

**Islanders in Community:
Identity Negotiation through Sites of Conflict and Transcripts of Power**

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Abstract: This paper explores the problem of negotiated identity on Madeline Island (Wisconsin, USA). In this social context, who is and who is not an islander is not clearly defined as simply “locals” or “tourists.” The winter population is numerically overwhelmed by the summer population, many of whom spend several months on the island over the summer. This creates a sliding scale of participation where the island identity is negotiated in the context of the rest of the island community. This negotiation is examined in geographic sites of conflict, discourse, and the transcripts referencing winter and its effects on people. This paper takes islanders’ colloquial categories, builds them out more objectively, and illustrates how these categories and their membership is negotiated through claims to the “Islander” identity.

Keywords: authenticity, authenticity politics, hidden transcripts, island community, Lake Superior, Madeline Island, negotiated identity, sites of conflict, tourism, Wisconsin.

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Introduction

This research examines some of the ways in which identity is negotiated on Madeline Island. Madeline is an island in Lake Superior in Wisconsin, USA, and is economically oriented around tourism in the summer months with corresponding seasonal population swings. On Madeline, belonging is not simply a matter of geography but one of personal choice and network cultivation (Bjarnason & Thorlindsson, 2006). Colloquial taxonomies of membership on the island are “locals,” “summer people,” and “tourists.” Becoming an “Islander” means moving away from the “tourists” and towards the “locals”. This identity is negotiated in geographic sites of conflict and by the discursive and behavioural use of island-appropriate symbols. Geographic sites of conflict elements include both the land and the water, as well as the bars and restaurants. Discursive elements include both *how people talk to each other*, which names they use in discussion, which experiences they reference in discussion, as well as *what they talk about* using gossip and rumour as examples of the various transcripts employed on Madeline.

Madeline Island carries some of the metaphorical associations noted by Terrell, including antique traditions and savage Edens (Terrell, 2004). It is relatively isolated, beautiful, and has formidable winters. The European and Native American histories intertwine since the sixteenth century. These metaphorical associations drive tourism. The presence of tourism objectifies and commodifies the island and its elements to be consumed by the tourists. Urry calls this the *tourist gaze* (Urry, 1990). This gaze creates an audience for the enactment of the islander dramaturgy (Goffman, 1959). The islanders themselves are well aware that they are playing out a script for others, with the script varying by levels of embeddedness (MacCannell, 1976). As a result, many of those who consider themselves “islanders” and who portray that identity to tourists are in fact people who spend only part of their time living on Madeline.

Madeline and its community suffer from epistemological problems associated with islands (Baldacchino, 2008; Hay, 2006). During the winter, the ferry is frozen in and the island is connected to the mainland through an ice road. Socially, some of the islanders spend the winters working away, and many of the summer community spend six months or more every year on the island. Epistemologically, is it less of an island when one can drive to the mainland, and are islanders only those people who have lived there year round for many years? According to these criteria, Madeline is epistemologically compromised as an island and its community is vanishingly small.

Map 1: Madeline on Lake Superior, Wisconsin, USA. (Source: Google Maps).



Enacting Identity

Mead (1934) argues that the self is created in social contexts, through the use of symbols. As social contexts and symbols change, the self grows as a result. The contexts, symbols, and selves are enmeshed in “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973: 5). Cohen (1985) recognizes that these webs of meaning are created on an ongoing basis through ongoing social interaction. Identity is influenced from the macro level through structures and discourses, and from the micro level through daily interactions in those webs of significance (Nagel, 1996; Omi & Winant 1986; Thoits & Virshup, 1997; West & Fenstermaker, 1995; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Identity is enacted in daily life, in response to a diversity of contexts, and reacting to changes in the structural environment in which the individual is embedded.

At the dramaturgical level, individuals enact identities oriented toward those around them (Goffman, 1959). This can include enacting identities for an individual within a community or for an identity that is staged and meant to be consumed (MacCannell, 1973; Peterson, 1997). Part of this enactment involves assembling *identity formation material* - the various pieces of surrounding culture to appropriately fit that identity (McRobbie, 1994: 192). Subcultural membership can be claimed through consumption of symbols that display membership. Examples may include certain clothes for gay men (Kates, 2002), Harley Davidson motorcycles for bikers (North-Coleman, 2008; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), or tattoos and hairstyles for punks (Fox, 1987; Williams 2006). These displayed identities essentially make claim to some group membership.

Identity has shifted away from being defined solely in relation to traditional social networks such as family, community, and religion and more towards voluntary identity and voluntary networks (Hewitt, 1988). Identity in some networks is a result of shared identities, and some identities are negotiated across geographical spaces (Vertovec, 2001). Place-based anchors have retreated in importance for location of identity. Connections between people and their networks have been “stretched” in modernity with the rise in technology and mobility (Vertovec, 2001). Modernity has to some extent cleaved the automatic connection between geography and identity (Bauman, 1995; Beck, 1992; Putnam, 2000). People are more able to leave their native geographies, and choose new places with almost seamless transitions in their associated identities.

This does not mean there is no relationship between identity and geography in modernity; simply that the relationship is less automatic and more voluntary. Place can and still does retain an influence on identity (Dunn, 1998; Marshall, 2001a; Melucci, 1996). Madeline, as a case in point, is a rural area whose associated identity is not an automatic result of having been raised in the community, and which is attractive enough to compel a voluntary identity. This placeness works even for those natives and tourists who are off-island, as evidenced by the numerous tourist shops selling items proclaiming “my heart is on the island” to be displayed in one’s mainland home.

Social and geographic mobility exist together for many rural residents (Bjarnason & Thorlindsson, 2006). Many rural residents find they need to emigrate to experience upward socio-economic mobility (Carr & Kefalas, 2009). Madeline also suffers from occupational emigration. However, other people immigrate seasonally or year-round because they desire to live and/or work there. This is despite a lack of wintertime economic opportunity.

Tourists seeking an authentic experience of island life are observing a voluntary community of islanders, some of whom are native residents and some of whom are seasonal migrant service employees. In the eyes of a day tourist, everyone he or she meets is an islander. Contemporary tourists tend to be looking for authentic experiences (MacCannell, 1976). They wish to meet locals, and want to see what island life is like. The ideal-typical experience would be to meet an islander who shows the tourist places and experiences not readily available to most tourists. Similarly, today's elite searches for a wide variety of these authentic experiences (Bjarnason and Thorlindsson, 2006; Gibbons, 2003; Peterson and Kern, 1996). Peterson and Kern argue that this represents a change from earlier elites who attempted to familiarize themselves with highbrow culture and experience. This represents a shift from highbrow or elite culture to authentic culture (Bourdieu, 1987; Brooks, 2001; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Seabrook, 2001).

Identities are not simply enacted, however. A link exists between the enactment of identities through cultural collage, and the acceptance or rejection of that identity by the appropriate community. McQueeney (2009) studied how GLBT and GLBT-affirming Southern Christians vied for acceptance in their respective churches using the acceptable symbols of biblical authority and human dignity, and Waters (1990) studied how individuals claimed ethnic identities through the enactment of appropriate symbols. Mitchell refers to the manipulation of material identity symbols as *ritual authority claims* in the context of weapons knowledge appropriate for survivalists (Mitchell, 2002: 96). In Mitchell's study, the actor's skill and knowledge in field stripping and reassembling a weapon provides authority claims for those present to judge and rank (*ibid.*).

However, in these situations, the communities in question can reject those individual claims of membership. Most subgroups or communities have pejorative names for those who fail to successfully claim membership. Rejected identities from the Harley study by Schouten and McAlexander (1995) include RUBs (Rich Urban Bikers), SeWeRs (Suburban Weekend Riders), and IGLOOS (I Got the Look, Own One Soon), and rejected identities from the Punker study by Fox (1987) include Preppy Punks.

With acceptance as an islander, political and economic consequences follow. People who successfully negotiate the islander claim may be more likely to get better deals on food, with "islander pricing." They may be more able to get better materials and better service from the local construction company. For summer service workers, being included as an islander may translate to housing on the island. For an employer, jovially including his or her employees as "island girls" may translate to better workers, and better service for his customers. Identification with a community and mastering its subcultural capital can translate into economic capital. This is illustrated in Kates' example of a gay man who has

translated his subcultural capital into economic capital by creating items tailored to the subculture's styles (Kates, 2002).

Differing groups of islanders access different transcripts in discourse with each other and about the island. Hidden transcripts are conceived as the ways in which groups of differing power relationships speak when in each others' presence, and the ways in which they speak when they are alone (Scott, 1992). Especially interesting are the ways the relatively less powerful group protects its dignity and humanity in the face of oppression. Scott asserts that these transcripts are the "weapons of the weak" (Scott, 1985: 303). Examples of hidden transcripts serving as a tool for pushback of the less powerful against the relatively more powerful include such diverse subjects as flight attendants against their employers (Murphy, 1998) and indigenous people of Mexico against European domination (Levi, 1999). Hidden transcripts have been shown to operate where the poor pushback against their demonization as cholera carriers in Brazil (Nations & Monte, 1996), and among women terminating pregnancies illegally and against religious sanction in Brazil (Nations *et al.*, 1997). Other research examining hidden transcripts has focused on the ways in which the unemployed negotiated their understanding of themselves against other conceptions of the unemployed, distinguishing and distancing themselves from "cheats" through discourse (Howe, 2000). Finally some research examines hidden transcripts as resistance from above – from the relatively more powerful government security agencies surrounding the 9/11 attacks (Greenhouse, 2005).

In the case of this fieldwork, the identity that is negotiated is the Islander identity. Madeline is interesting in that very few people are clearly identifiable as locals. There are roughly 175 people who overwinter, but the summer population can swell to 3,000. In this environment, who is an "islander" and who is a "tourist" is negotiated. As such, the ideal typical islander – that winter, long-term island dweller, is a small percentage of the actual community. The vast majority of people participating in the island community must negotiate their Islander identity between each other.

This distinction is less blurred in other social contexts. Marshall's study of Grand Manan Island reveals a distinction between the islanders and the "from-away" people (2001: 165). Having spent some time off the island living and working on the mainland is enough to compromise natives' claim to authenticity (Marshall, 2001: 402). On Grímsey in North Iceland, there is an acknowledgement that living on the Island is the key to Islander-ness, but that it takes time (Stefánsdóttir, 2010: 12). In these cases, islanders are those who live there, provided they have lived there long enough.

Methods

The fieldwork for this project encompassed two full summers, and weekend field visits every month through one full calendar year. We also completed summer and winter visits of varying lengths over the course of six years. My spouse was my research partner throughout this project, providing an important sounding board for new ideas as well as another analytical voice. She did not participate in all of the off-season weekend visits, but she did participate fully in all summer fieldwork. The initial contact with the field site was

primarily for employment, and the research project grew out of observing the daily discursive negotiation of the islander identity. The employment and subsequently more formal research involvement served as participant observation with involvement in daily life on the island.

We strove for direct experience participating in as many Island activities as possible (Douglas, 1976). As active member researchers, I worked at the moped rental shop multiple summers under two different owners, and my wife worked at one of the restaurants (Adler & Adler, 1987). I helped one of the key informants work on his cabin-building, getting to know much of the construction industry on the island. I did academic work on the public library terminals, getting to know the library staff. We ate at all the bars and restaurants, getting to know much of the service staff and some of the owners. We attended wine tastings and art shows, and we watched movies and operas (“Tuesday Night Operas”) in a pole barn equipped with a movie screen and a sound system. I sailed with the Sea Scouts, as well as regular citizens. I attended Native American activities including traditionally building a birch bark canoe for the Smithsonian and peaceful demonstrations regarding their treaty claims on the island. I attended town meetings where the viability of a cycling trail was discussed, including the frustrations that bike and moped traffic created on the extant roads. We did as much as we could to integrate ourselves into the community and met as many people as we could. The more people we knew, the more diverse and numerous were the perspectives.

As relationships between myself, my key informants, and general acquaintances on the island grew, so did my insight into the social and political events. This multi-year perspective allowed for an evolving understanding of the social fabric and culture of the island. As new summer people, we were expected to behave and converse as such; thus noticing the almost daily discussion of who was an islander and who was not. This built some understanding of the cultural capital necessary to belong on the island. As we learned more about the island and its history, and as we met some of the more-reclusive people, our understanding increased, as also did our acceptance. Immersion was well nigh complete when, during the final summer, one of the respondents embraced my wife and me, telling us “Welcome home guys!”

As grounded theory suggests, the theoretic and analytic perspective shifted as the study progressed (Glaser, 1967). The initial research question focused on how this identity was negotiated in daily life, what the discursive tools were, and what the behavioural and artifactual signifiers of belonging were. As the study evolved, the economic relationship of the various groups rose to the fore, until the findings echoed Geertz’s (1973) cockfight, where the patterns of betting surrounding a cockfight revealed a reflection of the political power structure of the community. The evolution of this trajectory was important because it allowed for both the objective distance and subjective knowledge to build a sufficiently deep yet objective understanding of the field site. We were involved in a variety of different roles, from the day tourist to the multi-summer worker, to academic researcher.

Data consisted of five formal and then forty informal interviews. Non-interview data included participant observation in a variety of roles, and photography. The interviews were tape-recorded, and relevant parts were transcribed. Opportunistic ad-hoc interviews were written from memory shortly after they happened. This shift from formal to informal interviews was a tactical shift. The formality of sitting down with a tape recorder and a discussion guide led respondents to give fairly straightforward, descriptive responses. This was adequate for factual information such as history and background, but it was not useful for the interpretive information regarding identity and symbolism the study strove for. Informal interviews could be more exploratory, qualitatively deeper, and could opportunistically take advantage of sights and people in the immediate environment. An example would be “why is knowing the story behind Joni’s beach important?” or “Why would you think [another islander] is only a tourist?” Questions such as this were unwieldy in formal interviews. Informal interviews were conducted with business owners, employees, day and camping tourists, people living in tents and trailers, as well as people in more traditional housing, people with lakeshore summer homes, schoolteachers with undeveloped interior lots, and Native Americans doing a variety of activities related to their history on Madeline.

Photography allowed for mnemonic devices to assist in recreating the experience (Hill, 1991). This proved especially important in reviewing people’s clothing, living structures, cars and trucks, and the bars and restaurants in which much social interaction took place. Daily field notes were taken in paper journals and on a laptop computer.

I cultivated two key informants. It was general knowledge that I was conducting research, but my two key informants had a deeper, more analytic understanding of the research objectives. Hence, they were especially alert to authenticity politics (Brooks, 2007), people’s use of island symbols, and friction between the various groups of islanders. These were individuals with different social skills. The first was especially good at understanding the politics and economics of the island, knowing who owned what, who was trying a new business venture, and who one would call when something was needed. The other was exceptionally tuned into the social life on the island. She knew (or thought she did) who was a friend with whom, who were friends in the past, who was dating whom, and what the various stories behind different breakups were. These two informants proved invaluable in gathering information to which we would not have had access.

Findings

Social Organization

An understanding of the rough social outline of the island is necessary to understand the sites of conflict and hidden transcripts employed in different situations. Initial findings suggest segmentation similar to other ethnographies. The most relevant components of the taxonomy were those of authenticity and levels of commitment to the island. Similar to Goffman’s Crofters, individual’s performed identities need to be convincing (Goffman, 1959). This identity then had to be authentic. One strove to be a *real* islander, and the best way to illustrate this authenticity was through a display of commitment to the island

identity, often through the amount of time one spent on the island, and whether one made one's living on the island.

During an informal interview, one of the respondents summed up the colloquial taxonomy as “locals, summer people, and tourists.” This is one of those ‘of course’ statements (Berger, 1963) that is absolutely taken for granted but which is rarely explicated. Delineating people based on season is problematic. “Summer people” can be used to mean everyone from the cottagers to the itinerant summer help. More often cottagers are referred to by their family name, and there is a general understanding that multiyear summer people are different from first-year summer help.

My findings found three strata of Islander: long-term, medium-term, and short-term. This stretches beyond the “locals,” and “summer people” mentioned in the interview. Our groups were based on the amount of time spent on the island. This segmentation is as objective as possible with some caveats. There is some blurring of boundaries and Islanders’ expressed segmentation of locals and summer people differs somewhat. This social structure is set against a backdrop of a continual stream of “tourists” which includes people visiting as day tourists, camping in a town park, camping in a state park, and staying in the cottages and hotels.

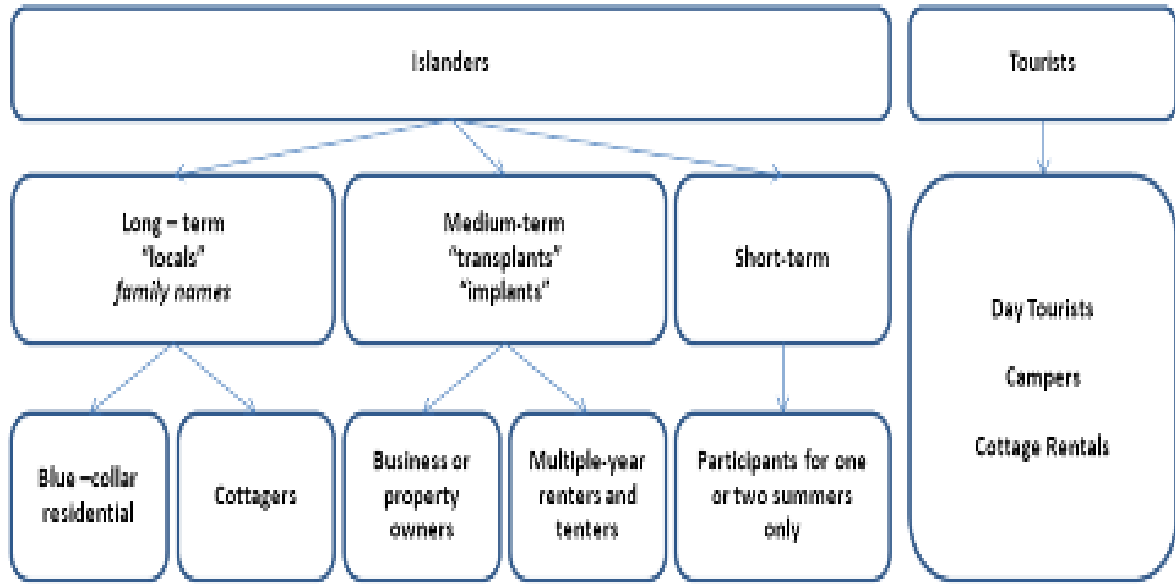
The cottagers and the blue collar islanders are those whose families came to the island almost one hundred years ago and built a symbiotic relationship between the two of them (Holzhueter, 1986; Madeline Island Historical Preservation Association, 1997; Ross, 2000). The penultimate blue collar islanders family immigrated circa 1885. Members of this family logged, farmed, and fished the area. They were involved with the ferry service, the marina construction, and are currently central to the construction industry on the island. This construction industry focuses on building and maintaining the homes, breakwaters, docks, and roads that constitute the infrastructure of the tourist industry.

The cottagers’ families came to the Island around 1895. Madeline was a place to summer to avoid the heat and hay fever of Nebraska. This family had already succeeded financially in telecommunications, and eventually bought a series of adjoining lots on which were erected homes for other family members. Many of these homes have been sold since then, but descendents of the family still summer on Madeline and are involved in several of the arts and cultural activities.

There are more recent ‘transplants’ or ‘implants’ (double entendre intended), some of whom own businesses and summer homes, and some of whom tent, rent, or live in substandard accommodations on their own land (e.g. campers and converted school buses). This group is often not segregated out specifically in islanders’ own taxonomies. This is one of the reasons for a blurring of colloquial categories. People can spend years on the island every summer but never fall in the “locals” or winter people category. Others do move in year round but find that it takes many years to be accepted as locals (Ross, 2000). People’s time per year and time over the years can vary widely leading to confusion about whether they count as “locals” or “summer people” and how many years “summer people” may have to visit to be accepted as Islanders.

Finally there are the highly transitory summer workers: some who work for a few summers, and others who only do so for one.

Figure 1: Taxonomy of Social Structure on Madeline Island



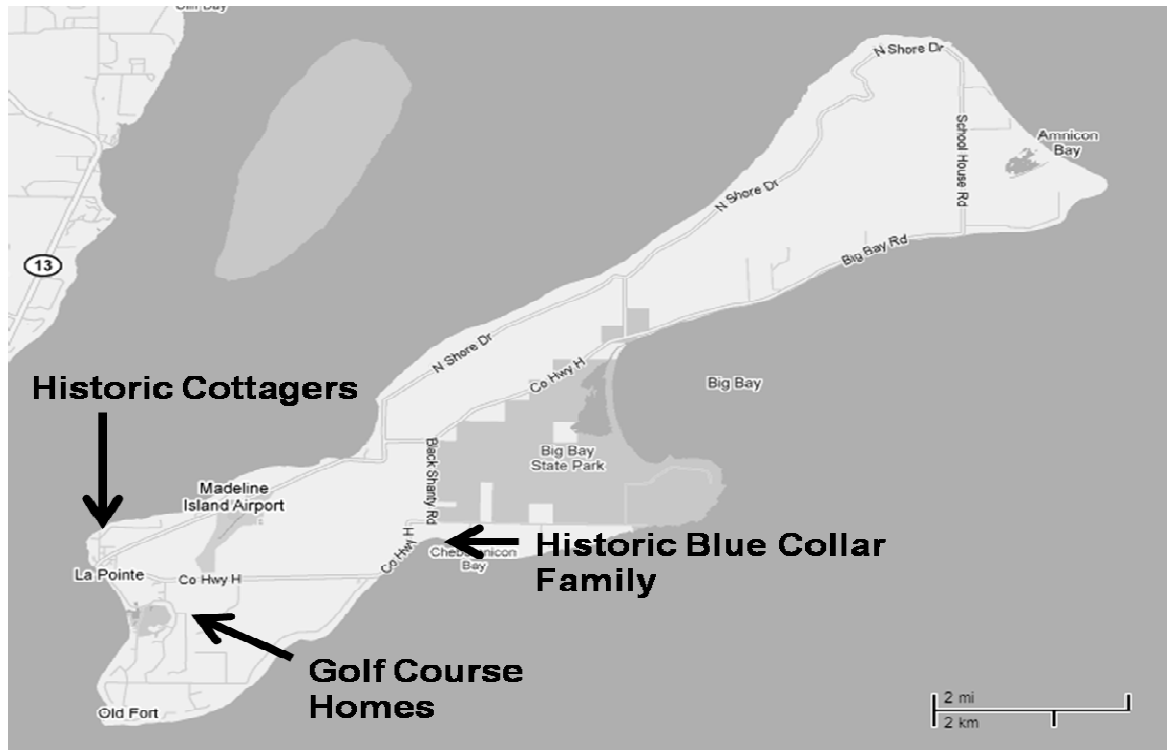
Sites of Conflict

Power relationships between the groups, and identity negotiations within those groups happened in a variety of different settings. The sites of conflict in this project are the land and water, and bars and restaurants. Geographically, where an islander lived said much about his or her membership in the various groups. The historic cottagers and blue collar families both had roads named after them, on which a majority of the property was owned by people within the family. These properties were also fairly expensive, keeping newer islanders out via price. Newer islanders who could afford expensive properties either bought the relatively newer plots on the golf course, or bought lakeshore farther up the island.

Most of the observed negotiation took place with the medium- and short-term islanders moving into the social arena and trying to establish their place. The authenticators employed would include clothing, bare-footedness, and living on the island – even if that meant substandard accommodations, and bathing in the lake. Winter experience, such as having driven the ice road when the ferry was frozen in, was also an important authenticator.

“I love bathing in the lake. People think it’s weird. I love people thinking I’m weird” (Island summer worker)

Map 2: Madeline Island. (Source: Google Maps.)



The historic cottagers' spot is on a high bluff overlooking the bay toward the mainland, surrounded by tall coniferous trees. It is also immediately off the edge of town. This spot is accessible to town life, including the coffee shops and art galleries in which some members are involved, as well as relatively quiet and secluded up their particular road. The historic blue collar families have a spot a few miles out of town, on a sandy bay facing South. While not as convenient to town life, this area has the protection of the island sheltering them from the north wind and the open lake. Their bay is therefore a little bit warmer, and their sun exposure is significant. Given their location in northern Wisconsin, such southern exposure on the lakefront is important.

Because of this price exclusivity, medium-term islanders who could not afford golf-course properties were relegated to one of a few places out of town, where land was platted, but not developed. These were "Rough" Road, and Miller Farm Road – both colloquial names. These roads were dirt or gravel, and sloppy in wet weather. There was a wide variety of housing on such roads. A few had put up homes, several homes were in various states of completion – including seemingly permanently half finished - and some abandoned before completion. Others included campers and house trailers. Some of the house trailers had additions indicating their residents were more permanently anchored, but some of the camp trailers were simply pop-ups and completely uninhabitable after November. One of these roads is also where one of the two school bus-homes was situated.

Map 3: Madeline roads, including Rough Road & Miller Farm Road (Source: Google Maps)



There was not necessarily overt conflict or hostility surrounding the geography of settlement on the island. Rather, one bought what one could afford and was available. Any conflict was sidelined by the market price of places. Because economic chances on the island are very limited, this segmentation by price is doubly effective. It is almost certain that if a newcomer does not have significant wealth or income before encountering the island, they will not be able to afford to challenge the historic cottagers' and blue collar families' geographical dominance of their spots.

Another geographic segmentation by price takes place on the water. There is a marina on the island. Many of the medium-term islanders felt the marina was too expensive. As such, those who have worked their way into the social fabric have options other than paying the fees associated with the marina. First, there is a small creek emptying into the marina where a few medium-term islanders keep small boats. Those who do this do so without paying fees and do so because they are friends with the harbourmaster.

Another option exists offshore. Immediately outside the marina and within walking distance from town is a small pier and boat launch. Offshore is an anchorage which islanders treat as a free mooring field. Technically, an anchorage is a free place for transient boats to put down anchors, while a mooring field is comprised of permanent anchors with ownership and property rights similar to land. Disregarding this technical difference, islanders have put permanent mooring pins in this anchorage and boats have been moored without cost for years. I assisted one of the islanders in doing just that, as we floated a tremendous hunk of concrete out and dropped it on the sandy bottom in ten feet of water, effectively homesteading just a little bit more of the area. This avoidance of

marina fees is only possible with an understanding of how the islanders conceptualize and use this space. A navigational map will not tell the whole story, and a non-islander would not know that this water is effectively open for the taking.

Onshore, there is some overlap in uses between the short-term islanders and visiting tourists. Joni's beach dock and boat launch are used as one of the places for visitors arriving by boat to tie up. Some will stay a few days, sleeping in the boat while it is tied at this dock. This creates tension for some islanders. Little of the lakeshore remains for the public on this island, and this is one of the few spots that islanders who do not own lakefront can swim, launch boats, and as mentioned earlier, bathe. For these activities, encroachment of "their" beach and dock is annoying, especially for those bathing in the lake. Since some of those who used the dock this way will bathe *au natural* if there is privacy, this encroachment further frustrates their activities.

Image 1: Joni's Beach Boat Dock, used for bathing and securing boats.
(Source: author's photograph.)



Another way that islanders claim their space in this environment has to do with the boats that are kept at this beach. Tenders were pulled up on the sand on an out-of-the way spot on the beach, but again, were simply placed there with no authorization or even recognition that this was public property. There were also two very small sailboats which their owners stored on the beach over the summer. This effectively staked a small claim on the island,

but as it was on public property it occurred because the community tolerated it. Were this claim-staking by non-paying islanders to get out of hand and start aggravating the more formal aspects of the community, all the small boats could be removed from the beach and the anchorage cleared for truly transient boats. Nobody wants that – and so these encroachments are tolerated.

Image 2: Transient boats at Joni’s Beach (Source: author’s photograph)



Bars and restaurants provide some of the most direct conflict as these were the common places in which various groups negotiated their claims against each other, and where individuals’ claims to membership would be enacted. The restaurant that provided the highest service and the most insulation for the moneyed was the golf course Clubhouse. In discussion, people claimed it was a four-star restaurant and had peers in Hawaii and New York. A wine-tasting fundraiser is held here every year, where the price is low enough that most islanders can go if they want to, and it serves as an unofficial open-house. Most of the time however, the prices are such that only the well-to-do can afford it. Some of the art events put on by the Clubhouse feature artwork done by the cottage family descendents. One respondent relayed that he enjoyed sailing from Duluth, MN, having dinner in the Clubhouse, and then sailing back home. Further, some of the medium-term islanders worked there as staff. The end result was that at The Clubhouse, this group is segmented by price without any overt conflict.

Other restaurants were segmented by their clientele as well, although not by exclusivity of price. The Thirsty Sturgeon served many of the medium-term islanders, and the owner himself was a “transplant,” although a very well-established one. He had lived on the island for fifteen years, had raised his children there, and now had grandchildren living on the island. Half of the dining room was on the deck, which on summer afternoons might have someone playing guitar, while his daughters chased after the grandchildren. The owner was on good terms with the historic families, who occasionally dined or drank there. His place was a social hub for medium-term islanders. The Thirsty Sturgeon was a fairly peaceful establishment. However, there were island prices versus tourist prices for food items; the cook might make an islander something off-menu; and at least one food item invented and named by an islander was only available by mention – “Lips.”

Image 3: The Thirsty Sturgeon (Source: author’s photograph)



Some of those who did not routinely eat there were the younger summer workers who tended more towards the “hippie” themed Burned-Down Café. The Burned-Down Café was more contentious than The Thirsty Sturgeon. First, its owner belonged to one of the historic blue-collar families, but had somewhat antagonistic relationships with them. As a result, other members of the family almost never frequented the place. Second, the restaurant itself was something of a political and zoning issue simply because of what it was. As the story goes, the week it was going to open, it burned down. Only the deck remained, and the proprietor decided to open the deck for business. During this fieldwork

the bar consisted of the deck, with a semi-trailer which had been retrofitted for restrooms and storage. The whole structure was covered by a used circus tent. Reportedly, as a result of loopholes and zoning disputes, the foundation of this structure rests on old cars. The owner also sponsored a metal-arts festival during the research, the side effect of which was piles of scrap metal around the property.

Image 4: The Burned Down Café (Source: Panoramio: www.panoramio.com/photo/10464083)



Many of the long-term islanders saw the Burned-Down Café as an eyesore, and as such tended to stay away. Visitors to the island however loved it. It is decorated with sayings painted on every surface, with portable fireplaces around the area for when it cools down at night. In one corner in the back is a palm-frond covered table, lending clichéd ‘island flair.’ The Burned-Down Café fit in with tourists’ ideas about islands in general and fed their appetite for the quirky on this particular island.

The short- and medium-term islanders frequenting the Burned-Down Cafe most often were those whom others referred to as ‘hippies.’ The owner tended to hire young women who fit this style to work for him, and they lived in camp trailers he owned on another piece of property. So part of the ‘hippie’ style came from the particular employees he hired. This style also fit a number of the medium-term islanders themselves, and those gravitated towards this establishment.

The Burned-Down Café therefore was contested on a number of levels. The bar itself was contested as an appropriate venture for the town. Its owner was a contentious person, belonging to one of the historic families, but dealing more with the short-term islanders. Finally, those that frequented it tended to be those with a more tenuous claim on the islander identity, interacting with or around tourists who came to the island to see this kind of eccentricity.

The Pub was the restaurant most closely associated with the more entrenched islanders that frequented bars. This bar was dark on the inside, reminiscent of a wooden ship's interior. More entrenched islanders policed this bar a little more heavily.

“Who the hell are you? Damn tourists?”. (Long-term blue-collar resident)

The Pub burned down one winter during fieldwork, and this dispersed the islanders to look for another mostly local hangout. One of the places that filled this role was the Bell Street Tavern, which had been unabashedly local from its opening during the study. Management changes and attempts to build tourist business had not been successful during the course of the study.

At one point, The Beach Club was a local bar. During the research it was remodelled, after which islanders felt that the Beach Club had become too touristy. It was situated on the water and had docks for customer's boats. One evening, I observed a fight at The Beach Club. A tourist dressed in a loud yellow Hawaiian shirt was obnoxiously drunk and aggravating many of the clientele. Behind his back I could see medium- and long-term islanders rolling their eyes at each other and shifting in their seats. Ultimately, one or two islanders started throwing 'gay' insults at him. The bar erupted as several other island men jumped in. This included one 60 year old man who I had heard complain about tourists from a bar stool all summer long. This particular islander antagonized the tourists whenever he could, and in this instance he and several island men jumped in on a fight that looked to me as if the islanders had started it.

The final restaurant to mention was Grandpa Tony's. This was a family eatery, serving ice cream, pizza, subway sandwiches, and hamburgers. This restaurant catered strongly to the tourist trade. On busy days in the summer, there could be a line out the door and the wait time on a pizza could be an hour or more. Several examples of discursive negotiation took place here.

Image 5: Grampa Tony's (Source: Panoramio: www.panoramio.com/photo/1591697)



Discursive Negotiation

Discursive authenticators included calling business establishments by the first names of their owners, and in one example by the name of a previous owner who was dead by the time of fieldwork (Leona's). Knowing older, more embedded, and more reclusive islanders was also discursively important, as many of these islanders were often less likely to be involved with the summer employees, and less likely to care for the identity games. Therefore knowing the owner of the last registered fishing vessel on the island, or knowing some of the older cottagers were powerful signifiers of belonging. A final element of discursive negotiation was the knowledge of places that were either hidden or gone. For instance, "Hidden Beach" was a privately owned beachfront, tucked in the woods several miles from town, accessed by a half mile covert path. Too much traffic would cause congestion and overcrowding, so people were selective about to whom they revealed its location. Similarly, during the years of fieldwork one of the restaurants burned down, another was built, and another changed hands. Discursively, being able to discuss these proprietorships based on first-hand experience buttressed one's negotiations.

Table 1: Owners' names, by which businesses are referred.

Dick's	The Thirsty Sturgeon – Restaurant
Tommy's	The Burned Down Café
Harry's	Northwestern Coffee Mills
Joe and Lisa's	Coffee Shop
Leona's	Occasionally the Burned Down Café – Leona being the owner prior to Tommy and the fire

Two instances of discursive conflict at Grandpa Tony's stand out. The first was on a particularly hot and busy summer day when one of the summer workers had lost her patience with the customers. The customers too were frustrated and grouchy. Having waited in line for some time to order, the customer was frustrated to find out that the establishment only took cash. Upon asking where an ATM was the waitress responded:

“There's no ATM. We're on an island. If you want an ATM you should stay on the mainland” (Short-term summer worker)

On another similarly hot and busy day, when a customer complained that the pizza he had ordered for his family was not right, and it was too slow, she again lost her temper:

“Well, I'll be happy to take this one back and make you another one, but it would be in line behind all the other orders”. (Short-term summer worker)

While not as explicitly local as some of the places discussed, there were islander benefits here as well. The owner also ran the moped shop, and all his employees at Grandpa Tony's and the moped shop were allowed to eat at half price. This could be a big benefit as there were few options for food on the island. One could get island prices and refills on coffee, even though the coffee on offer was gourmet coffee roasted and mixed by another island business. On a busy day, an islander could call in an order, charge it to their account, and even have one of the Grandpa Tony's employees run it over, while the tourists stand in line and sweat.

The other example of discursive negotiation occurred between two summer workers at Grandpa Tony's. One waitress (A) had worked there three years earlier, but hadn't summered for the last two, and was overseeing the restaurant. The other (B) had come in to make a purchase. B was on her third year, but had not overlapped with the first waitress. As the two waitresses did not know each other, there was some negotiation between the two. Who was higher in the organization was clear as A was overseeing the restaurant, although B felt that her work over the last two years could have given her superiority. Who was higher in the Islander hierarchy is what was up for negotiation.

A: Don't you know Joe, he's been coming up for years....

A: Back before the Pub burned down....

B: You probably haven't been to hidden beach.....

B: Well, the last two years we

The discussion went back and forth as we observed, with each woman asserting her markers. The authenticators employed by the two women included longevity on the Island, longevity at Grandpa Tony's, and professional experience.

Transcripts

There are a variety of transcripts on the island. The official transcript is that the locals and summer people get along well, bereft of the divisions that usually define vacation communities. This transcript is promulgated in Holzhuetter's history of the island and region (Holzhuetter, 1986). Imagery of community clam bakes and a symbiotic economy where local people benefit from the improvements and work that the cottagers bring to the island create and reinforce this transcript.

The two other relevant transcripts refer to the winter. There is a winter transcript about how difficult winter is and what it does to the people who stay there. The other transcript includes the beauty of winter and is the winter people's rebuttal. These transcripts capture the tension between seasonal islanders who otherwise might be in the same medium- or long-term categories. For instance, the long-term cottagers, some of whom have trust fund estates, are very well to do in comparison to the long-term blue-collar islanders. Similarly, some of the medium-term islanders are business owners with mainland incomes, while other medium-term islanders subsist on unemployment or have no income over the winter.

Transcripts include rumours and gossip. Rumours and gossip need not be true, but in their retelling provide important data about how people talk about a place. Regardless of their veracity, gossip and rumours provide insight into those transcripts. The gossip *is* the data.

The negative winter transcript is one of hardship and depression. Winter was long, dark, and quite solitary. Effectively, the economy slowed to a crawl leaving people with little to do, and little money to spend. Rumours of people's sexual escapades, alcoholism, and moments of violence served to reinforce this image of the winter as savage and brutal.

“Not *another* winter.” (Medium-term winter resident; emphasis in original)

This resident captured the negative transcript with this quote. She had graduated and moved in with her parents while she looked for work. She had already spent one winter this way, and as summer waned, she became increasingly agitated about her future. Her search for work had been futile to that point and she was worried nothing would come through before winter. By her own admission, she could not handle another winter.

Without explicating the details of particular gossip and rumours, there is a significant quantity of salacious storytelling. This gossip included a sexual focus, such as multiple partners, contextual bi- and homosexuality, and infidelity. There was also a focus on alcohol and drug use and abuse. People gossiped about how healthy different Islanders looked in the spring time as a way to gauge their level of alcohol use over the winter. Some gossiped about how specific people's alcoholism had increased or improved over the winter. A respondent spoke of cases of beer stockpiled in people's homes.

There were rumours of relationship dissolution as a consequence of winters' pressures, including the “partying” and sexual activities. Occasionally violence following infidelity or allegations of infidelity was a topic. The worst of these stories focused on a few domestic violence outcomes.

“Old man winter warms his buns burning marriage certificates”. (Medium-term winter resident)

The rebuttal transcript was one of winter beauty. Their focus is more often on the positive aspects of winter. On the wall of the Thirsty Sturgeon one winter, a medium-term islander had posted her poetry. She was living in an upstairs room there during the winter since the cold had made her own substandard housing uninhabitable. Her imagery was of the solitude and quiet of the island, welcoming the tourists' departure. When the ferry could no longer plough through the ice and stopped running for the winter, a great stillness comes over the island. Her poetry was an example of how winter islanders value their solitude and the beauty of winter. She discussed her snowshoe hikes through the forests, and the frozen lakeshore allowing the sea caves to be more intimately and thoroughly explored.

While a medium-term summer islander was lying on the beach, a long-term winter islander chided her for lying around so much. This long-term winter islander argued that the islanders did not get to enjoy summer – they had to work. She then went on to say that the summer people had no idea how beautiful the Island really was after they left. September and October are the islanders' summer, when they get to relax and have the whole place to themselves.

A pair of medium-term winter islanders related that they really enjoy the winters. They have coffee all morning, visiting each other's homes. They spend the afternoons watching soap operas together. Winter is leisurely and enjoyable for them, whereas summer is the work time.

A long-term winter islander who operates a small inn and sells realty, also runs dog sledding trips in the winter. Pictures of his trips adorn the walls of his summer businesses. His website includes pictures and descriptions of the beauty of winter in the North. He is an enthusiastic booster of winter on the island, using its wintertime beauty to his own advantage in selling dog-sledding trips and lodging.

These adventures on the island, and the beauty and solitude of winter give winter on the island its own value. Without context, discussion of these things simply illustrates how the island is enjoyable in the winter. However in the context of islander authenticity politics, discussion of the beauty of the island during the winter quickly separates the 'wannabees' from those who have spent the winters. In the contexts of transcripts of power, discussion of the beauty of the island during the winter serves to negate the image of the island winters as unliveable. These transcripts directly combat those that paint the winter islanders as savage.

Discussion

The segmentation put forth in this research, long-, middle-, and short-term islanders, focuses on objective markers, such as number of years spent and time per year spent. This differs from the islanders' "locals, summer people, and tourists" categorization which rely heavily on subjective interpretation of symbols of authenticity and commitment. This subjective interpretation of these symbols led to the counter-intuitive situation where someone who has made friends with several of the blue-collar long-term islanders but who had only lived there for two or three years could be more of an islander than someone who had been involved for years but whose social group was less connected to the longer-term islanders. It is in that environment that illustrating the symbols of islanders is more intense. Madeline is a social context where "islanders" are not clearly delineated from "tourists", and those that might be true locals are numerically a very small part of the social milieu during the summers.

The colloquial segmentation by authenticity and commitment mirrors Fox's punkers for whom the relevant commitment was shown through tattoos, clothing, and hairstyles. Markers that reduced one's chances in mainstream society showed more commitment to the punker identity than did markers that did not curtail one's mainstream chances (Fox, 1987). Harley riders similarly display commitment to the subculture through tattoos, motorcycle customization, and illustrate their hierarchy among Harley riders by waving to those higher than them, but not lower than them – similar to salutation in the armed services (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995). This puts a strong emphasis on *real islanders* as an ideal type (Weber, 1949). Contemporary tourists tend to be looking for authentic experiences (MacCannell, 1976). They wish to meet real locals, and want to see what island life is really like. The ideal typical experience would be to meet an islander who

shows the tourist places and experiences not readily available to most tourists. Along with such authentic experiences, today's elite searches for a wide variety of these authentic experiences (Bjarnason & Thorlindsson, 2006; Gibbons, 2003; Peterson and Kern, 1996). Peterson and Kern argue that this represents a change from earlier elites who attempted to familiarize themselves with highbrow culture and experience. This represents a shift from highbrow or elite culture to authentic culture (Bourdieu, 1987; Brooks, 2001; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Seabrook, 2001).

Residential segregation is one site of conflict. Whether or not one owns, rents, or squats on others' properties places that individual in different places on the hierarchy. Even the water, the boundary between the island and the rest of the world, is a contested site. Whether you own a boat and where you keep it are also indicators of where one fits in the island hierarchy.

Both the category of islander and socioeconomic status influenced where one lived on the island. Those who were most deeply entrenched were the long-term cottagers, and the long-term blue collar families. They owned residential areas in prime real estate locations known by the family names. Those in the medium-term would vary socioeconomically with the more well-to-do on the lakeshore or the golf course, and the less well-to-do on smaller interior parcels, especially concentrated on Miller and Rough Roads. Those medium- and short-term islanders lowest on the socioeconomic ladder lived in a variety of non-traditional accommodations including camp-trailers, tents, boats, and re-purposed vehicles.

Another site of conflict was the bars and restaurants. The bars and restaurants all cater to slightly different clientele. Different kinds of islanders frequent different bars and restaurants, and these clientele are fluid and always being negotiated. The different kinds of islanders also conflict with tourists at the different bars and restaurants. Inappropriate tourist behaviour is policed with incivility and occasionally violence. There is dynamism in the social geography of the bars and restaurants. This is partly due to the high turnover of these businesses. Over the course of this fieldwork, more than half changed themes, changed owners, or burned down. Only the Clubhouse and the Burned-Down Cafe have remained consistent since the study.

The antagonisms between different groups are enacted through discourses as well. To be considered an islander by successively higher groups meant access to island resources. In politicking to be accepted as an islander to higher groups, individuals use certain names and terms. They reference specific island experiences. This includes names of restaurant owners, colloquial names of beaches, roads and landmarks, and the names of more entrenched islanders. It included discussing island-appropriate experiences and illustrating island knowledge, such as being able to find and having swum at Hidden Beach.

Transcripts about winter are specific examples of discursive identity negotiation. Liking the winters or not wanting to deal with the winters could be strategies employed by the different groups. During research, along with the stories of shocking winter behaviour, we heard many references to winter's beauty, especially among the neophytes. Winter experience, and especially enjoyment, can be strong indicators for inclusion.

The long-term islanders maintain their spot at the top of the status hierarchy, and this allows them access to people who are town leaders, people who hold political power. The cottagers group has more power relative to the dominant society, but less on the island itself. This group as a whole may not want to compromise their economic security by moving to the island permanently, but will remain interested power brokers nonetheless. In this environment, the rumours and stories of winter savagery take on new meanings. They devalue the status of winter islanders by making winter on the island unacceptable; they would not want to spend winter on the island if winter is like that. The island also retains its wilderness qualities while they are not there. Winters are still wild, even if there are a few people there.

Depending on the speaker, winters on the island may be savage and harsh, extracting a human toll from those who choose to stay. Or they may be beautiful and secluded, allowing a person to relax and focus, allowing room for personal growth and creativity. These discussions will drive home the beauty of the island, contributing to its symbolic value. They will also drive home the point that living there in the winter is hard, so that those winter islanders who do stay do belong at the top of the social hierarchy. But they will also illustrate to the listener that this may not be a viable, enjoyable, or even acceptable way of gaining authenticity points.

However, if one spends the winters, these stories fulfill a totally different function. Stories of deviance will carry less weight because the listener knows the people involved, and knows the extent to which such deviance actually takes place. The listener may well walk away with the knowledge that one cannot be a real islander without staying the winters because of both the subtle beauty of winter and the stark harshness of it. The island's symbolic value will be reinforced as beautiful – in a painful kind of way.

A specific discussion of Grand Manan shows important similarities and differences. First, the changes on Grand Manan that Marshall documents (Marshall, 2001a; 2001b; Marshall & Foster, 2002) are changes which took place some time ago on Madeline. Madeline went through a number of booms when the extraction economies were primarily driving the community development. These included fishing, logging, mining and quarrying (Holzhueter, 1986). At the turn of the twentieth century fish houses and workboats crowded the waterfronts on both Madeline and the mainland (Holzhueter, 1986: 41). By the year 2000, only one licensed fishing boat remained on Madeline. These extraction industries have largely been replaced by tourism and its related industries (Holzhueter, 1986; Reich, 1992; Marshall, 2001b).

Sojourners on Grand Manan were likely to be migrant fish plant and aquaculture labour. Many lived in a set aside trailer park called “Comfort Cove Trailer Park” (Marshall & Foster, 2002: 76). On Madeline, much of the tourist labour is seasonal and migratory, and many live in trailers or other substandard housing isolated from the rest of the community (although not to the same extent). The key difference is Madeline’s seasonality and tourist economy, as the longest-term cottagers could as easily be sojourners as summer tourist workers.

Conclusion

Emerging here and deserving of further research is a pattern of identity formation as experienced in subgroup interaction. An individual can create and enact whatever identity he or she chooses, using symbols from the various cultural spheres he or she interacts with. Often that identity, or elements of that identity, refers to a community or subgroup comprised of other such individuals – bikers, punkers, islanders. In these situations, individuals within that community can accept or deny those claims. Punkers can be excluded as poseurs, and bikers as SeWeRs. Here, the community serves both as the audience to the enacted identity, as well as the judge as to whether or not that identity is granted through membership in the group. Someone who endeavours to be an islander can be excluded as a tourist by islanders higher up the hierarchy. This acceptance or rejection of claimed identity status also corresponds with material benefits in terms of islander pricing and assistance. Identity needs to be studied beyond the display of appropriate cultural symbols, and this work has focused on how those identities are accepted or rejected, and how they align with tangible economic and political benefits.

In sum, this research moves beyond the colloquial taxonomy of displayed authenticity and commitment to life on Madeline Island. A lack of agreement between colloquial categories indicated that these categories are negotiated and connected to something other than objective group membership. This negotiation includes symbols, knowledge, geography, bars and restaurants, and the ways one speaks about winter. In illustrating the symbols, attitudes, and behaviours for islanders, one is also appealing to group membership which will have political and economic benefits. Benefits which these higher on the hierarchy are not obliged to give with the simple dismissal:

“She’s not a real islander, she’s just a tourist.”

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