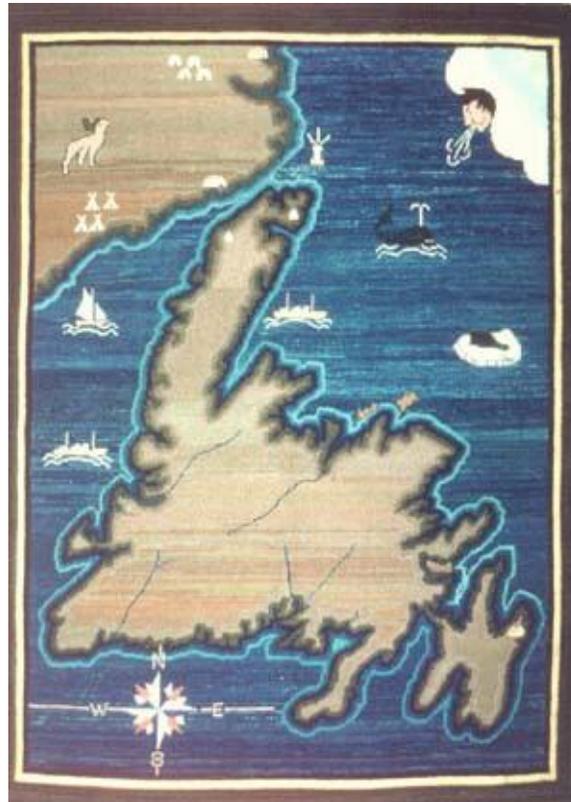


# STUDENT INDEPENDENT PROJECTS



## SOCIAL/CULTURAL STUDIES

MAY 2013

GRENFELL  
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One of the requirements for the Social/Cultural Studies degree at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University is the satisfactory completion of an independent research project. This in-depth and self-directed study allows students to engage in a topic of their own choosing, wherein they apply the theoretical and methodological skills and insights acquired throughout their programme. The three essays in this volume convey some of the ways students have creatively applied concepts and theories from anthropology, folklore, and sociology - the core cognates of Social/Cultural Studies, to look at aspects of everyday life in order to see them in a new light. The research of the 2013 graduates presents a range of issues including changing notions of beauty, identity, oppression, colonization, and occupational culture.

In “Through Western eyes: A study of South Korea's Rising Beauty Industry”, Stephanie Pike examines recent trends in South Korea’s beauty industry and some of the manifestations that have stemmed from its new ideal beauty standard. An application of Sociological theories of Glocalization, Hybridization and Simulation to unique cultural formations such as K-Pop, Flower Boys, and Uljjangs or ‘best face’ phenomenon has allowed her to investigate local cultural developments in light of self-image and their relationship to popular culture and media in South Korea. In particular this research probes how traditional perceptions of the body are now merging with Western world style Capitalism to create culturally unique forms.

Sarah Power’s research, entitled “Internalized Colonialism And Western Newfoundland Aboriginal Identity”, probes the notion of internalized colonization with a group of people of Aboriginal descent living in Western Newfoundland and Labrador. Working from the premise that the more widespread and normalized the oppression towards Aboriginal people is, the more they begin to internalize and normalize these forms of oppression themselves, she investigates issues of Aboriginal identity and self concept with people who are seeking or have received Aboriginal status.

Kenneth Spence’s work on “Tattooing, Apprenticeship and Contested Meaning in Newfoundland” looks at the emergence of, and debate about, nonprofessional tattooists in Newfoundland and exposes the tensions within the apprenticeship model in the Newfoundland tattoo industry. Based on interviews with established tattooists, apprentices, and nonprofessional tattooists, the study investigates the role of apprenticeship in transmitting the traditional occupational culture as well as managing and gatekeeping within the industry itself.

Dr. John Bodner and Dr. Marie Croll, Social/Cultural Studies faculty members, served as advisors for the 2013 projects.

On behalf of the faculty of Social/Cultural Studies, I congratulate the students whose work is included in this volume. As a faculty, we are pleased with our students’ commitment to understanding and articulating social/cultural issues. We wish them continued success as they build upon this foundation.

Marie Croll  
Chair, Social/Cultural Studies

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## **Through Western eyes: A study of South Korea's Rising Beauty Industry**

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The South Korea we know today with its booming technology industry and flourishing pop culture is nothing but a shadow of its former self. Not so long ago, the aftermath of the Korean War left South Korea in a struggling state, as one of Asia's poorest countries. However, through hard work, Korean people together strengthened their government and built Universities, and much like a phoenix, they successfully rebuilt their society from the ashes and became 'reborn' as the stronger country we know today. Such radical changes in a relatively short period of time however, did not occur without some negative effects on the Country. We can now see that in some ways, for instance, South Koreans are experiencing an identity crisis, in that they feel like strangers in their own land (Hart, 18).

As South Koreans began to embrace the Capitalist system, this brought with it new mediums for consuming and producing beauty, which in turn restructured their conceptions of beauty. The capitalist system creates consumers and desire in consumers, by creating a super structure that controls desire. This is a system perhaps not too different from our own model of Capitalism in the West. For South Koreans, this desire can be described as aesthetic perfection. Although it can be said that Capitalism created the pathway to this idealistic construct, it was not alone in developing the Korean pursuit of beauty. Capitalism exists in most developed Countries; however, the cosmetic surgery craze is more prominent in South Korea than in any other Country in the world (Woo, 53). To more readily understand this phenomenon of a change in aesthetic values and its effect on South Koreans, both men and women alike, I will be examining some of the cultural forms in which beauty consumption has become intertwined with Patriarchy, Capitalism, and more specifically, K-pop and cosmetic ads. Specifically, I will be investigating recent trends and their manifestations that have stemmed from the ideal beauty standard; these include, "flower boys", "S-line" body shapes and the "Best face" phenomenon.

### **Literature Review**

Some of the current scholarships that I have examined for my research include the works of Martina Deuchler and Boye Lafayette De Mente. Their findings were crucial to my research as they provided me with better insight into Neo-Confucianism. A clear understanding of Neo-Confucianism was important because it provided an essential context for evaluating contemporary politics, and cultures of South Korea. My examination of contemporary South Korea always and at every turn led me back to Neo-Confucianism. Yet while much of the research I have considered mentions Neo-Confucianism briefly, it never goes into specific details about its influence. Deuchler and De Mente's; "Neo-Confucian Transformation of Korea" and "The Korean Mind", however, I have provided more specific information about Neo-Confucianism than other scholarship on the subject.

An additional perspective has been provided by Taeyon Kim, Sang Un Park and Keong-Ja Woo's research. Their primarily feminist perspective uses Patriarchy as a framework for

understanding Korean Women's beauty complex. Woo argues that Neo-Confucianism set up the Patriarchal system. Kim points to Neo-Confucianism as an oppressive ideology that presents women as subjectless. Park's research dates Korean women's oppression back further than Neo-Confucianism and points to the origin myth of Korea known as the "Dangun myth". Each of these scholars, however, fails to mention men's place in cosmetic surgery. When I was in Korea I noticed that men were equally affected by the beauty standards. I have thus included the work of equality scholar's such as Kathy Davis and Ruth Holliday. Their research explores the beauty industry from an equality perspective which necessarily discusses men's place in the beauty industry. While Davis' research focuses on Men's place in the cosmetic surgery world in general, Holliday's research specifically examines Korean men's dissatisfaction with appearance. I found their research to be useful in that it presents the lesser known argument that men are also affected by the ideal beauty standards.

Sun Jung and John Lie write about contemporary cultural forms such as "Flower Boys" and "K-Pop." Understanding these cultural phenomena are essential for my research because they provide examples of how the beauty standards manifest themselves within contemporary culture. What makes my research different from previous research on this topic is that I am applying Social theories such as Jean Baudrillard's 'Simulacrum' and Roland Robertson's theory of 'Cultural-Hybridization' and 'Glocalization' to the research already conducted on this topic. Before exploring these modern phenomena though, it is important to understand what makes South Korea unique from other countries such as Canada or the United States, in terms of both Capitalistic structure and ways of life. To do this we must first examine the philosophy that has governed Korean policies, religion and the social system for over five hundred years.

### **Neo-Confucianism**

Neo-Confucianism was first introduced to Korea as the state's ideology during the Joseon dynasty period of 1392. In Neo-Confucian thought, the female body is considered to be sacred and pure. Women are not permitted to aesthetically alter their bodies in any form. Despite the recent move into capitalism, South Korea remains a unique Country that is still very much shaped by its ancient culture and traditions (De Mente, 4). Given that Neo-Confucianism was such a great influence on Korea for a significant period of time and still holds considerable significance on Korean mores and values, why is it that in the 21st century, cosmetic surgery has become such a significant phenomenon in South Korea? The answer may well be found within Neo-Confucian thought. Some of this doctrine is still being applied in Korean decisions and yet; the world today is much different from the one when Neo-Confucian philosophy was first adopted by Korea. These traditional thoughts are now merging with the new capitalist driven world, thus creating cultural and spiritual contradictions.

One of the Neo-Confucian ideals deeply seated in modern South Korean identity includes the notion that "conformity was regarded as a virtue that measured social success by approximation to an elite class image" (Deutchler, 99). This ideology can be linked to Koreans current attitude of beauty as there is an extremely limited range of beauty ideals promoted in the media. This may explain the desirability of the look that favors smooth and youthful features and the extreme popularity of the BB (blemish blocker) cream that is used to smooth and whiten the skin (Holliday, 18).

Another belief stemming from Neo-Confucian ideology lies in the notion that the thoughts and attitudes of a community toward an individual are extremely important to the success and

acceptance of that individual. Thus, in modern-day Korea, being perceived as attractive becomes a means to achieve things within that community, which in turn creates a culture where merit is more and more based solely on looks. And while, judging people based on their appearance is not unique to Korea, nor is it new to contemporary society, the emphasis put on beauty and the level of importance it holds for the probability of getting a job or getting married is unique to South Korea. When Neo-Confucian ideals are heavily embedded inside the Korean mind and then paired with Capitalism, the product is a dangerous obsession with achieving ideal beauty standards. Neo-Confucianism then can be seen as a sort of paradox. While its ideology places strong emphasis on pure and sacred bodies it is the very same ideology that provides a framework for the emphasis that is now placed upon attractiveness. Feminist scholarship often criticizes Neo-Confucianism, as it was the Confucian order of the Joseon dynasty that first established the patriarchal system in Korean society, and feminists argue that it is patriarchy that is the reason behind Korean women transforming their bodies (Park, 63). One feminist scholar, Taeyon Kim, asserts that Neo-Confucianism presents women as 'subjectless.' Even though the patriarchal system can be dated back to the Joseon dynasty, Feminist scholar Park Sang Un argues that the patriarchal ideals can be dated back further than Neo-Confucianism.

### **Feminist and Equality Discourse**

In Park's analysis of dieting in contemporary Korean society, she says that the beauty myth that is prevalent in contemporary society is not a new one; it is just a variation of the "old story" that has long relegated woman to passivity and obedience (44). The old story that Park is referring to is the famous origin myth of the Korean nation titled "The Dangun myth." This myth tells the story of a heavenly King, a 'she-bear' and a 'tigress.' Both of the animals wish to become incarnated as human beings. The king takes pity on them and hands them both garlic and mugwort telling them that in order to become human they must consume only those foods and not see the light for one hundred days. The 'she-bear' obeyed the orders and was transformed into a woman; the Tigress who disobeyed remained an animal. The story then goes on to say that the newly transformed woman could not find a husband so the King took her for his wife and they had a son together named Dangun who is known to Koreans as a national symbol that stresses uniqueness and the superiority of Korean people (45). Furthermore, the bear-woman is of great importance in the Dangun myth because without her existence, Dangun would not have been born and consequently, Korean people would not exist today (45). The reason that Park references this myth is because "like narratives, myths allow for various interpretations and can persist beyond space and time only when they provide the subjects of interpretation with various meanings." (45) Park uses this origin myth to draw a parallel between the old world and the new. The 'she-bear' eating only the mugwort and garlic to become a woman who is then married off to a man and impregnated with a son, is similar to Korean women of today who are dieting as a means to transform their bodies in order to become accepted by a man in the patriarchal society. Park states that the bear-woman in the Dangun myth symbolizes the place and role of women in Korean history and that regardless of the many generations that have passed since the origin myth; the destiny of Korean women today remains the same as the destiny of the bear-woman (46). The bear-woman's animal form had negative connotations as it was considered to be uncivilized and animalistic. Therefore, in order for the bear-woman to be happy she must first endure some pain and then become a woman, this is much the same as it is today. Korean women must undergo the pain of

dieting and plastic surgery in order to achieve bodies that are considered normal and socially acceptable (46).

One argument that Park makes is that the ideal bodyline that Korean women pursue is a perfect body, which is never attainable from the start. She also brings to light Roland Barthes work on myths in that “myths turn the social, the cultural, the ideological, and the historical into the natural.” (Barthes, 237) She says:

We have to be on guard against the myth elaborated by the mass media, consumer industry, and the patriarchal social system, which present a slim and beautiful body as culturally desirable and normal, and at the same time, cause us to recognize the act of pursuing that kind of body as natural.

By ideal bodyline, Park is referring to the “S-line” body shape that can be described as having ample breasts and buttocks when viewed from the side. The term S-line appears on various television shows and is known to be the most desired body shape for women to have. In Korea, there is a letter of the Latin alphabet signifying different body shapes, S-line being the most common, and another being the “V-line.” The V-line refers to the ideal slender face shape where the tip of the “V” represents the chin. There are currently many products on the market helping Korean women to achieve these ideal shapes, one being a “chin-roller” a device that massages the line of one’s face as a means to achieve the V-line shape. Products like these are usually ones women purchase in order to cope with their unsatisfactory looks until they can afford to get plastic surgery as a permanent fix.

When Park talks about myths she says that they are encouraging members of a society to view the artificial female body as not artificial at all, but rather natural. This ideology then, which distorts artificial as natural, can be considered a simulacrum. The danger of simulacrum of course is that it is often perceived as better than the real. In this case the natural body with its flaws and imperfections is being replaced with an unflawed, hyper-real version that is being misinterpreted as the natural. Although there are many speculations about the origins of the beauty industry in South Korea, it may very well be impossible to pin-point the exact causes of the phenomena partly because the new bodies are a simulacra of the old body. Baudrillard's research on simulacrum states that “Simulacrum is a generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal.” (Baudrillard, 166) This means that the ideal body that South Koreans strive to achieve is the hyperreal which has already replaced the real and the exact origin is hard to pinpoint.

Further feminist scholarship that deals with the female beauty complex talks in greater detail about the patriarchal system of the labour force. Keong-Ja Woo suggests Men are given an unfair advantage over women in Korean society because they are automatically granted positions as full members of society without the need to transform their bodies whereas the patriarchal labour system of South Korea discriminates against women based on their appearance (Woo, 56). A significant amount of scholarship on the Korean beauty industry is from a feminist context that focuses on patriarchy as the driving point for extreme pursuits of beauty. Although there is significant weight supporting their arguments, to ignore men’s place in the beauty industry would result in missing half of the picture.

Although, Neo-Confucianism set up the patriarchal system, women were not the only targets of oppressed views of the body as this philosophy also emphasized the care of men’s bodies and minds. This may provide context for why Korean men are almost equally conscious of their aesthetic appeal as women. Holliday argues with Taeyon Kim’s focus on woman’s bodies as ‘subjectless’ under Neo-Confucianism saying that her notions of subjects and subjectlessness is

extremely problematic. Holliday supports her argument by making reference to Foucault's work. According to Foucault:

We are all men and women alike - subjects, not of ourselves, but of discourses. Neither women nor men can stand outside language and culture and the power relations that produce our understandings of the world and our positions within it, men are just differently positioned within it.

A Foucaultian perspective might view Korean men as also easily lured by the cosmetic surgery industry because of the strong prevalence of social judgments about outer appearance. While these judgments project different connotations about gender, they apply to both men and women equally because “when both men and women are treated as generic individuals with the same desire for physical attractiveness, it is assumed that they are both equally subject to the pressures of cultural ideals of beauty” (Davis, 322). Therefore, Holliday states that Feminist constructions of men as subjects and women as ‘subjectless’ objects can only hold true if we ignore men's cosmetic surgeries (Holliday, 15).

When I was travelling around South Korea I noticed that fashion, dieting and beauty were almost equally as important to men as women. Inside every cosmetic store, there is an equally large section devoted to men and almost every makeup product produced for women, had a version for men as well. Perhaps one of the things that make the world of beauty so much different in South Korea than in the west is the fact that in South Korea cosmetic surgery and beauty are almost equally important to men. The results found in a recent survey conducted by a Korean employment website found that 44 percent of male college students were contemplating some form of aesthetic surgery (Kang and Cho, 2009). As well, edaily, a Korean news website stated that after a cosmetic surgery conference was held in Seoul Korea in 2012, it was revealed that out of every 1000 patients getting cosmetic surgery, 35% of them were males. If there are so many Korean males getting some form of cosmetic procedures, what type of image are they trying to achieve?

### **Flower Boys**

Kkonminam, or flower boys in English are a rising trend in South Korea. A typical kkonminam can be described as a youthful looking man with a very lean body shape and often soft feminine skin and facial features. Thus, the idea of kkonminam transcends the boundary of gender or sexual orientation. Instead of the muscular body shape, facial hair and rugged features that many western men seem to aim for, kkonminam seem to aspire to a very different image. The Korean media plays up this image with dramas focusing on the typical plot of an average girl next door falling in love with a handsome kkonminam. Just a few of the many popular Korean dramas about kkonminam include, “Boys Over Flowers,” “Flower boy Next Door,” “Shut-up Flower Boy Band,” and “Flower Boy Ramen Shop.” The Korean music industry also puts a strong emphasis on soft male features, a look that apparently makes Korean girl fans swoon over their beautiful idols.

According to Sun Jung’s findings on kkonminam, ‘the kkonminam syndrome has developed not because males have become feminized but as a consequence of the deconstruction and the hybridization of female/male sexual identities’ (Jung, 3). Jung also says that kkonminam are able to satisfy complex human desires because the kkonminam possesses both feminine and masculine attributes. This could explain the reason why girls love kkonminam and why some men aspire to become one. However, the kkonminam syndrome can have some negative effects on South Korean people’s self-image. From what I have seen many times in various forms of Korean media such as popular variety shows, the host often arranges for the guest starring male idol to

wear a long wig and dress as a girl. The implication of this is to show that these male idols look more beautiful and feminine than an average Korean girl. This naturally creates pressure for both males and females to improve their looks. Regular Korean males often get compared to these idealized male idols by females and females often feel inferior as their looks are being compared to men who apparently look more beautiful than them.

Even though the West does not influence the idea of *kkonminam*, it is not uniquely Korean either. Japanese manga (comics) popularized the idea of *bishnen*, which is unique to Japan and is equivalent to *kkonminam*. However the earliest recording of *bishnen* dates back as far as 1000 A.D. *Kkonminam* and *bishnen* are not identical and have characteristics that are uniquely shaped from the cultures of both countries. However, this does not imply that the sole reason for the cosmetic surgery trend in South Korea is due to the influence of Japanese culture; it does explain however the origins of one of the most common male beauty standards in South Korea. Jung describes what it means to be *bishnen* and how it has influenced Japanese culture, she says:

According to *The Bishonen Guide*, 15 *bishnen* (represented in manga and anime) refers to 'a young man of extraordinary beauty, often extremely capable, at times mistaken for a woman in appearance'. Laura Miller explains that the *bishnen* images of *shojo* manga [girls' manga] have clearly influenced the contemporary constructions of an ideal masculinity. *Bishnen* images have greatly influenced the visual styles of some J-pop artists such as Gackt and Hyde, 'the blue hair of J-pop boys is modeled not after ancient Anglo-Saxons but after Japanese manga characters' (Miller 2006: 152). It is thus evident that formulaic notions of *bishnen*, glorifying feminine aesthetics in men, have developed through various popular culture products including J-pop artists and *shojo* manga.

This raises the point that masculinity is in part being defined by what girls want masculinity to be which further supports the argument that women are not subjectless. Ruth Holliday also supports the argument that women are not subjectless. She says: "as the world shifted into capitalism, both women and men are now addressed as 'subjects', albeit subjects of consumerism." (Holliday, 64) Finally, the emergence of *kkonminam* offers men a new way to care for the self (as opposed to the old ways of Neo-Confucianism) their reworked bodies allude to a new flexibility within relationships that acknowledges feminine desire (Holliday, 76).

An analysis of men and the beauty industry may also help to debunk the myth that Korean beauty ideals are strictly a product of westernization. Many people are quick to assume that Asians who get the procedure called *blepharoplasty*; (commonly referred to as 'double eyelid surgery') which is a procedure intended to create an upper eyelid that Asians commonly do not have naturally, are attempting to look less Asian and more Caucasian. However some scholars argue otherwise. Holliday for example supports the notion that the common cosmetic procedures Korean people get are not linked to the desire to look western. She says:

On the surface it does appear that Koreans prefer Western features like wider, double-eyelid eyes, more prominent noses, and bigger breasts. However, the western body links to idealized and of course exceptional characteristics in many countries. Paler (than average) skin for instance in almost every country has historically signified distance from (agricultural) labor representing high class status. Wide eyes have local significations such as youthfulness and active desire and that western women also routinely undertake similar surgeries. Claiming Korean women want to look Western denies the constructed nature of Western beauty and that Western beauty has been valued because it entered Korea fitting pre-existing notions of class and status.

If the desire of aesthetic perfectionism rises from a standardized ideal of beauty, and if this standard is believed to be a product of the West; due to the common procedures often done by Koreans such as skin-whitening, nasal tip augmentation and blepharoplasty, (which appear to be attempts to having western features) then why is it that the ideal beauty standard for Korean men has almost no resemblance to that of Western men? Rather than strictly pointing to westernization, we can see that the global and local customs are beginning to blend together to form a “glocalized” product. This theory by Roland Robertson refers to the transculturation processes that are inevitably accompanied by localization and indigenization practices. South Korea is doing this with its obsession with aesthetic perfection by adopting certain ideas from the west and applying it to their own local culture thus creating a hybrid of both cultures.

### **The Influence of Media**

Advertisements and media are powerful tools of capitalism. Beauty products in Korea are marketed by influential celebrities. In fact, everything from amusement parks and cleaning products, to Pizza Hut and beer are advertised by a Korean celebrity. In the west, seemingly average people who appear to be just another consumer such as oneself often advertise these things. These perfect looking celebrities who are advertising makeup and other beauty products are sending a message to Korean consumers that they too can achieve the same level of perfection if they just follow them and purchase the products. Actually, Korean’s seem to be strongly influenced by what they see in the media. This can be seen in the example of the common belief shared by most young Korean girls that Korean men under 180cm are considered losers. This idea came from a television program known in English as ‘Beauties Talk.’ One female who appeared on that show made the statement that all men whose height was under 180cm are losers and they are not even considered as men. I watched this show with English subtitles and was relatively unaffected by this message. It is not shocking to hear people in western television shows saying something controversial. I did not consider that a statement such as that one would actually have any bearing on someone’s self-esteem because from my standpoint it merely represents one individual’s opinion. In South Korea, however this statement was taken seriously and stirred up much controversy amongst Korean men. While in Korea I tested out how well known this statement is among Korean men, and how sensitive they are to its message, by asking some of my male friends their height and then depending on their response, I would jokingly say “oh so you’re not a loser” or “oh that means you’re a loser.” In each case my male friends would know exactly what I was referencing. I mentioned this with Korean girls as well and those I spoke to, agreed that any man under 180cm was indeed a loser. Because of this statement made on *Beauties Talk*, Korean celebrities commonly lie about their height if they are 178 or 179 cm they will always say they are 180cm. And if boys and men are actually well over 180cm they are praised highly by the media. Korean males; especially celebrities, also commonly wear a device that in English we call ‘shoe-lifts.’ This is an insole platform that is inserted inside a sneaker to increase ones height. These are available in a variety of heights depending how many centimeters one would like to gain. This example not only displays the power Korean media has on its audiences, but it also shows the high standards Korean men and women have for one another, and the lengths one is willing to go through to maintain the standard.

In Korea so much emphasis is placed upon looks that people commonly believe that if they have good looks, they can achieve more than if they have average looks. Recruitment agency *Job Korea* found that 80% of recruitment executives considered the physical appearance of candidates

important, and in 2006 a study found that there was a perception among high school students that appearance would be often considered of greater importance than abilities and skills in hiring decisions (Jung and Lee, 354). During an interview a famous celebrity in Korea named Nichkhun Horvejkul once shared the story of how he became famous. He stated that he was first discovered by a Korean entertainment agency while he was attending a 'Rain' concert in the United States. He said that he was approached after the concert because of his 'good looks' and when they discussed recruiting him as a trainee under their label, he told them that he cannot dance, speak Korean or sing. They then told him that those things are not important to them and that because of his good looks he could go far in the Korean music industry. He later joined a very popular Korean pop group known as *2pm*. Nichkhun is not the only one who is gaining fame due to his 'good looks,' with the age of the internet there comes a new phenomenon known as Uljjangs.

### **Internet Culture and Best Face**

Uljjangs, which translates to 'best face' in English, is a concept unique to Korea, which refers to regular people becoming famous because of their good looks. There are many blogs and internet forums where 'good looking' Koreans post their photos (often photoshopped) and gain many hits, thus harboring a level of attention that often results in celebrity status (based solely on their looks alone) (Holliday, 70). By 'good looking' I am referring to the Korean beauty standard i.e., white/bright skin, big eyes, thin body and very youthful appearance. Uljjangs can be either a male or female. The story of how Nichkhun became famous and the new trend of Uljjangs are examples of how Korean media is sending a message to Korean people that implies that looks are more important than talent or values. Success should not be measured on your aesthetic appeal, but on skills, therefore, if a Korean feels that they were born with average or under average looks, the message they are given is that the only way for them to succeed is to get some sort of cosmetic procedure done to meet the standard.

### **Celebrity Culture and K-Pop**

K-Pop is important to mention in this analysis of notions of beauty and cosmetic alterations in South Korea because some scholars claim that it is one of the driving forces behind the contradictions embedded in traditional and modern beliefs of South Korea. According to John Lie, K-pop is symptomatic of the cultural transformation of South Korea and because the transformation of South Korea was rapid and compressed; Colonial rule, the Korean War, rapid industrialization and urbanization, and recent democratization and egalitarianism, it has caused Korea to pulverize its tradition, for better and worse (Lie, 361). One particular point made by Lie was applicable to this discussion. Lie maintains that,

The very embodiment of K-pop is distinct from the traditional Korean body and beauty. What is striking about most K-pop acts is how tall, thin, and unblemished they appear. This is of course a country that has sprouted up rapidly: the average 18 year-old male was 165 cm in 1977, but had shot up to 174 cm by 2007. Furthermore, the standard of beauty had traditionally valorized a round, even chubby look. The most popular member of the late 1980s idol group Sobangcha was the "chubby" one in the middle. Yet all this changed beyond recognition. "Beauty" itself is stylized as aesthetic surgery is very much a norm. The Confucian body that was envisioned as the precious gift from parents — so much so

that some Confucian literati refused to cut hair or clip finger nails — find itself under scalpel in the name of beauty and popularity.

Lie's analysis brings to mind a particular female K-Pop group that was formed in 2011, known as the Piggy Dolls. This group stood out from every other K-Pop group in the industry because each of the members was significantly over-weight. This group's purpose was to change the strict beauty standard of Korea by giving overweight girls an idol to look up to. This group claimed that due to their excess weight, their voices were more powerful than other idol groups, which also made them unique. Advertisements and official statements released by their record label indicated that something new and much needed was finally coming to the K-Pop industry. However, after watching their debut music video, I did not feel so convinced. One of the first sequences of the music video shows the girls gorging themselves with food by shoving whole slices of pizza in their mouths, drinking milk directly out of a two-liter container and eating bread rolls out of a bag. It seemed as though their record label was making a mockery out of the girls and exploiting them rather than making them idols as initially intended by their statement. Regardless of this, I was still anxious to see how this new group would settle with Korean viewers. Some of the feedback was positive and some was negative. Most of the feedback bore the sentiment that the members would look so pretty if only they dropped a few pounds. About a half a year later, the group made a comeback with a new hit song, however, the group's image was completely changed and the members were no longer recognizable. All of the girls had dropped a significant amount of weight and all but one member now resembled every other K-Pop idol group. Was the reason for this change because the girls (or the record label) gave into the pressures of the strict beauty standard? It seems as though Korea was not ready for such a change and celebrity culture dictated the bodily standard.

K-Pop sells a very specific image that is not reasonable or natural for regular people to attain, and because K-Pop is very appealing to consumers, it can cause youth to alter themselves drastically in order to "perfect" themselves to the level of their favorite K-Pop idol. According Lie's article, what makes K-Pop so attractive to the masses is that it exemplifies Pop perfectionism. Lie says:

In general, K-pop performers are, appropriate for the age of music videos, extremely photogenic (often enhanced by plastic surgery and other interventions). They exemplify sort of pop perfectionism: catchy tunes, good singing, attractive bodies, cool clothes, mesmerizing movements, and other attractive attributes in a nonthreatening, pleasant package.

Coming back to the topic of The Piggy Dolls, it seems that because they did not fit into the narrow standard held for K-Pop, the record label felt that it was necessary to remake the group in the physical image of other successful K-Pop groups; thus, finally coming to the conclusion that it was necessary for the girls to lose their weight so they could actively compete with the other big name groups surrounding them. I will conclude my discussion of this section by leaving you with a quote from Lie:

The Korean Wave in general and K-pop in particular is naked commercialism, albeit with the grateful garb of cultural respectability that comes from prestigious, luxury goods. It would be too much, however, to regard this as having anything to do with traditional Confucian, Korean culture.

This shows that much of the Confucian ideals that controlled Korean society is vastly watered down and is being replaced with the culture of consumerism that creates further distance between the 'old' and 'new' South Korea.

### **Beauty in the Workplace**

It is important to consider the importance of beauty in the work place because it is a good example of just how much emphasis is put on looks in South Korea today. When I was looking at the application process for getting a job in South Korea, I noticed that one of the requirements of your resume is a photo of yourself. According to Holliday, since a photograph is a requirement of all job applications, and physiognomy is often used to evaluate candidates where qualifications and experience are equal, an employee with 'friendly facial features' will always be preferred, given the importance of social bonding in the workplace (18). There are many factors of the South Korean workplace that distinguishes it from a typical workplace in Canada. Social bonding in the Korean workplace, in the form of bonding with your employers and fellow employees, is essential for keeping your job. However in this case, it seems that having a friendly face is also important in the workplace because it is less intimidating for others during the important time of socializing. Holliday then goes on to say that because of this, cosmetic surgery is a practical issue in an extremely competitive and, with some occupations, ageist job market, therefore, having the right face makes all the difference between success and failure in getting a job (18). Going back to Lie's article, he says that for South Korean youths, becoming a K-pop star is at the top of the most desired professions, and to become a K-Pop idol is considered the Korean dream (357). Thus, for Korean's it seems as though cosmetic alterations are essential for being successful in the job market, whether they decide to become a K-Pop idol or even if they simply desire to work at a regular job.

Each scholar I have mentioned in this analysis presents slightly different theories for why the cultural and spiritual contradiction about body adaptations exists. However, many of these speculations are linked and their connections seem to stem from the major economic transformation that followed the Korean War. South Korea had to rebuild its country from scratch, only becoming whole again by adopting capitalism. This dramatic shift caused Koreans to lose their identity thus creating a contradiction between the old and new cultural worlds. The resulting ideal beauty standard in South Korea has morphed into something new and unique to South Korea, so because of this, it cannot be easily explained through one theory such as westernization alone. As we have seen, the answer seems to lie in a number of factors unique to South Korea. Unfortunately, it seems as though aesthetic surgery or other radical forms of altering one's body to better improve looks is unavoidable in South Korea because of how the 'new' South Korea is governing its politics and social system. Idealized beauty has become so largely integrated into Korean society that it has become the norm and part of a new identity for South Koreans. What started out as a traditional country practicing strict ideas of body such as purity and sacredness presented by Neo-Confucianism, has become long lost and/or forgotten through South Korea's broader cultural transformation. "Cultural hybridization" and "Glocalization" help to explain the end products of some significant identity shifts. Together these theories help position this phenomenon and the contradictions they grew out of in terms of South Korea's history of Neo-Confucianism. Cultural-hybridization and Simulacrum are worthwhile tools for helping us to understand and appreciate the local value of these phenomena and its consequences. Applying Glocalization and Simulation theory to unique cultural formations such as K-Pop, Flower Boys, and Uljjangs or 'best face' has allowed me to see local cultural developments in self-image and its relationship to popular culture and media as universal phenomenon. These traditional perceptions of the body are now merging with a new Capitalism, thus creating culturally unique forms. Applying Baudrillard's work with simulacra and simulation to this glocal phenomenon has left me

with an important question. Has this development in concepts of beauty represented a cultural improvement from Neo-Confucianism or a setback?

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## Internalized Colonization and Western Newfoundland Aboriginal Identity

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Audre Lorde asserts that: “The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations which we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us” (Lorde, 123). This statement implies that if we are to change the large systems of oppression that we live under we must begin by acknowledging that we all have the capacity to oppress others. The situations we are put in can bring out the oppressor in each of us. For example, what is it like for a person of Aboriginal descent to have discriminatory feelings about his/her own ethnicity or racial heritage? This question is a major concern among Aboriginal Canadians and is the central question of this paper. This form of self-oppression, or negative self-concept, has been termed internal colonization or internalized colonialism. Andrea Bear Nicholas further explains this phenomenon in stating: “The more oppressive and coercive the colonial regime, the more intensive the indoctrination, and the more readily do oppressed people come to devalue their own beliefs, customs and languages and actually seek to emulate their oppressors in order to gain relief from their oppression” (Bear Nicholas, 2). What Nicholas illustrates here is that the more widespread and normalized the oppression towards Aboriginal people is, the more they begin to internalize and normalize these forms of oppression for themselves. When outside forces denigrate a person’s race, ethnicity, gender, or class, it affects that person’s self-esteem. Looking closely at internalized colonialism enables us to see how various outside forces contribute to this ongoing form of oppression.

Throughout this research, I will be exploring the notion of colonization of Aboriginal peoples and specifically I will apply it to those living in Newfoundland and Labrador. I will probe this concept with a group of people who have sought status, and also with those who have not. When trying to attain formal Aboriginal status there are specific steps one must take. The first step is tracing your family’s history to show proof that in your ancestral line, specifically through one of your grandparents, you are of Aboriginal descent. The *Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada* website states: “Once proven you have to go through a great deal of government paper work in order to receive a card which allows you to be formally identified as an Aboriginal person. You will be required to provide information about yourself, your parents and your grandparents including legal names, dates of birth, band name and registration numbers, contact information and adoption information (if relevant)” (*Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada*, 1). Through status, people are supposedly being compensated with money from the government for things they once lost, such as land claims, their heritage, including a sense of autonomy, their material culture, their language and their sense of self. Sadly, no amount of money or recognition will be able to compensate for the effects that colonization has had on the Aboriginal people. “Canada’s First Nations: A Legacy of Institutional Racism” by Claire Hutchings states:

Sadly, our history with respect to the treatment of Aboriginal people is not something in which we can take pride. Attitudes of racial and cultural superiority

led to a suppression of Aboriginal culture and values. As a country, we are burdened by past actions that resulted in weakening the identity of Aboriginal peoples, suppressing their languages and cultures, and outlawing spiritual practices. We must recognize the impact of these actions on the once self-sustaining nations that were disaggregated, disrupted, limited or even destroyed by the dispossession of traditional territory, by the relocation of Aboriginal people, and by some provisions of the Indian Act. We must acknowledge that the result of these actions was the erosion of the political, economic and social systems of Aboriginal people and nations (Hutchings, 1).

The process of applying for Aboriginal status presents many problems, the main one being the tracing of one's family history. Many people do not have the resources to do so, and many people are losing out on any sort of benefits as time is becoming short. "How the O'Leary's and 20,000 other Newfoundlanders were declared Mi'kmaq" by Kathryn Blaze Carlson states:

What they got were 26,000 countrywide applications by the first November 2009, deadline, and another 150 or so applications streaming in each month since. What they got, as of March 2011, were more than 20,000 approved members — and a ramped-up staff to deal with the backlog. As islanders and their relatives across the country dig into their genealogies — many finding traces of a Mi'kmaw bloodline that does not necessarily present itself visibly — applications will continue to roll in until the second November 2012, deadline"

Not only is this form of oppression affecting members of the older generation who have dealt with this first hand, but it has carried on throughout generations affecting members of the family. Carlson goes on to state:

Everyone who joins the band before November 2012, will be considered "founding members," and parents are being encouraged to make sure their children apply to become founding members, too. That is because it will ensure their grandchildren can be registered as status Indians, regardless of whether both parents have status. A 1985 amendment to the Indian Act changed that for most other status Indians: Today, if a status Indian marries a non-status Indian, their child still inherits status. But if that child marries a non-status Indian, then their child does not (Carlson, 1).

One of the many reasons people have opted to apply for this formal status is because it has been viewed by some as having a positive effect on upcoming generations by creating economic benefits and a sense of cultural identity.

Not only does internalized colonialism affect Aboriginal people, it must also be viewed within a matrix of social inequality that includes ageism, social class, oppression of ability as well as ethnicity and race. Julie McMullins, in *Understanding Social Inequality*, helpfully illustrates these forms of oppression and maintains that the importance of historical social inequality is also very important for understanding how generations of Aboriginal people have come to internalize their oppression. In order to gain an understanding of this phenomenon both primary and secondary research will be conducted.

### **Methodology**

This qualitative research study was conducted using non-recorded interviews

over a three-month period in 2013. These semi-standardized interviews were conducted using a snowball sampling method with acquaintances and other people located in my local community of Corner Brook and surrounding areas. Without the in-depth analysis of these interviews, a genuine sense of a person's oppression would not be perceived. When speaking with my interviewee's, whether in face-to-face meetings, email, or by telephone, I probed the issue of internalized colonization indirectly to ensure that I was not constructing a problem that did not actually exist and because racism is obviously a sensitive topic for many. In their work on *Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Jan Blommaert and Dong Jir state: "Rather than 'racism' and 'racist', you use more circumspect descriptions – things that circulate publicly as euphemisms on racism. So you don't use the loaded words themselves, but you carefully work your way through a series of issues that together belong to and make up the field of racism" (Blommaert and Jir, 48). In this case, the concept of internalized colonization was explored by asking my interviewees if they faced any forms of oppression.

Ten interviews were conducted, seven participants aged nineteen to forty who have Indigenous background, and three were from people working and/or volunteering within fields dealing with people of Aboriginal background. One of the last interviews was conducted with one of my family members who works with Aboriginal affairs in the capacity of deciding who is eligible for formal Aboriginal status and who is not. Amongst this group of interviewees my questions were modified slightly based on whether they had applied for formal status or not. All questions were as open ended as possible in order for the interviewees to share personal experiences and be able to feel comfortable in responding. Ethical concerns such as confidentiality were given utmost consideration. These interviews are augmented and supported by secondary research related to Aboriginal history, culture and identity as well as colonization and theories of oppression.

### **Ethics**

Ethics are an essential consideration of any research. Many factors can come into play when conducting the interviews. Sensitivity to the respondent was important since I was asking about matters of violence and symbolic violence. I thus tried to ensure that the interviewee felt comfortable when answering any questions that I had and let them know that they were under no obligation to respond to questions that made them feel uncomfortable. I also reassured the interviewee that confidentiality was important and anything they did not want included in my research would certainly be kept confidential. An ethics release form was signed by each informant in order for their information to be used in my research (Appendix A). Many of my questions were concerned with issues on internalized colonization, how my interviewees felt about being a person of Aboriginal descent, and the meaning it had for them.

### **Early Newfoundland History**

Newfoundland is one of ten of Canada's provinces located in the most eastern part of Canada and is a province in itself with Labrador. Newfoundland and Labrador joined Canada on 31 March 1949 and is considered the youngest province in Canada. Although it is considered the youngest, it is one of the oldest settled regions in North America. Harry Beckett, author of *Newfoundland and Labrador* states: "Archaeologists and scholars have dated a site in Labrador to 5500 BCE, and remains at Port aux Choix

indicate that people lived there as early as 2340 BCE” (Beckett, 7). Similar to Newfoundland, Labrador at this time had many Innu and Inuit people settling along the coast of its regions. Beckett states that: “Newfoundland was claimed by Britain in the sixteenth century. Throughout the next few centuries, it remains a British colony. During World War II army bases and military airports were built there. These bases became a major source of income for Newfoundland” (Beckett, 7). People first settled along the coast of Newfoundland to exploit the natural resources they found. Once these resources were depleted their plan was to leave and find somewhere else to settle. However, during this time Newfoundland was controlled by outsiders such as England and France and the settlement pattern ended up unfolding differently because of the economic base, and the exploitation of fish, which became Newfoundland’s main resource. The British government did not want settlers in Newfoundland and settlers did not want to work for the Europeans’ wages. Because of the limited options workers had little choice and began to work for them. During this time everything in Newfoundland was about exploitation through trading and dealt with control and domination. We are able to see this aspect of control and domination by looking at Aboriginal settlement and colonization in Newfoundland.

While there have been different theories as to how and when Aboriginal people first came to Newfoundland, it has been determined that as far back as 5000 BP native people first inhabited Port aux Choix and the Northern Peninsula along the coast of Newfoundland. However, *History and Ethnography of the Beothuk* by Ingeborg Marshall describes how much of this work contains errors and a great deal proves just a general idea of the appearance of northeastern Indians (Marshall 14). Marshall states: “European observers were often biased towards their own cultural concepts and tended to describe the Natives appearance rather than cultural features by which one ethnic group could be different from another” (Marshall, 14). Marshall describes that many were not able to even state the precise location where they first inhabited the native people, which indicates that much of the work could be unauthentic (Marshall, 14). Most of the Europeans wrote about what they first encountered when coming to the new world and, as Marshall describes, much of this was biased and yet readers could only go by what the Europeans were writing. Their first descriptions of the Natives they encountered were negative because their ways of life were different from that of the Europeans. This whole encounter period was filtered through a Eurocentric view and anything that could be potentially threatening to this perspective was disregarded which later contributed to colonialism.

An important development in studying this history of first contact has been the notion of colonization. According to Robert J. Brym and John Lie, “Conflict theorists argue that one of the most important mechanisms promoting inequality and conflict between racial and ethnic groups is colonialism” (Brym & Lie, 151). Colonialism is described as people from one country invading another causing the invaders to gain control over the native population and change or destroy their culture (Brym & Lie, 151). In this fashion the expulsion of the Aboriginal people began. Expulsion is described as: “The forcible removal of a population from a territory claimed by another population” (Brym & Lie, 151). This prevented the Aboriginal people from practicing their traditional ways, which eventually led them to live on reserves and in urban slums that lead to high rates of unemployment ill health and violence (Brym & Lie, 151). One of the extreme causes that Brym and Lie describe concerns the Beothuk people. During the sixteenth century Europeans used Newfoundland as fishing exposition. They decided in the seventeenth century that year round settlement would be the best option in order to get

the resources that they needed. The Europeans wanted the Beothuk people gone because they were a threat to the Europeans resources. In order to accomplish this they promised the Mi'kmaq people a form of payment if they would help get rid of the Beothuk people. The population then began to decline as the European population grew and in the eighteenth century Beothuk were competing for resources with fur traders. This initial contact and issues of colonialism between the Europeans and the Native people brought trading between Aboriginal groups such as the Inuit, the Innu, the Beothuk, the Mi'kmaq and the Métis which will be further analyzed.

### **Aboriginal Groups**

When referring to the Aboriginal people of Newfoundland and Labrador throughout this paper the five groups which are formally identified as being of Newfoundland and Labrador Aboriginal ancestry are the Inuit, the Innu, the Beothuk, the Mi'kmaq and the Métis. "Newfoundland and Labrador's Aboriginal People" states: "Of Newfoundland and Labrador's Aboriginal population that self-identified in 2006, 33% or 7,765 were First Nations, 28% or 6,470 were Métis and 25% or 4,715 were Inuit. This was a boost of 78% First Nations, 42% Métis, and 14% Inuit from 1996" (Newfoundland and Labrador's Aboriginal People, 1). While my research findings only revealed three specific groups, the Inuit, the Métis, and anything other than these two were classified as First Nations people, five of groups will be considered here as many of my interviewees are of Mi'kmaq Qalipu ancestry, a newly identified group.

The Inuit are decedents of an aboriginal group called Thales and are located along the coast of Labrador (Carol Brice-Bennett, 1). Carol Brice Bennett writes: "They first made contact with Europeans, who were Basques from Spain looking for new whale hunting grounds. In the mid-16th century the Basques established land stations to process whale oil for export to foreign markets, but they were only present in southern Labrador during ice free seasons, from summer until late fall" (Brice-Bennett, 1). Silent trades, which were trades without speaking, were conducted between the Inuit and the Europeans. These silent trades were conducted because in many cases the groups did not speak the same language so this form of communication was useless. Goods were placed in small boats and sent from one side of a bay to the other side. Inuit also visited whaling stations in winter to scavenge for iron tools, fishing equipment and other European goods left behind at the sites. A severe outbreak of influenza threatened to decrease the population of the Inuit significantly (Carol Brice-Bennett, 1).

Peter Armitage author of "The Innu" says that the word Innu means "human being" (Armitage, 1). Today, there are over 16,000 Innu who live in eleven communities in Québec and two in Labrador. The Innu that are residing in Labrador are located in the cities of Sheshatshi and Davis Inlet (Armitage, 1). Relationships to the land and animals are key to the Innu sense of community. Armitage writes: "Many Innu retain much of their traditional relationship with the land and its animals. The Innu are negotiating for recognition of their aboriginal rights to their traditional territory and struggling to heal the ravages of years of village life" (Armitage, 1). The European arrival was harmful to the Innu because it created a form of dependency that later led them to a much larger disadvantage. Armitage writes: "The late 19th and early 20th century were marked by increasing competition from white and settler fur trappers, particularly in central Labrador. The collapse in fur prices in the 1930s and the reduction in the size of the caribou herds caused great suffering among the Innu" (Armitage, 1). Without the large sizes of the caribou herds that the Innu once depended on, much of their population has

come to a decrease.

The Beothuks are another Aboriginal group located throughout Newfoundland. Ralph T. Pastore states: “They were Algonkian-speaking hunter-gatherers who probably numbered less than a thousand people at the time of European contact. The Beothuk are the descendants of a Recent Indian culture called the “Little Passage Complex” (Pastore, 1). Beothuks were scattered all over the island of Newfoundland when Europeans first arrived. Pastore goes on to state:

When Europeans arrived in Newfoundland in about 1497, the people we would come to know as Beothuk lived all around the island, with the possible exception of the eastern portion of the Avalon peninsula. There is good evidence to suggest that Beothuk also lived on the other side of the Strait of Belle Isle in what is now southern Labrador and the Québec Lower North Shore (Pastore, 1).

Beothuks were an Aboriginal group that had traditional ways of life that were different from many of the other Aboriginal groups. For example, Pastore states:

Everywhere else in North America, native people were usually eager to trade furs for metal cutting and piercing tools. The Beothuk, however, had the unusual opportunity to acquire such goods without having to exchange furs for them. This meant that they did not have to modify their traditional way of life by expending effort in the winter hunting fur-bearing animals such as lynx, marten, and the like-animals that provided little in the way of edible meat” (Pastore, 1).

Once the Europeans began to settle, they started a form of competition with the Beothuk people. The sea was a vital necessity with regards to the Beothuk and once the Europeans had knowledge of this, the sea also became one of their main forms of exploitation. Although trades did in fact occur, Pastore maintains that still we know relatively little about the first contact in the 16<sup>th</sup> century between the Beothuks and the Europeans (Pastore, 1).

*The Newfoundland Micmacs* by Ralph T. Pastore states: “The Newfoundland Micmacs are an offshoot of a once powerful people who numbered about 6,000 when Europeans first came to the New World. They lived in what is now Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, eastern New Brunswick and the Gaspé peninsula” (Pastore, 1). Pastore then goes on to state: “Like many other northern Algonkian speakers, the Micmacs were hunters, fishers, and food gatherers. When first contacted by Europeans, the Micmacs appear to have obtained most of their food from the sea” (Pastore, 1). The Mi'kmaq people were the first Aboriginal group to greet the European settlers (The History of the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq). In “The History of the Newfoundland Mi'kmaq” Ralph T. Pastore states: “After John Cabot's 1497 voyage to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Mi'kmaq would trade furs for copper kettles, woolen blankets, iron knives, and the other products of early modern Europe, as well as shallops to carry the new goods to other Native peoples throughout the Gulf and as far south as New England” (Pastore, 1). Pastore argues against the idea that the Mi'kmaq were brought over from Cape Breton to become allies in the war. Pastore states: “This is clearly not the case. The Mi'kmaq who came to Newfoundland did so of their own accord, and only after their arrival on the island did the French ask for their assistance. Not surprisingly, Mi'kmaq's had fought for years against English settlers in New England” (Pastore, 1).

The Métis originated as a result of interracial unions that resulted from European men coming over to Labrador to work and marrying Inuit women (Higgins, 1). They began to start families and these descendants from the European men and the Inuit women were known as the Métis. Jenny Higgins author of “Inuit-Métis History” states:

Some of these workers – the majority of which were single men – chose to remain

in Labrador permanently, but found it difficult to find wives in a land where men outnumbered women eight or nine to one. An almost absolute lack of European women meant that many settlers married Inuit women and it is to these unions that Labrador Inuit-Métis trace their aboriginal roots (Higgins, 1).

Many of the Métis developed their own way of life through seasonal labor. In spring and fall they hunted from the sea. Their catch included different fish such as waterfowl, cod, salmon, and seal. During the winter they could not catch as much from the sea so they focused more on hunting from the forest. Higgins states: "There were considerable local variations, but generally, the Inuit-Métis economy revolved around the local possibilities of each season. Social life was also seasonally-ordered" (Higgins, 1).

The above five groups together have been formally identified as composing the Newfoundland and Labrador Aboriginal population. Within these groups, different forms of oppression, along with self-oppression are still occurring. By taking a closer look into the Aboriginal groups of Newfoundland, it will be shown how these groups came to produce feelings of internalized oppression.

### **Internalized Colonialism**

Andrea Bear Nicholas maintains that internalized colonialism affects Aboriginal people in diverse ways and one of the main ways we are able to see this form of self-oppression occur is through the residential schools (Bear Nicolas, 43). She indicates:

On the one hand, it is essential for colonizers to convince at least some of the oppressed people to accept the colonizer's values and ideology; for not only must the oppressed be made to accept colonialism, but they must also be influenced to participate willingly in it. This is where the "need" for education arises, or to be more precise, colonial "indoctrination" (Bear Nicholas, 43).

This form of internalized colonization can be further seen using the concept of symbolic violence. *Violence, Inequality, and Human Freedom* by Peter Iadicola and Anson Shupe state: "In the school context is the systematic and deliberate destruction of students ethnic/racial/familial/religious identities by school administrators and other leaders" (Iadicola & Shupe, 197). Symbolic violence is a term coined by Pierre Bourdieu and can be defined as: "The imposition of a different or more likely dominate culture upon those who are in positions of domination as defined in terms of class, ethnicity, or gender. This violence stems from the denial of legitimacy of the other's knowledge based on their culture" (Iadicola and Shupe, 197). Iadicola and Shupe consider it a form of cultural genocide in which members of a certain cultural is purposefully destroyed by members of the dominant group. Symbolic violence requires both a dominator, and the dominated to accept their position in the exchange of social value that occurs between them. By accepting this form of symbolic power from the dominator it creates a form of internalized oppression that is seen throughout many members of Western Newfoundland's Aboriginal people.

In relation to symbolic violence that had been acted upon the Aboriginal people of NL, I sought out a sense of what these people, in this particular area of Western Newfoundland went through and where, if anywhere, their sense if internalized oppression is situated. Bear Nicolas examines how the residential school system can be seen as a form of symbolic violence and how this form of symbolic violence can be linked to the issues regarding internalized oppression. She described the attitudes that shaped the educational approach to Aboriginal peoples:

Under internal colonialism educational goals were characterized by efforts to assimilate Aboriginal Peoples. This new emphasis in colonial education was based on a racist belief in social evolutionism, which held that Aboriginal People could eventually be educated out of their "savage" and "wandering ways" to become like Europeans (Bear Nicholas, 46).

This perception of their savage and wandering ways was one of the main reasons the residential schools began. According to Bear Nicholas, the residential schools are only one of the many ways internalized oppression came into being. Not only did they affect those who were institutionalized in these residential schools, but they affected members of their family across subsequent generations.

Secondary research shows that the residential schools had a huge control over the Indigenous people and while there were many schools in NL that took the form and characteristics of the residential schools, only five of these thus far have been officially declared as residential schools. This form of control was used in a specific way to make the children more European and to wipe out any form of their ancestry. J.W. Berry author of "Aboriginal Cultural Identity" states: "The children experienced discrimination. They were told that they were stupid, lazy and parasites on society. They learned that being Indians, they belonged to the Devil and that they would bum in Hell" (Berry, 24). This was only one of the drastic forms of control that happened in the residential schools. Many of the children were not only mentally abused, but also physically, emotionally, and sexually abused as well. Constantly being told by a person of authority that their cultural identity belonged to the devil and that they would burn in hell caused the children to begin to believe it, and then internalize it, thus creating a form of self-oppression.

*They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools* by Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada states: "Public Works Minister Hector Langevin told the House of Commons. In order to educate the children properly we must separate them from their families. Some people may say that this is hard but if we want to civilize them we must do that." (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 5) This form of detachment was because they did not want the children to continue on with any forms of cultural traditions that their family once taught them. Governments repeatedly said that their parents would have a bad influence on their children. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada states:

At the heart of this policy was the Indian Act, which, in 1876, brought together all of Canada's legislation governing Indian people. The act both defined who Indians were under Canadian law and set out the process by which people would cease to be Indians. Under the act, the Canadian government assumed control of Indian peoples' governments, economy, religion, land, education, and even their personal lives (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 20).

This sense of control had a huge impact on the way that the Aboriginal people looked at their historical background and their selves. Bear Nicholas argues, "The few Natives who became educated were generally marginalized, unable to function in their own cultures and never fully accepted by the immigrant society" (Bear Nicholas, 41). She goes on to say:

Though most residential schools have now been closed (the last as lately as the 1980s), only recently has there been any real attempt to verify and document the extent of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse practiced in the schools. As a result of repeated revelations and corroborating stories there is now no question as to the genocidal intentions of the Canadian state for more than a century, So

insidious have been the effects of this abuse that they have continued to manifest themselves in children and grand-children of former residential school students, even though they never set foot in residential schools (Bear Nicholas, 41).

Bear Nicholas exemplifies how this form of oppression has been passed on through the generations of Aboriginal ancestry. Not only have the people who were in the residential schools been affected but family and community members continue to be subjected to this form of oppression and self-oppression. J.W. Berry agrees with Bear Nicholas's statements in saying: "Many felt that by previously having to suppress their language, they were pressured to deny who they were and to try and be somebody they were not. One participant lamented: "The language was the first thing I learned. I lost that when I went to the residential schools. Today my children ask me to teach them Micmac. I am sad I cannot teach them" (Berry, 24). Only a small number of my interviewees knew anything about being of Aboriginal descent while growing up. This demonstrates that none were taught any form of their Aboriginal ancestry despite being a person of Aboriginal descent.

In conducting my interviews I asked all of my participants if being Aboriginal had any effect on the way they grew up. Samantha said: "Well Because I found out in my later teenage years and my family both immediate and expanded only had a small idea of our family's status, my now Aboriginal awareness had no effect on how I grew up" (Interview). A second interviewee, Chris, responded by saying, "I didn't find out until I was twenty-one years old, so really it had no effect on how I grew up. I didn't even know I was Aboriginal until then. I don't even think many members of my family knew" (Interview). My third interviewee Ashley also responded by saying, "I didn't know until I was fifteen, wasn't really sure what it meant, so it didn't affect how I grew up at all" (Interview). When asking another interviewee Natasha if it had any effect on the way she grew up she also responded by saying: "It had really no effect on the way I grew up, but I did know that there was some Aboriginal ancestry somewhere in my family" (Interview). Another participant Lindsay responds to this question by saying, "It did not affect how I grew up because I was already an adult when I found out. However it does now affect the way I view my own personal heritage as I've discovered something about my family that none of us were really aware of before" (Interview).

As a result of not finding out they were of Aboriginal descent until they were in their teens or older, none of them were taught any traditional languages, customs, practices or cultural values while growing up. One of my informants, Denise, did not find out she was of Aboriginal ancestry until she was thirty-five so she described how it had no affect on the way she grew up. Another one of my participants Matthew Hughes who is chair of the student Aboriginal committee on Grenfell Campus expresses, "Since I only learned six years ago, it did not affect my upbringing. However, I have changed some of my traditions since. You could also argue: Having known of my Aboriginal descent earlier, I would have been more culturally aware by that age" (Interview). While this absence of identity could be attributed to many things, one of the expressed reasons was that their families did not have enough background on their cultural identity to pass along to their children. This absence of information, this silence about the family background contains untold stories. Because for many formal status is now being sought, identity issues are coming to the surface. Bear Nicholas' says that the residential schools were not talked about until now because of the shame associated with them. Dr. Maura Hanrahan, Memorial University's first special adviser for Aboriginal affairs, exhibits this in her interview by stating: "It made sense, I could put the pieces of the puzzle

together. Also it planted a sense of shame in me because I knew the Mi'kmaq were looked down upon" (Interview). As a result, many family members had no idea this occurred in their own families and often when people did find out it had occurred, as it was forbidden to talk about.

### **What does being of Aboriginal decent mean to you?**

A question I asked of my informants was what does being of Aboriginal decent mean to you? My interviewees produced two basic kinds of responses to this. One group who was looking for change in the ways Aboriginals are viewed, and others just identified for government reasons. For example Samantha said, "I am still in the early stages of discovering what it means to be an Aboriginal. It's still pretty new to me" Despite the newness of this identity she maintained "Well I think there are a lot of opportunities today for Aboriginal members; both to gain education funding and to give back volunteer work and using education to provide support for Aboriginals who live in areas that are undeveloped and lack resources" (Interview). Other one of my interviewees Natasha says, "Being an Aboriginal to me means respecting the land on which we live, taking care of and protecting the land where we live and respecting the environment for generations to come. I also think it's very important to understand where we came from as Aboriginal people and the struggles our ancestors had to go through" (Interviewee). Natasha re-joins this by saying, "Although all that is important, and as bad as it may seem, I think the benefits associated with the status are one of the main reasons why I applied. It has certainly helped me through my university education" (Interview). Lindsay provides another level of involvement with her Aboriginal identity: "To me, being of Aboriginal descent means that I can reclaim my personal family history and past. I think that it is important to identify with the culture and although I may not know much about it yet, I plan to continue to learn" (Interview). In a similar vein Matthew reveals:

In a concise answer, being Aboriginal, to me, means being part of a community. As I have mentioned, I have been lucky enough to learn of my heritage after 17 years, and since then have felt accepted by a community I didn't previously know existed. Currently, I do not regularly practice Aboriginal ceremonies, or congregate with large groups of Aboriginal on a regular basis, but I have taken the time to push for Aboriginal rights, initiatives, and equality. For these reasons, my current Aboriginal 'meaning' is more academically and politically charged

Denise, another one of my informants, in revealing what it means to her expressed, "Our ancestors before us have paved the way in every aspect, spiritually, culturally, physically and socially. It gives us something to carry on throughout generations" (Interview).

The perspectives of my other two interviews on this seemed to be different. Chris responded by saying, "I'm really just into it for the money as most people are. I don't really care about my ancestor's past. My parents recommend that I should get it because it will more or less mean that I can save a lot of money for me and my children" (Interview). Ashley agrees with Chris' response in saying, "To me it just means education funding and tax deductions" (Interview).

According to this small sample it seems that people in Western NL have only begun to identify as Aboriginal and in large part because the media in terms of discussions and debates has brought it forward in terms of the benefits associated with attaining status.

My informant Maura Hanrahan, in her article "A Story of Invisibility: The reaction of the Newfoundland and Labrador Print Media to the Formation of the Qalipu

Mi'kmaq Nation”, examines the formation of the Qalipu Mi'kmaw First Nation and how the media circulates negative feelings with regards to the federal funds and the benefits that the Mi'kmaw residents are receiving. Hanrahan implies that members of the Qalipu First Nation people have been depicted in a negative light (Hanrahan, 4). Hanrahan writes:

Mi'kmaq parents found that denial of Indigenous ancestry was the most effective way to help Mik'maw children and secure what employment was available, although even these fractured strategies did not always work. Said Acting Chief Ellie Edmunds, “As a young child I recall being made fun of and called a savage because we were Mi'kmaq (federation of Newfoundland Indians, n.d., Ca 2006) (Hanrahan, 6).

I was fortunate to be able to interview Dr. Hanrahan about her sense of what being a person of Aboriginal decent meant. Her response was: “Being tied to/part of the land we live on. Trying to live up to Mi'kmaq values, e.g. the importance of community over the individual” (Interview). She also expressed to me some of the concerns she has, “The racism in Newfoundland is pervasive so I worry about my daughter's future in that regard. I also worry about the division in the Mi'kmaq community with some people being granted status and others, including many FNI members, being denied” (Interview).

Most of my interview participants had no idea that they were of Indigenous ancestry until the procedures for the advancement of formal Aboriginal status began. If they were aware of their ancestry, they were taught very little about their cultural heritage. This could be one reason for why each of my interviewees did not formally identify at a young age with of being of Aboriginal ancestry. Natasha told me, “I always knew that there was Aboriginal heritage on my mom's side of the family, but it wasn't until I was in level two that my parents worked on getting status that I became aware that the blood line reached down the generations to include me” (Interview).

### **Identifying as an Aboriginal**

In “Newfoundland and Labrador's Aboriginal People”, the author states:

In 2006, Newfoundland and Labrador had a combined total Aboriginal identity population of 23,450 or 4.7%. During 2001 to 2006, the Aboriginal population grew 25% in Newfoundland and Labrador, where the non-Aboriginal population declined by 3%. This trend is magnified when the period of 1996 to 2006 is examined; the Aboriginal population augmented by 67%, while the non-Aboriginal population decreased by 11% (Newfoundland and Labrador's Aboriginal People, 1).

This illustrates that the Aboriginal population has only continued to grow as more and more people are self-identifying. Today, the process of self-identifying has become a lengthy process that many people have to go through in order to formally become a member of the Aboriginal community. When conducting my interview with Samantha she took me through the process of formally being identified as an Aboriginal.

My mother went through the entire research process which included and not limited to; piecing together our family tree and doing the related document and birth certificate collecting to provide proof of our family's background. She also had to fill out numerous governments provided papers for each member of our family. Within a number of weeks a temporary registration number was then assigned to each member of the family (proof that we have been approved) and then the remaining steps was up to the individual (Interview).

Today we are able to see that many of the people who are identifying as being of Aboriginal decent are members of the younger generation. Stats Canada states:

Children and youth aged 24 and under made up almost one-half (48%) of all Aboriginal people, compared with 31% of the non-Aboriginal population. About 9% of the Aboriginal population was aged 4 and under, nearly twice the proportion of 5% of the non-Aboriginal population. Similarly, 10% of the Aboriginal population was aged 5 to 9, compared with only 6% of the non-Aboriginal population” (Stats Canada).

These figures closely relate to members of my local community and to the demographics of the people that I have interviewed. Many of the younger generation can see the long-term benefits of identifying as a person of Aboriginal ancestry, which pushes them to formally identify.

J. W. Berry isolates this phenomenon in the following:

When individuals experience intercultural contact, the issue of who they are comes to the fore. Prior to major contact, this question is hardly an issue; people routinely and naturally think of themselves as part of their cultural community, and usually value this attachment in positive terms. Of course, other life transitions (such as adolescence) can lead people to wonder, and even doubt, who they are. But it is only during intercultural contact that their cultural identity may become a matter of concern” (Berry, 2).

Cultural identity can become a major issue concerning the self and struggles that Aboriginal people have had to face in relation to internalized colonization. In some cases identifying themselves as a person of Indigenous ancestry can be easy for some and harder for others. Berry raises questions about Aboriginal people with relation to cultural identity and self-concept. “Basically, it is the way in which one identifies as oneself. For example in response to questions such as “Who are you?”, or “How would you describe yourself?”. Responses can usually be placed in two categories, similar to the individual/social distinction noted for self-concept” (Berry, 3). Berry goes on to state: “There are many social groups that can serve as means of achieving a social identity. Some are related to social class, others to political parties or clubs and associations. Perhaps the most important form of social identity is one that links an individual to some large collectivity such as nation, culture or ethnic group” (Berry, 3). In this case, Berry is linking this large collective group to the Indigenous people. One feels more content and secure within their own skin when they have a sense of self. Individuals without this sense of self will hang onto aspects of a dominate culture and their beliefs; if this self identity is negative, a person will also feel this negativity, therefore a sense of internalized oppression is formed. Berry maintains that: “A consolidated cultural identity exists when there is consistency among components; a confused identity is present when there is inconsistency or uncertainty” (Berry, 6). Many negative effects can come out of having a confused sense of identity; most times people try and find a sense of their cultural identity in order to find themselves.

Berry states: “Aboriginal cultural identity is viewed here as an internal (symbolic) state (made up of cognitive, affective and motivational components) and external (behavioral) expression of being an Aboriginal person (individual emphasis), and a member of an Aboriginal community (social emphasis)” (Berry, 6). My interviews indicated that there are both positive and negative views on culturally identifying as an Aboriginal person. Someone could be very proud of being a person of Aboriginal decent as most of my interviewees are, and there are some people, as we see through researching

internalized oppression, who feel the need to hide their cultural identity.

Berry illustrates different aspects of a positive Aboriginal cultural identity: “A positive Aboriginal cultural identity is comprised of a number of interrelated features, including the perception of oneself as Aboriginal, considering this to be important, having positive feelings about being Aboriginal, wanting to remain an Aboriginal person, and expressing these in one's daily behavior” (Berry, 6). One of the questions I had for Janine Lightfoot, Grenfell’s Campus's new Aboriginal student liaison coordinator, is whether or not many people were self-identifying as being a person of Aboriginal decent. Janine explains:

At Grenfell, there are a huge number of students who self-identify as Aboriginal. This is a small campus and over 200 students self-identify as Aboriginal. Now, these students are not necessarily status Indians (legal term); Grenfell makes it quite clear that you do not require Indian Status to declare yourself as Aboriginal - this could mean Inuit, Métis and non-status Indians (those who claim First Nations ancestry, but have not been issued an Indian Status card) (Interview).

This can be seen as a form of positive Aboriginal cultural identity. I was surprised when Janine informed me about how many people were identifying as Aboriginal people on the Grenfell campus because, as she stated, the campus is in fact so small. This indicates that a positive form of cultural identity is becoming more prominent around the university. Janine informed me that in many cases people think you have to have formal status in order to self-identify as being a person of aboriginal status. She said in her interview, “Students may be unaware of the fact that one does not require Indian Status in order to self-declare. One regional example could be an individual who has applied for Qalipu Mi'kmaq status and has not been issued a status number to date, therefore, not declaring oneself as Aboriginal” (Interview).

However, with positively identifying as a person of Aboriginal ancestry, there are also drawbacks or negative cultural identity issues. Berry states:

Various degrees of a negative Aboriginal cultural identity are comprised of: not seeing oneself as Aboriginal; but if so, not considering it to be important; but if important, not liking or enjoying it; but if so, not wanting to maintain it; but if so, not being able to express it in daily life. A consolidated cultural identity exists when there is consistency among components; a confused identity is present when there is inconsistency or uncertainty (Berry, 6).

Berry’s comment was validated in my interviews by comments such as. “I'm really just into for the money” (Interview), “It will more or less mean that I can save money for me and my children” (Interview), “To me it just means education funding and tax deductions” (Interview), “My parents recommended that I should get it”(Interview). My informant Lindsay describes in her interview:

I would say the social issues would be that a lot of people talk about it as a money scam and don't believe in identifying as an Aboriginal because of that. And family wise my grandfather wouldn't identify as an Aboriginal because he said "they were going to come back and shoot all the Indians like they did years ago. Now it's possible that he could have been just messing with us because he's like that, or he could really believe that sort of thing. At any rate, he still sees Aboriginal status as being a bad thing (Interview).

One of the big questions I asked Janine in our interview was what are some of the emotional drawbacks to identifying as an Aboriginal student? She gave me her different opinions on why she thought some of these students were in fact of aboriginal ancestry,

and yet still not identifying.

Racism is still very much alive and well in this province (and everywhere) and there is a stigma associated when self-declaring as Aboriginal. Mainstream ideologies are quick to suggest that Aboriginal students get a 'free' education, which is incorrect and very offensive in and of itself. However, this may be a real deterrent for students to share who they are. You may also be aware that MUN does have a designated seats agreement for some of their programs whereby it reserves (again, no pun intended) a certain number of seats for Aboriginal students because of the systemic racism Aboriginal people face when entering into a Post-Secondary Institution and MUN has been proactive in accommodating the unique needs of Aboriginal populations throughout the province. MUN Faculty of Medicine in St. John's has Aboriginal students in their program who refuse to declare themselves as Aboriginal because of the stigma associated with being Aboriginal in a Medical School (Interview).

In terms of stigma beyond in the wider community, I was able to also ask My Aunt Nellie, who deals with the granting of status, about some of the emotional drawbacks that she faced regarding these issues. Some of the questions I asked her were confidential and she was not able to give me specific examples. However, for some of the emotional drawbacks she identified were as follows:

There are emotional problems in terms of stress from not being able to find their proper documentation especially knowing that they are indeed aboriginal. There is sometimes conflict within families who do not wish to share information. This is also stressful. Some people who know they are Aboriginal may not apply as they are financially sound and feel they do not need any benefits. Others do not want the stigma associated with the title of Indian which stems from the past attitudes (Interview).

This stigma, this negative title that my aunt describes, is supported throughout much of the secondary research I found as well as in my interviews. As previously stated, many of my interviewees are identifying as being Aboriginal for the benefits of 'free education' as they look at it. This confirms the negative stereotype mentioned earlier. However, this could also be a form of internalized colonization that has been passed down through generations. Eventually, people may not continue to identify as being a person of Aboriginal background because of the stigma of the benefits people are receiving. I thought Samantha, made an excellent point in answering the question of whether she had any personal doubts or hesitations when formally identifying herself as an aboriginal person. Samantha said:

The idea that, too many people are taking advantage of their status surfaces a lot when the topic comes up of free education, tax free purchases or free health care. This issue is complex and becomes foggy when we do not educate ourselves on why status holders receive these benefits - bottom line is; educate yourself and then draw conclusions (Interview).

Samantha implies that one of the leading causes for this stigma is people not educating themselves on the history of the Aboriginal people, and why they are being compensated for previous events. Many people make judgments and stereotypes when people are applying for this formal status. Many of the people who are making judgments are people who are not of Aboriginal ancestry and in most cases are in no place to judge. One of my interviews Ashley tells me, "People who do not have it (formal status) are just jealous. They're trying as hard as they can in order to receive formal status. It's actually kind of sad" (Interview). Samantha goes on to say, "Discovering my status I have educated

myself on my history by making appointments with my local band (Qalipu) members to discuss current issues and movement towards education. I have also taken courses at the university level that focus on Aboriginal issues” (Interview).

### **Charles Horton Cooley: The Looking Glass Self**

Two concepts I related to my study of internalized colonization were Cooley’s theory on The Looking Glass Self and Patricia Hill Collins theory of intersectionality and the matrix of domination. Both of these relate to my study in terms of seeing how oppression can occur and affect us internally. The looking glass self refers to: “The idea that people learn about themselves by imaging how they appear to others” (Baumeister & Bushman 68). This concept can be closely related to issues regarding internalized colonialism. Diana Kendall describes the looking glass self as having three components:

- 1) We imagine how our personality and appearance will look to other people
- 2) We image how other people judge the appearance and personality that we think we present
- 3) We develop a self-concept. If we think the evaluation of others is favorable, our self-concept is enhanced. If we think the evaluation is unfavorable our self-concept is diminished (Kendall, 101).

Kendall goes on to describe how theorist George Herbert Mead extended this theory to describe the term as role taking. Role taking is described as: “The process by which a person mentally assumes the role of another person or group in order to understand the world from that persons group or point of view” (Kendall, 101). Meade describes how this role taking is developed throughout the life of a child. However, by linking both of these concepts to internalized colonialism, we can see how this is not always the case. In terms of the Aboriginal people of my study we can see how forms of internalized oppression could have developed in a way similar to the concept of the looking glass self. We can see throughout this research that many factors including colonization, the residential schools, and family secrets that people carry, develop a form of negative stigma to the Aboriginal people. Once this stigma is developed, they begin to look at their self in a negative way, similar to that of internalized oppression. Both concepts can become intertwined and we see how both play a role in how Aboriginal people begin to see themselves. Kendall states, “The self develops only though contact with others just as social institutions and society exist independent of the interaction of individuals” (Kendall, 101).

### **Patricia Hill Collins: Intersecting Oppressions**

Patricia Hill Collins looks at forms of oppression and social identity that offer us a way to see change (Hill Collins, 1). In much of her research she explores what she refers to as the matrix of domination with regards to race, gender, and class. Hill Collins focuses much of her work on interlocking systems of oppression beginning with her standpoint of oppression as a black female. Not only does she look at race and gender, but she also examines class prejudice and the categories we are put it, such as privileged and underprivileged. Two of the theories that Patricia Hill Collins examines are intersectionality theory and the matrix of domination.

Intersectionality theory examines the ways that race gender and class work together to create inequality through interlocking systems of oppression. According to Collins, inequality and oppression are the result of several forces that work together, hand in hand, in order to create different forms of inequality. All of these forms of oppression

work together to create inequality and, most of the time, we do not even realize how this is working upon us. It is a constant form of oppression that effects where people are placed in society and the way they act. These different forms of oppression are taught at birth and Patricia Hill Collins demonstrates how the different forms work together to create inequalities. These interlocking oppressions are described by Hill Collins as the matrix of domination. In writing about Hill Collins' theory Kenneth Allan states: "Intersectionality captures that structured positions of people living at the crossroads of two or more systems of inequality, such as race and gender. The different intersectionalities of society influence the over organization of power" (Allan 544). This applies to many women who are of Aboriginal decent. For example, Mark Totten states: "Aboriginal girls and women in Canada suffer much higher rates of physical violence, sexual violence and homicide compared to any other group in the country. Arguably, the rate of extreme violence experienced by these women is amongst the highest in the world. In the vast majority of all incidents, men are the perpetrators" (Totten, 8). In this case, being an Aboriginal woman, especially one who has encountered any physical violence, sexual violence or homicide in their lifetime would make them have an even less privileged position in society.

Kenneth Allan describes says that there are two systems to this theory of the matrix of domination. The first one is that the matrix of domination has a specific arrangement of these intersecting systems of oppression. Secondly, these intersecting systems of oppression are organized through the structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal (Allan, 540). The structural domain deals with power, and social structure such as law, polity religion and the economy. The disciplinary domain shows us other forms of oppression. This is the domain that deals with control and ways to dominate human behavior. The hegemonic domain legitimizes oppression (Allan, 540). Allan states: "This is the cultural sphere of influence where ideology and consciousness come together, The hegemonic domain links the structural, disciplinary and interpersonal domains. It is made up of the language we use, the images we respond to, the values we hold, and the ideas we entertain" (Allan, 541). The interpersonal domain deals with the interactions we make within the everyday world. It deals with how one sees them self and how we form a sense of identity. Specifically, the interpersonal domain can be related to this research when looking at how oppression can affect members of the Aboriginal community. This deals with interactions and oppressions on a daily basis and with this comes a form of identity of the self.

These forms of oppressions can work in a system in order to create a form of internalized oppression. In *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* Patricia Hill Collins introduces her theories of power and domination. She looks at forms of social epistemology and ways that this relates to knowledge. Hill Collins states: "Domination operates by seducing, pressuring, or forcing African-American women, members of subordinated groups, and all individuals to replace individual and cultural ways of knowing with the dominant group's specialized thought—hegemonic ideologies that, in turn, justify practices of other domains of power" (Hill Collins, 287). This demonstrates that we internalize certain cultural ways because these ways are what the dominant group expects; this in turn supports internalized oppression. Hill Collins goes on to state: "Although most individuals have little difficulty identifying their own victimization within some major system of oppression—whether it be by race, social class, religion, physical ability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age or gender—they typically fail to see how their thoughts and actions uphold someone else's subordination" (Hill Collins, 287). This failing to see how their thoughts and actions

uphold someone else's subordination is one of the prime examples on how internalized colonialism affects people and causes them to internalize this form of oppression. One of the many ways this is shown is through the residential schools.

Patricia Hill Collins' theory can be further illuminated through the example of the residential schools. In these places Aboriginal men and women were abused physically, mentally, and sexually and many of them were never able to fully recover. This carried on down through generations and created a sense of self oppression, which joined with the external forms of oppression and created interlocking systems of oppression in which Aboriginal men or women, who went through the residential school system were doubly oppressed. The fact that many of my informants did not recognize themselves as oppressed is evidence of Hill Collins' theory of oppression.

### **Conclusion**

I chose this area of research because it is a local issue affecting many members of my community and because it relates to my own family and ancestry. From the hallways of my university, to family gatherings, and conversations with friends, the issue of being an Aboriginal person, particularly since the issue of receiving formal status has been introduced, is now discussed openly. I am also a person of Aboriginal decent both on my mother's side and my father's. On my mother's side, our family tree dates back to the Mi'kmaw people, and on my father's side are ancestry goes back to the Beothuk people, specifically to the last name Bennett. The importance in looking into the value of this generation of Aboriginal people allows me to see how it can affect the generations in families. This form of colonization has personally affected my family and we feel the grief in my family's loss of their traditional ways. Growing up I can remember making dream catchers with my Aunt and her briefly telling me some history about our family. At the time I was still too young to understand but I knew it was a part of our heritage. On the other hand I was never introduced to our languages or our culture values because my family was mostly in central Newfoundland and I was brought up on the West Coast. If I had been around the side of my family who embraced their heritage and expressed more of their cultural values, I could have been brought up with more of these traditional values and practices. Now in my early twenties and being able to understand where I come from, allows me to conduct further research on my heritage and become familiar with its traditions. Internalized colonization raises close issues with my family and a research opportunity like this allows me to not only become familiar with its traditions for myself, but also for my family and generations to come.

Members of my family are currently involved in an organized process of tracing Newfoundland Aboriginal family histories in order to help people regain a sense of their cultural identity. Through this study, I gained insight in terms of finding out what the different concerns were for people seeking their cultural identity and if they carried any sense of internalized colonization as Aboriginal people. Although, none of my interviewees relayed a sense that they experience internalized colonization, aspects of their interviews made me question what it was that made them identify as being a person of Aboriginal decent. Much of what I discovered through my interviews was that many of them only came to the forefront of being a person of Aboriginal decent around the time when declaring your formal Aboriginal status became public. Through the interviews we can see that most of my informants have admitted that the main reason they have chosen to identity as a person of Aboriginal decent was because of the benefits that they would receive.

Secondary research demonstrates how much one overt form of colonization, the residential schools, had on members of the Indigenous people. Among those I interviewed, there was no evidence within family's conversations on whether this affected members of their family. As much as this was looked down upon, most families had no interest in talking about it and it became a very silenced topic. Many of my interviewees had no recollection of ever finding out different aspects of their family's background on being a person of Aboriginal ancestry. Through this study, I gained insight in terms of finding out what the different concerns were for people seeking their cultural identity and if they carried any sense of internalized colonization as Aboriginal people. None of my interviewees relayed a sense that they experience internalized colonization. We have to wonder, given the lack of a sense of internal colonization in many of those I interviewed if colonization, together with the tactics of symbolic violence, have indeed been completely successful. It is my hope that by conducting more analysis on our cultural identity we will find out more information on issues of internalized oppression, and we will, in turn, eventually be able to shed more light on this sensitive and hidden matter of internalized colonization.

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APPENDIX A

Collecting from Human Subjects Permission Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby allow -  
\_\_\_\_\_, collector, to use this voluntarily recorded  
interview with me and/or documentation of a physical object belonging to myself, for educational  
purposes such as class presentations, research papers, or other scholarly projects for the class, -  
\_\_\_\_\_ at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. I understand that  
this material will not be used in any other form without my expressed permission.

Special Restrictions:

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewees Permanent Address

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## **Apprenticeship, Tattooing & Contested Meaning in Newfoundland & Labrador**

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### **Introduction**

The Newfoundland Scratcher Directory is a Facebook group that started in February 2012, dedicated to exposing individuals believed to be dangerous tattooists in the province by the administrator and participants. While the group's intent is benevolent, the consequences of their statements have a direct impact on the artists they try to expose. The administrator of the group is anonymous, as are their credentials which qualify them to state which artists are unclean. When people join the group to defend their artist who has been accused of tattooing unsafely they are banned, censoring a full discussion. This practice demonstrates a one-sided argument within the community of the Newfoundland Scratcher Directory, giving self-taught artists that are labelled scratchers no opportunity to defend themselves.

Having once been a member of the directory, I stepped down from being an active participant after a legal dispute between myself and an artist from Corner Brook emerged in September 2012. Having worked in professional tattoo shops since late 2011, I had developed a bias against self-taught artists; or scratchers as the professional industry calls them. My experience with the scratcher directory allowed me to take a step back from my bias and look at the industry as a whole. Thus, inspiring my central research question: what is the difference between a self-taught artist and a professionally trained artist? This paper will be concerned with this distinction and the cultural processes that create it.

The tattoo industry of Newfoundland & Labrador has rarely been the focus of academic study. Academic writing on tattooing has been primarily associated with deviance and stigma. Although there has been much written about the rise of tattoos within popular culture, there is very little on the structure of the tattoo industry as a whole; specifically, the process by which one becomes a tattoo artist.

The tattoo industry is like any other subculture, in which there is a division between insiders and outsiders. To become a tattoo artist an individual must complete an apprenticeship which can take between six months and three years to complete. However, this apprenticeship model is unlike the model used for industrial trades such as welding or carpentry; it is a vernacular folk agreement between an artist and an individual, in which the individual agrees to work for the artist without pay for a set period of time and until the apprenticeship is completed.

For the first half of an apprenticeship, the apprentice does not touch a tattoo machine, nor do they learn any art theory in regards to drawing or tattooing, nor do they learn any techniques for avoiding cross contamination. During this time, nothing inherently meaningful or related to tattooing as an art form is learned. Instead, apprentices are required to do menial tasks such as sweeping and mop floors, scrubbing toilets, fetching coffee, lunch, managing appointments, and picking up supplies. To get an apprenticeship, an individual brings a portfolio of sketches, never tattoos they attempted on their own, to an artist. They may take them on as an apprentice based on their talent alone; which is often times not the case, as the underlying politics of the industry

dictate what Pierre Bourdieu calls *habitus*: the use of social, cultural and/or economic capital.

Based on Marxist theories of exploitation, Bourdieu looked at how resources control the flow of power within a social construct (Bourdieu 12). In the tattoo industry, an individual may not be a gifted artist when looking for an apprenticeship, but they may be able to pay an artist a large sum of money to train them which would be using economic capital to gain an apprenticeship. Perhaps they are a close friend and client of an artist, which gets them an apprenticeship through the use of social capital. Or maybe they are tech-savvy with a computer, enabling them to better manage an artist's online marketing approaches, gaining them an apprenticeship through cultural capital. Simply put, there are many ways to get an apprenticeship other than raw talent. But what happens when an individual chooses to tattoo without an apprenticeship or because they cannot get one? They become a scratcher.

Scratchers, as these outsiders are known to the professional industry are a controversial topic within the industry. Scratchers are defined as individuals who tattoos without any formal training. These self-taught artists use the internet, books and instructional videos to learn the art form. The controversy surrounding scratchers according to the professional industry is that a scratcher cannot learn from these media methods how to tattoo safely; that cross-contamination is something that can only be learned through the guidance of an apprenticeship.

However, there is a contested meaning to the apprenticeship model. It can be argued that an apprenticeship has less to do with proper methods or safety techniques and everything to do with passing on sub-cultural norms and values and creating a hierarchy of respect in which an artist "pays their dues." This phrase is commonly used within the tattoo industry to justify the apprenticeship model is an *ad hominem* for an initiation to the inner circles of the contemporary culture of artists in Newfoundland & Labrador. Because of labelling theory, "scratcher" is a stigmatizing label to deter potential clients from going to self-taught artists and to deter individuals from becoming self-taught. Therefore, it can be argued that the apprenticeship exists to build and manage social capital within the subculture. Thus, an entire super structure can be seen of how the tattoo industry, through the initiation of new members and the creation and recreation of subcultural norms and values, uses stigma to deter subcultural deviance within the industry.

Based on interviews with six informants who operate within the local industry, this paper will analyse the apprenticeship process within the contemporary tattoo industry of Newfoundland & Labrador and contest its meaning. It will begin with a literature review, to build an understanding of the history of tattooing in the West, as well as the theories and approaches which apply to the research. Following this, the methodology of the research design will be disclosed, to understand how and why the research was conducted in the manner that it was. Then the findings of the research will be presented.

### **Literature Review**

There is a deficit of knowledge on the subject, compared with the societies where its status has been more secure or its aesthetics more complex, notable Polynesia and Japan... The history remains barely researched and widely misunderstood, and has achieved clearer definition only in the context of the new history and sociology of bodies and culture.... (Caplan xi)

The history of contemporary tattooing in the West is rather complex, first emerging as a deviant subculture which had been previously associated with slavery and criminals. Despite what

Caplan calls the “tattoo renaissance”<sup>1</sup> and the lessening of social stigma surrounding the practice, Mark Gustafson notes that tattooing still retains much of its historic legacy of outlaw culture and deviance.

We are witnesses to a tattoo revival. We see bodies emblazoned with them everywhere, it seems, in our media-saturated society.... There is for some a lingering sense that tattoos are signs of degradation, criminality and deviance, and thus their appearance is deemed an assault on the viewer. (Gustafson 17)

According to Gustafson, the stigma of tattoos can be attributed to its historical function as a punitive device. Around 250 AD, tattoos were used in the Roman Empire as criminal marker for Christians. Their foreheads were tattooed before individuals were banished to the mines to live out their lives in hard labour (17-18).

Moving from antiquity into the early Middle Ages, the Celtic speaking populations of Ireland and Great Britain used tattoos to identify soldiers, slaves and criminals (MacQuarrie 33). Tattoos were also used by Christian sects during this period to inscribe their body with holy texts. In the context of Middle Age tattooing then, tattoos had complex and overlapping purposes; in which they exist as marks of iniquity, subjection to evil powers, a sign of Christian virtue, and subjection to Christ (44).

During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, tattoos took on a new form of deviance, as some people tattooed astrological symbols on their arms or wrists. Astrology at this time was considered a form of magic. The Catholic Church denounced the use of magic, and consequently tattooing, being identified as practice within the occult. Such deviant labels throughout history provide some context as to why tattooing was linked to deviant subcultures.

Stigma surrounding the practice of tattooing continued into the contemporary period (1950-1990) with the use of tattoos by sailors and gangs. Throughout this period, gangs used tattoos as a means of initiation and to symbolize group identity; the Hell’s Angels, MS-13, the Bloods and the Crips are just a few examples of gangs that originated in this period who are identified by their tattoos. The use of tattoos by these groups is one of the leading causes as to why tattoos were associated with deviance in this period, as well as the stigma against people with tattoos. However, the contextual meaning of tattoos began to change in the early 1990’s, as the practice became more socially and commercially acceptable. As the stigma of tattoos began to decline, middle-class people began getting tattoos, showing the start of the tattoo renaissance.<sup>2</sup>

The paradigm shift from an outlaw to a socially accepted practice manifested in a change in both the social and art form. The change of clientele within the industry resulted in a change in tattoo shop aesthetics and practices, with a transition from grungy, dark workplaces to the look of a boutique. This change shows a class conflict has emerged within the industry, as Fleming notes:

Western tattooing is now divided against itself in terms of class. On the one hand, it advances serious claims to be considered a ‘high art’ whose products are governed by canons of taste and knowledge, and shown in galleries and museums. On the other hand, tattooing remains, in theory and in fact, a demotic practice whos products include prison and home-made tattoos, as well as those done in

<sup>1</sup> Caplan, Jane & Gustafson, Flemming, MacQuarrie. *Written on the Body : The Tattoo in European and American History*. London: Reakiton, 2000 pg: xi

<sup>2</sup> Caplan, Jane & Gustafson, Flemming, MacQuarrie. *Written on the Body : The Tattoo in European and American History*. London: Reakiton, 2000 pg: xi

commercial studios to more or less standard designs. (Fleming 61)

The contrast of views on tattooing that Fleming described, shows a polarizing difference within the industry. Margo Demello, who also wrote on the class conflict of tattooing, said that this conflict is partially a result of the meaning of tattoos in the West shifting from a sign of rebellion to a sign of personal expression (Demello 191). Demello concluded that when the class conflict has been resolved, it will be the middle class who have inherited tattoo culture (252). This change in the social aspect of tattooing has also influenced a change in the art:

Where once customers chose tattoos from sheets and so 'had to fit their individual psyche into pre-congealed images that were often very-out-of-date, today's tattoo artist functions as a kind of therapist: a vehicle to help people channel their unconscious urges to the surface. (Fleming 63)

The use of flash books, which are catalogues of imagery and stencils for tattoo designs has been replaced with custom work, to better suit the personal expression of the middle-class clientele. Instead of simply having a client pick a pre-drawn image, tattooists now have clients describe why they are getting a tattoo, the imagery they like and incorporate it into a personally expressive piece for that client. Demello says this change is preceded by a shift from American Traditional designs to Celtic and Japanese designs (Demello 111). It is apparent from Fleming and Demello's research that individually defined meaning is very important to the contemporary consumer of tattoo culture.

Thus, if the clientele is changing from low-class deviant subcultures to the middle class, then the meaning of tattooing is also changing. The way in which an artist approaches a contemporary client is different from how they would approach their previously deviant clientele. However, many contemporary artists within the industry began their careers in the outlaw tradition, which has a direct impact on how they function within contemporary tattoo culture.

In regards to the culture of the tattoo industry of Newfoundland & Labrador, where tattooing is still very much a marginalized form of art and expression, as well as an unregulated industry, the outlaw roots still resonate within the culture. Many tattooists currently operating within the professional industry of the province did their apprenticeships at the beginning of the tattoo renaissance<sup>3</sup>, outside of the province; the data collected shows that some of the informants learned their trade from heroin dealers or while in a juvenile detention facility; thus showing their connection to the outlaw roots.

The socio-economic landscape of contemporary tattooing in the province is dynamic and widely dispersed. There are currently 14 tattoo studios open within the province, with 25 professional artists working in them. In addition to this, there are over 250 self-taught tattooists in the province, showing a wide gap in the ratio between professional artists and the self-taught community.

Bill C-67 is the first proposed legislation by the government of Newfoundland & Labrador, to standardize the health regulations of the personal service industry. However, from the data collected during the research, the local industry has a fricative response to the proposed legislation which, in context, can be explained by a deep connection within the industry to its outlaw roots.

Such roots can help to explain the context of how culture is recreated in this industry, through the apprenticeship model as it currently stands, mediates the flow of insiders and outsiders within the contemporary Newfoundland tattoo industry and is governed by an outlaw system.

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<sup>3</sup> Caplan, Jane & Gustafson, Flemming, MacQuarrie. *Written on the Body : The Tattoo in European and American History*. London: Reakiton, 2000 pg: xi

## Theories & Approaches

To become a tattoo artist within the context of the professional industry, one does not simply pick up a machine and start tattooing. The artist must undergo an apprenticeship to be initiated into the inner circles of the industry. If they tattoo outside of the apprenticeship model, they are labelled a scratcher and are considered to be deviant. An apprenticeship is a means to an end, a transition between an individual who wants to tattoo and a professional artist within the industry. This transition is predicated on the apprentice's acceptance of subcultural norms and values, which is a view that is supported by Alison Fuller, who stated:

Apprenticeship has always been seen as a vehicle for controlling the behavior and morals of young people as well as for skill formation; the good worker as good citizen. It also acts as a connective force in that it bridges the space between education and work, communities and employment, and the generational dimension in workplaces as 'old timers' pass on their expertise to newcomers. (Fuller 64)

While Fuller's assessment of apprenticeship is an accurate description of the apprenticeship model within the tattoo industry, her research was about standardized apprenticeship models for licensed trades. I will argue that because apprenticeships are not a standardized practice within the outlaw tradition of the tattoo industry, it can be seen a subcultural structure of power, built upon exploitation.

Pierre Bourdieu's "The Logic of Practice" introduces the theory of Habitus; which refers to the values and expectations of social groups which are acquired through activities and experiences within the culture. Bourdieu describes habitus in relation to capital as:

... habitus which is the precondition for appropriate economic behaviour is the product of particular economic condition, the one defined by possession of the economic and cultural capital required in order to seize the 'potential opportunities' theoretically available to all. (Bourdieu 64)

Simply put, habitus is a structure of power that creates social hierarchy, based on disposition and taste (52). Capital is an asset within that system which is manifested through social, cultural or economic means, and is used by an individual to move along the ladder of a subculture to attain a higher position within its habitus (56). However, as Bourdieu stated, this is a transparent process as people believe that these opportunities are available to all, even if that is not the case.

Building on the theories of Bourdieu, Gerbert Kraaykamp's "The Intergenerational Reproduction of Cultural Capital" demonstrates the relation between capital and education. Kraaykamp argues that private education is not based on an individual's ability or desire to learn, but their connections to educators, through the means of social and economic capital (Kraaykamp 220). Individuals with money or prestige within the context of privatized education are more likely to be accepted into a school than an intelligent individual, who does not have access to those forms of cultural capital, because of their disposition within society (Kraaykamp 229). Thus, showing that despite one's intellect, they are held back from their potential because of a lack of capital within the habitus of the education system (Kraaykamp 231). There is a similarity between how an individual accesses private school and how an individual gets an apprenticeship.

Applying Bourdieu's theory, with respect to Kraaykamp's study shows that an apprenticeship within the tattoo industry can be seen as a form of privatized education. Forms of capital influence an individual's opportunity to get an apprenticeship. For example, a very talented

sketch artist with no prior relations to the artist or tattoos could bring their portfolio to a professional artist and be rejected, while a less talented artist but a friend and regular client of that same artist will be given an apprenticeship; which is representative of a use of social and/or cultural capital to get an apprenticeship as opposed to raw talent. Conversely, an individual who lacks artistic talent and/or social capital can use economic capital to both gain and skip the menial stage of the apprenticeship.

Outside of an apprenticeship, the only other way to become a tattooist results in a stigmatizing label (“scratcher”) placed on the individual by the professional industry. Labels are a powerful tool in the construction of identity, which is one of the focuses of Edwin Lemert’s research (Lemert 12). Lemert says that deviance is a spiralling pattern, defining primary deviance as a label that is associated with an individual based on their first time deviating from social norms (12). After being penalized based on their label, individuals engage in secondary deviance, following a pattern of resistance and punishment (16). Although Lemert’s study was focused on how systematic prejudice produces criminals, it is applicable to the scratcher paradigm. Self-taught tattooists do not realize they are doing something that is perceived by the professional industry to be wrong, until they are labelled.

In my research, self-taught artists did not identify as scratchers; however, they exist within a larger discursive context, where the process of labelling and deviance is active and systemic. Thus, if they are labelled a scratcher, they are treated as scratcher, regardless of their actual abilities and/or procedures as an artist. This is similar to deterrence theory, which is used in criminal sociology:

General deterrence is designed to prevent crime in the general population. Thus, the state’s punishment of offenders serves as an example for others in the general population who have not yet participated in criminal events. It is meant to make them aware of the horrors of official sanctions in order to put them off committing crimes. Examples include the application of the death penalty and the use of corporal punishment. (Dilulio 233)

Using Dilulio’s definition of general deterrence and modifying it to the basic principles of labelling theory, the term “scratcher” within the context of the professional industry signifies deviance. As the Facebook page clearly demonstrates, the label is used to deter individuals from going to self-taught artists. Often this deterrence is buttressed by professional artist using folk narratives of other client’s that have had bad experiences with a self-taught artist. Tattooing without an apprenticeship is not a crime, but it can be argued that within the normative values of the professional tattoo industry is considered to be criminal.

According to Goffman, stigmatization leads to identity construction, in which the individual takes on the deviant label that is associated as part of identity (Goffman 60). Self-taught artists do not label themselves scratchers; they are labelled; even if the implications of the term do not apply to that particular artist, and it is still applied based on the definition of what a scratcher is.

Curiously, the deviance associated with scratching is not based primarily on the quality of an artist’s work. According to one of my informants Shawn Legge, tattoos are a minor cosmetic surgery where personal safety can be jeopardized if an individual does not know how to use their equipment properly.

Cross-contamination is a medical practice, which teaches sterile field techniques and aseptic practice; equipment is handled with care to prevent the contamination of surgical instruments, in this case, tattoo stations and supplies. The general procedure is: a dental bib is

secured to the station, bags are used to cover wash bottles and tattoo machines; a disposable sleeve is placed on the clip cord and power supply; the arm rest is covered with a disposable nonporous material, to prevent blood and ink from touching the fabric. The artist only touches these things with his gloves on and when the tattoo is finished, all of these materials are disposed of in specially marked garbage bags. The needle is placed into a sharps container, which must be given to a clinic for proper disposal when full. If the artist uses steel tubes, they are placed in a contaminated zone and cleaned with an ultrasonic machine, scrubbed, packaged and placed into an autoclave to be sterilized.

Blood-borne pathogens are one of the leading causes of concern when getting a tattoo, as Hepatitis B or HIV can easily be transmitted between clients or the artist themselves. If something gets contaminated, it has to be thrown out or immediately scrubbed with chemical solvents. This is one of the professional industry's main arguments; that without an apprenticeship and hands-on training, there is no way self-taught tattooists can learn this process.

In the tattoo industry practices of health and safety are strongly associated with professional identity. However, a question arises as to how well professional artist's adhere to the sterile field practice? A study was conducted in Minneapolis, Minnesota in which 25 tattoo artists were interviewed and studied, to investigate if there was a disparity between knowledge about tattoo safety and workplace practices. According to Raymond's research:

Tattooists participating in this study demonstrated awareness of the risks associated with blood exposure to themselves and their customers... Although knowledge level was high, it was only partially operationalized in the workplace. While knowledge was associated with self-reported practice, it was not associated with observed practice.(Raymond 255)

The results from the study show that the tattoo artists who participated in the study know more about tattoo safety but do not universally apply procedures. If safety is a main concern of the professional industry of Newfoundland, their argument becomes significantly weaker when research has shown that an average of 44 of 62 recommended procedures are being followed, based on a sample of 25 professional artists from another region (Raymond 254).

An important understanding to take away from the literature review is how the history of the tattooing has influenced how knowledge is transmitted within the context of contemporary tattooing, the exploitative use of capital to enter the tattoo industry and how practices of health and safety are an integral part of professional identity within the tattoo industry. Finally, it is also important to consider how labels are used to construct deviant identity and police the industry.

## **Methodology**

Three types of semi-standardized interviews were designed for six different informants. The first interview was designed for artists in professional shops who had done an apprenticeship. Three informants were interviewed using this model. The second interview was designed for tattoo artists who operate outside of the apprenticeship system, of which one informant was interviewed. The third type of interview was designed for apprentices and artists who had recently completed an apprenticeship, of which two informants were interviewed. The purpose of the interview models was to create a dialogue between groups of people without ever having them speak directly to one another.

All of the interviews took place in tattoo shops. Having already known most of the informants in the study, I used convenience sampling and Facebook to build my research group.

Given that there are approximately 25 professional tattooists in Newfoundland, a sample size of six is likely representational of artists within the professional tattoo community. A limitation of the research is that only one individual, who straddles both communities, was interviewed who fits the profile of a scratcher. Therefore, this research, largely documents the views and cultural perceptions of the professional tattoo industry.

Five of the informants handled the interview process with relative ease, although one informant, Shawn Legge required some coaching and time to ease into the process. The answers received from the informants were fairly honest. Although two potential informants were discarded for being dishonest in their interview, which if it were for the purpose of another study, may have still been included in the current research.

At least one professional artists interviewed had started out as scratcher. Some of the questions were designed to target these artists in which they were asked to identify the problems that they faced as a scratcher and how they overcame the obstacles they faced due to the fact they had been tattooing without an apprenticeship. The self-taught informant that was interviewed using the second form of interview did not actually identify as being a scratcher, despite meeting the criteria used by the professional industry and Newfoundland Scratcher Directory to define scratchers. I found this interesting, because although he is a self-taught artist he considers some others in the self-taught community to be scratchers.

The findings from the research will be divided into four sections: Getting to Know the Informants, The Apprenticeship Model of Newfoundland, Contesting the Apprenticeship Model, the Social Construction of a Scratcher. Following the results, a conclusion will be made to tie the ideas presented in each section together.

### **Getting to Know the Informants**

Shawn is a 38-year old tattooist from Deer Lake, Newfoundland. Currently, he owns and operates Rock Island Tattoos, which is his second tattoo shop. Shawn began tattooing professionally in 2001 at Planet Ink on Queen Street, in downtown Toronto, Ontario. He moved back to Deer Lake in 2004 where he opened East Coast Tattoos, his shop before opening Rock Island. Unlike many of the artists that I interviewed, Shawn acknowledged that he did not start his career with an apprenticeship, instead his story as a tattooist began somewhere in the profession's *outlaw* roots. Hesitant at first to talk about his experience, Shawn described how a two-week sentence at a juvenile detention facility in Steady Brook in 1991 lead him to his current career. Despite a rough first night in the facility, Shawn quickly became friends with a group of kids who were already tattooed. They were fond of Shawn's sketches, and they asked him to tattoo them. Shawn obliged.

A few guys there were pretty heavily tattooed. You know, jail house tattooing, all hand poked shit, it was crap... They asked me to do a couple of tattoos on them... It was all just hand poking. They gave me a needle and some thread and wrapped it up and some ink and I drew stuff on them with pens and then I would tattoo it on there and that's how I did my first few tattoos. (Legge 0:05:19 - 0:06:02)

While many could argue that correctional facilities make juvenile delinquents more proficient criminals, Shawn left with ambitions for a career in tattooing, eventually getting his apprenticeship in 1996 when he moved to Ontario from Jim Wiseman, a fellow Newfoundlander, although he never finished his apprenticeship.

Chris Rogers is a 31 year-old apprentice, currently working under Shawn. The two met through a mutual friend in late 2012, and as they began playing in a band. Chris had previously been offered an apprenticeship by another artist in 2002 while he was still living in Corner Brook, but declined. In early 2013, Chris asked Shawn for an apprenticeship and is currently in the menial stages, but will soon begin developing his art practice.

Dave Munro is a 39 year-old tattooist, who owns and operates Trouble Bound Studio, a tattoo shop located in downtown St. John's. Before moving to St. John's, Dave began his apprenticeship in 1992 at Accents of Skin, a small tattoo shop in Toronto, Ontario. He apprenticed under a woman named Toby Martin, who had apprenticed under Gary Chaney, the owner of Studio One in Toronto, which is a large tattoo supply is used by many local artists within the industry. Dave had a very interesting story about how he got his apprenticeship:

I was tattooing after about six months.... Their idea was to milk me for as much as they possibly could.... The day before I started my apprenticeship, they were busted for dealing heroin and didn't know if they were going to be getting out of jail so their whole concept was to get me to make money for them, so they could potentially run [the shop] if they didn't think they were going to make it through their court issues. (Munro 0:07:25-0:08:05)

Although sceptical about the provincial legislation regulating tattoo shops within the province, Dave has been involved with advising the government on behalf of the industry. On June 6, 2012 Dave represented the tattoo industry when NTV News aired the public disclosure of Bill-C67 on live television. Dave is considered to be highly influential in the industry, with Trouble Bound Studio considered to by many to be the most successful shop in the province.

Andy Griffin is a 25 year-old tattooist who recently completed his apprenticeship under Dave Munro. Andy considers himself to still be in the infancy of tattooing and does not yet feel ready to call himself an artist. Andy is currently working with Dave at Trouble Bound Studio.

Ken Power is a 40 year-old tattooist from Kelligrews, Conception Bay South. Before tattooing, Ken was a painter and had trained as a nurse. He currently owns The Ken Power Tattoo Company. He apprenticed at St. John's Ink for a year and has only been tattooing for five years. Ken is an active member of the Newfoundland Scratcher Directory and had a story to share, which stemmed from his participation on the directory:

In June of 2012, a fire bomb was thrown through the window of my shop in an attempt to burn me down, in an attempt to silence me.... It stemmed from an incident on the Scratcher Directory, where I gave my opinion on an open forum with my name attached to it.... A little while later I received threats, and 16 hours after that a fire bomb came through my window (Power 0:19:50-0:20:18)

Despite the incident, Ken is still an active member of the directory. While he does not entirely agree with the directory's methods, he nonetheless supports it because of their stance against scratchers.

Travis Jones is a 26 year-old tattooist, who graduated from the College of the North Atlantic with a certificate in Business Administration in 2008. Upon completing his program at CNA, Travis opened Skin Gallery, a tattoo shop in Corner Brook. Travis has never done an apprenticeship, instead learning to tattoo by using the internet, books and videos. In 2011, Travis won two awards at the Maritime Tattoo Convention in Halifax, Nova Scotia winning the best back piece and 2<sup>nd</sup> best large black and grey.

I was always into getting tattoos and I was always into art, and over time the two kind of came together and I found something that I was passionate about doing. (Jones 0:00:33-0:00:38)

Despite being new to the industry and operating outside of it, Travis is an accomplished tattooist, having the awards to support that claim. Although he meets the criteria for being a scratcher, no one has directly made the claim to his face, nor does he consider himself to be one. Travis represents the potential paradigm shift within the industry, as more people may opt to learn how to tattoo outside of the apprenticeship model currently.

### **The Apprenticeship Model of the Newfoundland Tattoo Industry**

One does not need an apprenticeship to tattoo in Newfoundland, nor do they need one to open their own tattoo shop. When an apprenticeship is over, the apprentice does not receive a certificate or any other document authenticating that they have done an apprenticeship. Despite the secretive nature of the apprenticeship model, it is still considered by the professional industry to be the most essential step in becoming a *real* tattoo artist and the only means by which an artist can have credentials within the industry.

As noted in the introduction, the apprenticeship model of the Newfoundland tattoo industry is not legally binding; it is not controlled by any direct authoritative power, bureaucracy or government agency. In the context of the Newfoundland & Labrador tattoo industry, apprenticeship follows a traditional folk (or vernacular) form wherein the apprentice enters into a nonbinding interpersonal agreement with the tattooist to follow a basic configuration. The apprentice in question has given their consent to work for the artist, without pay as a form of payment on their behalf, for their education. However, the artists I interviewed within the industry did not find their own apprenticeships to be of a high quality. For example, Dave Munro said:

A lot of the way she designed what she was teaching me was so that I would always know what I needed to do, but not enough to leave. The idea was that I couldn't make needles but I could use them.... (Munro 0:03:14 - 0:03:30)

Needle-making used to be a standard practice within the industry, because ready-made needles were too expensive to buy in bulk. Tattooists would have to buy individual needles, group them and solder the groupings to the needle bar then bathe the excess solder off of the needle in a nitrate solution before sterilizing them in an autoclave. In his response, Dave is illustrating how apprenticeships are both a means of teaching, while at the same time making sure they do not learn enough to abandon the apprenticeship process. When asked about the design of the apprenticeship model as it currently stands, Dave confirms the definition I have been using:

You're dealing with an unlicensed notion of things.... I wasn't charged for my apprenticeship but I definitely paid for it.... I've had friends, who I respect in the industry who had very few apprentices but like the one's they've had, charged them a couple of grand... It's an unregulated industry when it comes to things like that, like it's not like carpentry or plumbing.... I don't think someone could set up a board that could sort of summarize what it is you need to move forward because there is nothing standardized about an art form. (Munro 0:08:08 – 0:09:27)

Dave's response is indicative of Bourdieu's theory, as he knows individuals who have taken on

apprentices for economic capital. The lack of regulations help to explain the exploitation of an apprenticeship, such that someone could charge thousands of dollars to teach an art form they could potentially learn for free, through the self-taught methods. Shawn Legge is an interesting story, as he started tattooing without an apprenticeship, never finished his own, yet offers them to other individuals.

Shawn has offered three other people apprenticeships before Chris, with one failing their apprenticeship and the other two abandoning the process within the first couple of weeks. When asked about the notion of failing an apprenticeship in reference to his former apprentice, Shawn had this to say:

There was a certain lack of interest from the start, but I thought that maybe he would come around eventually when they saw the potential in tattooing, the growth in tattooing... He didn't put effort in the places he was supposed to put effort in... The thing is that, confidence is very key in tattooing but over confidence can really set you back. (Rogers & Legge 0:17:05 - 0:20:03)

In the context of the apprenticeship model that takes place in contemporary tattooing, there is no guarantee of success. Shawn's former apprentice had served under him for three years before being told that he was not ready to tattoo and subsequently left. Within the subcultural norms and values of tattooists, there is a sense of responsibility. If the artist does not feel that their apprentice is ready to tattoo, they will not give them permission to tattoo. In the tattoo industry, word of mouth and an individual's reputation is everything. Because a tattooist is identified with their teacher, the cultural capital of a tattooist, as outlined is imperilled if the artist's apprentice does low quality work.

The practice of free labour is often called "paying your dues." The menial tasks of an apprenticeship are to determine if an apprentice has enough dedication to become a tattoo artist. When asked about what it is like to work for free for an extended period of time, Chris, who is apprenticing under Shawn, had this response:

I mean it is what it is, I'm not looking at the short term game, I'm looking at my career down the road... I'm paying the dues now so that it gets to put food on my table later... It's an investment in yourself more than anything else. (Rogers & Legge 0:06:08 - 0:06:34)

Chris did not seem to be troubled by the notion of failing an apprenticeship and is very optimistic about finishing. When asked how he felt about possibly failing his apprenticeship, in regards to Shawn's previous apprentice Chris responded:

I'm an all or nothing guy, I'm not a casual guy. I'll throw my whole self into it... For him to take a chance on me is a big deal, I don't take that lightly. This place is like sacred ground to me, so I treat it with the reverence and respect it deserves... Failure is always an option, but if you don't fear failing, what do you got to lose? (Rogers & Legge 0:20:53 - 0:21:45)

This quote shows that Chris is conforming to the subcultural norms and values, taking on the identity of a tattooist; which is apparent from his view of an apprenticeship as self-investment as opposed to exploitation.

The progression from apprentice to tattooist can be validated as with the case of Andy. Although Andy has already completed his apprenticeship under Dave, he still feels that he is an

apprentice because he is learning something new every day. When asked to describe his apprenticeship, Andy replied:

With me and Dave, it was pretty hands on. Like, he taught me just about everything, every aspect. How to build a machine, the technique of stretching skin and I drew every god damn day.... It was great, I couldn't ask for any better. (Griffin 0:01:56-0:02:28)

The hegemonic attitude of the professional tattoo industry in Newfoundland seems to be that the reason an apprenticeship is so important, is that to tattoo without proper training is potentially a health hazard. According to Shawn, safety is the most important aspect of learning how to tattoo.

A lot of it is procedure, how you handle things, how you zone things. You have a contaminated zone, you have a sterile zone... These are things that are a combination of common sense and training. (Legge 54:45-54:56)

Ken Power had three apprentices fail and refuses to take on another. However, Ken also stresses the importance of an apprenticeship, as he explained what it is they learn:

An apprentice is made to break down and set up stations over and over and over again, so that they don't even have to think about it anymore, until it becomes second nature... An apprentice is supplied with all the best possible opportunities to have the best possible equipment it in terms of barriers, solvents and whatever else is needed to keep your work area clean... It's not only the materials, but it's the techniques, what you can touch, when you can touch it. (Power 0:23:45 - 0:24:44)

Returning to Bourdieu's idea of habitus, from the data collected it can be seen that each of the informants reported a use of social, cultural or economic capital in context with the apprenticeship model. Dave Munro knows artists who offer an apprenticeship seeking economic capital, while Dave himself had gotten his apprenticeship using social capital. Until Shawn had met Jim Wiseman, he could not find anyone that would apprentice him because his previous experience tattooing without an apprenticeship hindered his cultural capital; even though he was an adept artist, he was still, in the eyes of the professional industry a scratcher. Shawn had gotten his apprenticeship from an artist, using social and cultural capital; being a prospective young artist who is from the same province as his master was. Chris, who has no tattoos, got his apprenticeship using social capital, from his experience playing in a band with Shawn.

Although these are reasons as to why the apprenticeship model exists, it still does not explain why it is considered to be the only way to learn how to tattoo. To answer this question, in the following section, this model will be contested, to show not only are there other ways to learn how to tattoo, but why this model is so supported by the professional industry.

### **Contesting the Apprenticeship Model of Newfoundland**

A term coined by Erving Goffman, "reinvention" was used by Marion Goldman in her analysis of subcultures that require an individual to recreate their identity to join a subculture. Goldman writes:

Contemporary reinventive institutions may go unnoticed because they are insular and often secret, requiring high levels of personal

commitment and investment to cement inclusion. (Goldman 276)

Reinvention, in the context of the contemporary tattoo industry, applies to the training of an apprentice, in which their normative values towards work place ethics are replaced with the values of the industry. The tattoo industry qualifies as a reinventive institution, because of the secret, unofficial nature of the apprenticeship. As a reinventive institution however, tattoo shops differ from Goffman's model because they are defined by voluntary action rather than coercive membership (275). While not coercive, the tattoo shop is the sole habitus in which an individual can learn the trade and therefore, the need to conform to expectations is imperative to gain access. As well, we will see the scratcher movement is partially a response to the tensions within the apprenticeship model.

From a Capitalist perspective, it would be more beneficial to train an apprentice at a faster pace, to have them tattooing in half the time it takes to do an apprenticeship. However, this does not happen is because, in a traditional apprenticeship, the passing on of subcultural norms and values is more important than monetary gain. It can be argued that paying your dues has nothing to do with the transmission of trade-based knowledge and everything to do with the construction and reproduction of subcultural norms and values. Scrubbing toilets and fetching coffee has absolutely nothing to do with learning how to outline, shade and colour a tattoo safely; it is about creating a hierarchy of respect, a system of beliefs and a way of life in an individual, in which the apprentice will transition into a professional artist who will one day pass on those norms, values and hierarchies to the next generation of artist's that go through the apprenticeship model.

Apprentices work very hard for the shop. They dedicate hours of their life every day, doing menial tasks in the hopes of becoming a tattoo artist. Without an apprentice, these tasks would have to be done by the artist themselves or they would have to hire someone else to do them, because keeping a shop clean is difficult work and a requirement if they do not want their shops to be shut down by a health inspector. These tasks are meaningless parts of an apprentice's actual education, and the unpaid labour materially contributes to the financial success of the shop. I am sure that if Marx and Engels were alive to analyse the apprenticeship model within contemporary tattooing, they would no doubt have called it an exploitative affair. Which is one of the reasons why Travis Jones learned to tattoo on his own; as a self-taught artist, Travis has heard about many situations in which apprentices were exploited by their master:

I know people in Ontario that have done apprenticeships and they worked for a year, no wages and I've heard cases where some shops will take somebody on, under the assumption they're doing an apprenticeship, have them work for free for six months then send them on their way.... It depends if you're dealing with a legit or honest person. (Jones 0:3:50 – 0:4:13)

From Travis' response it is apparent that the industry still exists within its outlaw roots. Morally grey decisions to let an apprentice go after having them work for them for three years, such as the case with Shawn and his former apprentice, or a tattoo shop apprenticing someone to make them money as in Dave's case, or artists like Dave's friends who charge thousands of dollars for an apprenticeship, all of these examples derive from the outlaw ethic that still governs the tattoo industry in Newfoundland & Labrador.

Travis has won two awards at the most prestigious convention in Atlantic Canada. However, Travis is self-taught. So how can this be? Travis' success contradicts the notion that tattooing can only be learned from an apprenticeship. He could not have entered the Maritime Tattoo Convention without passing a test to prove that he is knowledgeable of cross

contamination. When asked how he learned to tattoo, Travis replied:

I was around tattooing in my spare time but mainly just a lot of reading, internet, books.... Everything in regards to health regulations can be found in a book, there's no discrepancy in that.... The tattooing part is just a lot of research, a lot of time put into it.  
(Jones 0:00:54 – 0:01:26)

Travis used the same methods that are available to anyone that chooses to tattoo outside of the apprenticeship model; methods which are considered by the inner circle of the professional industry as ineffective.

If the proposed apprenticeship model is supported by the industry through the argument of passing on safety practices regarding cross-contamination to the next generation, why did the results show so many differences in their procedures in Raymond's study? Healing methods differ from artist to artist, and although there is a standard, each artist's practice is relatively different.

Shawn bandages his tattoos with saran wrap and recommends a semi-dry healing method, in which a client washes their tattoo once, and waits three days before applying ointment. Conversely, Dave Munro wraps his tattoos in a medicated pad, recommends they wash the tattoo multiple times a day and to start applying ointment the following day. Ken Power suggests that a tattoo be washed once during the two week healing period, with ointment being applied three times a day, from the first day onwards. Vastly different practices, while safe, leaves one to wonder why there are so many differences in something as important as healing methods and bandages. A question to which, all three of the artists within the professional industry responded similarly, that it is an artist's discretion to use what works best for their work to heal. Such lack of standardization, suggests that the tattoo industry's stance on safety is less of a concern to the industry than they would make it seem. When considering issues of health and safety, healing techniques are an esoteric way for an individual to make distinctions about practitioners in the industry. Value judgements, competency and a hierarchy are related to performance of identity.

Returning to Raymond's study from the literature review, the lack of health and safety practices by the professional industry could help explain why most artists in that study completed 44 out of 67 procedures on average, with none of the artists completing all 67 procedures (Raymond 257). Such results suggest that the argument supporting the apprenticeship model based on safety is a mode of stigmatization of self-taught artists as opposed to actual fact.

With vast differences in their methods and Travis' success as an artist taken into account, one has to wonder if there is there something deeper involved in the labelling and construction of the scratcher identity. The next section will show that while there are a variety of basement artists who tattoo dangerously, not all self-taught artists are the same.

### **The Social Construction of a Scratcher**

According to the professional industry, a scratcher is an individual who attempts to tattoo without an apprenticeship, in an unsafe environment, lacking any aseptic knowledge, resulting in poor quality work that is potentially infected. This is a part of the stigma that has become attached to self-taught artists through the label "scratcher." The research has shown that the professional industry has a variety of defining characteristics that they associate with scratchers. According to Dave Munro:

They don't mean to screw up but, but they seem to lack moral fibre that would define screwing up the rest of someone else's life as

being an issue. They've got a certain level of narcissism and a slightly sociopathic nature of dealing with other human beings. (Munro 0:13:06 – 0:13:30)

According to Shawn Legge:

For there to be a scratcher now, makes no sense to me and really shows the level of ignorance because so much information is available on the internet that, that if you're trying to tattoo and you're not at least finding out these fundamentals of health and safety, then what are you doing? (Legge 0:45:24 – 0:45:35)

According to Ken Power:

They want to go in their basement and hack apart their friends. To do what they're doing unmolested, unchecked by the department of Health or anybody else who's responsibility to make sure they're not causing harm... The biggest problem with scratchers is their absolute lack of knowledge. For example, they don't understand cross-contamination. (Power 0:10:20 – 0:11:15)

Obviously, this depiction is of a stereotype of self-taught artists, as seen by the professional industry.

This secondary deviance is socially constructed, as both a label and a means of deterrence to make people avoid a marginalized group within society. Within the context of the tattoo industry, scratcher is a label used to define self-taught artists, even if the definition is not necessarily true. Edwin Lemert called this secondary deviance, in which deviance is created as deterrence (Lemert 17). Once a member of the industry, one does not simply question why scratchers are considered to be outsiders, no matter how gifted or safe they may be in their techniques, because in the framework of the apprenticeship model of the tattoo industry, they are constructed as a deviant. This construction helps keep apprentices on the path of their apprenticeship, fearing to become viewed as a scratcher if they choose to tattoo on their own. Despite safety methods regarding cross contamination in publically available medical journals, the unclean association with scratchers is part of the construction of their secondary deviance.

The label is used to discredit the ability of self-taught artists. By creating this label, the professional industry deters potential customers from going to self-taught artists because scratchers are perceived to be dangerous. This is perhaps a defence mechanism, in fear of losing their clientele to artists who tattoo for cheaper prices and are more flexible on the overall imagery of the tattoo.

The Newfoundland Scratcher Directory is a tool, which may not have been started by an artist within the industry, but is nonetheless being used to deter people from scratchers. The stigmatization of self-taught artists, as a label and social construct, is the result of a bias that has formed within the professional tattoo industry and community of Newfoundland & Labrador, based on the fear of change as a result of the rejection of subcultural norms and values.

In relation to habitus, receiving the label of scratcher removes one's cultural and social capital within the industry. The label is designed to create a difference between insiders and outsiders, as a form of social control. It also inspires in-group conformity, as insiders make an effort to spread the knowledge of scratchers to any and all potential clients.

The level abhorrence of the professional industry has for self-taught artist would suggest that there is a change occurring within the industry that they do not agree with, which will be part of the next section, the conclusion.

### Conclusion

Historically, change has almost always met with resistance and the same can be said of the structure of the subcultural norms and values of the tattoo industry. Becoming a self-taught artist is an easier process than it was ten years ago; the apprenticeship model as it currently stands, is becoming outdated because of the available information technology and the economic struggle associated with doing an apprenticeship. These changes represent a potential change in how the industry of the future will operate, as well as the position of those who are operating it.

Tattooing outside of the apprenticeship model not only lessens the importance of an apprenticeship within the current industry, but affects the foundation upon which the industry operates. If people stop doing apprenticeships, the entire structure of the system changes. The subcultural norms and values that have been in effect for generations have been challenged by the development and accessibility of information technology, which essentially makes an apprenticeship redundant. Thus, offering a possible explanation as to why the labelling of scratchers has developed, as a response by the professional industry to deter individuals from self-taught artists.

Of course, that is not to say that the informants for the research are malevolent people. They are simply a product of the system as it currently stands; the values that lie at the foundation of their careers, justify their beliefs in the current apprenticeship model. The personal resistance and stigmatization of self-taught artists is not the product of individual thought, but the overarching hegemony of a subcultural way of life, that is being threatened by a change caused by advances in information technology.

In conclusion, the apprenticeship model is exploitative within an etic and exoteric perspective. Esoterically, artists within the industry and current apprentices view this model as the only means which an individual can learn to tattoo. While the professional artists were all unsatisfied with their own apprenticeships, they still believe in it as a system of learning. It is also apparent that the work of Bourdieu, Goffman and Lemert were applicable to this study, and contemporary tattoo culture in Newfoundland & Labrador.

Whether the professional industry will change from the current model of apprenticeship to an industry of self-taught artists remains to be seen. What is apparent, is that the level of stigma associated with self-taught artists is highly suggestive of at the very least, a fear of this possibility. In conclusion, further research would need to be conducted, as well as a follow up report on the development of the tattoo industry in the next ten to fifteen years. A good start for future research would be to build the ethnography of self-taught artists within the province. As it stands, the tattoo industry continues onward in its outlaw roots, although it would appear that the skin of its troubled past is slowly beginning to shed away.

Since I began conducting research in January 2013, the Newfoundland Scratcher Directory has been shut down and reopened four times and is still a controversial forum, within the context of contemporary tattoo culture in Newfoundland & Labrador. I doubt that I'll ever return to the directory as an active participant, although further study on the directory would be an interesting focus of future research.

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