the Gulf of Guinea (West-Africa). He compares two beach settlements of different ethnic groups in the P.R. Bénin with respect to their fishing policies. The majority of fishermen of 'Zogbèdji-beach' have opted for seasonal movements. Those of the 'Adounko-beach' settlement of Akpanji have chosen migration to Gabon and the Congo. Jorion outlines the reasons underlying these diverging strategies and concludes his paper with a sociological 'law.'

In their joint paper, Gail Pool and Frances Stewart take up the issue of government regulation of salmon fishing in New Brunswick. They consider the ecological, economic, and social effects of limited entry measures and describe the response of Chance and Dipper Harbours fishermen to this resource management strategy. Pool and Stewart argue that the introduction of limited access was accompanied by many problems, mainly because the managers overlooked the socio-economic context of fishing a mobile resource.

Jeffrey Kassner, a shellfish biologist, says that since the 'baymen' of the Great South Bay 'prey' upon hard clams, they are predators amenable to an ecological analysis. This approach can provide important insights in ecological processes of predation, competition, and adaptation from the perspective of the baymen. He maintains that this approach may lead to a better understanding of the behavior of fishermen and is therefore useful in formulating adequate management policies.

Paul Durrenberger pays attention to fisheries policy in the United States. He focuses on the introduction of turtle excluder devices (TEDs) in the Alabama shrimp fishery. His detailed case study provides an example of the complexities of fisheries regulations and shows how these regulations can influence the livelihoods of different categories of people. Durrenberger stresses the necessity to understand commercial fisheries in their broadest political and economic contexts.

Usufruct and Contradiction

Territorial Custom and Abuse in Newfoundland's Banks Schooner and Dory Fishery¹

Raoul Andersen

Memorial University of Newfoundland

Introduction

Newfoundland's banks or "deep sea" schooner and dory fishery was displaced by modern groundfish trawler operations in the mid-1950's. Yet its organization remains superficially understood and fragmentary described. This paper draws upon information from published and archival sources, especially those at the Memorial University of Newfoundland's Centre for Newfoundland Studies, and oral historical data about the schooner fishery gathered by the author since about 1967.

In 1967-68 I went to sea with many ex-banks schooner fishermen who were then engaged in groundfish trawling. Over the years I came to know and interview about twelve former schooner captains and about fifty or more ex-dory fishermen. The principal oral historical data for this essay, however, are drawn from the biographical recollections of a particularly authoritative Newfoundland banks schooner master. Information from other men interviewed is used where appropriate. Particular attention is upon my primary informant's recollections of skipper and dory fisherman decisions about territorial use by schooners and dory units.

I will attempt to draw relationships between material and reputational rewards, usufruct customs, their violation, and risk taking in these fishing operations. In this regard, I examine some important consequences of fishing on the 'count' and (average) 'share' schemes, the two major incentive arrangements used in this fishery.

The following discussion therefore bears on an understanding often expressed by Newfoundland's retired banks schooner fishermen that "there were lives and lives lost" in this fishery. In addition to the wholesale destruction of schooner crews in various vessel disasters, perhaps every fisherman I interviewed remembered occasions when individual dory crews were lost, "gone astray." Countless were never seen again. Such strays are usually attributed mainly to storms, errors in seamanship, and men losing their way in dense fog. This oversimplifies the past. One must also recognize how material and reputational incentives helped to shape such events. We will consider the wisdom of the established Newfoundland banks fisherman belief that the 'count' both compelled men to work hard and killed them.