“He Stuns Yer Arse”:

Jack Tales in Contemporary Newfoundland and Labrador

By © Abigail Crocker, a Thesis submitted

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Abstract

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This thesis interrogates and describes the purpose of Jack tales in Newfoundland, Jack's identity, and why understanding and interpreting differing, contemporary views of the character is meaningful when the theoretical framework of Functionalism is applied. This research focusses on the three central themes of home, genre, and gender and discusses the relevance of Jack in contemporary Newfoundland traditions, ideologies, and narratives following interviews with community members, oral narratives, and published texts. Ultimately, this research concludes that Jack is a dynamic character who is capable of influencing the way people re-construct, de-construct, and maintain both personal and provincial identity.

KEY WORDS: Analysis, Fieldwork, Folklore, Folk Narrative, Folktales, Functionalism, Gender Inequality, Genre, Identity, Jack tales, Legends, Newfoundland and Labrador

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I acknowledge tellers of Jack stories, and the folklorists who have studied their work and their impact. They are seen. I also acknowledge that there is more to learn about Jack tales, and wish for this work to be scaffolding for others who follow in this research.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Scope and Objectives

Jack was a friend of mine as a child. I knew his face from a deck of cards and carved into pumpkins. I knew his visits from the frost on car windows. He jumped over candlesticks, sat in corners, and went up hills with our mutual friend Jill. He climbed beanstalks. He fought giants. He lived in a box.

We parted ways when I grew older. Not in any meaningful way. Jack just faded into the background to make space for more character acquaintances - Robin Hood, Skadi, and King Arthur among others – and we lost touch. I forgot about Jack. It was not until my second year of graduate school that I serendipitously rediscovered our friendship.

Jack returned shortly after my first thesis idea dissolved and I was searching, without luck, for a new research topic. A wise woman at the copy machine asked, "What about folklore interests you the most?".

My answer to her, "stories, education, and vigilante heroes."

"Have you heard about Jack tales?" she asked. "There's a local storyteller who writes children's books using Jack tales – it connects almost all your interests, and it's a growth area in our field."

This thesis is proof that I took her advice. In it, I explore how the theoretical framework of functionalism helps folklorists explore the representation and interpretation of Newfoundland culture and identity as expressed through 'Jack tales' – stories about a character called Jack.

First, this theoretical framework interrogates how Jack tales allow Newfoundland residents to express, reinforce, and challenge representations of home; second, the framework can be combined with genre theory to discusses how Jack tales in Newfoundland both transgress and adhere to traditional boundaries of the folktale genre; and finally, functionalism when applied with gender, feminist, trans, and queer theories can examine how and why tellers negotiate dynamics of power and gender within their communities of practice.

The sections of this thesis follow the spheres of impact for the tale – from the home, where the stories are told, and out into the communities they shape. I am following the pathway established by Charlotte Paige Gutierrez's 1975 thesis "The Jack Tales", wherein she "describes and defines the Jack Tale as a genre (or sub-genre) of American folk narrative and to investigate how one teller, Marshall Ward, has both preserved and modified the Jack Tale tradition" (Gutierrez, 1975, 1). Bengt Holbek argues that fairy tales can be used to identify problems faced by children and young adults by addressing three themes: "gender, age, and social power" (Lovelace, Greenhill, and Best, 2019, Location 241). This thesis explores a similar structure, proposing that Jack tales allow Newfoundland residents to explore home, genre, and gender – which, in literary fields, could stand for societal expectations of people and stories alike. Building on this critical foundation, this thesis will explore the ways in which Jack tales are being conserved, used, and transformed in current Newfoundland culture and identity through the careful application of a functionalist analysis.

1.2 Background of Study

Jack tales are folktales whose central character is named Jack – though sometimes he is referred to by the name of which Jack is the diminutive: John. For example, when storyteller and

comedian Andy Jones tells the story *Jack the Little Fisherman*, he calls the main character Jack or 'Little Johnny' interchangeably (Jones, 2019, Interview). Jack is a character whose story has been told throughout history. Herbert Halpert traced the Irish, Scottish, and English history of Jack tales in his preface to Richard Chase's 1943 collection called *The Jack Tales* (Chase, 1943, 1) and elaborated upon this ancestry in his work with J. D. A Widdowson in *Folktales of Newfoundland* (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 2). Henry Glassie, on the other hand, connected the lineage of Jack tales to a German ancestry. Stephen D. Winick argues that Jack, as a nickname derived from John, allows us to draw connections between the personal attributes of the character to those of the German Hans, Spanish Juan, French Petit Jean, and Russian Ivan, and asserts that "clearly Anglo Jack is just one facet of a wider European tradition" (Winick, n.d.).

Winick also argues that Jack is no longer just a name through its presentation in the names of tools like the Car *Jack,* *Jack*hammer*, Jack* plane, *Jack*knife, Roasting *Jack* and *Jack*screw, or as the less useful "tool," the *Jack*ass. Someone or something that is Cracker*jack* is said to be of exceptional quality, while someone or something that is *Jack*booted is cruel and oppressive. The phrases "Jack of all trades; master of none; still a lot better than master of one" and the 1650s proverb "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" suggest that a key characteristic of Jack is the ability to be average at many things without working too hard. Winick further argues it is a combination of these common, everyday phrases and words that "suggests both commonness and humility, and is thus a name for Everyman, much like the later legal nickname, John Doe. However, 'Jack' combines its commonness and humbleness with clearly Anglo-Saxon ancestry; after all, his most famous opponent, the giant, smells the blood not of an Everyman, but of an Englishman" (Winick, n.d.).

Jack tales follow a basic pattern where the hero, Jack, sets out "to seek his fortune" – sometimes preceded by his older brothers Tom and Bill (or Will). His kindness to a stranger or creature, cleverness in the face of adversity, or dumb luck gives him access to supernatural help. Sometimes this help takes the form of companions who help him along his journey, at others help comes to Jack from ordinary objects with magical abilities. At other times, Jack's goodness and cleverness are his only tools. By these means, Jack completes tasks, usually three, and wins whatever he set out to claim: fame, fortune, and/or love before returning home.

Jack in Newfoundland, according to producer of Battery Radio Christopher Brookes, Andy Jones, and Running the Goat Books and Broadsides publisher Marnie Parsons, is everyman: "He's the young naive guy that doesn't have any particular skills or learning, but because of his skills or naïveté, he ultimately wins the day and the hand of the princess…. He survives where other people who are nastier and more miserable don't" (Brooks, 2019, Interview). Marnie Parsons observed that Jack tales stress certain values such as "do good, be kind, be brave. Jack can be a bit of a trickster too sometimes" (Parsons, 2019, Interview). One of Elizabeth Fine's informants, Beverly Carter-Sexton, tells a story in which Jack, much like Parsons observes, acts as a "slothful, Cannibalistic anti-hero… He is a deceiver, a shape-shifter, and a situation inverter" (Fine, 1999, 126). While this too reflects everyman, it reveals a much darker personality. Mary Fearon believes that the reason Jack tales last is because the stories continually have value to the people who both tell and hear them: "That value is not who Jack is as a man, but who Jack is [as?] a character – the essence of his character is more important than who he is as 'Jack'" (Fearon, 2019, Interview).

Reinforcing this everyman character, whenever they appear in the tales, are Jack's brothers – usually named Bill and Tom. In Jones' 2008 puppet play adaptation of *The Queen of*

Paradise's Garden, artist Darka Erdelji created the puppets of Bill and Tom as a play on words: Tom's body is made out of a *tom*ato can, while Bill's body is made out of an abacus – a tool that people use to help pay their *bills* (Jones and Erdelji, The Queen of Paradise's Garden Puppet Play, 2019). When these brothers exist, Jack is usually the youngest, kindest, and sometimes least precocious of the three – "all he ever done was sit around in the coal box all day long… all he ever done was take a potato, stick it on his big toe, stick it in the fire, roast it and eat it" (Yashinsky, 1998, 76) – he also often has the least fulfilling relationship with their mother.

1.3 Geographical Contexts

In the United States, Jack tales have a rich history. Appalachian Jack tales were nationally popularized in 1943, by American folklorist and children's author Richard Chase's book *The Jack Tales* – a book which Carl Lindahl says was so influential that "it helped perpetuate two substantial fallacies: that American Märchen were pretty much the legacy of one family, and that the characteristic tales were about a boy named Jack" (Lindahl, 2001, 73). Chase so dynamically altered the Jack tales that he collected in ways similar to the Grimm Brothers and Charles Perrault, that Charles L. Perdue Jr. argues, "through [Chase] Appalachian Jack became American Jack" (Purdue, 2001, 125) showcasing a parody "in which Jack appears as a tall tale hero with swagger and without subtlety, and in which the most intimate aspects of context and motivation are lost" (Lindahl, 2001, 92). Chase interpreted Jack tales as a cycle that reflected the "dreams, desires, ambitions, and experiences of a whole people" (Chase, 1943, xii) by way of Jack's personality. Chase characterizes Jack as possessing "easy going, unpretentious, rural, American mannerisms" (Chase, 1943, ix) without defining what 'American' mannerisms mean,

or whether they differentiate him from the Jacks in England, Ireland, Scotland (Purdue Jr., 1987), or, for that matter, Newfoundland.

By contrast, Widdowson suggests that Newfoundland, as a British overseas colony, was an enclave for traditions brought over "from 'the old country'" (Widdowson, 2004, 22), and therefore Jack in Newfoundland does not express these quintessential 'American' characteristics. In his article "Jack and His Masters: Real Worlds and Tale Worlds in Newfoundland Folktales", Martin Lovelace illustrates Newfoundland Jack's rules: guard your knowledge, trust older men's advice, trust and value your female companion, be sturdy and useful, never complain, never admit that a task is too difficult, do not flinch, and be deceitful and contrary to your employer because they are benefiting *from* you, not *for* you. Lovelace argues that these implicit rules guided young boys to be strong, productive members of Newfoundland society as they grew up. Lovelace also suggests that because the working poor were both the primary narrators and the target audience for Jack tales – especially children and young adults – and that these tales were told primarily on work-based trips or at home, that Jack tales connected a community together – the man to the home, the men to their work, and the boys to the men. Lovelace suggests "narrators' memories of male-to-male storytelling seem to support the idea that many Newfoundland Jack tales instructed young men and boys in how to be proper men according to the canons of working-class behavior" (Lovelace, 2001, 154). They also served to encourage unity against an oppressive figure – thus illustrating the antagonistic relationship between the 'working man' and his employer. Telling these tales at a workplace coded important information that boys needed in order to operate within a pre-existing hierarchy or "ways to be" (Lovelace, 2001, 151). Jack tales were one way that employees could gripe about their employer, commiserate over the job, and teach life lessons without the employer knowing the 'ogre' or the

'magician' was referring to them. Implications regarding gendered interpretation of Jack can be found in chapter four.

Lovelace drew upon Herbert Halpert and J. D. A. Widdowson's 1996 two-volume collection of Newfoundland Jack tale narratives, *Folktales of Newfoundland*, as sources for his article. Halpert and Widdowson had collected the stories from interviews dated between 1964 and 1972, and had worked together on folktale research in Newfoundland in the 1960s and 1970s. Halpert had also previously collected Märchen resulting from fieldwork in the United States between 1937 and 1946 (Widdowson, 2009).[1] *Folktales of Newfoundland* includes 150 tales from eighty tellers in forty communities, 135 of which are transcribed verbatim from their tellers, and reflect influences from England, Ireland, Scotland, and France (Widdowson, 2009). Halpert and Widdowson observed that in an historical context, Jack tales were told by men on the job, during sealing trips, fishing voyages, or in lumber camps, though their tellers remember learning these tales as children at home (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, xxxiii-xxxiv). This tradition of telling Jack tales in domestic contexts, as documented in *Folktales of Newfoundland*, appears to be less prevalent now than it once was – though an academic exploration into whether this is completely true or not has not recently been conducted. Widdowson hypothesizes that "music, songs, dances, mummers plays, and stories performed as everyday entertainment... inevitably began to decline with the advent of the mass media, and the impact of educational development and social change" (Widdowson, 2004, 22). Halpert and Widdowson's 1996 publication therefore acts as a foundational text that both records a declining way of life, and inspires contemporary authors such as Jones – who directly credits Halpert and Widdowson as

[1] These tales were finally published in 2004 in *American Folktales from the Collections of the Library of Congress,* as part of a 158-page section devoted to the tales, principally Jack tales, of the Hicks-Harmon family in Beech Mountain, North Carolina (Lindahl, 2004, 1-158).

part of the inspiration behind his children's Jack tale books. In opposition to Alan Dundes' denigration of published fairy tales arguing that "one cannot possibly read fairy tales; one can only properly hear them told" (Dundes, 1986, 259) and Holbek's similar assertion that "no word of any language and few pre-industrial artifacts had spread as far and wide as the haunting themes of these tales, despite their lack of physical substance, their total dependence on the faulty memories of men" (Holbek, 1987, 17), there is still value in writing Jack tales down. Writers like Jones are conserving and creating Jack tales while also bringing them to new, global audiences. In a world where people build relationships by writing their comments to each other online, the written word becomes an imperative mode of expression that can no longer be dismissed.

The most recent work on Jack tales, published in 2019, builds on Halpert and Widdowson's example. Pauline Greenhill, Anita Best, and Martin Lovelace published *Clever Maids, Fearless Jacks, and a Cat* to showcase eight stories told by Pius Power and Alice Lannon, and argues the true power of a story is through oral rather than literary tradition. In an attempt to demonstrate this point, Best, Greenhill, and Lovelace's transcriptions are based on Greenhill's detailed ethnopoetic model, and suggest that everything a teller does and says while they are presenting the story is important. It must be noted, however, that in their first appendix, they emphasize that every transcription is a compromise: "in moving from oral to written, nuances of voice are difficult to denote; we lose, for example, Alice's representations of the speakers in her stories, and her singing the fairies' tune (though we include it as a musical transcription). But something is also gained: oral texts may be inaccessible to many hearers because of the teller's accent, as could be the case with Pius's stories" (Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill, 2019, Appendix 1). In this way, their argument that the true power of stories lies in

oral performances rather than in literary representations is undermined by the fact that they are disseminating their arguments through the written word.

The irony is, that to reach a global audience, these Jack tales *must* be written down, whether it is bound and sold as a book or recorded on the internet – perhaps unintentionally, on the authors' part, supporting Ruth B Bottigheimer's assertion that "writing and print are essential to the transmission of complex tales" (Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill, 2019, 10). "The 'rise' fairy tale – with its protagonists' humble origins, their suffering the effects of poverty, their undergoing tests or tasks and surmounting trials, and with the trope of magical assistance that allows the protagonists to marry a royal personage and become rich – did not exist in popular tradition before the 1550s" (Bottigheimer, 2010, 447). In contrast to the extreme, opposed positions argued by Dundes and Bottigheimer, this thesis posits that neither method of transmission is the sole purveyor of "the true power of story" and incorporates resources from both oral and written practices.

1.4 Methodology, and Informants

The fieldwork for this project included interviews with Jack tale tellers, as well as the analysis of folktale transcripts, children's books, tape and video recorded interviews, and performances relating to Jack tales. The reading and interpretation of such texts, argues Bonnie Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, provides "a rich fictional account of a cultural group with its own codes, behaviors, stories, and rituals" (Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater, 2002, 113) – a form that Max Lüthi likewise theorizes "is dependent upon what type of person creates and cultivates it. At the same time, much more significantly, it is dependent upon the needs of the audience" (Lüthi, 1986, 81). Considering these two theoretical perspectives in combination with Holbek

and Bottigheimer is important for the development of this research process, because their combination encourages a close examination of Jack tales not only as texts but also as oral performances.

I reviewed four Jack tale children's books published between 2005 and 2018, and discuss them here as they relate to the central themes of home, genre, and gender. Three of these books are published through Running the Goat Books and Broadsides – a local St. John's publishing agency – and were authored by Andy Jones and illustrated by Darka Erdelji: *Jack and the Manger* (2010), *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves* (2011), and *Jack and the Green Man* (2016). Janet McNaughton wrote and Susan Tooke illustrated the sixth children's book text: *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* (2005). This research also includes an audio-recorded performance of Andy Jones' *The Queen of Paradise's Garden* puppet play from 2019, an audio-recorded performance of *Jack Meets the Cat*, including a scripted variation (Yashinsky, 1998), by Sheila's Brush, and a radio play called *The Annotated Jack: A Tale of Two Jacks* by Chris Brookes. Lastly, chapters three and four include analysis of Jack tales told by Alice Lannon: *Jack and the Cat*, Andy Jones: *Jack the Little Fisherman*, Mary Fearon: *Jack and the Ghost*, and brothers Freeman and Everett Bennett: *Black George*. Jones' and Fearon's stories were told directly to me during our interviews.

I interviewed members of the community who work with, or have worked with, Jack tales in their lifetimes, and they are referred to as either "interviewees" or "community partners" in this thesis. I interviewed Christopher Brookes of Battery Radio; Andy Jones; Marnie Parsons; Mary Fearon, Director of the Blue Door; cognitive psychologist and storyteller, Gary Green; and Anita Best, teacher and folk-singer. Each of these interviews lasted approximately one hour, and discussed the nature of Jack as a character in Newfoundland folktales, how Jack tales are

incorporated into performances, and the interviewees' individual relationships with the stories. Combining interviews and textual analysis allows this research to address the multiple ways in which Jack tales address the themes of home, genre, and gender, and how these themes are incorporated in Newfoundland identity and culture, while giving voice to people's own interpretive narratives through both text and oral storytelling.

1.5 Theoretical Background

I have chosen to use the theoretical framework of functionalism as the primary lens through which Jack tales will be explored. Functionalism is the theory that highlights how and why folk cultures use their traditions and material artifacts to communicate. William Bascom (1965) says there are four distinct functions to folklore that all work together in ongoing processes toward the common goal of "maintaining the stability of culture" (Bascom, 1965, 349). These four functions are: 1) The education of "particularly, but not exclusively, non-literate societies" (Bascom, 1965, 345); 2) "Maintaining conformity to the accepted patterns of behavior" (Bascom, 1965, 346); 3) "Validating culture" (Bascom, 1965, 344); 4) and revealing "attempts to escape in fantasy from the conditions of geographical environment and from biological limitations" (Bascom, 1965, 343).

Bascom builds upon functionalist theories established in the early 20th century by anthropologists Bronislaw Malinowski (1939) and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1935) who suggest that the framework outlines a coexistence between culture and society as shaped within an organic whole. Radcliffe-Brown's (1935) argument that functionalism "involves the notion of a *structure* consisting of a *set of relations* amongst *unit entities,* the *continuity* of the structure being maintained by a *life-process* made up of the *activities* of the constituent units" (Radcliffe-

Brown, 1935, 396) suggests that a function cannot be divested from the culture in which the function is performed. All investigations using this framework must, by Radcliffe-Brown's assertion, be "observed within its functioning" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1935, 396) yet at the same time, must be considered only a "partial contribution" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1935, 396) of a superorganic system of ideologies, beliefs, and actions. He claims that there is a "functional unity of a social system" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1935, 396) where all parts of the system work harmoniously together without conflict. He views culture and society as one whole. Bascom sees culture and society as two different, but still connected entities. Both Radcliffe-Brown and Bascom are defiant in the face of conflict within social structures, and both notably ignore asynchronicities between individual beliefs and actions and the demands of society such as in the forms of protest or coding.

Malinowski (1939) on the other hand rejects Radcliffe-Brown's superorganic paradigm and instead establishes that cultural processes and applications distill into biological needs first, social needs second. A true functionalist analysis, according to Malinowski, includes "not merely the emotional as well as the intellectual side of mental processes, but also insists that man in his full biological reality has to be drawn into our analysis of culture. The bodily needs and environmental influences, and the cultural reactions to them, have thus to be studied side by side" (Malinowski, 1939, 940). The researcher, according to Malinowski, is obligated to consider the ways that interviewees and community partners "interact within an environmental setting, natural and artificial; influenced by it, and in turn transforming it in co-operation with each other… Empirically speaking the field worker has to collect texts, statements, and opinions, side by side with the observation of behavior and the study of material culture" (Malinowski, 1939, 940).

Elliot Oring (1976) supposes that Malinowski placed so much importance on biological needs because he felt threatened by Radcliffe-Brown's (1935) approach which almost entirely absorbed the individual into the group, superimposing the social needs over the psychological. Oring's functionalist framework posits that there are three functions to folklore, not four: "1) sociocultural patterns have consequences which are independent of the conscious intentions of the actors who perform them; 2) these patterns may be explained or understood in terms of these consequences; and 3) these consequences are explanatory only if they contribute and are necessary to the proper integration and functioning of the individual or society" (Oring, 1976, 70). Oring acknowledges that folklore can be used to counter the maintenance of pre-established culture norms and that the study of "the content and structure of the lore require[s] explanation regardless of whether they reflect or distort other aspects of the sociocultural whole" (Oring, 1976, 70). The key for Oring's functionalist analysis is specificity. Citing Bascom (1965) and Vogt (1972), Oring notes that previous constructions of functionalism – "continuity of survival" (Oring, 1976, 77) and "stability of culture" (Bascom, 1965, 249) – are "sufficiently vague so that the recognition of a negative case becomes virtually impossible" (Oring, 1976, 77). Functionalism's theoretical value comes from its use in explaining rather than interpreting sociocultural actions, and Oring places a call for folklorists to think more deeply about the ways culture is interconnected with the settings and peoples in which it is placed.

Holly Everett (2002) takes up this call in her book *Roadside Crosses in Contemporary Memorial Culture*. She combines functionalist analysis with Gramscian hegemony theory in such a way that allows her to understand rather than interpret the gaps that Bascom, Malinowski, and Radcliffe-Brown's functionalist approaches possess – namely the way that individuals use folklore to protest cultural norms. An approach like this has not yet been applied to Jack, but

through the combined application of functionalism, gender, queer, and trans theories, chapter four of this thesis addresses such a perspective.

1.6 Existing Literature

Jack tales illuminate key aspects of a distinctive Newfoundland culture which in turn shapes Newfoundland identity. James Overton coalesces descriptions of the work of multiple authors – Patrick O'Flaherty, F.L. Jackson, Cyril Poole, Douglas House, D.W.S. Ryan and T.P. Rossiter – into a summary of this culture and identity: "Newfoundlanders are religious, not atheistic. They are peaceful, not violent. They are simple, not complex. Rather than acknowledge and explore the contradictions and variations in people's actual behavior, we have instead a simple, idealized character" (Overton, 2008, 11-12). Of course the human condition is more complex than Overton's observed "idealized character". While Jack can be kind and generous to an old woman on the road, he is often disrespectful and insulting to his own mother. Yet, those who hear Newfoundland Jack tales still admire and seek to be like the character of Jack. Surely this idealized character becomes reality once it is repeated and acted upon by those who both tell and listen to Jack tales.

To Danielle Fuller, this Newfoundland image of itself is based on a combination of place and heritage, "A persistent place-myth upholds Newfoundland's heritage and folk culture as distinctive, shaped by the hardships of life on a wind-battered rock in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean and resistant to outside cultural influences" (Fuller, 2004, 24). She argues that textual representation and interpretation perpetuates these place-based myths and are "produced and reproduced through a variety of social actions" (Fuller, 2004, 23). Jack tales, their representation in text, and interpretation in performance fall under Fuller's dynamics as reflections of place

because they sustain some cultural narratives at the exclusion of others. Thus, Fuller concludes that it is important to consider "Lefebvre's concern… that textual forms of representation have ideological force and consequences that we might interrogate, they may not coincide with the material experiences of place and space" (Fuller, 2004, 23).

It could also be argued that relatively isolated geography (ie islands and mountains, and places that were inaccessible to cars) also plays a role in the preservation of these stories. Beech Mountain North Carolina is a region close to the Cherokee National Forest and the border with Tennessee. It is not one of the most populous regions in North Carolina and as such could be argued, it is isolated. Newfoundland likewise being an island and its own dominion until 1949 is likewise isolated and can contribute to the preservation of stories that would otherwise have dispersed and ultimately disappeared in larger communities.

How individuals and communities reflect upon and conserve their individual and collective pasts has been viewed by Ray Cashman in his 2006 article "Critical Nostalgia and Material Culture in Northern Ireland" as critical nostalgia. Cashman suggests individuals express critical stances of modernity through their material culture objects and their reflections of a past era. Cashman (2006) extends this further by arguing that communities preserve material cultural artefacts as a way to cope with temporal change. Not only does nostalgia critique the present as well as reflect the past, for these individuals, in similar ways as Jack tales, but it can help individuals reshape the way they interpret the future:

> Such a fast pace offers people very little sense of being in control. Such a fast pace makes it difficult to make informed decisions about which changes should be embraced and which changes should be resisted. Unable to slow the pace of change unwilling to passively float with the tides of change, people nonetheless claim right to at least evaluate change in retrospect, to discern true loss (such as a in neighborly cooperation) from at least provisional improvements (such as modern conveniences of transportation and communication). Nostalgic practices such as amateur preservation work can be seen, then, as a reclamation of

> individual agency. Nostalgic practices do not offer people the power to literally arrest change, but they do offer them the temporal perspective necessary to become critics of change, and more or less willing participants. (Cashman, 2006, 146)

Following his assertion, it makes sense that Jack stories would be ideal vehicles for the preservation of past ideologies and societal structures that critique current society, build a future where society is more a reflection of the past, and that would not be possible without Fuller's geographically centered theories.

Fuller's argument is supported by Vivian Tenika-Agbaw, Ruth McKoy Lowery, and Laretta Henderson in their Conclusion to *Fairy Tales with a Black Consciousness: Essays on Adaptations of Familiar Stories* – "Fairy tales have always been revised: as stories migrate through space and time they evolve to reflect and meet the needs of their audiences" (Tenika-Agbaw et al, 2013, 222). Tenika-Agbaw et al's argument that presenting stories with protagonists of color is important for young children because it allows children to see themselves in a narrative and is essential for helping them feel engaged in specific dialogues, can also be transposed for Newfoundland audiences who regard Jack as a reflection of a nuanced culture and identity. Teya Rosenberg's application of Fuller and Overton's arguments inadvertently supports Tenika-Agbaw et al's by asserting that it is exactly this "perception that they [Jack tales] convey cultural, ethnic, or national identity as well as important lessons for individual identity and behaviors [that] contributes further to their perceived importance to children" (Rosenberg, 2013, 117).

Presently, Jack tales are represented in many forms such as children's books, puppet plays, or tape-recorded performances, and are performed in contexts where children are the central audience like festivals and schools. The result of this combination of representation and

context does imply that Jack tales are told *for* children like Rosenberg observes, but this was not always true, as Best notes (Best, 2019, Interview) and still not quite true today. Jack tales are still told in oral contexts that exclude children – the storytelling circle at Erin's Pub in downtown St. John's on the second Wednesday of every month or at special events such as The Jack Cycle performances at the Ship Pub are perfect examples. However, Halpert and Widdowson (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996) and Jones (Jones, 2019, Interview) observe that little present documentation exists that explores Jack tale tellings in home contexts as is observed historically by at least four of the storytellers in *Jack in Two Worlds: Contemporary North American Tales and their Tellers*, by Orville Hicks (Ebel and Hicks, 2009). These storytellers remember learning their Jack tales from grandparents and parents in the kitchens or on the porches of their homes, but they no longer tell them in such ways. As the most common settings for Jack tales performances in Newfoundland varied considerably from those in the Appalachian mountains, it is likely that at least some of the functions of performances in the two communities varied in significant ways.

Maria Tatar laments the folktale's shift from adult stories to children's tales because she believes "many of the elements that accounted for their appeal to adults qua adults, rather than as parents, guardians or teachers" (Tatar, 1992, 3) has been lost in the stories' shifting. Because of this shift in storytelling methods alongside the audiences to whom these stories are told, Lutz Röhrich sees not something lost, but an opportunity to renegotiate and re-involve adults in the Jack tale storytelling tradition by arguing that "folktales live on not only as children's folklore descended from its original audience. If presented properly, the folktale can also have new appeal for adults" (Röhrich, 1991, xix).

Nowhere is this truer than in Newfoundland where Jack tales are interwoven through daily routines by reading children's books, watching puppet shows or plays, and listening to radio shows, audio books, or performances at pubs. Separating folktale texts from their contexts would carpenter only a narrow frame through which Jack tales could or should be analyzed. To appropriately establish the most comprehensive overview of Jack tales, one must consider the ways that Jack tale oral tradition is applied on paper alongside the ways that Jack tales are presented through audio and visual performances. At the same time this research must interrogate the purpose of the methods applied and results achieved by performers, creators, and audience participants as component parts of a complex whole as they express culture through story.

In her 1984 book *The Folklore Text* Elizabeth Fine identifies "the folklore text" as a "major methodological problem" (Fine, 1984, 3) that obstructs folklore performances. Fine's argument refers specifically to transcriptions of oral performances, but it can be used to discuss the books and plays that emanate from Jack tale story telling tradition. Other folklorists – J. Barre Toelken (1969), Robert Georges (1969), Steven Jones (1979), Linda Dégh (1969), and Del Hymes (1974) – support Fine's argument that while text and performance are different "even the most detailed transcription cannot make the text 'speak for itself.' The reader must learn something about the normal performing situation and the larger significance of motifs and allusions. For this reason, Fine argues that a "'record' of the tale's text and texture must be accompanied by a 'report' incorporating information about the performer and his or her subculture. A purely text centered approach to narratives, however detailed, is incomplete" (Ellis and McCarthy, 1994, xxxix).

It is essential to consider Dégh, Fine, and Honko's calls to integrate folktale texts and oral performances with everyday experience – which is why this thesis is separated into the three segments of home, power, and genre that all work together to investigate Jack tales as the "collective lore not according to its origin but according to its fate… because it mirrors the collective psyche of a community" (Brachetti, 1931, 202). Stith Thompson and Vladimir Propp also make the argument that studying all forms of a folktale within a given context is a beneficial practice (Thompson, 1977; Propp, 1968) along with Maria Tatar, whose eclectic approach that posits "every interpretation of a tale (even the strongest misreading) can add something to our understanding of the high threshold of tolerance in these stories for editorial intervention and reinterpretation along ever-changing ideological lines" (Tatar, 1992, xxvii).

Richard M. Dorson's account of Jack tales in *Folktale Performers,* while it focuses on Jack tales told in Appalachia, also speaks to the ways in which the form of folktale performances are perceived to reflect the character of the community in which they are told (Dorson, 1986). Dorson uses the example of tale-teller Marshall Ward to illustrate his point by noting that "[Ward's] Jack conforms to the stock Americanized and Appalachianized version of the hero in standard European tale-types, a farm boy who speaks and behaves like any Beech Mountain youth but undergoes remarkable adventures and encounters" (Dorson, 1986, 288). Gutierrez in her article *The Jack Tale: A Definition of a Folk Tale Sub-Genre,* likewise, sees reflected in the nature of the 'lucky' character Jack the characteristics and ideals of the Beech Mountain, North Carolina community in which they are told (Gutierrez, 1978, 86). She identifies three versions of luck: through virtue, by chance, and through wit (Gutierrez, 1975) and also implies that because Beech Mountain Jack's "personality traits such as kindness and generosity make cooperation easier" (Gutierrez, 1978, 87), such traits within the community were highly valued.

Carl Lindahl notes that "justice often *simply happens* in American Märchen. It is less the job of the hero than of the plot. Story structure is in many ways simply an externalization of the inner rewards of virtue. The hero's riches come as a reward for simply being who she or he is – when no one else is watching" (Lindahl, 2001, 77). Implicit justice because a character is good still expresses an exchange of goods and services, though on a more cosmic level. If someone is good, the natural reward is justice. If someone is evil, the natural reward is still justice. In real life, this does not happen, and could be one of the greatest fallacies of our time. People are not always rewarded for doing good things, but in Märchen they are. This undisguised fantastic rendition of reality combined with a masterful storyteller, Lindahl argues, is a reason Märchen can be "considered… to be one of the primary folklore examples of art for art's sake" (Lindahl, 2001, 89) at least with regard to the Ozark narrations of Jack tales.

Lindahl also notes a point of continuity between American and Newfoundland Jack tales. "The present text is an example of one of the most popular tale types in Appalachia: AT 313, "The Girl as Helper in the Hero's Flight." Yet this is, to our knowledge, the only American text in which the villain is a green man. Giant men are popular antagonists in Irish and Scottish versions of this tale, and Halpert and Widdowson have published several variants of AT 313 in which a green man appears" (Lindahl, 2001, 106). The story *Jack and the Green Man* is not only published by Halpert and Widdowson, but was adapted by Andy Jones and published by Running the Goat Books and Broadsides in 2016. The literary connection between the Appalachian Jack tales and the Newfoundland Jack tales through this continued connection further connects the character of Jack as a highly adaptable everyman, who provides a reflection of real life in a relatable way.

There are stories of Jack that are told from a male centric perspective and tales told of Jack from a female centric perspective. One story told by Alice Lannon and recorded by Martin Lovelace called "The Ship that Sailed on Land and Water" is an example of a story told from a female perspective. Lovelace concludes that "it is thus made quite clear that Jack's success depends not on his own merit, but rather on his kindness to elders and particularly to women" (Lovelace, 2001, 140). Andy Jones' text *Jack & Mary in the Land of Thieves* is an example of a modern female centric story and serves to emphasize that while Jack ultimately succeeds because he is good, he often requires the help of others, primarily female companions, who help him along the way and who, in the case of Jones' text, dominate much of the narrative. It also showcases the relationships shared between male and female identifying persons in Newfoundland. Jack is only as powerful as the woman who helps him succeed. In many cases, the lady in the story is more powerful than Jack. The suggestion from Lovelace's piece is that there is an appropriate way to behave for both men and women which will ultimately result in reward. The same is true of Gutierrez and Lindahl's observations of Jack tales.

Though it is important to note that accepted "appropriate" ways of behavior is inherently biased against non-binary persons and perpetuates patriarchal social control, against which Rosan Jordan suggests "Folklore is an important means of expressing attitudes, ideology, and worldview, whether consciously or unconsciously. And if folklore is sometimes indirect and in need of analysis to interpret its encoded message, so too it may be a vehicle for learning aspects of a culture which are seldom or never stated in other ways" (Jordan, 1985, 27).

Jordan's arguments, though, are checked by Diane Tye and Pauline Greenhill who argue first and foremost "folklore studies can provide an important 'reality check' for feminism and women's studies. Folkloristics looks at groups from the inside, honours both the individual view

and the world-view and recognizes creativity as well as coping strategies" (Greenhill and Tye, 2001, 198). It is important to honor marginalized groups who identify as non-binary, and with Jack as an advocate, this can be done.

1.7 Chapter Overview

Chapter Two

The Jack tales themselves evoke images of both Newfoundland as a home and representations of home in Newfoundland – though neither Halpert nor Widdowson explore the significance or implications of this imagery within *Folktales of Newfoundland*, only their context. Chapter one of this thesis expands upon Halpert and Widdowson's extensive work by revisiting their presentation of 'home' through Newfoundland Jack tales outlined within *Folktales of Newfoundland*. It analyzes how concepts of 'home' have evolved from Halpert and Widdowson's 1964-1972 collection to modern retellings of Jack tales today through video and audio-recorded performances, interviews, and children's books. Through further applications of functionalism, paying particular attention to Bascom's function "escape", this chapter seeks to understand and interpret how images of a pre-Confederation Newfoundland both apply and allow nostalgic perspectives of the province to persist across generations.

Chapter Three

This chapter interrogates the function of genre and discusses the fluid nature of Jack tales as following Honko's observation that genre accomplishes three goals, the third of which is function, While some of Jack tales present as traditional folk or fairy tales, in Newfoundland two versions of this story present most closely to Legend: *Black George* and Mary Fearon's adaptation of *Jack and the Ghost*. This thesis will draw upon the theoretical works of Linda

Dégh, Max Lüthi, and Laurie Honko among legend genre specific scholars to interrogate the nuanced use and presentation of Jack tales that exhibit characteristics of both folktale and legend.

Linda Dégh's central theoretical argument in her book *Folktales in Society* concurs with Honko's by observing the interrelationship that folktales and reality share and positing that folklore research is incomplete if one half of this interrelationship is studied without the other. "Folklore research," Dégh claims, "has had a two-pronged aim: it has been interested on the one hand in the nature and origins of oral narration not fixed in writing; and it has been interested in folk culture as expressed in the content and form of the folktale…. We can hope to advance only if we succeed in uniting the two directions, in putting the textual analysis on the right socio-cultural basis" (Dégh, 1969, 45-46). Thus this chapter also discusses why some Jack tales exhibit a fluid structure that balances on the precipice between folktale and legend and what needs these stories might fulfill.

Chapter Four

Feminist, Queer, and Trans Folklore theorists such as Diane Tye and Pauline Greenhill advocate "to move women's experiences from the margin to the centre of cultural production" (Greenhill and Tye, 2001, 195). Until recently, members of women's, queer, and trans communities have been overlooked in folklore theory. Jordan and Kalčik suggest that "genres and performance contexts that are especially characteristic of men have most interested folklorists as worthy of study, while folklore that flourishes within the private domain of women has be underrated and ignored" (Jordan and Kalčik, 1985, ix). Barbara Babcock points out that, "the history of folklore studies is the history of the male line" (Babcock, 1987, 395) including but not limited to, dominating male folklorists, the study of male-centric tales, and the privileging of cis-male characters like Jack.

Elizabeth Fine's (1999) text "Lazy Jack: Coding and Contextualizing Resistance in Appalachian Women's Narratives" argues that Jack tales can be as subversive at undermining patriarchal control as they can be tools for reinforcing it. Fine's analysis "Lazy Jack" told by Beverly Carter-Sexton's asserts "techniques that recontextualize the tale, link it to the audience in vivid and powerful ways that force the audience to consider "the truth" in her performance (Babcock, 1984; Bauman and Braid, 1998; Bauman and Briggs, 1990). Many of her recontextualizing techniques reinforce her coded message of female strength and triumph over male dominance" (Fine, 1994, 113). Jack tales too deconstruct and imbalance the traditionally perceived gender-binary and re-enforce equity. Yet, this is not an easy process because, as Polly Stewart argues, "Folklore informally teaches by supporting and reifying belief systems—as well as by controlling people, since males and females learn from their culture's folklore what is proper and possible for them" (Stewart, 1993, 54). To this end, Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn have argued that "Feminist scholarship…undertakes the dual task of deconstructing a female perspective and experience in an effort to change the tradition that has silenced and marginalized [women]" (Greene and Kahn, 1985, 1).

Best, Greenhill, and Lovelace argue "fairy tales in oral tradition see the world from the bottom up; in their natural state are inherently revolutionary" (Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill, 2019, 11). Jack tales operate within this domain. Jack is not a merchant or a man of means. More often than not, Jack comes from humble beginnings and finds success through wealth, status, and marriage - finding his way to both social and economic power. Fearon sees Jack as neither masculine nor feminine, but clever and highly relatable. Further, she views Jack tales as a representation of Newfoundlanders as an oppressed people (Fearon, 2019, Interview). Chapter four therefore deconstructs a masculine Jack applying the combined theoretical frameworks of

functionalism, queer, feminist, and trans theory, to build on Fearon's arguments of power represented in economic, social, and gender roles. It will also interrogate the interplay between characters within Jack tales and how those characters are expressed by their tellers through both spoken and written word. Jones' text *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves* and Alice Lannon's retelling of *Jack and the Cat* are used to illustrate this point. A copy of Alice Lannon's text can be found on pages 91-93 in Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill's 2019 book *Clever Maids, Fearless Jacks, and a Cat: Fairy Tales from a Living Oral Tradition.* Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill note that "fairy-tale characters are masks for figures in real-life family relationships," (Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill, 2019, 12) which in this case allows Jack tales the platform to interact with these dynamics of power. "Holbek argued that the tales made it possible to think about, or hint about (as Pius did), oppressive and abusive family dynamics by throwing the contentious situations onto a screen of fiction where giants and witches, Kings and Queens, enact violence against well-meaning but downtrodden youth" (Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill, 2019, 12)

1.8 Conclusion

Jack tales last because they have value – whether that value is intrinsic, nostalgic, or rebellious. Chapters two through four weigh to whom Jack tales are valuable, and why and how these expressions of value are employed in contemporary Newfoundland society. They are consumed with discussions about how Jack tales reinforce what home both looks like to Newfoundland communities, how Jack complicates and blurs the boundaries between genres, and how Jack, and the tales about the character, emphasize resistance against established and stratified social conformity.

The scholarship mentioned in this chapter references Jack tales as reflections on the past more than as imaginative constructions of the future, and thereby taps into Cashman's (2006)

discussions of nostalgia as "concerns of the present [always determining] our representations of the past, and some, well-aware of this dynamic, wield these representations to effect a future more consonant with a yearned for past" (Cashman, 2006, 152). Jack's structural themes that reminisce about recent pasts, though, are not preclusive documentation of present or future economic, social, or structural struggles, and should be considered an avenue for further study – how might Jack tales' use of nostalgia affect future communities, peoples, and ideas? To that end, Cashman (2006) ironically observes that the very reticence towards change that drives his interviewees to express nostalgic symbolism through the display of material cultural artefacts may help them to regain control over their lives, understand that their lived experiences are not being brushed aside to make way for "progress", and allows them to contribute to this change in positive ways. Jack tales perform similar functions for their participants, listeners, readers, and tellers alike, and these are likewise discussed in chapters two, three, and four.

Jack is a character that brings hope, validation, and acceptance to so many members of the Newfoundland community through the use of the character's, at times, thinly veiled metaphors and references to a communal past. Jack is an entity – an idea – perhaps even a belief, that speaks with the contemporary population as they evolve and grow, and empowers past generations to reflect on lives once lived. Jack is not just a character. Jack is the coalescence of time, ideas, memories, opinions, and actions, and when listening to a Jack tale being told or reading it to ourselves, we witness the history of a province written by the identities of the people who live there.

Chapter Two

Jack at Home

An Unlimited Escape

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how three authors' adaptations of Newfoundland Jack tales – *Jack and the Manger* by Andy Jones, illustrated by Darka Erdelji, *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* by Janet McNaughton illustrated by Susan Tooke, and *The Annotated Jack: A Tale of Two Jacks* by Chris Brookes – represent and interpret Newfoundland as home. These two picture books and radio broadcast were selected as the focus for this chapter because their unique combinations of words and images invite comparison through functionalist analysis with particular attention paid to Bascom's (1965) functions of folklore to escape and to amuse.

2.2 Applying Humor and Escape to Jack

Jack and the Manger was published in 2010 by Marni Parsons' local Newfoundland publishing agency – Running the Goat Books and Broadsides. This picture book promotes itself as "A Christmas Jack tale" and is unconventional in its adherence to traditional Jack tale patterns – there is no task, and there are no magical objects or supernatural characters other than Jesus Christ. In this book, Jack is an adult who meets Mary and Joseph on their way to the census in Bethlehem. Jack attends the birth of Christ, helps spread the good word of his coming, and then after time passes meets the young Jesus as a child. Any transcriber would find here a reflection of Newfoundland, depicted as if someone were telling the story with their voice from one person to another using such insertion of an ellipses and numerous commas that gives the impression the

narrator needs to pause, think, and redirect their opening statement just like people do when telling a story that has not been written down: “Now this story you may have heard, but this, we’ll say is from a different point of view… Now once upon a time in olden times, it come to pass that there was a mighty emperor, and his name was Caesar Augustus” (Jones, 2010, 1).

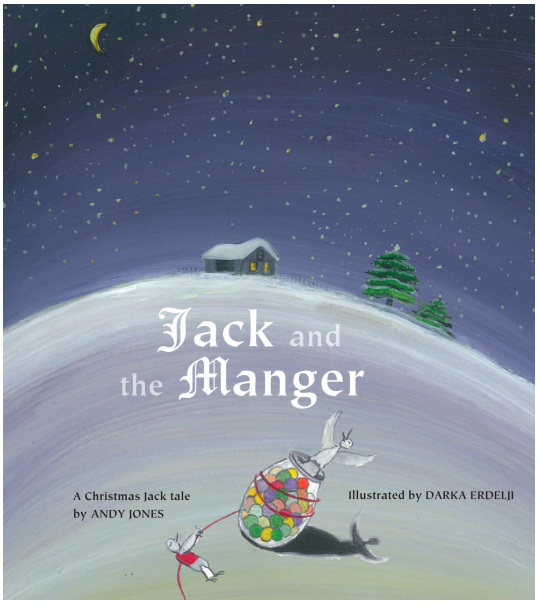


Figure 1.1: *Jack and the Manger* (2010) Cover

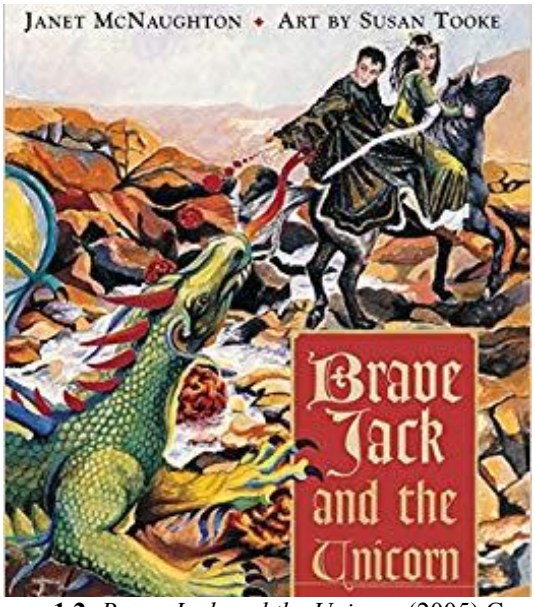


Figure 1.2: *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* (2005) Cover

Brave Jack and the Unicorn, on the other hand, was published in 2005 by Tundra Books and follows a much more traditional Jack tale pattern. Through his goodness to creatures and people, Jack – who was considered foolish by his widowed mother and older brothers Tom and Bill – receives a golden apple, a magic flute, a fine coat, a pair of boots, and magic needles as thanks. These items help Jack complete three tasks, to separate wheat from sand in a night, to fetch a flower from atop a glass mountain, and to capture a unicorn in order to win the hand of the princess, and ultimately fame and fortune. Where Jones alludes to commonly known places and figures such as "the Mount of Pearls" (Jones, 2010, 2) where Jack lives in a basement apartment, or Mummers when he mistakes the three wise kings, the writing style of McNaughton's book is not as colloquial, and therefore rests more heavily on its images to connect it to Newfoundland – images that depict a Newfoundland spring replete with icebergs, local flora such as morning glories and pitcher plants, and fauna such as gannets and whales.

Figure 1.3: *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* (2005) Pg. 9-10

Figure 1.4: *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* (2005) Pg. 19-20

The Annotated Jack: A Tale of Two Jacks produced by Chris Brookes at Battery Radio is a feature originally broadcast by DTE Dublin in 2009 for an Irish audience and connects a real "Jack" story: a biopic about Jack Wells – retired fisherman who lives at The Battery – a small outport neighborhood in St. John's that sits on the neck side of Signal Hill, with more traditional Jack tales: *Jack and the Head Card Player of the World* and *Jack Meets the Cat*, both narratives are tied together and performed by Mary Fearon. There are eerie similarities between Wells and the character Jack. Wells has two brothers, and he is the youngest of the three. In many Jack tales, character Jack is the youngest of three sons – his older brothers are Bill and Tom. In some of the Jack tales of Newfoundland, character Jack is a sailor such as in *Jack the Sailor Feller* (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 681), a mate such as in *Jack and the Slave Islands* (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 473), or even a fisherman such as in *Little Jack: The Little Fisherman* (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 998). Wells was a fisherman. Character Jack is often given the grittiest, dirtiest chores to do because he was the youngest and the smallest. Wells' responsibility was to clean out puncheons – a container used for carrying either spirits or fish – similarly because he was the youngest and the smallest. Much like the character Jack who often gets along

with everybody, Wells did not mind this job because in his words, "I done what I wanted to do" (Brookes, 2009, 5).

Combining these two narratives, as indicated in Brookes' interview "celebrate[s] Jack and the poor little institution of his Twine Store down the way. There would be a group of elderly friends who would get together and pass the time together. I thought that was a lovely thing. Jack's a retired fisherman. He represents a way of life that's passing. Like I said, that's why I wanted to do it. And he's a neighbor you know and he's a part of my life" (Brookes, 2019, Interview). This radio broadcast thus illustrates three versions of Newfoundland as a home 1) Jack Wells' place of work and social circle in The Battery and a reflection of home as an evolution of social interfaces – work and play – that now has fallen into disrepair; 2) Brookes' interpretation of his home in The Battery as he talks about the life of his neighbor, Wells, and intimates how Brookes' home has also changed, and then 3) parallel connectivity between the character Jack and Wells provides commentary on the province of Newfoundland as home and how one can be "at home" with a story.

These three stories were selected because they are original creations which model themselves on Jack tales of oral tradition – a distinction that Janet McNaughton presents proudly on the back cover of her book as "An Original Newfoundland Folktale". Authors Jones and McNaughton make these connections in their acknowledgements.

> McNaughton: This story was inspired by listening to actor Andy Jones tell Newfoundland folktales while I was working with him and students of Macdonald Drive Junior High on an Arts Smarts project in 2000. Andy's tales were previously collected from Pius Power Senior of Clattis Harbour, Placentia Bay, and adapted from *Folktales of Newfoundland*, edited by Herbert Halpert and John Widdowson. I also drew on *Little Jack and Other Newfoundland Folktales,* edited by John Widdowson, and *Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, edited by Jack Zipes. The chase sequence was adapted from a story I heard from the late Emile Benoit, Newfoundland fiddler and raconteur extraordinaire. (McNaughton, 2005, Acknowledgements)

> Jones: The narrative voice in this story was inspired by the oral traditions of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is especially indebted to the storytelling style of Freeman Bennett, of St. Paul's on the Great Northern Peninsula; Pius Power Sr and his family, of South East Bight, Placentia Bay; and Anita Best. To honour these people and the other storytellers who have shaped his love of storytelling, Andy Jones has ignored some of the structures of formal written language, choosing to participate instead in the energy of the dialect and the verbal traditions of this place. He has tried to capture the cadence of the language with punctuation and a sentence style more musical than grammatical. (Jones, 2010, Acknowledgements)

By clearly connecting their work to a long tradition of telling, these authors hint by evidence of their acknowledgements, that their work is to be seen as an extension of the Jack telling tradition in Newfoundland that was heavily documented by Herbert Halpert and JDA Widdowson in the 60s and 70s. Given also that McNaughton's book acknowledges influence from Jones' storytelling in schools, the books themselves are connected through the oral narrative performances and interpersonal experiences of their authors and suggests a significance to the practice of honoring the people and the narrative traditions that came before in order to legitimize their Jack narratives. Further, because Jones was born in, and currently resides in Newfoundland, Jack tales are one way that he interacts with his opinions of his home. McNaughton, on the other hand, while not born in Newfoundland, lived here while attending school at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. She also is using Jack tales to connect herself to a province she once called home, and that through writing and reading keeps that relationship alive.

Bascom argues that folklore can help us understand and interpret culture as "attempts to escape in fantasy from the conditions of geographical environment and from biological limitations however familiar the authors might be towards one another and to the culture of the province they depict" (Bascom, 1965, 343). I suggest that Jack tales can also help people relive

it. Though McNaughton no longer lives in Newfoundland, her time spent at university there clearly left a lasting impression, one that she seeks to recreate in her original rendition of a Jack tale. She immortalizes her time spent in the province through her text and through Jack. Jack is the vehicle that captures McNaughton's interpretations of Newfoundland personalities and cultural history, and that validates her inclusion as a part of it. Jack allows McNaughton to become a small part of the Newfoundland narrative identity.

Bascom also notes that "amusement is, obviously, one of the functions of folklore, and an important one" (Bascom, 1965, 343) which should not be dismissed. The relationships these authors express through their Jack tales both amuse and create a nostalgic fantasy. Though he refers to oral narrative traditions in West Africa, Bascom says storytellers are "expected to modify a familiar tale by introducing new elements or giving a novel twist to the plot". One of Jack's prime characteristics is his good humor. Jones' interpretation of Jack plays exactly into this central characteristic. For example when Jack meets Jesus all grown up, his first response is an exclamatory "Jesus!". This is both an acknowledgement that Jack recognizes the man and a play on the popular interjection that invokes Christ's name. Jones cleverly evokes a humorous response from his audience by writing a humorous response from his character.

2.3 Fulfilling Wishes as Escapism

While Brookes does not situate his radio broadcast within the larger context of Jack telling tradition in the same way that Jones and McNaughton do, he did acknowledge the prowess of Jack tale tellers during our interview. When asked how he knew what a good Jack tale was when he heard one, Brookes responded by identifying the talent of the tellers,

> Oh, it's the storyteller – a good storyteller. Andy Jones is terrific. Andy Jones is a folk saint. He is a great storyteller and he has rescued tales. I know the folklore

> department does that too and it's important to have an academic rescue of things that otherwise would have been forgotten or lost or died out, but Andy makes them live again, you know? And does it very well and very skillfully, and really in a way that respects and upholds the tradition. I've got a lot of time for Andy (Brookes, 2019, Interview).

By acknowledging storytellers who tell Jack tales well, and further using someone he considers one of them – Mary Fearon – in his radio broadcast, Brookes positions his Jack tale within a broader context of Jack telling tradition. His stories are placed at the intersection of "Town" and "Bay" through Fearon and Wells in such a way that shows both their contrast and how these identities can be brought together. Brookes even gives Fearon the platform to speak about her experience listening to Jack tales when she visited her uncle's home in Placentia Bay:

> The first Jack Story I ever heard was when I was in Placentia Bay visiting my uncle, who was a fisherman in Paradise Sound. And I heard the men telling stories of Jack. I mean, that was 1971 when I went to Paradise Sound. There was no power in the place I went to visit. You couldn't just flip on your lights or turn on the television. You couldn't even read a book because it would be too dark to read by the candlelight. So, sitting around telling stories was the thing to do (Brookes 2009, 4).

Allowing Fearon the chance to expostulate about how she heard Jack tales as a child further illustrates the divide between people who grew up in Town and people who grew up outside of Town (around the Bay) by highlighting Brookes' previous assertion that "the soul of Newfoundland is not in Town" (Brookes, 2019, Interview). Brookes, who grew up in Town, did not hear Jack tales as a child (Brookes, 2019, Interview). Though Fearon is from Town, she was given experiences of hearing Jack tales around the Bay. Brookes' unique combination of Town and Bay, fantasy Jack with real-life Jack, positions his radio broadcast in such a way that it can be used to save his home as well as represent one. In this case, home is reflected in not just a place of living, but as a work space that became a social venue for a group of retired fishermen, that provides character for the neighborhood in which Brookes lives, and that is worth protecting

and preserving. Thus one significant function of Jack tales is the conservation of culture – the preservation of a home – and I argue that this too can be viewed as a form of escape. Brookes is using Jack tales to fight for a way of life that is disappearing – Wells' twine store and outport communities are two such examples. Yet by doing so, Brookes is keeping alive an ideal of Newfoundland that no longer exists. This hope to rebuild something that is lost, or actively being lost, is escapism and Jack tales are the perfect vehicle to facilitate such fantasy. They rely on a character that is supposed to represent the everyman, and these are placed in historic contexts and settings by tellers that Brookes respects. It makes sense then that Jack would become, in this way, a martyr.

When a storm surge seriously damaged Wells' Twine Store in February of 2010, the neighborhood raised an emergency fund to help. CBC Newfoundland and Labrador broadcast *The Annotated Jack*: *A Tale of Two Jacks* locally and paid Brookes the freelance fee. Brookes then gave his fee to Wells' son, Jack Jr., to help rebuild. And then, as Brookes says,

> Several sad things happened, the city made him jump through a ludicrous number of hoops, they made him get an environmental impact study done. His son, Jacky Jr, got the bit in his teeth and decided "to hell with these guys," he was gonna hang on to it for…five years. Finally, he got the permit to repair. Of course, the thing was in worse repair, and by that time Jacky Jr. had got kidney cancer. So, it's started to get fixed up, and now it's in limbo. In the meantime, it's gotten much worse. I don't know if its salvageable now. That's what happened. The city were pricks about it. They really were. I don't know why. Because it's a… I discovered there were 90,000 walkers that go by here between May and November every year, at least that was the case in 2009. I'm sure it's worse than that now – so a lot of people and a lot of them are tourists. These are heritage fishing properties that people wanted to restore down here. City wouldn't have it. Some people down here thought that one official in the city was involved with maybe a developer who had his eyes on properties down here. But that's just rumor. Nobody really knows. It blindsided me. I thought that the city would be responsive to people wanting to fix up their fishing properties just for the tourism potential alone, you know? (Brookes, 2019, Interview).

Important components of Jack tales are his adversaries. Lovelace observes that Jack's adversaries, when analyzing a number of magic tales in Halpert and Widdowson's collection, are "giants (1 instance), magicians (2), kings (5), and farmers (5)" (Lovelace, 2001, 152). All of Jack's adversaries are people in positions of power. If we consider Wells' narrative as a Jack tale, he as well, would have an adversary in a position of power capable of threatening the harmony of his home. Though in this case, Wells' adversary is not a king, it is the government of a city, St. John's. Protecting Jack's home against those who want to destroy it is an important component, albeit one that was unexpected, of Brookes' *The Annotated Jack: A Tale of Two Jacks* broadcast. Indeed, one of the stories Brookes uses to parallel Wells' narrative is *Jack and the Head Card Player of the World* wherein one 1975 version of the story told in Springdale, Notre Dame Bay by Allan Oake has Jack playing for two thousand dollars against his house (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 166). It is not a stretch to connect Jack playing cards against a master player – a feat where winning feels impossible – with Wells playing in the bureaucratic circus of big government in order to save his Twine Store.

2.4 Idealized Character as Escape

Teya Rosenberg suggests that the evolution, creation, and collection of Jack tales in Newfoundland began by Halpert and Widdowson in the 1960s and 1970s, is reminiscent of the practices performed by the Grimm's Brothers (Rosenberg, 2013, 98). Jack Zipes argues that the Grimm's intent to promote and preserve a cultural identity motivated them to "document basic truths about the customs and practices of the German people and on preserving authentic ties to the oral tradition" (Zipes, 1986, xxiv). Zipes' 2005 edition of *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* as well aligns with Rosenberg's observations that folktales, through their

evolution from oral to literary tradition reflect the developments of communities and the people within them (Norton Anthology of Children's Literature, 2005, 176). Jack tales were not primarily told as children's stories, but through their publication as picture books have come to appeal to children as well as adults.

Part of Jack tales' presentation in Newfoundland deals with anti-modern imagery, which might occur in part because of Newfoundland's unique position within the Canadian Confederation, but in such ways that can appeal to both adults and children. In his 1988 paper "A Newfoundland Culture?", sociologist James Overton's discussion of regionalized identity rests on the argument that Newfoundland Culture as it is presented to the world through art and literature is an invented "imagined community" following Eric Hobsbawm and T. Ranger's book *The Invention of Tradition* and Benedict Anderson's book *Imagined Communities*. Cashman on the other hand argues that granting "seemingly obsolete equipment, structures, and landmarks new life as symbols… is a useful part for coming to terms with massive, economic, social, and cultural changes associated with modernity" (Cashman, 2006, 144). Combining Cashman's assertion that the imagery and material culture of a time past by are part of "contemporary commemorative activities" (Cashman, 2006, 142) that bring about new meaning to those objects and reinvigorate the people who use them, and Overton's suggestion that "culture is a particular lens through which the world is 'seen' [that raises] questions about how this lens was ground and the nature of the vision that it allows" (Overton, 1988, 13), the character of Jack allows the contemporary community to recycle and reuse their history in such a way that it builds an ideological foundation. Overton asserts that the presentation of Newfoundland Culture rests on certain ideological foundations of a "distinct culture, way of life, ethos, character, soul, or ethnic identity… This unique culture, centered on the outports has been undermined by

industrialization, the welfare state, urbanization and the introduction of North American values in the period since the Second World War" and that it is now "threatened with extinction" (Overton, 2008, 9).

Regarding the images and interpretation of the people as players within this cultural heritage, Overton notes that "whether it is viewed in negative or positive terms, the assumption of most observers is that there is a single, distinct Newfoundland ethos, character or culture. Newfoundlanders are religious, *not* atheistic. They are peaceful, *not* violent. They are simple, *not* complex. Rather than acknowledge and explore the contradictions and variations in people's actual behavior, we have instead a simple idealized character" (Overton, 1988, 11-12).

Jones and McNaughton's presentation of Jack as a character within the setting of Newfoundland illustrates this 'idealized behavior' which Overton outlines as anything but simple. Jack clearly represents for Jones, McNaughton, and Brookes, a character that is very, very real. Though Jack might have an idealized character of Newfoundlanders, he is by no means a caricature, as Overtone implies, because the characteristics that make Jack "Jack" are ultimately achievable by anyone – kindness, good humor, simplicity, and humility among others. In *Brave Jack and the Unicorn,* Jack is considered foolish for being kind to animals and beggars. However, it is implied that these characteristics of generosity and kindness are the desired characteristics for a Newfoundlander because Jack wins the hand of the princess – his reflections of the idealized Newfoundland character is rewarded. His brothers, Tom who is "handsome as the day" (McNaughton, 2005, 2) and, Bill who is "clever as a cat" (McNaughton, 2005, 2) showcase distinguishing features that differentiate them from everyone else including members of the readership – but ultimately make them not as successful as Jack at the end of the story because the characteristics that defined them were not the ideal ones. Jack, who was accused of

"never amount[ing] to anything" (McNaughton, 2005, 2) is easily seen as an "everyman" and is therefore a relatable and desirable personage in Newfoundland storytelling. Characterizing Jack in this way perpetuates Overton's observation about the assumptions of Newfoundlanders – simple, religious, compassionate – but it also perpetuates this mythos that the ideal characteristics for a Newfoundlander are the ones found in Jack. Overton suggests that Newfoundlanders find comfort living this "fantasy" promoted through Jack tales because it provides an escape from the "anxieties and insecurities" (Overton, 1988, 18) induced by reality. This shared narrative escape, Overton argues, manufactures a "regional culture" (Overton, 1988, 18) with easy to understand ethics, codes, and morals brought into being by, and sustained by, Jack tales. The promotion of this "regional culture" gives Newfoundlanders "a sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized and alienating world. For those who do feel uprooted and uncertain, being part of an 'imagined community' may be comforting. It provides a sense of belonging. And through this the world is ordered" (Overton, 1988, 18). In summary, Newfoundland tales of Jack yield security and strengthen solidarity within the groups that share these tales. Regardless of the reasons, Jack tales bring people together.

Overton is applying Jack tales within the framework of the functionalist analysis of escape, specifically from reality. Jack's character according to Overton is too simplified, too different from how people outside of storybooks think and act. Yet, the way Jones and Brookes talk about Jack shows that there is a strong belief that the characteristics Jack presents are not escapism, not fantasy, not wish fulfillment – these characteristics constitute a reality worth repeating. What we see is a chicken-and-egg scenario. Were Jack's characteristics shaped from Newfoundlanders, or were Newfoundlanders shaped from Jack's characteristics? In either case, there is an inescapable connection spotlighting the creation of a persona that my tellers strive to

achieve. In this case, people who tell and listen to Jack tales are not escaping an idealized culture – they are creating it.

2.5 Illustrating Newfoundland

The setting in Jack tales can also function as an escape that both reinforces stability of culture and actively destabilizes it. First, it is important to understand that confederacy shook Newfoundland's way of ordering the world. Those born before 1949 proudly consider themselves true Newfoundlanders. Those born after Confederation in 1949 must, by virtue of being born within the boundaries of Canada, consider themselves Canadian though they live in Newfoundland and only wish they were born in Newfoundland. People like Gary Green, a local storyteller and former cognitive psychologist at Memorial University emphasized the difference between even classmates and spouses of the same age marked most notably by the differences in national identity.

> My wife, who was born a few months before me is so proud of the fact that she was born in Newfoundland and not Canada. You have, in the few months that my wife and I are apart, you have people who have a totally different national identity. So, you have people like me who say, "Darn I wish I was born a few months earlier." One of my high school buddies, I went to a large high school we weren't bosom buddies, was actually the last person born in Newfoundland the country. And so that was it. You had people who were totally different from 10 years previous or so. (Green, 2019, Interview)

Historian Jeff Webb likewise posits that the period after World War II showcased dramatic social and cultural changes to rural Newfoundland. He defines culture as "socially transmitted environmental adaptations and ways of interacting with others within their community. This 'traditional culture' was a way of life passed from generation to generation, and they thought little changed from the remote past" (Webb, 2016, 5). In this case, Jones and McNaughton have built upon oral tradition that functions to perpetuate the telling of Jack tales –

albeit in a different medium – and the conservation of Newfoundland culture. This culture is reflected through the artistic community, specifically in picture books, and ties the character of Jack as a representation of 'the everyman' to Newfoundland. Further it allows tellers and listeners of Jack tales to envision themselves as true Newfoundlanders, a demographic that exists but that is slowly disappearing.

Green recalls that the years after Confederation were still a period of adjustment and that the arts provided a means of conservation for a national identity that no longer existed. Art, performance, and storytelling provided the means for people to process how they felt about the loss of their old country, the establishment of a new country, and how they fit within it.

> In the 1960s and 70s there got to be a renaissance of people saying we need to preserve our culture…you had these artists who were all Newfoundlanders for the most part… who were trying to say 'this is the time of my life' to interpret the events of 20 years ago when they shifted from being a teenager Newfoundlander to being a Canadian…. They say when a country has been defeated, in battles or in those sorts of things, the people who lead the preservation of the culture are in fact the artists, the writers, the songwriters, and the painters. (Green, 2019, Interview)

Like the artists who used their mediums to process what was happening to their culture and identity, the illustrations of *Jack and the Manger* are reminiscent of a pre-industrialized Newfoundland. Cashman's (2006) argues that the materiality of material culture artefacts "makes them well suited for display, and having survived from the past grants them authority to bear witness. When once familiar objects take on a second life as symbols through display, they may index a wealth of experience and even contradictory evaluations, prompting speakers to formulate words anew" (Cashman, 2006, 148). Jones' depiction of Newfoundland in his Jack tale similarly displays the material world of past generations to revive a vanished era for readers. Persons depicted within wear sweaters, mitts, and caps instead of Canada Goose Jackets, machine milled stocking caps, and Blundstones. They wheel carts for their "come home year"

and walk instead of driving cars or trucks. When the characters stop and rest for the evening, their kettle is warmed over a fire, and their clothes dried on a line (much like you see done today in tourist images of rural Newfoundland) but there is no electricity, no roads, and no washers or dryers. The conveniences of a modern household are distinctly absent. Two birds pull a jar of gumballs around on a piece of string, which shows, despite the snow on the ground, the only objects that characters have to play with - no phones, no skateboards, no PS4s. Homes reflected within are small rectangular blocks far more reminiscent of the early 1900s Newfoundland outports than modern day dwellings. Smoke often spirals from chimneys which hints at a lack of central oil/gas/electric heating, and candles illuminate windows instead of electric lightbulbs (Jones, 2010).

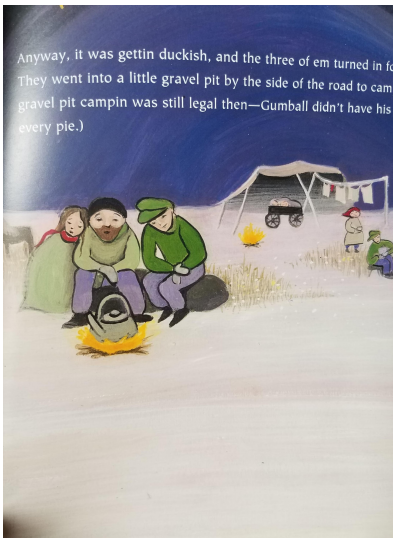


Figure 1.5: *Jack and the Manger* (2010) Pg. 17

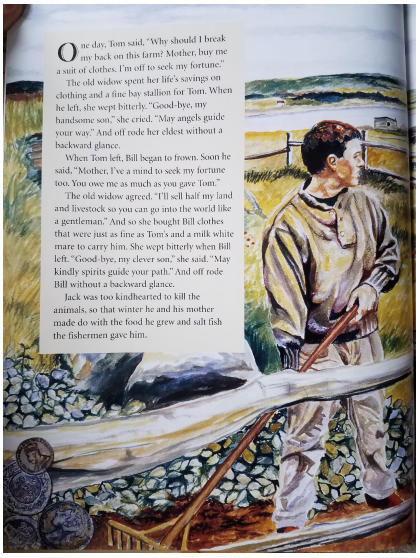
Figure 1.6: *View of Placentia from the* quarries, *1899. 08.01.010*

Figure 1.7 *View of Placentia, showing Mount Pleasant 1901. 08.01.001*

Figure 1.8: *Jack and the Manger* (2010) Pg. 22

Brave Jack and the Unicorn also shows evidence of a Newfoundland that aligns more closely with pre-Confederation. Tools used in the garden are made of wood – carved pegs stuck into a horizontal slat attached to a handle. Coins in the bottom left corner of page three display the date 1870 and match coins from Newfoundland of that date. Characters travel either on dirt pathways on foot, or horses. There are no cars and no white picket fences. Land is marked by stone walls. Houses, much like those in *Jack and the Manger*, are simple rectangles with chimneys near a harbor. Whatever characters need, they must make rather than buy – such as Jack's shoes and his fine coat. Characters drink from tin cups, and even in the Royal Family's home, light comes from candles on a table. There is no electricity (McNaughton, 2005).

Figure 1.9: *50 cents, 1870 Newfoundland*


One day, Tom said, "Why should I break my back on this farm? Mother, buy me a suit of clothes. I'm off to seek my fortune."

The old widow spent her life's savings on clothing and a fine bay stallion for Tom. When he left, she wept bitterly. "Good-bye, my handsome son," she cried. "May angels guide your way." And off rode her eldest without a backward glance.

When Tom left, Bill began to frown. Soon he said, "Mother, I've a mind to seek my fortune too. You owe me as much as you gave Tom."

The old widow agreed. "I'll sell half my land and livestock so you can go into the world like a gentleman." And so she bought Bill clothes that were just as fine as Tom's and a milk white mare to carry him. She wept bitterly when Bill left. "Good-bye, my clever son," she said. "May kindly spirits guide your path." And off rode Bill without a backward glance.

Jack was too kindhearted to kill the animals, so that winter he and his mother made do with the food he grew and salt fish the fishermen gave him.

Figure 1.10: *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* (2005) Pg. 4

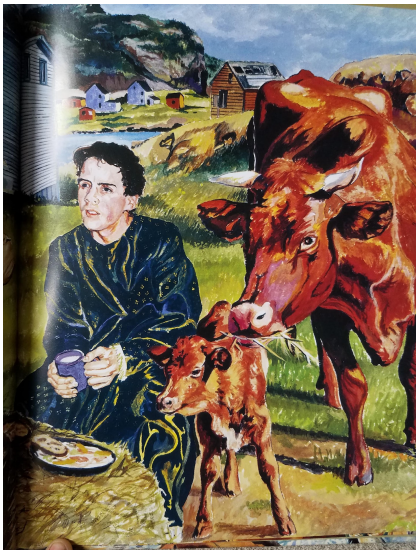


Figure 1.11: *Brave Jack and the Unicorn* (2005) Pg. 12

Figure 1.12: *Placentia. View of Placentia, probably pre-1930*. 08.01.017

These depictions align with Green's account of pre-Confederation Newfoundland. Every summer he would go north to his hometown of Griquet. When he did, he said,

> In those days there were no roads, no electricity, no running water. So it was, for me growing up, I saw pre-Confederation Newfoundland very much so. Over the next umpteen years people would say "people can finally drive down home now" you go down and there are lightbulbs. There were roads. So, I got to see this transition from a time of no electricity and I was born before television. (Green, 2019, Interview)

Green's personal experience narrative encourages us to be cognizant about the ways changes in national identity affect how people consider their personal circumstances. It also forces consideration of the ways that Confederation, industrialism, urbanization, and development help frame a generation in transition within their home province. Writers like Jones, through his text *Jack and the Manger,* McNaughton with *Brave Jack and the Unicorn,* and Brookes with *The Annotated Jack: A Tale of Two Jacks* explore this identity shift by reflecting the contrast between images, ideologies, and traditions of the Newfoundland culture that was familiar when Newfoundland was an autonomous dominion, but also partly based on the stories heard and the ways of life they experienced vicariously through older relatives and acquaintances who lived, worked, and grew up here – and in the case of Wells, still live here. Their personal connections with the source material intimate a familiarity with the setting that is reflected as Jack's home.

Jones' and McNaughton's adaptations of Newfoundland Jack tales echo those of Brookes, as the images within this broadcast are spoken rather than illustrated and enmesh Jack Wells' real world of "Town" with character Jack's version of "Bay", the listener is invited to interpret tensions between people from "Town" and people from "The Bay" and the radio broadcast as a depiction of a province whose inhabitants grapple with an image of themselves as "true" Newfoundlanders and heirs of its culture and tradition, or as a "Townie" – a threat to Newfoundland culture and an unworthy bearer of its tradition. The broadcast alludes to these conflicts through the mediums of text images and traditional story, both of which describe versions of Newfoundland as home – one imagined and one lived – in ways not dissimilar to Jones' and McNaughton's picture books. Brookes begins:

> Look out. A crab boat steaming through the narrows into St. John's Harbour. Seven ducks paddling out from the near shore. Soft purr of noises from the other

> end of the harbor: the city, waking. Seagulls preening on the roof of the small shed by the wharf -- the one with the sign announcing it as "Jack Wells' Twine Store", which confuses the tourists on the walking trail. They think it's a shop, instead of the place where a retired fisherman once stored his nets. The gulls have a nest there, close by the chimney. Three fluffy chicks noisily demanding breakfast. Beside them, a cough of smoke: the stove, clearing its throat before telling today's story to the chimney. Jack's smoke is up. I turn to my wife: "Jack's smoke is up" I say. All is well with the world. My neighbor has walked down the road to his Twine Store kingdom. The day may begin. (Brookes, 2009, 3)

Brookes' following bitter interpretation of this statement as "romantic" is telling, and implies he considers that "the real soul of Newfoundland is not in St. John's. It's in all the coasts and bays, and that's where the culture lived and hopefully still does, you know. But not in town. In town, it was like mummering. It was made illegal in 1861. So, it died out right away in town because the cops stopped it. They kept on going around the bay – away from the reach of law and order" (Brookes, 2019, Interview). Brookes also sardonically comments that one could just as easily describe such a morning as "another ordinary day in an insignificant neighborhood in an insignificant small city on an insignificant island off the east coast of Canada, an insignificant nation" (Brookes, 2009, 3) – a statement that implies other places are more significant, cared-about, and treasured by others than Newfoundland, and invites the possibility that Newfoundlanders think this not only of their country, province, and capital city, but of themselves as well.

In this Jack is used as escape to what Brookes considers the "real" Newfoundland – communities and topographies that are outside of civic hubs like St. John's. These picture books and radio broadcast, while not traditional Jack tales told in an orally traditional way, still contextualize themselves within the Jack telling tradition in Newfoundland by crediting their respective lineages, situating the illustrations in the context of Newfoundland, and by building upon a character (Jack), in connection with Jack Wells, who is an important part of

Newfoundland's storytelling heritage. In these narratives, Jack continues to exhibit his traditional characteristics of kindness and cleverness which can serve to perpetuate an idealized culture as Overton suggests. However, more importantly, they perpetuate a nostalgia for pre-confederate Newfoundland, honor the tellers of Jack tales that lived before Confederation, and evidence characteristics that people of this province still find important to commemorate even after 1949 through a character, Jack, that is heralded as representative of themselves – characteristics such as tenacity, kinship, and loyalty. Cashman argues that "material culture from the past, no less than oral traditions and vernacular practices, can provide the raw materials from which people responsibly revise their memory of the past and their identities of the present. From these revisions people gain perspectives on their present situation and identify aspects of a perceived past that may be considered superior to their present way of life" (Cashman, 2006, 154). My interviewees' discussion of Jack combined with their description of Newfoundland past and present shows that Jack tales can be used to help real Newfoundlanders fight for the sustained continuance of their homes and their way of life, in ways that may be aided by nostalgia, but are not wholly nostalgic. In this way, these stories are as much retellings of Newfoundland as they are retellings of Newfoundland folktales.

Chapter Three

Two Weird Jack Tales

Functionalism and Genre

3.1 Introduction

It is often difficult to distinguish a definitive boundary separating the genres of legend and folktale, though many have tried. Max Lüthi argues that "the secret power of the folktale lies not in the motifs it employs, but in the manner in which it uses them – that is, in its form. The form of a legend or a saint's legend stands in a one-to-one relationship to what is told" (Lüthi, 1986, 3). Lüthi's identification differentiates the legend from the folktale in both narrative structure and the distance of the narrator to the narrative, concluding that while folktales and legends might share otherworldly subjects, the relationship of the central character to them and of the narrator to the events differs, and therefore so does the purpose of telling.

Linda Dégh on the other hand, suggests that "the legend is a legend once it entertains debate about belief" (Dégh, 2001, 97) – the ways that narrators express their belief that their narratives are true because we cannot see their beliefs frame their stories in believable contexts, or the way they expect their narratives to be believed by their audiences are three examples that illustrate what Dégh means. She uses the term *legend* to encompass all subgenres and categories created by other folklorists such as rumor, memorate, fabulate, or urban legend, because "no straight jacket is needed to confine the legend, which stays the same while adjusting to new needs" (Dégh, 2001, 97). Dégh's definition of legend encompasses the multiform ways in which the genre can be presented to the point where Dégh has even argued that, unlike a folktale, "the legend has no frame" and "the legend has no form" (Dégh, 1991, 18-19).

If the legend then has no set form, or definitive framing – but could take any form - following Lüthi's example the only way to observe its distinction as a genre is to oppose it against others within either similar or different genres and how to engage in debate about belief. This chapter will add to this dialogue by comparing *Jack and the Ghost* told in 2019 by Fearon with Newfoundland versions of a Jack tale called *Black George* told by brothers Freeman and Everett Bennett between 1966 and 1970. Both these stories will serve as models which can illustrate how fluid the genre of Jack tales can be within Newfoundland storytelling traditions. This chapter also discusses how the functions of these narratives are unique because based on their presentation, they showcase characteristics of both the folktale and legend genres – though told almost fifty-three years apart. This chapter therefore will not only interrogate these narratives' form and structure, but by doing so use Lauri Honko's proposal that "the concept of genre appears to embrace three more or less equal components whose relationships are always having to be reassessed. These are 1) theme (content), 2) form, and 3) function" (Honko, 1989, 6).

3.2 Jack and the Ghost Summary

Provided below is a summary of what Robert Georges in "The General Concept of Legend" loosely calls "in literary parlance, plots" (Georges, 1997, 9). This is meant to present the events in Fearon's Jack story narratives as well as the Bennett brothers' Black George narratives so that audiences who might not be familiar with them can begin on common ground. A transcript of the Black George narrative can be found on pages 970-977 in Halpert and Widdowson's book "Folktales of Newfoundland" or listened to in the Memorial University

Folklore and Language Archives. A transcript of Fearon's narrative can be found in this thesis attached as Appendix A.

Summary of Mary Fearon's story *Jack and the Ghost* (2019)

1. Jack sent out by his mother to get some firewood
2. Jack is so distracted, he never gets the firewood.
3. Jack follows a bird he can't identify.
4. Jack gets lost in the woods for the first time.
5. It starts to rain.
6. Jack makes his way toward the light and sees that it is a cabin.
7. Jack opens the door to the cabin.
8. An old woman in a rocking chair welcomes Jack into the house.
9. She asks Jack to take off his sweater so she can dry it by the fire.
10. Jack takes off his sweater and the old woman puts it by the fire to dry
11. Old woman rocks in her chair.
12. Old woman tells Jack to take off his boots and vamps
13. Jack takes off his boots and vamps and the old woman puts them by the fire to dry.
14. Old woman rocks in her chair.
15. Old woman tells Jack to take off his pants.
16. Jack takes off his pants and the old woman puts them by the fire to dry.
17. Old woman rocks in her chair.
18. Old woman tells Jack to take off his underwear.
19. Jack takes off his underwear and the old woman puts them by the fire to dry
20. Old woman tells Jack to take off his skin.
21. Jack's skin falls off and the old woman puts it by the fire to dry.
22. Old woman rocks in her chair.
23. Old woman tells jack to give over his bones.
24. Jack gives the old woman his bones and he puts them on top of the pile.
25. Jack lies down on a daybed under a quilt and falls asleep.
26. Jack wakes up.
27. Jack puts his bones back together, skin on, long johns, pants, boots, and sweater.
28. Jack runs away from the cabin.
29. Jack discovers he knows where he is.
30. Jack's mother is sitting in a rocking chair. Tells Jack to get something to eat.
31. Jack eats a hearty breakfast.
32. Jack goes out and cuts enough wood for two years without complaining or getting distracted

3.3 Jack and the Ghost De-constructed

It was a sunny, chilly afternoon in St. John's, Newfoundland. I had a sick, sticky feeling in my gut that usually accompanies nerves, and so arrived shamefully early to Rocket Bakery on Water Street. I ordered a hot chocolate with whipped cream and almond croissant, and found a small round table in the back under some colorful and loudly-patterned, cotton bunting. When

Fearon arrived, she had a tea in her hands, and a tissue. She had a cold, but she was as generous with her narratives as she was with her time. In the middle of our interview, I asked Fearon whether she adapted stories to Newfoundland settings, and how she chose the stories she did. She said that a few years ago she performed the story *Jack and the Ghost* with Andy Jones and poet Angela Antle on Christmas Eve. In line with Dickens' tale *A Christmas Carol*, *Jack and the Ghost* has a main character who is himself transformed into a spirit entity and presents motifs, themes, forms, and functions of both legend and folktale genres.

Though framed as a folktale, Fearon's adaptation of *Jack and the Ghost* shares more characteristics indicative of the legend genre than the folktale much in the same ways as F. and E. Bennett's stories of *Black George.* This similarity is evidenced not by the events that occur in the story, but the way they are portrayed following Timothy Tangherlini's observation that "although both forms may include similar motifs, this difference in orientation leads to differing treatments of these motifs…As similar motifs appear in both narrative forms, the distinguishing characteristic is not relation to reality, but rather presentation of motifs, world view and portrayal of protagonist" (Tangherlini, 1990, 373).

Jack and the Ghost, which could be more aptly titled "Jack *is* a Ghost", because of his existence outside of his clothes, skin, and bones, showcases motifs such as E710: The External Soul and E726.3 Soul reunited with body. *Jack and the Ghost* also showcases fractions of whole motifs, such as E720: Soul Leaves or Enters the Body – partially represented because the body leaves the soul and the soul reconstructs the body around it and E721.1.2.3.1: Body dismembered so soul cannot return. This motif is only partially represented in *Jack and the Ghost* because the intent within Fearon's narrative to dismember a body specifically so a soul cannot return to it, is unexpressed. That said, Jack dismembers his own body when the old woman on a rocking chair

asks him first for his clothes, his skin, and then his bones to dry by the fire. Again, Jack expresses no argument against peeling away his skin and disconnecting his bones – it is the only time during Fearon's story that Jack does what he is told to do. This begs the question whether what is left – which Fearon identifies as "Jack" – is a ghost, a soul, or something else entirely.

The entity of "Jack" without his clothes, and skin, and bones exhibits self-awareness enough to know it is tired. When it wakes up in the morning, it desires to leave the old woman's cabin. It also knows that it cannot leave without first putting on the bones, the skin, and the clothes which returns the character to a human form. The cabin is a distinctly "other" place that only appears after Jack gets lost in the woods for the first time in his life. Further, after Jack wakes up and leaves the cabin, he goes home and chops enough wood for two years.

Following Radcliffe-Brown's interpretation, the fear or anxiety of death is present in this legend tale. One interpretation of Jack's return home to chop wood, and exceeding his mother's request, exhibits a fear of dying. He was so shocked by his out-of-body experience that chopping wood for several years is his coping mechanism, and his offering. If Jack does well, or too well, the experience will never happen to him again.

The motif E606.2: Reincarnation to complete unfinished work in this way is relevant. One can interpret the entity of "Jack" going to sleep and waking up "just before the break of day" (Fearon, 2019, Interview), as its death and subsequent reincarnation. The "Jack" figure that wakes up has transformed and is decisive and driven, different from the distracted character that entered the cabin. The difference in the character is internal as the disembodied "Jack" reattaches the same bones, and skin, and clothes that they wore before they were removed to dry by the fire. Secondly, Fearon identifies when Jack woke up and not how long he slept. She also does not indicate whether this sleep was magical. She simply says humorously, "And Jack, feeling kind of

exposed, sees there's a daybed on the side of the room, and crawls under a quilt, and falls fast asleep to the sound of the old lady rocking back and forth, back and forth" (Fearon, 2019, Interview).

When discussing the story *The Old Woman and Her Three Sons* – a Jack tale told by David Power in Harbour Breton, Fortune Bay, August 31, 1967 — Halpert and Widdowson observe legends in Newfoundland following the theme of a hero killing a dragon "lack certain elements found in the folktale. For example, they rarely include the hero's magic sleep and awakening" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 11-12). *The Old Woman and Her Three Sons* is a Jack story that shares similar themes and structure to the legends *St. George and the Dragon* and *Perseus and Andromeda*, and is told as a folktale that showcases characteristics of a legend in similar ways to *Jack and the Ghost.* Chief among these characteristics is the omission of magical sleep. Jack is not put under a spell. The old woman casts no charm or hex. Fearon uses no descriptive language other than the adjective "old" to describe the woman, and casts no negative aspersions upon her personal character. She simply falls asleep and remains asleep as Jack sneaks out of her house. In truth, her actions can be perceived as nothing except kindly – drying clothes of a lost, sopping traveler by the fire. It is only when she asks for Jack's skin and bones to be removed so they too might be dried, that any unordinary actions are manifest. It is also worth noting that these actions are only unordinary to the listener. Jack makes no observation or comment upon the oddness of stripping away his skin and bones, and then he makes the ordinary choice to fall asleep for some unspecified amount of time. This length of time could be seen as representing the process of reincarnation as the Jack entity that falls asleep is not the same Jack entity that wakes up. There is a transformation.

Presenting motifs, viewed especially through the lens of reincarnation, within *Jack and the Ghost* strides a line between what could be considered reality, and what could be considered fantasy. When Jack arrives at the cabin, he is soaking wet. One colloquial phrase to mean "soaking wet" is to say someone has "been drowned". Though Fearon does not use the word "drowned" in her telling of *Jack and the Ghost* it is possible to interpret the story's events thusly: When Jack got lost in the woods and it began to rain, he died, and is already dead when he arrives at the old woman's home in the woods. Two characteristics of these events lend themselves more closely to legend than folktale following this interpretation 1) Jack follows a light which leads him to the old woman's home, 2) the old woman is expecting him. "[Jack] looks off in the distance and he sees a light. So he makes his way toward the light. And, when he gets to the light, he sees that it's a little cabin. And when he opens the door, the door swings open with a great creak, and there is an old woman sitting in a rocking chair rocking back and forth, back and forth. 'Welcome Jack, she says, I've been expecting you.'" (Fearon, 2019, Interview). This would mean as an extension of the metaphor, that God is an old woman, and heaven is a small cabin in the middle of the woods with a warm fire out of the rain.

Further, Jack's reincarnation as a more industrious man also exposes the anxieties of Newfoundlanders, that without people doing the needed work during Spring, Summer, and Fall, they will not survive the Winter. The purpose of this legend tale could be instructive as well as cautionary. Jack, before his reincarnation – before his encounter with the numinous – is easily distracted and gets no work done. His mother is afraid that without the wood getting cut, they will freeze come wintertime. In a province known for its harsh winters and long distance between communities, fears of freezing to death are very strongly felt and is reflected in this legend *Jack and the Ghost* through Jack's reincarnation as a more focused and helpful person.

One major purpose of legends is to express the anxieties of the people who tell them, anxiety over drowning, or getting lost either at sea or in the woods, for a province that relied heavily on the sea for its enterprises would be relevant. In his 1952 book chapter "Taboo" functionalist Radcliffe-Brown argues that folklore can not only assuage anxieties, but create them. He says that "fears or anxieties as well as in our hopes we are conditioned (as the phrase goes) by the community in which we live" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, Location 2961). He suggests that it is the sharing of "hopes and fears" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, Location 2961) that link people together in community. Fear and anxiety are also expressed in Jack's mother's statement "Jack, where have you been? I've been waiting for you" (Fearon, 2019, Interview) when he returns home. Fearon fixes these experiences as well within the real Newfoundland setting which further contributes to the presentation of these social anxieties through story and fits with Dégh's observation that "the real world is the referent of the legend. It is presented before the legend event begins and after it has ended; life is restored to ordinariness. Ordinary landscapes, ordinary people are featured, engaged in their daily routines when, according to theologian Rudolf Otto…, the sudden intrusion of the *ganz andere*, the numinous, the *tremendum*, and the *fascinans* as a religious experience occurs and transforms the world of experiencers for a moment" (Dégh, 1996, 41).

Gillian Bennett tells us that legends are detailed because their settings need to orient audiences who might have no prior connection to them. Her article "What's 'Modern' about the Modern Legend?" examines the relationships between personal narratives and legend telling using the stories of her two informants – who Bennett refers to in her article as Mrs. Lawrenson and Mrs. Edelstein. Bennett observes that "in order to verify their narratives…they each prefer to provide good evidence of its truth by demonstrating their reliability… the truth of the account is

vouched for by their scrupulousness about details of place and person, time and circumstance" (Bennett, 1985, 227). For audiences who have never heard this Jack tale and who, like me, are not native Newfoundlanders, detailed narration is necessary. When Fearon told me *Jack and the Ghost*, complex details helped me understand the narrative and cement Fearon's credibility as a reliable narrator.

Conveying the possibility of a narrative's veracity through contextual details, regardless of whether or not the narrator hints at any belief in the narrative, appears to be a key component in categorizing narratives as legends. Dégh argues, "the painstaking, factual depiction of the situation serves the purpose of authenticating the narrative" (Dégh, 1996, 39) built on Röhrich's argument in his 1974 book *Folktales and Reality* that "identical narrative motifs are elastic enough to accommodate the message of both genres" (Dégh, 1996, 39). This posits that categorizing a legend requires a hierarchy of needs – primary amongst these needs are a narrator's emphasis that the told narrative might be true even if belief in its truth remains un-emphasized, and descriptions of a realistic setting.

Though Fearon admits "there's a longer version of that story that I didn't tell you. It describes the landscape and everything" (Fearon, 2019, Interview), her adaptation still follows Dégh's observations that landscape begins and ends the narrative. At the beginning of the story "it's the last day before winter" (Fearon, 2019, Interview) and Jack begins cutting wood for the winter. At the end of the story, Jack runs through the woods and continues to cut wood for the winter. While these details are sparse, Fearon has clearly structured her practiced story with space enough to describe "every bird in the trees, every bush, every berry, every flower" (Fearon, 2019, Interview) that Jack sees along the way. When she was describing how she learned this story, and adapted it to suit her, Fearon said she heard this story at a festival, and as

the teller was describing the landscape, she thought "No, this is the Newfoundland landscape. This is the barrens. This is those blueberry bushes. That's those kind of Jays across the landscape, and the gulls, and all of that" (Fearon, 2019, Interview). Firmly establishing the story in a realistic setting complicates this Jack tale's classification as a folktale because it affixes the story in reality – a characteristic of legends more-so than it is of folktales. This story provides elements of narrative structure and performance style that confirm what other folklorists, notably Dégh (2001), Honko (1989), Bascom (1965), Lüthi (1986), and Georges (1971), have submitted as evidence regarding the themes presented in legend telling – emphasizing truth, illuminating anxieties, and setting the narrative in the recent past.

It can be inferred from Fearon's telling that *Jack and the Ghost* takes place in the recent past based on the need to cut wood for the winter. Even today some Newfoundlanders still supplement the cost of electric or oil heating with cutting wood. A 2011 Statistics Canada Report observes that 22 percent of Newfoundland and Labrador households are heated with wood and wood pellets (Statistics Canada, Table 2: Type of Main Heating Fuel Used, By Province 2011, 2015). A report from the 2016 Residential Sector – Newfoundland and Labrador Government Website observed, that at least 13.6 thousand households still use wood as a primary heat source. Though this number has decreased by approximately 8,000 households since 1990 (Natural Resources, Residential Sector Newfoundland, Table 14: Total Households by Building Type and Energy Source), that Newfoundlanders today still heat their homes with wood and have for the past twenty years is evidence that *Jack and the Ghost* could be situated in the recent past. Secondly, the old woman's home has an external light. Though the old woman dries Jack's clothes by the fire, a light outside the house could be evidence of electricity. A half of Newfoundland and Labrador residents had electricity by Confederation in 1949 (McBride,

Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador, 2001) it also evidences the setting of *Jack in the Ghost* within this time-frame.

Fearon's story also comes from an untraceable lineage. She first heard *Jack and the Ghost* from someone at a conference called "Canadian Storytellers of Canada...The Storytellers of Canada Association or whatever" (Fearon, 2019, Interview). When Fearon asked from whom the teller learned the story, they told her they were never able to track down the original teller. Fearon then made it her mission to find them. She met a PhD student studying the connection between feminism, poverty, and stories, and who was also trying to track down where *Jack and the Ghost* first originated. Then Fearon explains,

> At this storytelling festival one year...I heard it, but I didn't have the story. And, this teller who told it – I didn't know who they were. It was one of those things that just slipped out of my reach...Sometimes storytellers are funny about their stories and [don't] want to share it. I emailed someone, and they didn't get back to me. But then we had a storytelling festival, and we had a story-slam that night and someone told this story. There it was. So I said to him. "Oh my God!" Norm Walker. He won. "Where'd you get that story?" He said, "Oh I got that from the original person who told it to me at the thing. We've been trying to figure out the threads… [but] we can't." So that ended that search, but I thought, "I'm going to tell that story." (Fearon, 2019, Interview)

Tangherlini argues that when telling a legend "any more transmissional links [than two] seriously compromises the believability of the account… [though] a narrative could be considered in tradition when original authorship is no longer verifiable and transmission is still actively taking place – this could occur in as few as a single transmissionary link" (Tangherlini, 1990, 374). *Jack and the Ghost*, because the origins are unknown to Fearon, Norm Walker, and the PhD candidate, could be said to be still "in transmission" following Tangherlini's argument and its classification as a legend. While the narrative is being modified to suit the needs of Fearon, the teller, this fits into the tradition of legend telling wherein the scaffolding of the story

remains the same, but the specific details might change – a commonality shared with Märchen telling as well.

Let us consider, for example, the legend *The Hook* as an illustration of this. Bill Ellis argues that "there is no 'ideal' or 'typical' plot'… 'The Hook' itself is a *nomos* – a customary way of discussing ambiguous social situations, a field of reference, a habitation for meanings" (Ellis, 1994, 68). Versions of the legend *The Vanishing Hitchhiker* as well include ghosts as passengers in cars or carts. Other variants have ghosts walking with someone down a lane or crossing a river (Baughman, 1966, 148-150) and its adaptations suit the needs of the people to whom the legend is told – much in the same way that Fearon adapts her story to a Newfoundland specific audience and geographic location. Secondly, because we do not know how the original *Jack and the Ghost* story was told, it is plausible given the structure of Fearon's story that it was originally told as a legend beginning with a clause delineating personal belief in its truth, or came from literary origin thus aligning with Halpert and Widdowson's similar observation of F. and E. Bennett's Black George narratives.

Az Mclean's 1964 story *Brave Jack,* told in Payne's Cove on the Great Northern Peninsula evidences the motif *AT 326A Soul Released from Torment* on which Halpert and Widdowson have added an asterisk, and which they discuss at length as a ghost legend, also shares similarities with *Jack and the Ghost* – first and foremost because there is a ghost in it. Halpert and Widdowson say they include the motif AT 326A* in their descriptions of *Brave Jack* because the ghost within the tale "wishes to reveal its hidden treasure, or to disclose its murder, or because it wants proper burial, or its murderer punished, as well as those in which it wants some wrongs righted that it committed while alive. Our chief problem has been to decide whether a narrative should be classed as a legend or as a fictional tale – not always an easy

decision to make… Perhaps the most valid observation that can be made in distinguishing between the ghost legend and those analogues we regard as folktales is that the latter are frequently more elaborate" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 211). In *Brave Jack,* Jack ignores the fact that supernatural visitors are unusual and behaves as he normally would with other humans. Jack in *Jack and the Ghost* does the same, he behaves as he normally would with other humans, taking off his skin as easily as his clothes and lying down to sleep. "To sum up," argues Halpert and Widdowson, "although ghost legends and the folktales under AT 326A* may embody the same folk beliefs, the legends are more straightforward" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 212). They conclude their analysis of *Brave Jack* by noting this motif is more a framework than the rule, though in both stories the ghost cannot rest until its debts in life are paid. For Jack in *Jack and the Ghost* his debts are owed to his mother and must be repaid before ghost Jack can rest and his story is straightforward with little deviation from the plot. In European and North American tradition, Tale Type 326 often coexists as both and legend and a Märchen.

3.4 Black George Narratives

F. and E. Bennett on the other hand, based on Halpert and Widdowson's transcription, were asked deliberately if they knew any stories and so their Black George narratives cannot be considered unprompted in the same way that Fearon's is. However, their narratives are equally as complicated as Fearon's story *Jack and the Ghost.*

Summary of Freeman Bennett's Black George Narrative (1966)[2]

1. Opening. "Way back in olden times when the Indians used to be out around. Now that's a TRUE story that is" (970).
2. Black George's father killed by RED Indians. (Author differentiates from Micmacs)
3. Black George kills lots of Indians.
4. Indians capture Black George and tie him up.
5. Chief's Wife lies to guard to go get the Chief so she can tell him her dream.
6. Chief's Wife frees Black George.
7. Black George kills more Indians but then retires.
8. Bill and Jack are furriers in the wintertime.
9. Jack goes to town to sell fur and get food.
10. Jack meets Girl and falls in love.
11. Girl persuades Jack to wait until Monday to leave instead of Sunday.
12. Jack stays the night with Girl.
13. Jack meets Girl's Uncle.
14. Girl's Uncle does not like Jack.
15. Girl gives Jack a whistle to call her next time he visits.
16. Jack lies to Bill about why he was back late.
17. Bill goes to town, sells fur, back Sunday night.
18. Jack goes to Girl's house and blows whistle.
19. Girl does not answer.
20. Girl's Uncle tells Jack that Girl went to get water and was carried off by Indians.
21. Jack returns to Bill and tells Bill the truth about why Jack did not return on Sunday.
22. Jack and Bill go to look for Girl.
23. Jack and Bill meet Black George staring at a fire.
24. Black George tells Jack and Bill it is impossible to get the Girl.
25. Jack and Bill agree to listen to Black George in exchange for his help.
26. Black George, Jack, and Bill meet four furriers in a cabin.
27. Black George tells furriers about the girl.
28. The furriers want to join the rescue, but Black George refuses to let them
29. Black George, Jack, and Bill meet a single Indian who had been kicked out of his tribe for being lazy
30. Indian tells Black George, Jack, and Bill about the Girl and where she is.
31. Black George, Jack, and Bill find Indian encampment.
32. Jack spots Girl.
33. Black George tells Jack and Bill to be quiet
34. Black George, Jack, and Bill see Chief offering Girl meat and frightening her with a knife.
35. Black George cuts a long pole.
36. Black George gives note to Girl with escape instructions.
37. Girl follows note's instructions by running away from Indians.
38. Bill and Black George kill many Indians.
39. Jack gets the Girl.
40. Black George leads Jack, Bill, and Girl away

[2] This chapter recognizes that the appropriate term, instead of *Indian* in Canada is Indigenous Peoples or First Nations, despite Freeman and Everett Bennett's use of the term.

The Black George stories from their collection *Folktales of Newfoundland: The Resilience of the Oral Tradition*, as Halpert and Widdowson explain, "are told by the Bennett family along with Märchen and other long tales, and despite their greater realism and credibility they have much in common in theme with the more fantastic stories…Although the tellers regard them as 'true stories,' they incorporate many of the structural features identified in the longer tales of Märchen type" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, liii). Despite the similarity between the Black George stories and the folktale genre, Halpert and Widdowson maintain that "these particular narratives, while exhibiting some of the characteristics of motifs and folktales, are in many ways more characteristic of legends. This is especially true of the stories about Black George, which are obviously legends and of literary origin" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, liii).

To demonstrate this claim, Halpert and Widdowson present three versions of the Black George narrative chronologically based on when they were collected. Two of these three stories were told by the same narrator Everett Bennett, the third by his brother Freeman Bennett (referenced as E. Bennett and F. Bennett respectively for clarity). The first of E. Bennett's two versions, Halpert and Widdowson observe, is "fuller and more animated than that in the later recording, although the basic plot of each is the same" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 987). They do not, however, query or discuss why these E. Bennett's two versions of the Black George narrative are told differently, which allows this paper to engage a discussion of Honko's second genre requirements: form.

In the latter two-thirds of both E. and F. Bennett's narratives, Indians[3] hold a girl hostage. Black George and his two companions sneak up on the Indian encampment and observe them trying to entice the girl to eat some food – which both narrators describe as raw meat. The

[3] I have used the term "Indian" based on E. and F. Bennett's use of the term. As previously mentioned, the respectful form of address is First Nations and Indigenous Peoples.

differences in the level of detail in E. Bennett's story is evident in this section and is presented as an example below.

1966. Black George. Everett Bennett. The Abduction of the Girl.

> Anyhow they _ went on. Got to this place what this Indian told 'em 'bout, sure enough _ this was their campin place. Stowed away in the woods. An' uh… just at dark they come. Now the girl was on a camel's back see, strapped on a camel's back. An' er… her husband now what _ had her for… for a wife see_ er… start unbuckle her off the camel's back an' _made in their fire an' _ Indians you see they never roast meat. They just warm it that's all over the fire see. An' they was in the woods watchin 'em, Black George an' th' other two fellers. An' her _ what she had for her husband _ he warmed the meat over the fire you know an' he _ offered it to her an' she shook her head. An' he _ had a big knife _ an' he offered the knife at her (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 986).

1970. Black George. Everett Bennett. The Abduction of the Girl.

> They go to their campin place, sure enough he found it. Settled away in the woods. By an' by _ they come back. Indians come. Start getting their… feed now. Warmin meat over the fire. Eatin of it. (He) passed it to the girl _ one he had for his wife now, th' ol' chief. This was his wife now. She shook her head an' he offered to stab her (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 991).

Why would a narrator tell the same story twice, but in different ways? One logical answer is that the narrator changes the story to address different performance contexts. In his article "Legend Genre as a Function of Audience", Edgar Slotkin considers why a narrator would tell a legend twice, once with first-person narration and the other with third. This interrogation of the differences between a memorate and a fabulate, invite into Slotkin's conversation the emic and etic perceptions of story resulting in his conclusion that both versions of the narrator's legend are the same. Paul Smith claims that "tradition, although a unified whole, can, in structural terms, be seen to have two main elements: an infrastructure, or 'emic' element, comprising the underlying ideology, beliefs and perceived functions of the tradition; and an 'etic' element, comprising the behavioral elements necessary to reify the tradition" (Smith, 1989, 91). This chapter too follows Smith's structure in his paper "Contemporary Legend: A Legendary Genre" by breaking down four stories into their component parts for assessment. However, Slotkin argues that the most

meaningful variable between the two tellings that he discusses in "Legend Genre as a Function of Audience", is not Ellis' distinction between narratives as "words as words" or "words as experiences" (Ellis, 1988, 59) but "the different audience Mr. Gruber had the second time. The presence of his wife and grandson, especially his grandson, seems to account for the narrator's first-person performance" (Slotkin, 1988, 103). The audience to whom the legend is being told shapes the purpose of, and thus the telling of, the legend.

While I was not present when Halpert and Widdowson listened to E. Bennett's narration, the transcripts of both tellings are evidence of their observation that the first of E. Bennett's stories is more detailed than the second. In this circumstance, though, there is no difference in audience. Halpert and Widdowson are the same people in 1970 that they were when E. Bennett first told them his Black George story in 1966 – other than a difference of four years in age and experience. Therefore, the only meaningful variable, based on the data at hand, is that Halpert and Widdowson have already heard E. Bennett's legend and carry with them a pre-established relationship to the teller. Without the appropriate data and interviews, it is impossible to draw any concrete conclusions, but it is not outside the realm of possibility for the reason E. Bennett told a less detailed second version to be that his audience no longer requires the longer version.

This indicates Elliot Oring's application of rhetoric to unpack legend telling strategies. Oring argues that when a legend teller applies Ethos, they do so through a series of tropes. His first identified trope is called "The Authority of the source" and it "depends, on some extent, upon the social position of the narrator and/or the reputed source of the narrative" (Oring, 2008, 131). E. Bennett's authority as a narrator is already established when he tells his Black George story the second time. He does not need to re-establish it with Halpert and Widdowson. As, Oring notes that contextualizing details are one component that authors use to establish their

authority, it would make further sense that E. Bennett's 1966 Black George telling would be more detailed than the second. E. Bennett was unconsciously applying Ethos to establish his credibility to listeners who he had never met.

Neither Halpert nor Widdowson are native Newfoundlanders – Halpert was born in the United States and Widdowson in Great Britain. Thus, contextualizing details not only of geography, but also of occupation, and historical intention would be necessary to fully provide the essential background to understand the story like a native Newfoundlander. Again, it is probable that E. Bennett would have known, or been able to deduce that his audience was not from Newfoundland and so would have provided more details to help connect his audience to his story.[4] In this way, E. Bennett uses the details of his story to create the audience he needs in order to help them understand the narrative he wants to tell. When E. Bennett re-tells his Black George story four years later in 1970, he no longer needs to convince or orient his audience, because they are the audience that he created returned to him, and so a less detailed narration is required. Had E. Bennett been telling a folktale, he would not have needed to add so much, if any, contextualizing exposition because a folktale exists outside of reality where no familiarizing context is needed.

An alternative hypothesis for the change in narrative style could be E. Bennett's development as a narrator. He has had four years to hone his telling skills therefore his second telling, while shorter, is a much smoother narration. For example, E. Bennett's 1970 Black George retelling includes fewer fillers such as 'uh' and 'er' and 'gar'[5] – 16 in his 1966 version,

[4] Without the relevant data presenting E. Bennett's telling the Black George story to audiences that differ from Halpert and Widdowson in 1966 and 1970, while it seems probable, it is impossible to conclude that E. Bennett's narrative style does change in similar ways for other people who might be from Newfoundland, but who have never heard the story of Black George.

[5] 'Uh', 'Er', and 'Gar' are all included in the final tabulation because their narrative function is the same – they indicate when a narrator has lost their narrative flow and verbalizes the pause to think.

and only 1 in his 1970 version. Halpert and Widdowson's transcription includes fewer breath breaks as well in E. Bennett's 1970 Black George story than in his 1966 version which means that E. Bennett no longer needs to think as much about telling his story – Halpert and Widdowson use underscores to illustrate this type of pause.[6]

The narratives about Black George that Halpert and Widdowson present in their collection are narratives of a man who fights Indians so that he may avenge his father who was murdered by them. In all three stories, Black George is pulled out of Indian fighting retirement to help out a pair of younger men and thus engages Honko's first requirement of genre: theme/content. F. Bennett, E. Bennett's brother, specifically identifies these Indians as "RED Indians. There's two kind o' Indians, there was the… what they call the Red Indians an' the… the Micmacs. Only this was the RED Indians" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 970). This emphatic detail, which fixes F. Bennett's Black George narrative in a realistic setting, suggests believability. The Micmac peoples are well known in Newfoundland, and F. Bennett's effort to differentiate them from other indigenous communities reveals contextual specificity that might resonate with a North American audience but also imply that the true events in his story occurred elsewhere.

Other components to F. Bennett's Black George narrative also suggest believability: bison, furriers, and cutting a long pole to which a note is affixed – Bennett uses the vernacular word *stick* to describe this tool. F. Bennett also takes time to describe the setting of each location and the routines of each character as he moves through the story. His description about the furring occupation, for example, is extremely detailed "at that time _ them times they used to go

[6] Pauses of this type are not specifically counted because Halpert and Widdowson's use of underscores "denotes a brief pause, often for breath" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, lxiii) which do not upset the flow of a story the way that verbalized or lengthy pauses do.

in the country see furrin. An' they used to _ two an' three men in a lot an' they'd go in, build up their camps back in the country, well they'd stay there all the winter long see _ furrin. They'd take_ a week [or] two a time an' come out an' sell their fur an' get a turn o' grub an' carry back again see?" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 971). F. Bennett uses these contextual details to orient the listener to his story exemplifying "The Authority of the Source" trope from Oring's analysis of Ethos (Oring, 2008, 131). Without them, the audience lacks the appropriate familiarity to interpret the occupation of the characters Bill and Jack. In this case contextual components within the narrative create a relatable atmosphere that relaxes and soothes the listener thus encouraging them to develop empathetic connections with the narrator. This increases his credibility, which results in the audience's belief in the truth of the narrative.

That said, it is not relevant whether the audience or narrator believes the story that they tell, argues Gillian Bennett in her article "Legend: Performance and Truth": "No one, not even the performers themselves, can always say for certain whether a given narrative is *believed to be* true, but we can at least try to work out how it sounds to an audience if it is '*told as* true' and what it *means* for a story to be told as true" (Bennett, 1988, 13). To support her claim, Bennett examines the way that two narrators tell the same legend – one narrator a skeptic and the other a believer – and concludes that the "small performative touches" and "arrangement of structural elements" are two key components that "distinguishes the story 'told as true'" (Bennett, 1988, 18). When discussing the arrangement of structural elements within this story, it illustrates Honko's third genre requirement: function.

When applying Bennett's framework combined with Oring's rhetorical trope "Framing [which] concerns the degree to which a narrative is foregrounded in respect to the speech in which it is embedded" (Oring, 2008, 139) to the Black George narratives told by E. and F.

Bennett respectively, it is clear that they are stories 'told as true'. Take as an example the first five sentences of F. Bennett's Black George story which F. Bennett uses to "Frame" his narrative: "I knows one about Black George. *[coughs]* Way back in olden times when Indians used to be out around. Now that's a **TRUE** story that is. Black George_ he's uh… 'tis way back in olden times see? Well uh… might be… three or four hundred year ago" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 970). F. Bennett emphatically states that this story is **TRUE**. Halpert and Widdowson's meticulous transcription guidelines require any word or phrase that is strongly emphasized to be written with capital letters and bolded. This means, when reading F. Bennett's story, that his telling of Black George is meant to be taken as the truth, as a documentation of a factual, historic event. Oring argues that "Intonation, Countenance, and Demeanor" are one trope that legend tellers use to apply the rhetorical tool Logos. He states that "Intonation can communicate seriousness, wonder, joy, excitement, fear, sadness, anguish, nervousness, irony, and doubt" (Oring, 2008, 138). F. Bennett's use of emphatic intonation implies not only earnestness, but seriousness. If the story is true, or at least told to be believed as true, then it makes sense that F. Bennett's intonation would reflect this about his narrative.

F. Bennett also employs the interrogative "see?" which Halpert and Widdowson suggests is meant to "elicit a response from the listeners" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 971) and which Oring labels as "Corroborative Invitations and Challenges" – trope belonging to the category of Logos and that "involves the participation of listeners who ask questions, support or challenge events, and offer their own interpretations" (Oring, 2008, 143). The anticipated response from the audience is either an affirmative *yes, we do see* or a negative *no, we do not see* – the equivalent of *we understand* or *we do not understand.* Based on the audience response that F. Bennett receives, he can tailor his narrative to help his audience "see" if they do not or continue

his intended narrative if they do "see" like he does. The implication is that if the audience "sees," they also understand, and then can therefore accept that the story is true.

Bennett suggests that when a narrator tells a story as the truth, that the reason they present so many orienting facts to their listeners is because their reputation is at stake. She argues that "in the case of modern legends, where narrators telling stories 'for true' lay their reputation for good sense and sober judgement on the line (because the supposed events, though momentous, are at odds with received ideas about the nature of the world), they prefer, as it were, to bully their audience into belief by belabouring them with orienting facts" (Bennett, 1988, 22). Applying this argument, F. and E. Bennett's orienting facts in the Black George narrative combined with their assertions that the events are **TRUE,** are rhetorical tools that they use in order to both protect and cement their reputation as truthful individuals.

Few people believe folktales are true. Max Lüthi builds upon William Bascom's assertion that "folktales are prose narratives which are regarded as fiction" (Bascom, 1965, 4) by arguing "from the outset, the folktale does not seek empathetically to recreate the concrete world with its many dimensions. The folktale transforms the world" (Lüthi, 1986, 24) in ways similar to art. It is precisely because of F. Bennett's attempt to recreate the world around him that precludes labeling his version of Black George as a folktale and supports Bascom's definition of legend as "prose narratives which, like myths, are regarded as true by the narrator and his audience, but they are set in a period considered less remote, when the world was much as it is today" (Bascom 1965, 4).

E. Bennett's Black George narratives on the other hand, do not begin by emphatically stating the story is the truth. Nor does he differentiate Red Indians from the Micmac peoples. However, he still portrays the Black George character as if he actually existed.

1966. Black George. Everett Bennett. Opening.

> He was er…Black George was er…a man_ after the Indians you see? An'_ when Black George was a boy_ small boy_ the Indians killed his father. An' he swore if ever he'd grow up to be a man_ he'd have revenge_ for his father you see. An' Black George killed_ hundreds o' Indians. Hundreds. But I tell you one little short one about Black George… Uh… gar… there was a feller… two fellers in the country [i.e., inland] one time. An' er… they goin for a week at a time you see? (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 984)

1970. Black George. Everett Bennett. Opening.

> Black George. Uh…Black George… his father was killed by the Indians you see. An' he swore if ever he'd… grow to get a man _ he'd have revenge. Well _ 'cordin to the reports he killed hundreds o' Indians. So there were two fellers in the…country [i.e., inland]. An' they'd… week an' week [i.e., take turns alternate weeks' to come out _ an' get food. (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 990)

E. Bennett portrays Black George's truthful existence by establishing a plausible background for him set in the interior of Newfoundland. Black George's fight with North American Indians further affixes the story 'told as truth' because it would have been events with which most Newfoundland audiences would have been familiar. Secondly, E. Bennett uses the same rhetorical trope "Corroborative Invitations and Challenges" as his brother F. Bennett does by using interjections such as 'see?' and 'you see" to elicit responses from his audience and include them in the telling of the Black George tale. Folktales are not told as true and so will not contain any of the interjectional elements that E. and F. Bennett use to draw their audiences into the story.

Halpert and Widdowson consider it important

> that in Newfoundland many of the [Black George stories] are told with a degree of verisimilitude typical of the novella or the legend, in that they are deliberately set more in the real world than might be expected of international Märchen and include correspondingly fewer elements in which magic or "wonder" plays a significant part. The shift from the wonderful to the realistic is emphasized by the localizing of many episodes, elements, and details, including of course the use of familiar vernacular words and idioms. (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, liii)

However, Halpert and Widdowson also infer that the stories of Black George here presented by E. and F. Bennett, all stem from a literary source because of the distinct lack of plot variation. To this end, Halpert and Widdowson comment that printed sources do enter oral tradition, if rarely, such as "tales derived from medieval exampla and Renaissance jestbooks, as well as from later chapbooks, circulate widely among storytellers" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 979). Thus, legends that exhibit characteristics of the folktale without actually being a folktale would not only be probable, but in this case possible.

F. Bennett's choice to name the furriers Bill and Jack also complicates classifying this narrative as a legend. Bill and Jack are well known folktale characters in Newfoundland, the United States, and Great Britain. Jack is characterized as a kind, clever, everyman. These characteristics make Jack a highly relatable character, especially in Newfoundland, to the point where some individuals might see themselves as Jack. Wonderous events occur in Jack tales that remain unquestioned by the characters in the story – finding magic beans that grow a beanstalk that reaches to the clouds, catching the three prettiest fish in the sea, or creating a rawhide belt that gives instructions when it is used. These stories often include Jack's older brothers, Tom and Bill, when they are being told. If these characteristics of F. Bennett's Black George narrative are the only ones that are considered, then there is no other conclusion than that these stories are folktales. While F. Bennett's use of Bill and Jack to make his story appealing to Newfoundland audiences makes them more receptible to a story, this nominative use signifies to listeners that the story they are going to hear is a folktale and not a legend.

However, Jack is not as central a character as Black George and thus the narrative function of Bill and Jack is not to signify to audiences that the story F. Bennett tells is a folktale. Jack and Bill are just placeholders – familiar names that F. Bennett uses to distinguish characters

from one another and make his story coherent and easy to listen to[7] and therefore could be a loose representation, if not an exact representation, of Oring's rhetorical trope "Narrative Positioning" (Oring, 2008, 141) where narratives are framed in relation to other narratives. These names also signify for audiences, because Jack is an everyman, that the narrative could be both truthful and probable. E. Bennett's Black George stories are not as organized, primarily because they do not identify any characters other than Black George by name. E. Bennett, because of this, must lean on slightly different techniques to instill probability and believability in audience listeners.

A Legend can have relationships to folktales without being one. F. Bennett and E. Bennett's Black George stories illustrate this point through the unusualness of their conclusions. In all three Black George Narratives, the girl marries one of the furriers. The story concludes as it would in a folktale – with a happy ending. However, not all folktales require happy endings, and not all legends are without them. Ambivalence is a characteristic that permeates both genres, even if it does not overwhelm them. Also, the ending of F. Bennett's Black George story, while a couple gets married and has two children, implies that the Indians are continuing their chase. 1966. F. Bennett. Black George Conclusion:

> An'__'Now' Black George said he said 'come on. 'Cause' he said 'there's two gone' he said 'now' he said 'they're goin to get another tribe' he said 'an' they're goina be after us.' So he got the girl an' when I left they was married an' had two youngsters. (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 976)

[7] It is important to mention that Tom is a notable absence and few, if any, Jack tales exist where Bill and Jack are involved without Tom – even if there are occurrences where Bill and Tom do not exist at all. This means that, while Jack exists in F. Bennett's Black George story, it cannot solely be classified as a Jack tale.

This narrative communicates a concern over safety in the wild. It further communicates anxiety about groups of people who are different from other groups of people. Because of this, the Black George story cannot be a folktale.

Lastly E. Bennett's versions of the Black George story include not a bison, but a camel – a creature not native to North America. Black George and the two furriers do not comment on the situation's oddness and so, this could be evidence of a folktale. However, Halpert and Widdowson note that "a comparison with [E. Bennett's Black George stories] will indicate, the various tales of Black George in this collection may well have come from a single source, probably an adventure story or purportedly true account of this character's exploits" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 977). And so, the appearance of a camel in E. Bennett's tales is less evidence of an oral storytelling origin, and more evidence of a similar originating literary text. It also suggests that the combination of a narrator claiming their story is true with a realistic setting to their story is more important in determining a legend than a happy ending or unusual creature. It is the unusual creature that is used to interrogate the anxiety that is important, not the creature itself.

The question then becomes, what do we as folklorists call stories that share so much in common with multiple genres? Could we, perhaps, create an interstitial genre, or is breaking the stories and categorizing them by their component parts a futile endeavor? Are there further purposes and goals to telling stories in such a liminal way? Through this analysis of Fearon's *Jack and the Ghost* and F. Bennett and E. Bennett's Black George stories, it should be evident that some characteristics of genre are hierarchically more important than others – such as a realistic setting. For example, *Black George* narratives should more strongly be associated with legends because they lack enough of the appropriate characteristics to be folktales – while both

are exhibited to a degree. *Jack and the Ghost* on the other hand positions itself at the interstitial boundary between folktale and legend because of how Fearon chose to tell *Jack and the Ghost* within the context of our conversation and its exhibition of Newfoundland anxieties. These could be seen as a close facsimile of Oring's rhetorical trope "Narrative Positioning" (Oring, 2008, 141) because while the authors are not using two contrasting narratives they are combining two contrasting narrative styles – Folktale and Legend – in order to tell a believable and captivating narrative. *Jack and the Ghost* as well as the Black George stories are told as if they were true by more than one author and in different years – 1966, 1970, and 2019. These stories possess descriptions and details of both occupations and settings that exist in the real world and the characters operate within the boundaries of reality. Further, they do not question any events that might, to the listener, appear unordinary. Characters within each story do not have magical powers, they do not have many magical helpers. While the camel in E. Bennett's story is unusual, it is not a wondrous creature. It too exists in the real world, if not within the geographic region that E. Bennett sets it. Also, while the old Woman asks for Jack to remove his skin and bones, the entity of Jack that remains fits within a belief in the soul, or belief in ghosts. The entity's actions as well show an ordinary action – falling asleep on a daybed. Despite the happy endings of all three stories, they are used to express the anxieties of clashing cultures, surviving harsh winters, and getting lost in the woods or at sea.

In the end, it does not matter under which category a story rests, or in what form. What is most important is what these stories do for their tellers and audiences – their purpose. *Jack and the Ghost* explains lessons to scare a lazy son into overachieving, it illustrates a comfortable and calm, warm and cozy death, and it situates the fantastic in a realistic and relatable setting. F. and E. Bennett's narratives examine a clash of cultures, and the anxiety of losing something you

love. Delimiting these narratives allows us to invite and draw comparisons between 'like' and 'unlike' stories. Though, to quote the Brothers Grimm, "To try to debate the advantages of both genres would be crude and awkward, and even in this discussion of their differences one should neither overlook nor deny their common properties, or the fact that they intermingle with one another in infinite combinations and intertwinings, often resembling one another to a greater or lesser degree" (Brothers Grimm, 1981, 2). *Jack and the Ghost* and Black George are clearly important narratives that are compelling enough to Fearon, and F. and E. Bennett that they continue telling their tales even if the narrative lineages can no longer be distinguished. These Newfoundland stories follow a complicated pattern of fluid genre identity, and as two of them are Jack tales – Fearon's *Jack and the Ghost* and F. Bennett's version of Black George that uses Bill and Jack as brothers – it illustrates how legend telling, transcription, and collection is as varied and complex as the people they represent.

Chapter Four

Jackeline Stories

De-Stabilizing Interpretations of Gender and Power in Jack Tales

4.1 Introduction

William Bascom's 1954 call to action spotlighted four integrative functions to folklore – education, validation, amusement, and maintaining conformity – that created a framework folklorists have used to assess how meaning is created in traditional culture. These four functions have encouraged folklorists to explore how practices, perspectives, expressions, beliefs, and material culture "work together under the single function of maintaining conformity" (Bascom, 1954, 248) that contribute to "maintaining the stability of culture" (Bascom, 1954, 349). However, Bascom's application of functionalism routinely ignores how folklore is often used to protest, question, critique and undermine this same stability, and in her book *Roadside Crosses in Contemporary Material Culture* folklorist Holly Everett asserts "functionalism does not adequately account for social conflict or change, but rather, resulting from its origins in the idea of socio-cultural evolution, embraces only those aspects of culture contributing to (re)integration" (Everett, 2002, 125). Everett uses, what she has termed, a "modified functionalist" (Everett, 2002, 101) approach that combines counter-hegemonic theories in her analysis of roadside crosses, emphasizing their "inform[al] and liminal status" (Everett, 2002, 118), as a "transient, vernacular art form crossing religious, culture, and class lines" (Everett, 2002, 118), that possess an "outlaw quality" (Everett, 2002, 118).

This chapter follows Everett's example by similarly using a "modified functionalist" approach, instead combining feminist, queer, and trans folklore theory with functionalism. This discussion challenges the way Jack tales have conceptualized and utilized gender and suggests that Jack is no longer a character that can be or should be considered cis-gendered male. This "queering" of Jack is not a compilation of hypothetical "what-if" scenarios, but an acknowledgment that these perspectives about Jack are very real, as at least two of my interviewees discussed them during their interviews. As Kay Turner sees it, "The very task of queering the Grimms or any other traditional tales is to seek out the small and little-known story to discover queer possibility in the traces it offers" (Turner, 2012, 245).

As such, changing perceptions of Jack tales and how they are embodied at present are imperative elements that cannot be viewed within the context of outdated gender binaries but instead rebel against them. In fact, the argument will be made that Jack is genderless by exploring how female-centric Jack tales, specifically Andy Jones' 2011 version of *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves*, male-centric stories told by a female narrator such as Alice Lannon's 2001 telling of *Jack and the Cat,* and Jack's anonymity embody the rebelliousness of an oppressed people, Newfoundlanders, and reframes an identity of powerlessness as empowerment.

4.2 Historic Jack: Validation and Conformity

Folklorists have commonly written about a Jack as a cis-gendered male character with narratives that are primarily male-centered. Male-centric tales are often identified by a wedding that signifies the end of the story whereas weddings occur at the beginning of female-centric stories, and Bengt Holbek notes that "the heroine's fight begins only after the wedding" (Holbek,

1989, 49). Martin Lovelace's 2001 article "Jack and his Masters: Real Worlds and Tale Worlds in Newfoundland Folktales" argues that male-centered Jack tales provide a behavioral framework for young men to follow when navigating employer/employee relationships and to help protect themselves from exploitation. Though this schema is what defines Lovelace's analysis, his model based on male-centered stories and male-to-male transmission ultimately belies his own gender-bias. Sherene Razack argues "[gender] is the prism through which daily life is viewed" (Razack, 1993, 86) and by extension, interpreted. Through Lovelace's analysis, Jack tales can be seen as tools that validate, conform to, and reinforce patriarchal values and social constructions of gender-norms established by, and for, men and young boys whether or not a woman tells the Jack story.

Anita Best, Martin Lovelace, and Pauline Greenhill's 2019 collaborative work *Clever Maids, Fearless Jacks, and a Cat* likewise interpret Alice Lannon's story *The Ship that Sailed over Land and Water* as "Jack modeling the 'way to be' for a man negotiating with an employer" (Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill, 2019, 243). These folklorists have used Jack in their analysis to brush aside any young girls who might have been listening, as the authors admit "it is easy to imagine why Alice's Grandmother told this classic masculine tale: she had boys to amuse as well as girls" (Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill, 2019, 243). Gutierrez as well suggests that "the Jack tale can serve to draw members of the family closer together; the tale is a gift from the grandfather to the grandson. As such it solidifies the relationship and perhaps even partly defines it" (Gutierrez, 1975, 25). These observations of Jack tales assert that while girls are present in Jack tale tradition, girls come second. The argument that "Mary Strang McCarthy and Alice were plainly giving advice to boys about how to behave in working life as well as showing them the benefit of being kind to old women" even if "Jack owes his survival entirely to women" (Best, Lovelace,

and Greenhill, 2019, 243) is an implicitly patriarchal one as it continues to place men and boys in positions of power above women and girls. Contrary to both Bruno Bettelheim's (1989) and Max Lüthi's (1986) assertions that gender within fairy tales does not matter, Jeana Jorgensen unequivocally asserts that it does: "Not only does gender matter in terms of how it is inscribed on the body, but it also matters in different ways for men and for women" (Jorgensen, 2019, 56). In Jack tales while women are many times more magically gifted than Jack, and help him achieve his goals, women rarely embody leading roles, and the main character – Jack – has remained in interpretation a straight, male character. Gender clearly matters. Hence, Jack has been used to validate a social hierarchy that privileges patriarchal ideology, literally strips away the agency women and girls possess, and places them in subservient roles to men and boys.

Feminist folklore scholarship challenges the ways that "patriarchal ideology has created cultural lenses that emphasize males, hierarchy, dualism, and linear/logical ways of knowing" (Mitchell, 1993, 281), which Beverly Stoeltje (1988) has cleverly defined as:

> The structure most characteristic of institutions (political, social, and religious) in modern life may best be described as a *hierarchy*, a system of levels, large at the bottom, small at the top, organized for the distribution of power and authority with the greatest authority vested in a single individual (usually a male) at the top of the structure. But the term *hierarchy* fails to account for…the absence of women in positions of power. The term *patriarchy* incorporates *hierarchy*, but expands the definition of hierarchical relations to include gender, thereby identifying the major structural form affecting women in modern society…With this structure of power established in the state, in religion, and in the family, it replicates itself throughout society, insuring male control over females in any domain, since females are effectively defined out of the "correct and right" systems of power. (Stoeltje, 1988, 146-147)

It is important to consider Jack tales through this lens of feminist folklore theory because it confronts the implicit biases through which gender-specific privileges are enacted. Liz Locke's 2008 argument from "Folklore of Subversion" proposes that "Folkways may communicate messages regarding how women should conform to their social roles and sometimes warn about

the repercussions of violating cultural norms" (Locke, 2008, 1), and rather than decoding these messages, folklorists have taken for granted that Jack tales reinforce them. For example, Jack tales could as well be teaching young women ways to negotiate with their employers, or ways to be a respectful employer, such as in the Sheila's Brush 1991 rendition of *Jack Meets the Cat* – wherein Jack finds himself gainfully employed to a lady cat – but neither Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill (2019) nor Lovelace (2001) suggest this, implying that because the main character is male, that girls and women would have no interest in emulating him. Neither do these scholars acknowledge that many Jack tales reinforce conformity in young girls by idealizing their 'way to be' as tangential helpers in a male-dominated world. I suggest that this is in part because Jack has historically been viewed by scholars, tellers, and listeners as a male character, operating in story and in scholarship through male-dominated power structures, social contexts, and cultural interpretation.

Folkloristics has also been historically a largely male dominated field of study and it is only pertinent that so too would male perspectives dominate in the history of this scholarship.[8] Out of the 69 Greatest Hits Reading List from Ohio State University's Center for Folklore Studies ranging from 1965 to the present, only 27 were authored or co-authored by women[9] (OSU Center for Folklore Studies, n.d.); from Memorial University of Newfoundland's Department of Folklore Suggested Reading List's 57 entries ranging from 1976 to 2014, 25 were authored or co-authored by women[10] (MUN Department of Folklore, n.d.). 7 out of 19 entries

[8] Johnathan Gottschall et al's (2008) problematic work nods to this source of bias in folk tale collections by acknowledging "about 60% of the collections [in his study's sample of 90] were collected, edited, translated, and in some cases retold by Westerners, usually males, between 1860 and 1930. It is therefore possible that the sample has been distorted by the biases – male and Western – of ethnographers, collectors, and editors of an imperial era" (Gottschall, 2008, 179).
[9] Approximately 39 percent
[10] Approximately 44 percent

were authored or co-authored by women[11] in Indiana University's Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology Undergraduate Selected Faculty Book List that ranges from 1999 to 2015 (Indiana University Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, n.d., 38-39); and only 9 out of 30 University of Pennsylvania's Center for Folklore and Folklife entries on their First-Year Reading List ranging from 1956-1999 were authored or co-authored by women[12] (University of Pennsylvania Center for Folklore and Folklife, n.d.). For these four prestigious institutions, less-than-half of the scholarship their websites promote as foundational material with which students should familiarize themselves was written by, or contributed to by, female-identifying scholars and recalls M. Jane Young and Kay Turner's pertinent question offered in 1993: "Why aren't a significant number of academic writings by female folklorists on the Ph.D. reading lists of the major departments?" (Young and Turner, 1993, 9).

4.3 De-Stabilizing Age and Gender

As in the case of Halpert and Widdowson's previously mentioned collection *Folktales of Newfoundland*, there are no female Jacks, and few female Jack storytellers. Only eight of the storytellers identify as female, and only one mentions a Jack story. In the tale called *The Fiddler's Bet,* Rebecca Bennett is recorded in an exchange with her husband Freeman Bennett admitting she had never listened to *The Fiddler's Bet* because she had been warned it was too "smutty" (Halpert and Widdowson, 1996, 511). She only knew of its existence because she would sing an accompanying song. Whether Rebecca had never listened to the tale by choice, or social restrictions, Halpert and Widdowson do not speculate, though the omission of such discussion is startling. That this text includes a Jack story from only one female storyteller,

[11] Approximately 37 percent
[12] Approximately 30 percent

consequentially leads Lovelace to comment that "given so many of the narrators in the collection recall learning tales from older men when they themselves were boys or teenagers, it seems likely that children and young adults were key audiences for the magic tale" (Lovelace, 2001, 154). He extends this logic further by connecting "narrators' memories of male-to-male transition [in support of] the idea that many Newfoundland Jack tales instructed young men and boys in how to be proper men according to the canons of working-class behavior" (Lovelace, 2001, 154).

This extension of Lovelace's argument leaves two critical gaps that some of my interviewees identified in Jack tales. First, Jack tales were told to adults; not primarily to children. Folksinger, storyteller, and teacher Anita Best did not consider the Jack tales to be appropriate material for children to hear, instead she considers them "part of the adult entertainment tradition…. It never comes to me to tell them as children's stories. I would never prevent a child from hearing a Jack tale, but I'd rather not tell them to a group of children" (Best, 2019, Interview). Actor, comedian, and author Andy Jones agrees that "the original [Jack] stories were told for adults, but kids got to listen in" (Jones, 2019, Interview). Storyteller and Director of the Blue Door, Mary Fearon remembers listening to men sing and tell Jack tales through the floorboards of her uncle's home in Paradise Sound "because they weren't really considered children's stories" (Fearon, 2019, Interview). While children may have never been excluded from listening to a Jack tale, Best's, Jones', and Fearon's experiences show that children were not explicitly the target audience of Jack tales in Newfoundland. Even Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill comment that "fairy tales weren't meant only, or even particularly, for children, contrary to what one raised on Walt Disney movies might suppose. Geraldine Barter (1979) recorded her mother's memories of Port-au-Port *viellées* before the 1940s; children were

regarded as a tolerated nuisance and allowed to listen only as long as they stayed quiet" (Best, Greenhill, Lovelace, 2019, 6). Because of this, Jack tales cannot be considered alone, as Lovelace asserted in 2001, as "primers to boys on how to carry themselves in the working world" (Lovelace, 2001, 167).

Second, Jack is genderless. Fearon's interpretation of Jack as a character becomes key in this. She argues that "[Jack] is a man, but he encapsulates the feminine and the masculine…. I think of it more as kind of Jack *could* be a man; Jack *could* be a woman. I mean I have a visual on him, but when I think about his sexuality I can't see it. It's not part of the picture. It's an interesting thing. He's not a masculine fellow. However, he's clever and he stuns yer arse. You know, he can be all of those things, he can be all aspects of self in a way…. But he also represents this incredible strength of character whether female or male that is represented in Newfoundland really well" (Fearon, 2019, Interview). This second, most crucial observation positions Jack as a concept more than as a character, and suggests that for listeners and tellers, Jack's gender and sexuality is inconsequential. What resonates most is how Jack acts and who Jack is seen to be by others. Importantly, the function of these characteristics allows women and girls as well to imagine themselves as Jack, women including Best.

Best calls Jack "anonymous" when characterizing him and believes this to be an "irreversible" component to his character that allows "everybody [to] identify as Jack, girls as well as boys" (Best, 2019, Interview). This assertion is in direct contrast with Lovelace, who "orients [his] analysis toward what Holbek calls 'male-centered' tales, rather than the female-centered tales that are equally important in forming the genre as a whole, because the majority of the tales in *Folktales of Newfoundland* are male-centered" (Lovelace, 2001, 151).[13] Lovelace

[13] Lovelace acknowledges that his focus is only "one facet of these marvelously complex narratives" (Lovelace, 2001, 149).

follows this explanation with the conclusion that "the narrators are male and they identify with their protagonist, Jack" (Lovelace, 2001, 151). Extending this conclusion draws a fascinating correlation between Jack's and the narrator's sex and gender: the narrators are male and they identify with their protagonist Jack *because* he is also male. But, when Best (who does not identify as male) was a child, she also identified as Jack, "always put down, always kept from doing things, you know you identify as Jack. You identify as the underdog [because] that's you as a little kid, the whole world is adult and you're a little kid. You can't do anything, but the stories let you see that's not always going to be the way it is. You know they eventually will win in the end and just using your own body, your own self" (Best, 2019, Interview). As evidenced by both Fearon and Best, one does not need to be male in order to identify with Jack, share their character traits, or value the lessons the tales teach. When asked if she still identified as Jack now that she is an adult, Best responded confidently, "Yep. I do" (Best, 2019, Interview).

There is significant parallel between Best's interpretation of Jack and the experiences and memories of Jane Muncy from Leslie County, Kentucky. In Jane's family tradition passed down matrilineally from grandmother to granddaughter, Jack is known as the more gender-neutral Merrywise. Lindahl notes in his 2009 article "Faces in the Fire: Images of Terror in Oral Märchen in the Wake of September 11" that Jane's "Grandmother Sidney urged Jane to see the boy-hero as a copy of herself: Merrywise, like Jane, lived without his parents; like Jane, he lived in the care of an old widow. Merrywise was young and small. Through subtle guided imaging, Sidney made Merrywise change and grow in ways that she thought important for Jane herself to do" (Lindahl, 2009, 213). She did. Not only did Jane personally identify with the character, she both imagined Jack as a boy, and envisioned Jack as a reflection and extension of her own self.

Observes Jane:

> He was small, smaller than the other boys of course, maybe up to their shoulders. And he wore sort of a knickers kind of clothing, like little boys would wear. He had a little boy haircut that maybe came down over his ears. It was sort of round, and he had freckles. I had freckles too. [I started out ashamed of them. But my grandmother] always told me that she had freckles as a child. . . . And freckles made you beautiful. And so, when I pictured Merrywise, I pictured Merrywise as sandy blond hair and freckles - sort of like me. Surprise. Surprise. (Lindahl, 2009, 215)

Jane's use of the pronoun "he" clearly illustrates her acceptance of Jack as a cis-male character. However, her imagining Jack as someone who looks just like Jane further complicates Jack's gender. Lindahl claims that this allowed Jack, as Merrywise, to be "Jane's second-closest family member" (Lindahl, 2009, 215). However, Jane (like Best) clearly sees Jack/Merrywise as an extension of herself at least in looks if not in character. Further, Jane's Grandmother Sidney's non-gendered use of the name Merrywise continues to showcase Jack as both gender-fluid and non-binary.

Oddly, in this female-centric analysis, Jack's gender is overshadowed by his character's qualities. In Lovelace's male-centric analysis, Jack is defined by his gender – Jack acts the way he does *because* he is male. In female-centric analysis, Jack acts the way he does *in spite of* it. Regarding both Jack as a genderless entity and the specific audience of Jack tales allows us to consider how Jack tales issue messages of impact for differing audiences and tellers. Jack tales have been used as expressions of power, gender, and sexuality through who is privileged to hear or read Jack tales, how Jack tales are structured, and how characters are expected to behave.

Fifteenth century English chapbooks included a particularly bawdy narrative called "Jack and his Stepdame" (Lindahl, 1994, 2) wherein Jack humiliates his stepmother by wishing her to experience deafening flatulence whenever she glares at Jack (Furrow, 2013, Jack and his Stepdame). This is a tale that professors Julia Boffey and Carol Meale suggest has encompassed an "anti-feminist and anti-fraternal" agenda, that "evidently held considerable appeal for its

[conceivably adult, male] audience" (Boffey and Meale, 1991, 160) especially when considering Stoeltje's description of patriarchy. Jack's stepdame acts against social expectation. She was rude and overbearing to Jack – a man in the household – and while the relationship between Jack and his mother is not always convivial, Jack considered his stepmother to be so vile and shrewish, that in perfect demonstration of how "males [exert] control over females in any domain" (Stoeltje, 1988, 147) Jack took it upon himself to exact a lasting, humiliating punishment thus ensuring she would always behave correctly within the systems of power Jack imagined, and by-proxy the audience expected.

Jack tales in Newfoundland showcase similar patterns of disrespect towards women. Jack's treatment of the cat in Pius Power's rendition of *Jack Ships to the Cat* wildly "contrasts with how he violently treats his mother – he twice gives her a 'puck of his knee.' The relationships of respect (between Jack and the cat) and disrespect (between Jack and his mother) are, however, reciprocal. Jack and his mother 'weren't too peaceable the best of times,' and when he announces his intention to leave, his mother says she's 'only afraid you'll come back'" (Best, Lovelace, Greenhill, 2019, 102). Though this reinforces Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill's conclusions that folktales illuminate features of their teller's personal contexts and world-view it also reinforces a gender-biased substructure wherein it is acceptable to be despicable towards one's mother, but not to a potential love-interest – especially if that love-interest (in this case the cat) outranks Jack.

4.4 De-Stabilizing Power

Jack tales can also be used to subvert socially constructed dynamics of power. This subversion is of particular interest wherein Jack can be reframed not as a "he" but as a "they" – a

set of characteristics by which Newfoundlanders can, and have, identified themselves regardless of the gender of the teller or character they narrate. To that end, who is Jack? I asked this question of all my interviewees, and while all of them referred to Jack at first as gendered male, more significant was their emphasis on Jack's character qualities – qualities that are not indicative of gender or sexuality, but being a Newfoundlander. Running the Goat Books and Broadsides Publisher Marnie Parsons and Best both said that Jack is gendered male – at least they begin their statements about who Jack is with references to he/him/his. Both Parsons and Best consider Jack to be the clever, overlooked everyman who surprises everyone by winning at the end of the story.

Marnie Parsons	Anita Best
Jack is kind of, well, he's different in different stories he's everyman. He's the wise fool. He's the – a few where he's not so nice – but mostly he's the simple loyal, brave, foolish, funny, kindhearted, generous, those are the Jack tales that really draw me. There's this English one where he just runs around killing things. Sometimes he's a bit of a trickster. But I think the Jack who stands out for me is always the youngest son who is always a little maligned, but turns out to be the kind hearted and wily one. But he's not always the most law abiding, but he's governed by a law of the heart and compassion. In one of Andy's stories he becomes a robber, which is fine but then he kind of tricks the robbers and does much better things like buries dead people. He's kind of this everyman, this simple fool, this wise hearted compassionate underdog who triumphs in the end. (Parsons, 2019, Interview)	Jack is the hero and he's usually the underdog. He takes a chance or sort of takes a risk and then things happen to him that he has to figure his way out of. It's usually with the help of some female character. In stories from my tradition, it is usually women who are the helpers. Sometimes it's a dead person. And Jack will be given help by a person who we find out later is a dead person. But they're magic stories so that you know Jack gets help from things that are magical like a magic pot that is never empty or a tablecloth where all you have to do is spread it and there is all kinds of food appears on it. Birds that can fly with him on their back. Things of that nature you know that you would find normally in the natural world – supernatural. Now a-days they're sort of like comic book heroes: the underdog, the downtrodden one who succeeds by his wits with a little help from friends and by not taking life too seriously. The Newfoundland Jack tales and Mr. Power's versions of them especially but in others, Jack, if he can't figure something out he just goes to sleep. Just curls up and goes to sleep and something will happen later on. So they don't take life really seriously. (Best, 2019, Interview)

Table 4.1: Parsons' and Best's answer to "Who is Jack?"

Though both Parsons and Best discuss Jack using the pronouns he/him/his, their answers to the question "who is Jack?" reveal more about the intangible qualities the character embodies. Jack is an underdog. Jack is an everyman. Jack is a simple fool. Jack is kind hearted,

compassionate, and does not take life too seriously. Jack sleeps on his problems, but ultimately succeeds in the end. All of these characteristics indicative of the "male" Jack archetype in Newfoundland are also presented by Newfoundland women, and portrayals of Newfoundland women in Jack tales.

For example, one of Jack's defining qualities is his cleverness, regardless of whether the story is male-centric or female-centric, or told by a male-identifying or female-identifying teller. Jack always seems to have a clever answer or a clever solution. Yet, in Jones' telling of *Jack the Little Fisherman* (see Appendix B for full transcript) the princess not only tricks Jack to compete for her hand in marriage, but she also collects the fish from Jack that will allow him to win.

> She says, 'Before you leave I want to tell you something,' she said. She said, 'I got the three fish. I kept them all, the three you gave me. Tomorrow night there's going to be a contest and the king is going to pick the three prettiest fish in the sea,' she said, 'and there's going to be a reward. If you got three pretty fish.'
> He says, 'Oh yeah that'll be alright.'
> But she doesn't tell him what it is. (Jones, 2019, Interview)

By doing so, the princess chooses her own husband and manipulates her father the king, Jack, and all the other suitors to get what she wants. She embodies the defining quality of cleverness more than Jack, who would instead have brought the fish to his Grandmother for her supper and ignored the competition entirely, in such a way that allows her to determine her future without the aid of men, therefore showing tenacity, grit, and forward-thinking ability that is clearly represented in folktales like Jack tales with the intent to be ubiquitous to all Newfoundlanders – at least as represented by my interviewees.

Jones and Fearon answer the question "Who is Jack?" similarly to Parsons and Best by describing Jack at first as masculine – a term that Jack Halberstam argues "inevitably conjures up notions of power and legitimacy and privilege; it often symbolically refers to the power of the state and to uneven distributions of wealth…masculinity represents the power of inheritance, the

consequences of the traffic in women, and the promise of social privilege. But, obviously, many other lines of identification traverse the terrain of masculinity, dividing its power into complicated differentials of class, race, sexuality, and gender" (Halberstam, 2018, 2). However, Parsons' and Best's descriptions of the character differ because these two community partners ultimately conclude that Jack, by statement or by suggestion, has no gender and their true power lies in their relatable characteristics.

Andy Jones	Mary Fearon
Jack is kind of everyman I guess. From an academic point of view he's the person who sets down the road to go through his life like anyone does. But in Newfoundland Jack always seems to be generally speaking an easy-going guy. He is not the one that's picked as the most likely to succeed in your high school year book. He is often portrayed as lazy and goes at life from a different perspective. But he succeeds to some extent because of his personality. He's usually pretty friendly and he is generally kind hearted – not always. He has a sense of the rights of the common man instead of the kings and queens and the higher ups of the world. So I think that we tell ourselves constantly. It's not the person that is the smart ass or the person who's supposedly brilliant at whatever who's got to make our species survive it's the one you don't expect who may be the hero of the day. That's my theory (Jones, 2019, Interview).	Well, Jack is. He is… It's a good question and I think a lot about who Jack is. So Jack is kind of, you know, he is a man, but he encapsulates the feminine and the masculine. Like he is not, you know, sometimes when I tell a Jack story some people will say, "I don't like that Jack story. It sounds like he's, you know." In *The Bottle at the World's End Water*, he has sex with the princess. And there's a sense that she's asleep, but it's not. It's not really. It's the archetype of what it is. That scene is really telling. When Jack cuts the fingers of the girl off in *The Glassen Pole* [AT 313] and sticks them on the pole like – it's the deconstruction of self to become the full true self. It's not about, and it's the changing, the finger turns into the branch. It's cracked back off and put back on the woman and she's transformed somehow. Separated from the trap that she's in and the life that she has. So people get really caught up in the words, whereas I don't. I think of it more as kind of Jack could be a man, Jack could be a woman. I mean I have a visual on him, but when I think about his sexuality I can't see it. It's not part of the picture. It's an interesting thing. He's not a masculine fellow (Fearon, 2019, Interview).[14]

Table 4.2: Jones' and Fearon's answer to "Who is Jack?"

Jones may have begun his statement using the pronouns he/him/his to describe Jack, but by the end, Jones' language switches, and he references how Jack translates as a concept with which everyone can identify: the underdog, the unexpected, the exploited, the hero – regardless of gender.

[14] Again, what Fearon sees in Jack in Newfoundland is similar to what Jane Muncy saw as a girl in the Kentucky mountains.

Jones also characterizes Jack as the—:

> … ideal kind of character [because] Newfoundlanders tend to be people who are interested in other people. Interested in people who arrive on ships, who sail by on ships. People say Newfoundland is isolated, but in fact it never was. We were part of the big shipping lanes of the world. So people always said curiosity is the way things got here. People always told the stories. Again we don't know where some of these stories came from. Jack being this easygoing and saucy and not having a great deal of respect for authority, is part of the psyche of the Newfoundlander who was part of the independent fishing family. (Jones, 2019, Interview)

In this statement too, Jones positions Jack's character qualities as more important than the gender of the character. Jack is the embodiment of the Newfoundland spirit according to Jones – a tricky, curious, politely disrespectful persona which can be *neither* male nor female.

Fearon, though, posits that Jack could be *either* a man or a woman. Her visual on the character has less to do with what they look like, but how the character acts, and what the character means to audiences. Isabel Cardigos's interpretation of female narrators in *In and Out Enchantment: Blood Symbolism in Portuguese Fairytales* similarly corroborates Fearon's narrative by observing an osmosis between the masculine and feminine when women tell "men's tales". Christine Goldberg's review of the same text suggests that because "One and the same story narrators, for example, often learn tales from their fathers. One and the same story (for example, tales in the AT 327-328 complex) can have either a male or female protagonist. In such cases we should question whether the gender of this protagonist is significant or arbitrary" (Goldberg, 1998, 159).

Not to say that gender is arbitrary with regard to Jack. Jack as a character is historically tied to a global tradition of masculine identity and espouses values ascribed to those who identify by pronouns with he/him/his/. Even the name "Jack" is inherently cis-gendered male. Jack is a diminutive form of John, and has been translated from German as Hans, in French as Jacques, and in Scots English as Jock (Lindahl, 1994, 16). This lineage and connectivity to characters

across the folk-narrative spectrum who all have been identified as cis-male is also acknowledged by Best:

> I know the stories came from Ireland, because of Mr. Power. He learned them from his mother's brothers, and from his relatives who were Irish in origin. So as you know, you can find those stories in China or Japan. Or you know in eastern Europe, there's always the Jack character who might be Hans or he might be Ti-Jean, if you're in France, he might be Hansel, or he might be anybody, but mostly in the English-speaking world he's Jack. (Best, 2019, Interview)

Herein lies the foremost role of Jack tales: the redistribution of power. Regardless of the etymology, who is empowered in Jack tales often is not determined by the gender of Jack, but by the strength of intangible character qualities – perseverance, compassion, wit – that are not rooted in gender, sex, or socially prescribed gender roles, and that today, encourage women and members of other historically marginalized communities to identify with, and emulate characteristics of a genderless Jack. Jack may overthrow kings and giants, yes, but doing so reinforces an obvious redistribution of true power to the marginalized which is why my community partners have emphasized that *anyone* can be Jack.

4.5 Identity and Power

Identity plays a crucial role in this. How my interviewees feel about Jack defines the way they see the character. Best felt a sense of otherness as a girl, but also as a child, and these two embodied feelings encouraged her to identify as Jack, the underdog, the every-person, and to continue identifying as Jack to adulthood. Best also believes the characteristic "underdog" can be extended to the province of Newfoundland, and by proxy encourages its inhabitants to identify as Jack.

> I think Newfoundlanders in Canada have always identified as Jack because we're the youngest, the underdog and people make fun of us all the time. Other Canadians make fun of how we talk and if you spend a lot of time on the mainland, people always find something funny about the fact that you're a

> Newfoundlander. It's like the people who come from the Appalachians or the Ozarks or something and they have a big strong Jack tradition too. It speaks to their situation. They're sort of looked down on by let's say people who come from more sophisticated societies. (Best, 2019, Interview)

Best suggests that Newfoundlanders are exploited and discriminated against due in part to the province's isolated geographic location – and with an economic status that is considered by some in mainland Canada as a strain on national, economic resources – not as sophisticated.

Even at present, some media perceptions of Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders are prejudiced in this same way. A recent episode of The Simpsons, *D'oh Canada*, stereotypically portrays Newfoundlanders as dim-witted, barbaric seal-clubbers:

> "This country does it all," says a woman at the bus stop, "Tar sands, strip mining, Mounty mocking, geese goosing, French fry gravy-ing."
> "Okay, but I'm sure you treat all peoples equally," a concerned Lisa Simpson asks to a group of Canadian children holding curling brushes.
> "Except the Quebecois," one boy in a red toque responds.
> "And the Newfies. Stupid Newfies," declares another.
> "I'm a Newfie. Whee!" Ralph Wiggum exclaims. He pulls a stick from behind his back, and before he finishes his interjection, clubs the head off of a stuffed seal pup. As Lisa and her mom climb aboard the city bus, the scene closes with Ralph Wiggum singing the lyrics to "Islander Forever" – a song written by famed Newfoundland musical group "The Navigators". Ralph kicks around the decapitated, stuffed seal head in circles like a soccer ball then wears it like a hat.
> (Nastuk, Long & Thompson, The Simpsons, Season 30 Episode 21).

The response to The Simpsons' *D'oh Canada* episode was, at best, critical. While some such as CBC's Mark Critch were disappointed by the artlessness of the joke, and argued on Twitter that it was "the lamest, least interesting 'Newfie' joke I've heard" (Critch, Twitter, 2019), others such as Edward L. Riche felt the episode uncovered something deeper. "At least," wrote Riche, "The Simpsons settled once and for all whether "Newfie" is some term of endearment for a pet or a slur" (Riche, Twitter, 2019).

The label, Newfie, has either referred to a Newfoundland Dog (a shaggy, gentle giant) or Newfoundlanders themselves and "is a site of ideological dispute," linguists Ruth King and

Sandra Clarke observe. “For some, it is simply an informal term for residents and expatriates of the Canadian province of Newfoundland, for others it may function as an in-group term of solidarity which takes on negative connotations when used by non-Newfoundlanders, and for still others it is the equivalent of a racial slur” (King and Clarke, 2002, 537). When Clarke and King’s remarks are considered against Marc Galanter’s[15] argument that “jokes *mean* something, that they are coded expressions of thoughts that we are unwilling or unable to express openly and directly… [that they] only prosper and survive when they evoke a shared sentiment, [and that act as the] social counterpart of individuals’ dreams, parading in disguise the anxieties of society at large” (Galanter, 2017, Forward), The Simpsons’ use of the term “Newfie” is not a light-hearted jibe between friends, but can be interpreted as an insult that differentiates and marginalizes residents of Newfoundland from the rest of mainland Canada, much in the same way that Jack is marginalized and differentiated by their community members for being too lazy, or too young, or too poor. “Newfie” was widely so used as a derogatory term even before the 1949 Confederation that it made it into Abraham Aaron Roback’s 1944 “Dictionary of International Slurs”. The entry is short and reads, “Newfie: Newfoundland (*Canadian Slang)”* (Roback, 1944, 56).

The joke perpetuated by The Simpsons in this case illustrates years of social stigmatization that denigrates a specific socio-cultural group within Canada, and while funny for some, can be seen by others like Fearon, as oppressive: “We have just had, like, our history is being oppressed by merchants and the rich and living with nothing and managing with nothing and seen as nothing. Yet we have overcome incredible adversity for generations. And we continue to” (Fearon, 2019, Interview).

[15] Marc Galanter’s comments come from the Forward to Alan Dundes’ (2017) book *Cracking Jokes.*

Jack is the representation of the Newfoundland spirit acting against those in power both present and historic in ways that Lovelace's introduction to *Clever Maids, Fearless Jacks, and a Cat: Fairy Tales from a Living Oral Tradition* argues: "fairy tales in oral tradition see the world from the bottom up; in their natural state they are inherently revolutionary" (Best, Lovelace, & Greenhill, 2019, 10). Jack tales must at once acknowledge that 1) powerful social strata in Newfoundland exist and that 2) people should want to join them; and then Jack must challenge what it means to be "truly powerful" by suggesting instead that being "truly empowered" is a worthier goal. In this way, Jack is positioned as the hero of an oppressed people who represents a resistance against a controlling hegemony regardless of gender.

Jones hints that the major reason Newfoundlanders might feel oppressed and resentful is because of the independence that communities enjoyed before the Confederation with Canada in 1949. He acknowledges that Jack is a character who exists in many narrative communities across the globe, but uses the province as an adjective to describe Jack and explain why he is a character who represents resistance:

> There's something very Newfoundland-like about Jack in the sense that Newfoundlanders tended to be independent – we all came here from another place and not necessarily having anything to come to except the fishery… We were in a unique position in that we were – every single fishing family was independent and you know, uh, lived by themselves. They didn't have land. They had the ocean, which was very precarious…. People didn't know where the fish were. Where are they, why are they disappearing for the last three years? And all that sort of thing…. There is a highly developed sense of the absurd in Newfoundland for that reason. So uh, you know, there's a swashbuckling kind of attitude in Newfoundlanders because they survived and they built their own boats, they built their own houses, and they grew their own vegetables, they survived on this rock in a way that most in this world, there was nothing quite like it…, We were on this little island and parts of Labrador and developed in a very different way. (Jones, 2019, Interview)

When that power was wrested from Newfoundlanders by a marginal vote of 52.3% of the population to 47.7% (Hiller, 1997) in 1949 to join Canada, and then arguably again in 1991 with

the Cod moratorium, it makes sense that Jack would become a figure around which Newfoundlanders could rally to find comfort at times when rapid change threatened to completely dissolve independent fishing families, small outport communities, and a way of living.

4.6 Gender Contexts in Newfoundland History

Though Newfoundland can be described as a dramatic, breathtaking, and hardy province, it has never been a setting that inspires large-scale agrarian enterprises. Its glacial melt has speckled the province with boulders, carved bogs, lakes, and ponds into an already rocky landscape at the end of the Appalachian mountain range, and eroded away much of the topsoil. This, combined with long, cold nights and few truly warm days, never lent itself to a climate suitable for sustaining agricultural prosperity. In their article "Foodways as Transformation: The Magical and the Realistic in an Oral Tale," Diane Tye and Pauline Greenhill observe that "Newfoundland has a long history of food insecurity: a poor catch or low cod prices throw a region (if not the whole province) into dire circumstance. The death of a parent put an entire family in peril…. In the tale, as in life, hunger is not far from the door" (Tye and Greenhill, 2020, 108); and sociologist Marilyn Porter notes that even in times of relative prosperity, "poverty persisted" (Porter, 1998, 112).

In her 1998 article "Skipper of the Shore Crew: Notes on the History of the Sexual Division of Labor in Newfoundland" Porter observes that women who were part of the organization of settler society in Newfoundland had the prime responsibilities of feeding, clothing, cleaning, and caring for not only themselves, but their children and the men in their lives – tasks that even in prosperous regions require hours of steady labor. These women managed everything from cooking meals, feeding and caring for livestock (if the family had

any), planting, weeding and defending a garden, making butter, baking bread, sewing clothing from old garments, pillow cases, flour sacks, aprons or tablecloths, knitting socks, sweaters, or scarves, making soap from cod livers and ash (before 1930), cleaning and organizing a home as it grew more elaborate, and preparing root cellars and food stocks for wintertime, to helping to make twine for nets and running the shore operation of a family's fishery.

The extent of this economic control is rooted in a history that originally considered women as tangential citizens. It was only when 40 men from the London and Bristol Company of the Colonization of Newfoundland, established a permanent settlement in Cupids in 1610 that women, as wives, mothers, daughters, and servants were encouraged to reside in Newfoundland, and they comprised only 13 percent of the island's population by the start of the 18th century (Porter, 1998, 108-109). That said, women quickly became important, if officially uncredited, caretakers of a family's social and economic wellbeing. Fishing endeavors would rarely be as successful without wives, daughters, mothers, and helpers, and some including sociologist Ellen Antler have acknowledged that up to "$2,400 per season can be contributed to a woman's organized, well-run shore operation" (Antler, 1977, 109).

Porter observes that though the "shore operation never became 'women's work' the way baking was, it did become an area in which women developed skills and expertise" (Porter, 1998, 115). Women running a household acted as "skippers" who supervised onshore fishing labor and processing jobs such as cleaning and salting cod. Because of this considerable, if unspoken, position of power, women represented the economic hub of the family, though their actions were carried out under the names of men. Porter also argues that "Newfoundland men unhesitatingly credit women with at least half of the work of the family… The handling of what little cash actually passed in outport families reflects this trust" (Porter, 1998, 117). This is reflected in

Andy Jones' Jack tale *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves,* when Jack acknowledges that Mary controls where the money is hidden. The key to the mountain vault he says, "is in the heart of Mary" (Jones, 2011, Chapter 4).

While later accounts of gender divides in Newfoundland labor likewise disempower women through gender-bias, Porter suggests that women's work rather than "reflecting subordination… arises out of poverty and the extreme skill needed to produce sufficient food and drink. It has become part of the housewife's pride that she can, and does, supply what is necessary. When I see it today, I do not notice subjugation, but rather a sense of quiet confidence in the women's control of the kitchen and the house" (Porter, 1998, 119). While true for some, this argument may not represent the lived experiences of all women in Newfoundland. One of the most magical times in storyteller and former teacher Anita Best's life was when she lived and worked aboard a schooner with, and not for, her husband.

> I held a fishing license at that time, and I fished with my husband, and we lived aboard a schooner – a small two-masted schooner 59' long. It was a turn schooner like the old grand banking schooners, only smaller. It was probably the last working schooner in Newfoundland where you lived on the schooner and also worked on the schooner. So we lived on the schooner and we fished all over Placentia Bay. It would start in April when the lobster season opened and we'd come back home in the fall so we'd spend the whole summer back and forth to different communities anchored here or there where the fishing was good or whatever type of fishing you were doing at the time. (Best, 2019, Interview)

Working on board a schooner as Best told it, is certainly not within the analytical framework of 'women's work' that Porter has described. Secondly, where society expected women to hold power, they did – the house and on the shore – but there was little opportunity to extend beyond these realms regardless of interest. Though women might have taken pride in that work relegated to them, this was still a problematic restriction of choice. While women may have taken pride in their designated work, it was all that was afforded to them because of their gender.

Women were not generally accepted as fishermen or foremen, or provided the opportunity to try other jobs at which they might have excelled but that fell under the general umbrella of "men's work" (Neil, 2011). Following WWI, married women had even less choice than single women. Historian Nancy Forestell suggests that married women in this postwar era were more oppressed than those who were not: "In 1921 and 1935 women who were never married made up 93.0% and 91.2% of working women respectively, while married women were 1.6% and 2.4% of the total" (Forestell, 1998, 78).

By the end of WWII, Newfoundland's fish markets began to expand. The rich fishing grounds that originally attracted settlers to the province gained appreciation on a global scale where 60% of fish exports comprised salted cod (Neil, 2011). The increasing demand bolstered production in Newfoundland, and by the end of the 1940s, fish plants had been built along the coastline which offered employment opportunities for the island's women. Benoit argues that this industrial development encouraged families to devalue women who did not work additional hours outside the home. In a startling reversal of previous appreciation for a woman's homemaking efforts, these same women saw themselves and were seen in their communities in the 1950s and 1960s as "just housewives" (Benoit, 1998, 118). Additionally, the Confederation of Newfoundland with Canada in 1949 forced families to depend more and more on goods from outside the province, further devaluing the products and activities of women produced from the home.

The second wave of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s in America slowly trickled into Newfoundland and Labrador by the 1990s, and by then women had begun to want more economic autonomy. So much so that when the Cod moratorium was enacted, women sought opportunities for employment away from their ancestral communities. Popular options to break

out of the traditional homemaker-mold included teachers and nurses, yet women still felt pressure to help maintain a household. By 2011, economist Kerri Neil argues that, "cultural notions of traditional gender roles have started to shake and women are entering a larger range of careers, but as the gender wage gap remains, more work is yet to be done" (Neil, 2011, 14).

4.7 Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves

Though it cannot be denied that women possess significant power in Jack tales, they are still relegated to the types of power that women have either been historically allowed to possess in Newfoundland – expert seamstresses, cooks, helpers, and advice providers – or as othered beings with inhuman magical powers. The characters in Jack tales are still limited by their gender and inform Polly Stewart's argument that "folklore informally teaches by supporting and reifying belief systems—as well as by controlling people, since males and females learn from their culture's folklore what is proper and possible for them" (Stewart, 1993, 54).

Where Jack as a character can enact both male and female tasks, his female companions are often not free to do the same. Take for example the character Mary in *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves.* Jack and Mary fall in love. Mary's father does not approve of the marriage, and rather than live apart, Jack and Mary get married and flee to the Land of Thieves where they live rich and happy lives. When her husband, Jack "bets everything he owns including his own freedom" (Jones, 2011, Chapter 4) that Mary would tell Captain Cudahy where the key to their secret vault is, and loses, Mary is turned out of her home. Her husband is enslaved. Mary finds a position as a kitchen helper at a farmhouse, and she is given a room where a ship captain once lived. She spends her spare time reading every word of every "book of ships and navigation there

ever was in the world" (Jones, 2011, Chapter 9), cuts her hair short "like a boy" (Jones, 2011, Chapter 9), wears a full sailor's kit, and finds a job as a cook aboard a ship.

Though Mary's cooking in the farm house and aboard the ship could still be considered a woman's role, the progression of setting makes the task considerably less so. Because of her disguise, everyone thinks Mary is a man, and so cooking on board a ship is a decidedly less feminine role than cooking in her own home as a wife or helping someone else cook in a farmhouse. Jorgensen's (2014) work cataloguing body references in fairy tales emphasizes this point. She says that "body references seem to uphold a dichotomous view of the sexes that correlates to mind-body dualism, trapping women in their bodies and skins while men are free to transcend their bodies through transformations" (Jorgensen, 2014, 128). However, in *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves,* Mary is not free in her body as a woman and even this pattern observed by Jorgensen is inverted. Jorgensen (2018) further notes that transformation is an incredibly important theme usually ascribed to masculine identities in fairy tales. Her research observes:

> The other theme significantly associated with men is that of transformation. I had to treat this bodily happening as a theme, in addition to a noun in its own right, because not every description of a magical transformation included the word "transformation" (more often, a verb was used, such as "transformed," "became," or "turned into"). The theme "transformation" occurred with men 196 times (to women's 77 times), whereas the actual noun "transformation" was used with men 4 times and with women 3 times. Statistically, the theme "transformation" is very important for men: it occurs with men 71.79% out of all times it refers to a gendered body. Simply put, men are transformed into other shapes more than women are in this sample of fairy tales. (Jorgensen, 2018, 349)

Mary must transform her own self to be free of expectation, and in such a way that convinces others that she is a man. Not only does Mary embrace the masculine narrative theme, she does so to turn into a man, to save her husband. This act essentially flips this theme on its head and queers it. Mary's disguise is so complete that all the sailors want her to meet their

daughters and become part of their families – even if they "don't know what kind of man he is, but he's a nice little man anyhow" (Jones, 2011, Chapter 10). Mary's dress could qualify her as a "tomboy" whose constant misrecognition could have "actually produce[d] a new recognition: in other words, to be constantly mistaken for a boy, for many tomboys, can contribute to the production of a masculine identity" (Halberstam, 2018, 19). Halberstam suggests that where female masculinity "conjoins with possibly queer identities, it is far less likely to meet with approval" (Halberstam, 2018, 29). As Mary's transformation remains within the realm of heterosexuality, she is never threatened even if she is consistently misidentified as male. This suggests that the qualities Mary espouses as feminine masculinity, are equally as attractive qualities in men as they are in women, negating a gender-binary and effectively "queering" and "transgendering" this Jack tale.

Mary typifies this transgender transformation as a woman dressed as a man, but seen by men as a man. This transformation, this outward acceptance of Mary's inward characteristics, allows Mary the agency to command her own ship once her navigation skills are recognized – skills that otherwise would be ignored or chastened had she been seen as a woman by the other men. Further, Mary would be unable to enact the part of the captain in her own right as a woman – she must dress herself as a man in order to be taken seriously. Darka Erdejli illustrates a woman with red hair tied up under a cap, dressed in a long slicker with galoshes. To enter into what has been unofficially interpreted as the realm of men – the ocean, on the other side of the shoreline, Mary has to look masculine even if she does not change the way she acts. Though the gender roles in this are reversed, as Jack enacts the damsel in distress while his wife sets out to find him, Mary is unable to be her whole self on her journey to Jack. And this too should be

interpreted a form of oppressive power that Mary works to circumvent. She finds personal empowerment in menswear and men's jobs.

However for Mary to be so empowered, she and Jack literally flee to the land of thieves far beyond the veil space, and time, and order – her father did not approve of the wedding between Jack and Mary, and would not allow the union. This last is important because it implies that the simple idea of women's autonomy and empowerment in Newfoundland is so far-fetched that it cannot exist anywhere on earth in a land governed by the rule of laws – natural or socially constructed. Erdejli's illustrations of Jack and Mary's life together in the land of thieves show a green circle, upon whose surface are Jack and Mary, their Mynah bird, and the rest of the thieves. The reader is meant to interpret the circle as a world set apart. This separation between worlds delineates a realm where, in the story, the socially constructed rules of gender norms become fluid and Mary can take on more men's roles, and Jack can take on more women's ones. That said, they both become the best at what they choose to do – "Jack had three schooners, and Mary had three bakeries" (Jones, 2011, 5) – and they made lots of money. What this suggests is that in the land of thieves characters can become their true selves. Though Mary and Jack both choose to be successful in roles that are, to the "real world", aligned by gender, they had the choice to be whatever they wanted. The opportunity to be defiantly gender-fluid is significant to *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves*.

When Mary confronts Captain Cudahy she buys Jack for $2,000 like property, and locks him in the brig thus placing herself in a position of power above Jack – literally owning him. Jack acknowledges Mary's power over him and says, "I guess now I'm your servant." She accepts and responds, "I guess you are" (Jones, 2011, Chapter 14).

This expression of power in *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves* showcases how being self-empowered is more significant than having power. Further, through the journey to become self-empowered, Jack and Mary gain more influential social positions than they started with. If power dynamics of gender were not in play, Mary would not have needed to hide her true identity behind the clothes and husky voice, but could have searched for her husband as herself. This echoes Diane Tye's analysis of male and female kilt-wearers. In her article "What's under the Kilt? Intersections of Ethnic and Gender Performativity," Tye builds on Caitlin Fry's observations of clothing that "while literature about dress and gender places emphasis on the visual, many do not simply observe a kilt; they approach and interact with the kilt-wearer" (Fry, 2007, 11). Kilts are a symbol that allow individuals access to interact with the wearer in specific ways. Similarly, men aboard the ship Mary works on try to marry her (seen as him) to their daughters because of the way Mary is dressed. Mary's clothing signified that she was a man to others, even though she did not identify as one. Tye also observes that her research with "kilt wearers shows that to look like a woman is apparently read by some women as an invitation to treat a man as they themselves are treated. In fact, Fry herself notes that for a man to wear a kilt in public is to become "collective 'property'" (Fry, 2007, 11). Conversely in the manner of Jack tales as presented by *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves,* Mary shows that to look like a man is read by her/his shipmates as an invitation for her to be treated like one – offered to be part of their family as a son-in-law.

This transgendered narrative blurs both homosocial and heteronormative ones and empowers Mary, upon her return home, to speak about her experiences – to bring into the open an experience that was closeted for her. Mary's public discussion inspires other women who had captained their own ships to come forward and speak about their experiences. Until Mary spoke,

these women said they "had never had the courage to speak up" (Jones, 2011, Chapter 14). This Jack story shows how publically addressing gender inequity about reform. Donald Haase has argued the fairy tale provides "a space where gender identity is constructed," and further claims – following Alicia Ostriker's (1982) scholarship – that fairy tales "… do not simply enact feminist anti-authoritarianism, reevaluate the patriarchal values of patriarchal mythologies, and consciously assert their theft and revision of tradition; most significantly they reject the model of the integrated subject that texts such as fairy tales hold up as normative" (Haase, 2000, 33).

It also illustrates the power of communication in groups. Haase analyzing Ostriker (1982) concludes as well that this manner of feminist revisionist scholarship is "not characterized by a single subject or voice, but by 'multiple intertwined voices' that is a multivocality of 'divided voices evok[ing] divided selves' and 'challeng[ing] the validity of the 'I'" (Haase, 2000, 33). If Mary had not had the courage to speak up and tell her story, she would not have inspired other women in the Land of Thieves to do the same, and all their narratives would have remained silenced. Destabilizing and invalidating a cultural norm is most powerful when it happens in concert with others.

Mary, in this book, expresses more of the characteristics of a typical "Jack" character than the character named Jack. She is a clever problem solver, she is kind, and talented, and shrewd, and she brings about the happy ending. Jack, on the other hand, is boastful and prideful and that gets him in trouble. Mary empowers the community of women by her example and she chooses to remain in her masculine role. By extension, the listener never doubts Mary's or Jack's gender, despite the reversal of roles. Mary makes it clear that she is a female bodied person enacting the persona of one who is male. She does not "appropriate maleness because she is already 'just like' [Jack], and their masculinities exist on parallel planes" (Halberstam, 2018, 32).

Jack, for that matter, takes on the more feminine role of caring for the children, house, and garden: “Mary carried on as a captain and sails the seven seas to this very day. Sometimes Jack goes along as her first mate, but mostly he stays home tending to the youngsters and the famous giant peas” (Jones, 2011, Chapter 15).

Best’s and Fearon’s comments that Jack subverts traditionally masculine roles and represents “this incredible strength of character whether female or male that is represented in Newfoundland really well. Newfoundlanders have fought and overcame incredible adversity, and Jack always seems to do that. He fights the dragons, he fights the giants and he wins. It all kind of works out in the end for Jack” (Fearon, 2019). Fearon implies that the true power of Jack is not the gender that people see on the outside, but the character qualities he actively presents to his audiences. Best, on the other hand, argues that the reason anyone can empathetically relate with the Jack character and with Jack tales is due to his everyman persona that equates to an irreversible “anonymity” (Best, 2019, Interview).

4.8 Jack and the Cat

Alice Lannon’s 2001 telling of *Jack and the Cat* similarly problematizes non-binary gender relationships in Jack tales. In this retelling of *Jack and the Cat,* Jack finds a cat with a broken leg. He cares for the cat until it heals. The cat speaks to Jack and begs Jack to throw the cat in the fire. Jack hesitates, but in the end throws the cat into the flames. The cat’s body burns away, and in its place stands a prince. The prince takes Jack to his castle where they live together happily ever after. The only relationship that is presented to the listener is the relationship between Jack and his cat. Jack’s mother does not exist, neither do Jack’s brothers. Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill hint towards a larger multi-pronged goal because the ending of this tale

is a gender reversal. They say that "as the transformed cat is revealed to be a handsome young man rather than a beautiful woman; Alice refers to the cat as both "it" and "he". As open to a gay-positive understanding as this might be, the surprise twist in the transformation may simply reflect that finding love is not the only goal of any of Alice's stories" (Best, Lovelace, Greenhill, 2019, 103).

While Alice's story could be reflective of universal ideals and representations of love it could illustrate an opportunity for Lannon to code messages that give specific permission to be gay or lesbian following Radner and Lanser's first characteristic of women's coding – Appropriation. Radner and Lanser argue that coding women's messages are "(a) undertaken in situations of risk, (b) are ambiguous in that neither the fact of coding nor the key to the code has been made explicit, and (c) are therefore indeterminate in intentionality" (Radner and Lanser, 1993, 4). They further assert that implicit coding practices exit when "there is a situation of oppression, dominance, or risk for a particular individual or identifiable group; when there is some kind of opposition to this situation that cannot safely be made explicit; and when there is a community of potential 'listeners' from which one would want to protect oneself" (Radner and Lanser, 1993, 9).

According to Devon Hodges "appropriation" as a coding tool "transgress[es] literary structure from within – demonstrating the inadequacy of the paternal narrative by opening it up to what it excludes" (Hodges, 1983, 156). Lannon's implied use of a non-binary Jack character interferes with a patriarchal heteronormative construction that true love or sexual love can only be enacted between one man and one woman, and validates communities of people who identify as gender neutral. If Jack can be considered as the ideal Newfoundlander and the "everyman", and Lannon is asserting that Jack is non-binary, she breaks-down implicit bias for LGBTQIA+

communities by coding Jack as gay, and placing them in the traditionally hetero-female role as 'the one who marries the prince'. Lannon's inverted-gender Jack also encourages women and girls to place themselves in Jack's position to see themselves as Jack, as well as permitting women and girls who find true love or sexual love with someone who shares their same gender identity, the encouragement to explore and embrace this part of themselves openly. By coding Jack as non-binary, Lannon inadvertently "queers", and "transgenders" Jack's character and perverts traditionally hetero-centric narratives.

Lewis Seifert broadly suggests that:

> Queer designates the practices and concepts showing that gender and sexuality do not derive in any straightforward way from a "natural" essence but necessarily involve social and cultural factors, which in turn create normative constructions. The term queer designates those genders and sexualities that resist these normative constructions, including not only gay male and lesbian sexualities but also nonnormative heterosexualities and the range of gender expressions often classified as transgender. As forms of resistance to the heteronormative order, queer genders and sexualities aim to destabilize the binaries (such as masculine-feminine, heterosexual-homosexual, dominant-submissive, active-passive) that are so central to upholding normative categories. (Seifert, 2015, 16)

Queer theory capitalizes on the foundation that feminist folklore has been building since the suffragette movements in the 1800s and the second wave of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s. Susan Stryker, however, argues that the term "queer" does not go far enough because it usually codes gay or lesbian. Instead, Jack tales in this instance would slant more towards Transgender theory. Stryker suggests that "if queer theory was born of the union of sexuality studies and feminism, transgender studies can be considered queer theory's evil twin: it has the same parentage but willfully disrupts the privileged family narratives that favor sexual identity labels (like gay, lesbian, bisexual, and heterosexual) over the gender categories (like man and woman) that enable desire to take shape and find its aim" (Stryker, 2004, 212).

It is common to assume the gender of Jack in stories, because until Fearon's expression that "Jack can change depending on the stories" (Fearon, 2019, Interview) there has been no scholarship discussing even the possibility that Jack's gender could or should be identified differently by tellers and interpreters. Halberstam points out that it is a function of our binary society that blinds us to third genders. "On the other hand," they suggest, "we could also say that the failure of "male" and "female" to exhaust the field of gender variation actually ensures the continued dominance of these terms. Precisely because virtually nobody fits the definitions of male and female, the categories gain power and currency from their impossibility. In other words, the very flexibility and elasticity of the terms "man" and "woman" ensures their longevity" (Halberstam, 2018, 27). Therefore, it is not a function of Jack tales that prevents us from considering Jack's alterity, but a function of society.

A traditional reading of Lannon's story places Jack as a cis-gendered male falling in love with a prince, transforming a heteronormative relationship into a homosexual one. A closer reading of Lannon's text extends this further by suggesting a homoerotic form to Jack's relationship with the prince. After the cat transforms, Alice first says "And he took Jack" (Lannon, 2001, 93). Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill write this as its own line, its own thought. "Taking" has a sexual connotation, it also implies possession and power. Though Lannon corrects this statement by immediately saying "and took him to wherever you know his castle, and all this" (Lannon, 2001, 93), it does not change the obviously loving, caring, and consummate relationship that Jack has with his prince.

4.9 Conclusion

If we complicate Jack's gender identity further and consider them as a non-gendered or female character – as Fearon says "I can't get a hold on him…his sexuality" (Fearon, 2019,

Interview) – then Jack tales can represent heteronormative relationships, but with a traditionally cis-gendered male character now female, homosexual relationships with two men, or a transgender tale that focusses on themes such as compassion, love, and desire. Arguably, given the binary gender structures prevalent in Newfoundland, considering Jack as a "Jackeline" or "Jackie" cis-gendered female character reinforces patriarchal values by aligning a female character in a position of helper who then elevates her social standing through marriage to a prince. Reading *Jack and the Cat* with Jack as a cis-gendered man complicates these systems because Jack's worth, though taking on female roles such as helper and marrying into a higher social position, is endowed by his gender as part of the patriarchy. And as concluded in Tye's 2014 discussion of kilts, "a man in a skirt is a man" (Tye, 2014, 206), the ability to empower oneself through use of clothing items or actions that would typically be ascribed to one gender or the other in a binary social system, Jack is still a man. Living happily ever after with another man, does not change this.

Problematizing gender is a newer concept in folklore studies, but it is something that women and men alike are presently discussing and positioning as an important component of their interpretation. A "hero" story such as Jack's, containing characters that are clever, wry, and good, appeals to all regardless of their genders or gender bias. Best attributed these characteristics to herself which allowed her to embody Jack in ways that empowered her when she was in a disempowering social position. Fearon considers Jack as a character that is genderless, which encourages others to place value in being a good and successful person rather than being a good and successful cis-man or cis-woman. Jones wrote a story that disenfranchised the patriarchy by positioning Jack in a subservient position to his wife and rearranging gender roles so that both find happiness. This was an unexpected discovery – this interpretation of Jack

as a woman, Jack as a feminist hero. These people saw Jack in themselves, or themselves as Jack, and their stories, and the way they discuss the character reflect this interpretation. We cannot and should not dismiss half of the population, or more than half of the population especially if they are expressing themselves as Jack. Even if these interviewees did not vocalize Jack as a hero, they vocalized the characteristics they need to make themselves heroes, or make heroes of others.

Gender is a fluid spectrum rather than a binary. People might have thought this way, but no one has spoken this way about Jack until now as functionalism combines with feminist theory, queer theory, and transgender theory: all relatively new theoretical pursuits. This chapter, because of these things, does not have a conclusion, at least not in the traditional sense wherein the author wraps the independent parts of an argument together for the reader in a neat package of pithy insight. It acknowledges those who have been marginalized and also to those who have been dismissed by the label of Jack as cis-gendered male. I see this chapter more as a call to action provoking future analysis of Jack tales with gendered and non-gendered points-of-view rather than as a one-size-fits-all solution to this academic problem. Instead this chapter acknowledges that there is more scholarship to be completed, more avenues of research to be conducted. Sometimes it is just as important to acknowledge that there is a problem as it is to solve one. Jack's function is evolving.

Chapter Five

Continuing Applications of Jack Tales

5.1 Introduction

This thesis is by no means the most expansive view of Jack tales. In fact as I was writing, new avenues for study kept presenting themselves. Exploring expressions of economic power and hegemony, poverty, race, gender, and age are all interesting and important areas to consider when analyzing Jack – especially through functionalism, which, when combined with other theoretical frameworks, can do so much to illuminate purposes, roles, and uses of traditional culture. However, the three areas that I have chosen to write about and expand upon in this thesis are equally instructive.

Jack tales detail perceptions of an historical, but also idealized home that offers to Newfoundlanders a nostalgic escape. Illustrations in Andy Jones' and Janet McNaughton's children's texts reveal a Newfoundland that existed pre-Confederation in 1949, and Brookes' radio show shapes the way tellers and listeners rank Town vs Bay in Jack tales. Escaping brings comfort, removes a story to what is perceived to be a "simpler time," and contributes to the authenticity of the phrases starting "once upon a time." The images in these Jack tales function to restore to our mindscape the buildings, clothing, and phrases of long ago. These components encourage adults and children to situate their identities and their interpretations of identity of their communities –neighborhood and provincial – through Jack. Children who read Jack tales and see images of a distant past affix their identity to the larger context of Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders.

My third chapter expands upon how legends including Jack, and stories of Jack that exhibit characteristics both typified by the legend-type and folktale, operate to create and alleviate anxiety following Radcliffe-Brown's (1935) approach to functionalism. It also interrogates the function of legends when they perform a delicate balancing act between genres. This exploration of the roles genre plays through Jack tales begs of us to inquire whether our current classification system encompasses all story types widely enough, or should we be considering how to include interstitial genres that comprise forms of both legend and folktale?

Lastly, combining functionalism with counter-hegemonic frameworks encourages scholars to consider the evolution of Jack tales within current culture especially regarding gender roles. This analytical method also encourages us to reimagine that Jack, formerly a patriarchal figurehead, may no longer be considered so as tellers and listeners increasingly focus on inclusive and didactic narratives. Historical interpretation has assumed Jack to be a male character, especially in Newfoundland where male-identifying folklorists have crafted an academic narrative that largely credits male-to-male transmission of Jack tales. This is a largely self-fulfilling cycle, as female-centric and female-performed Jack tales may not have been sought out or realized for what they were when they were found due to inadvertent scholarly gender bias. Few scholars in Newfoundland have endeavored to explore this avenue of research. The overarching theme, regardless, is of a male-dominated field. Functionalism, queer, trans, and feminist theory has shown that Jack dissolves gender boundaries, upends traditional structures of power, challenges, protests, and questions what it means to be masculine in Newfoundland by being inclusive to all gender identities.

These three chapters' coalescence shows a more comprehensive view of Jack tales from inside and around conditions of home, uses in genre, and as protest tools against a status quo.

Together they frame a Newfoundland culture that is, all at once, nostalgic, resentful, and hopeful. I have pulled only on a few threads in this tapestry, and the established image of Jack has all begun to unravel. As a result, this conclusion is mostly dedicated to three areas around Jack tales where I see great need for further study especially within the framework of functionalism: educational contexts and uses, race-centric narratives, and gender-inclusivity.

5.2 Jack in the School Box

Bascom phrases the function of education with relation to "particularly, but not exclusively non-literate societies" (Bascom, 1965, 344-345). He also spotlights the importance of examining folklore's use as a pedagogic device. Young children can be considered a non-literate community who enjoy listening to and watching story books as they learn. While there is a dearth of scholarship regarding folklore in educational settings in general, there is even less scholarship regarding the role of Jack tales in classrooms. Functionalism would allow us to explore the role Jack tales play not just for adults, but for children at varied ages, developmental stages, and skill-levels specifically in more structured classroom or after-school settings. Researching the role Jack tales play in classrooms would complicate Best's and Fearon's comments that Jack tales are not "children's stories." In truth, the very use of Jack as a children's story by McNaughton and Jones can be seen to embody as equally an unconventional a role as a genderless, trans, feminist, or queer Jack because it similarly empowers a marginalized group within this storytelling tradition: children.

In our increasingly connected world, sharing stories through text reaches not only adults, but also children. The cultural context has changed so fundamentally – with mandatory education for children relying on literacy, rather than any expectation that children will work and learn a

trade at their parents' sides – that the cultural context for the transmission of narratives must also change in order to suit the times. That is precisely why the written word is important now, because it is the cornerstone of children's education and their initiation into being good, hardworking members of society which the Jack tales so passionately promote. It integrates Overton's "imagined" Newfoundland characteristics into a cultural ethos that is reinforced through individuals "questioning the notion of progress and deciding for him or herself which aspects of change to embrace" (Cashman, 2006, 154) or through social groups that may use "nostalgic voluntary associations… of the past with alternative narratives, reformulate identity in local rather than sectarian terms, and use the contrast between past and present to inform action taken in defense of community" (Cashman, 2006, 154). This ensures the preservation of a broader "Newfoundland culture," one whose context has changed from a society where educational tales are told on the way to work, to one where they are told in a classroom where children learn to read and write. Jack presents these characteristics of goodness, wit, cleverness, and tenacity as a reflection of those who tell Jack tales, but also as a model for the behaviors of those who will grow to identify themselves as Newfoundlanders.

One must also consider that children's books are, by design, targeting specific age groups through written language. Marnie Parsons, by nature of her work as a publisher, has the capacity to selectively categorize the appropriateness of the Jack tales that she publishes:

> A lot of people when they're looking at children's books, they want to think about age level; they want to think about "boy" or "girl" – which is unfortunate. That's another thing I can talk about sort of having taught children's literature, and working in a bookstore for years, and review[ing] children's books for various media outlets, and I'm able to talk with a certain level of knowledge about the stories themselves: who reads them, who their intended audience would be, how they relate to intended interests. You know if you had kids in mind, like Jack and Mary would be appropriate for this kid. Jack and the Green man would be appropriate for this kid. Or to say, 'they're not appropriate yet' if you're looking

> for a two-year-old you're not looking for a Jack story right now. (Parsons, 2019, Interview)

This gatekeeping, though necessary for a profession that works with books, clearly establishes a culture that judges whether stories are appropriate or not, and based on this idea, can prevent some children from listening to them – much like adults did by tolerating children at Jack storytelling experiences and not telling children Jack tales. Thus the act of publishing Jack tales and determining the appropriateness thereof maintains a continued culture and validates for those in power – adults – that children are unable to fully understand and choose for themselves what to listen to.

Further avenues for future study include the exploration of Jack tales within schools and classrooms – how they function within these contexts, why they generate impact, and what roles they serve. Paige Gutierrez's application of functionalism to this argues that "the basic reason for Jack tales is to entertain children" (Gutierrez, 1978, 80) following Bascom's role of amusement.

Others such as Jones, who observed children secretly listening to Jack tales, took this into consideration when presenting his puppet play *Jack and the Queen of Paradise's Garden* to elementary school students. His consideration of audience and setting functions as a reflection of a home kitchen and familial, personalized experience. This aspect of Jones' storytelling passes his memory of Jack tales to children, educates them about the history of Jack telling performances, and creates a new and memorable Jack story experience for his audience who might have never heard of Jack before. "Really," says Jones, "I think we were doing stories for children that could be appreciated by adults as opposed to the original stories which were told for adults, but kids got to listen in. But I think we were kind of thinking – yeah, I think we were always thinking of children reading the stories I'm not sure what age sometimes, but it always has another level for the audience which, in effect, probably, I was always thinking about the

guys in the kitchen telling the stories, and I tried to reproduce that everywhere we went" (Jones, 2019).

Exploring how children might internalize stories differently when told directly for them, as opposed to listening on the sidelines, or how young children consider their own identities in relation to Jack tales, would be worthy avenues for future study and certainly in line with a gap in folklore studies identified by Anne Pryor and Paddy Bowman – that folklore in schools is understudied and underutilized. It also would serve as a counterpoint to memories of adults who heard Jack tales as children, all of whom are represented by my community partners who interviewed for this project. Further introspection about the purposes of Jack tales based on transmission as well would be illuminating.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, Jack tales are promoted study material through the Cultural Connections K-12 Arts and Cultural Strategy: a program that complements existing curriculum (ELA Curriculum Guide, 2014; Social Studies Curriculum Guide, 2011) addressing "arts, heritage, and cultural aspects of the province" (Cultural Connections, 2013, 1). A teacher-to-child Jack story may differ from a Jack story told between children, and one could explore the purposes of directed pedagogy, government mandated curriculum, or even the absence of these materials and stories in formalized education structures.

Sylvia Grider's 1994 American Folklore Society Presidential Address calls for folklorists to take teaching seriously because "teaching is so fundamental to the function and process of folklore that tradition cannot exist without it" (Grider, 1995, 179). Betty Belanus argues for "teachers and educators: The folk and traditional arts are a promising resource for reaching students 'where they live'" (Belanus, 1985, 12); she advocates for their inclusion in classrooms. Belanus defines folk and traditional arts as "music and songs, tales and legends, children's

rhymes and games, occupational practices, rituals, celebrations, foods, crafts, beliefs, and customs" (Belanus, 1985, 2) that "embody community aesthetics, identity, and values; they are not just about techniques, skills, or pieces of information, but about people and a way of engaging the world, learning about the world, responding to and being responsible for the world" (Belanus, 1985, 2).

Anne Pryor and Paddy Bowman observe that current folklore research trends presented through the American Folklore Society after 1970 focus on pedagogical practice and student involvement within classrooms. Before 1970 "early papers point[ed] to the broad twin streams of folklore and education: folklore as content with accompanying concerns about how it is taught, and folklore as a process for learning about communities, primarily those beyond school doors" (Pryor and Bowman, 2006, 441). When considering the impact of Jack tales and their educative value for intergenerational members of a specific locality, specifically as one third of this research project investigates Jack tales as they relate to school, it is important to consider the second of the American Folklore Society research streams before 1970: the learning that happens outside the classroom is equitable in value to the learning that happens within it. Further, for members of the community who may no longer attend traditional school classrooms, hearing and telling Jack tales outlines and reinforces the acceptable behaviors and ideal characteristics desired by members of local communities.

Notable Appalachian Jack tale teller, Marshall Ward, emphasizes children as the target audience for Jack tales. A former school teacher from North Carolina, himself, Ward attempts "to add educational value to entertaining situations – an inclination probably related to his long career as an Appalachian schoolmaster, during which he introduced Friday Jack Tale-telling sessions and what he calls "programs" into his fifth-grade curriculum" (McGowan, 1978, 51).

Donna J. Eder as well calls for the integration of storytelling in schools in her article *Bringing Navaho Storytelling Practices into Schools: The Importance of Maintaining Cultural Integrity*. Eder's study considers "the *practices* we use in education and in our research rather than simply providing new content about other cultures in schools and research studies" (Eder, 2007, 278). Eder observes a cyclical nature regarding Navajo storytelling which encourages their telling to children even if the stories are not told exclusively to children that is imparted through oral culture and provides "models of how to live" (Eder, 2007, 286) much like Mary Fearon believes Jack tales do in Newfoundland (Fearon, 2019, Interview).

Jones as well modified *The Queen of Paradise's Garden* as a puppet play and presents it to elementary-aged children in schools, most recently to Grade 5 children at St. Andrew's school in St. John's (Jones, 2019, Interview). Gutierrez agrees that Jack tales can be educative, though she observes that non-conformity within communities is usually emphasized. She rationalizes that "the message to a child hearing these stories would be to value the traditional way of doing things but not to be chained by it. Imagination and flexibility are as important as endurance and perseverance. Traditional skills and values promise survival, but nothing more. The implication of the tales is that more than mere survival is possible, if one only has the imagination to reach for it" (Gutierrez, 1978, 89).

This stance is opposed by the mid-19th century trend to teach Aesop's fables in classes but not folktales because folktales were considered "entertaining fiction" (Kemenetsky, 1992, 232) and not suitable for child audiences. It would not be unreasonable to conclude, then, that because "European folktales did not play a vital role in the American search for national identity, they [European folktales] were rarely included in school textbooks at that time" (Kemenetsky, 1992, 234) unlike American legends such as Paul Revere's midnight ride or Sleepy Hollow.

Following this logic, once Jack tales were nationalized by Richard Chase in 1943, it would make sense that more schools would begin to include folktales with a North American focus in classroom curriculum (Colvin and Ross, 1992; Jarvey, McKeugh and Pyryt, 2008; Iseke-Barnes, 2009; Young and Ferguson, 1995; Yaskowich and Gervais, 2005).

5.3 Race-Conscious Jack Tales

When I defended my thesis proposal in front of peers and professors at Memorial University in the Spring of 2019, my advisor asked me the difficult question: "Is this a thesis about white people?" I paused, considered, and then answered, "Yes."

The scope of this paper has largely been about white people: Newfoundlanders, Anglo-Europeans, and Appalachian Americans to some extent. Narratives from Indigenous peoples and persons of color, regrettably, have not been as present in this project as I would have preferred. The limitations of my own research are strongly reflective of Haase's advocation to use transcultural analysis of folktales while paying particular attention to decolonize them (Haase, 2010, 31) – and it is imperative that this work be continued through the contexts of functionalism and Jack. This paper would have needed a more global scope than would have been feasible to discuss within a Master's thesis, instead following scholars may find feasance in pursuing Jack through combined functionalist analysis and multiculturalism. Vivian Tenika-Agbaw notes two struggles for the inclusion of multiculturalism in Children's literature that would need to be considered, when studying the impact of Jack tales race-consciously – especially as the position of these stories within educational spaces is consistently challenged:

> First, there is the concern about how it would further marginalize non-Western people and cultures whose literary practices are still rooted in oral traditions. Thus, there is a risk of having their literary cultural spaces usurped by outsiders with access to the printed word and to the technologies that make texts available

> in multiple forms. Secondly, as Taxel notes, the degree of commercialization involved in the publishing process of trade books for children would further marginalize these groups. In addition, since 'trade book literature for young people' [is] 'now almost universally accepted as a fixture in K–12 classrooms,' publishers encounter 'an array of forces and pressures that influence both the kinds of books that are written and the way they are received and perceived by the public'. ((Taxel, 146) in Yenika-Agbaw, 2013, 1)

Marginalized voices use Jack tales to encode their struggle against abusive and oppressive power regimes that Radner and Lanser say "always [signifies] a freedom that is incomplete" (Radner and Lanser, 1987, 423). They also note that women, and by extension non-cis-gendered men, "code because their attitudes and understandings cannot be openly acknowledged because of their social, economic, and emotional dependence on the goodwill of men" (Radner and Lanser, 1993, 2).

While my thesis has only begun to scratch the surface of the multifaceted ways in which Jack embodies the representation of repressed freedoms of vulnerable communities, this would be a worthy pursuit for future scholars who seek to engage in impactful conversations with those who have been historically silenced and to bring equity to folklore studies and academic interpretations of Jack. One of the pathways that presents itself for further study in race-conscious folkloristics would be the consideration of Jack as a trickster hero.

Both scholars and tellers of Jack tales have observed Jack's trickster qualities. Stephen J Winick argues that in *Jack and his Stepdame*, "he is a trickster figure who brings back physical and spiritual sustenance for himself and his community" (Winick, n.d.). Elizabeth Fine argues that Carter-Sexton's Jack character "shares several characteristics of the archetypal trickster. He is a deceiver, a shape-shifter, and a situation inverter. Like many tricksters, he is lazy, but he has an uncontrollable appetite, 'forever hungry and in search of food' (Hynes, 1993, 40) in (Fine,

1994, 125). Marnie Parsons says that "Jack can be a bit of a trickster" (Parsons, 2019, Interview), which invites discussion of the darker side of Jack's character as tricksters can be both altruistic and selfish. Fine observes that as a result of their actions, "tricksters often get their comeuppance at the hands of other tricksters and, in this tale, Jack meets his match in a lazy woman determined to con a man into doing all the work" (Fine, 1994, 125). Jack fights against dissatisfaction, social expectation, control, or oppression, and empowers himself or others in situations of powerlessness by utilizing trickery. In one Appalachian Jack story, *Jack and the Heifer Hide*, told by Maud Gentry Long, Jack convinces his brothers that he acquired a flock of sheep from a river, when in fact he had been gifted them by an old man Jack helped to commit suicide.

> "Oh," the old man said,
> "Jack,
> I've wanted to go to heaven for *so* long!
> Listen, son,
> Why you're *just* a boy!
> Get *out* of there, won't you please,
> And let me get in your place,
> And let *me* go to heaven?"
> [*sighing again*] "Well," Jack says
> "my father always did tell me to be *nice* to old people.
> Yes,
> I'll get out,
> And you lay down here on this sheet and I'll roll you up and you stay
> j-u-s-t as still as you can be.
> After a while they'll come back two fellows, and they'll *tie* you up
> And send you off to heaven."
> Says, "Now Jack, all those sheep are yours.
> Just take 'em, son". (Maud Gentry Long, 1994, 119).

When Jack's greedy brothers Bill and Tom see the sheep, they are envious of Jack's flock. When they ask where Jack got them, and when they hear his response of "in the river," they demand to be tossed in as well. Jack ties his brothers in sheets and

> Jack gave him a good old swing and a hard tie and
> *Out* into the river he [the brothers] went –
> [Jack] turned on around and went back home –

> And do you know when I left there,
> Jack was just one of the richest men there was in that country (Maud Gentry Long, 1994, 122).

Jack's brothers drown. Jack wins the house, the land, and the flock, he builds his own prosperity because of his trickery and pre-meditated murder of his brothers. Hynes and Doty (1997) define a trickster hero as a Deceiver and Trick Player (35), Shape-Shifter (36), Situation-Inverter (37), a Messenger and Imitator of the Gods (39), Sacred and Lewd Bricoleur (42) who is also Ambiguous and Anomalous (34). Jack possesses most of these characteristics especially when you consider the almost universal acknowledgement from my community partners that Jack represents the "everyman" at least in Newfoundland, and therefore Jack follows in the footsteps of trickster heroes like Loki, Br'er Rabbit, Anansi, Coyote, Raven, The Monkey King, Indra, or Hermes. Fine's observations connect motifs of auto-cannibalism in Carter-Sexton's retelling of *Lazy Jack* to the Indigenous communities of North America. Fine argues that a Seneca tale "The Woman Who Became a Monster Through the Orenda of Her Husband's Dogs" and a Cree tale called "The Skeleton Woman" are remarkably similar to *Lazy Jack* which allows Fine to speculate about whether the Indigenous tales influenced the Appalachian *Lazy Jack tales.*

Echoing back to Chapter 4, North American Indigenous Trickster stories defy rigid characterization and may operate in function as any combination of myth, legend, or folktale; further, they have a rich tradition of thwarting and complicating perceived gender norms in similar ways to Jack. Jack's demonstrated defiance of sexual identities, then, is not unique and yet at the same time helps establish the character as a European-descended exemplar or a phenomenon most often attributed to stories in other narrative traditions.

For example, Franchot Ballinger observes in his article "Coyote, He/She Was Going There: Sex and Gender in Native American Trickster Stories" that "tricksters are commonly, but

not exclusively, male" (Ballinger, 2000, 15) with "no more than a few dozen… trickster protagonists female" (Ballinger, 2000, 15). Ballinger suggests that the role of gender in these stories matters and that it "is sometimes part of their underlying didacticism and satire… [and that] the use of either male or female tricksters as well as a storyteller's gendering narrative details may point to a storyteller's critical judgements or personal observations on a tribe's gender assumptions" (Ballinger, 2000, 16). He complicates discussions of gendered trickster narratives by not only acknowledging the role female tricksters enact, the transformative power of male tricksters, and the contexts of the Two-Spirit people within a societal construct where "clear cut assumptions and expectations about gender character and responsibility" (Ballinger, 2000, 17) exist.

Whether a trickster is gendered male or female, Ballinger suggests they function to provide an educative and interest-grabbing way of exploring how one individual can be both a stabilizing and destabilizing force that can threaten the survival of a people such as illuminating "the social dangers and disorder attending or threatened by men's unbridled sexuality" (18) or "as enforcer of social stability teaching a woman a lesson [because she] rebelled against the community's values and needs"[16] (21) or as individuals cope with their own failure to fulfill their gender role expectations within their communities (21; 24) or by rejecting "a dualistic either/or gendering" (30) through the Two-Spirit people.

Jack's trickster roles are equally complex if not as sexually explicit, and often their functions are similar – to both reinforce as much as to destabilize established social order. Take for example Jack's enslavement in *Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves* when, in a gamble, Jack was unable to keep Mary and his household safe from threats like Captain Cudahy (Jones,

[16] Ballinger also notes that Tricksters in Indigenous narratives serve the same role for men who refuse to adhere to their social roles – transforming into women, marrying them, and then bearing their children (Ballinger, 2000).

2011) or in Donald Davis' 1992 retelling of *The Time Jack Fooled the Miller.* This tale, is a story remarkably similar to Chaucer's Reeve's tale where Jack faces off against a miller in a bet to win his mill. The miller is a self-proclaimed "trickster" who declared that "I'd give [anyone] the deed to this mill and everything that I own right along with it" (Davis, 1992, 65) if anyone could steal anything from him. Jack at first was reticent to try, but upon finding himself lost at night near the miller's house, asked the miller for a bed in which to sleep until morning. The miller obliged, offering Jack a bed in his own room where the miller slept with his young wife and baby. When later that evening the wife needed the outhouse and left the room, Jack moved the baby's cradle next to his own bed, so that when the wife returned to her dark room, she climbed in bed with Jack and not her husband. Jack "slept pretty late into the next morning," and the miller said, "'You did it… you are the first person in this world to ever steal anything from me'… So Jack moved into the mill that was now his. The miller did get to keep his wife and baby even though Jack could have said that they were part of the deal, too " (Davis, 1992, 72). The words of the story Davis records are not explicit, but the implication is that Jack has sex with the miller's wife thus cuckolding him and stealing the wife's virtue.

Jack's actions sleeping with a married woman, are similar to what Ballinger observes in the trickster traditions of the Indigenous communities of North America, as they punish a man who was abusing his power as a critical community figure whose position supported the subsistence of others. Jack shames the miller by sleeping (or at least waking up) with the miller's wife, and takes control over the mill. While it is not a direct parallel, Ballinger's observations of tricksters acting in similar lights as transgendered enforcers of social control, are still relevant. Ballinger asserts that when the "Trickster poses as a woman and marries a man" it is often as a critique against the man for his inability to perform significant roles that would benefit the

survival of a community, such as a son refusing to marry any woman at all. Ballinger builds on this by continuing that "the laughter stimulated by most sexually-oriented male trickster stories is not because of what the trickster does to women but rather because of what he reveals about himself (and males?) as he victimizes others" (Ballinger, 2000, 21). In this case, Jack's attack was not on the wife for her inability to fulfill her social role for her husband, but as a critique of the miller's (her husband's) inability to provide necessary services for his community.

Of course there are more pathways of exploring Jack through Trickster narratives, especially as they intertwine to the Two-Spirit ideologies and female centric trickster narratives that again, for the purposes of brevity I was unable to discuss in this thesis. Connecting Jack to a more intricate pattern of multicultural trickster heroes across the globe through functionalism would encourage folklore scholars to study Jack as a character of color, a non-gendered or multi-gendered character, or a hero of persons of color, so any scholarship that follows would not necessarily be "a thesis about white people" as mine has been.

5.4 Jacking-It Genderlessly

Further the themes that are often attributed to Folk-groups of color – marginality, struggle, oppression, and rebellion – are all themes also vocalized through Newfoundland Jack tales, analyzed through functionalism, and embodied through my interviewees' interpretations of them. Jose E Limón observed similar oppression occurring to Mexican immigrants along the American-Mexican border as Fearon did in Newfoundland. Limón documents that "the largely labor-dependent workers in the United States political economy… became the objects of economic exploitation and racial-cultural prejudice and discrimination," and that, "such practices

are still characteristic of social relations in the area, although in an attenuated form" (Limón, 1983, 216),

Mary Fearon's forceful statement that Newfoundlanders are an oppressed people, directed the tone of this thesis' fourth chapter in which feminist, queer, and trans theory were all incorporated to give light to the interpretation of Jack as a character that arguably challenges gender-norms, and complicates ideas of a gender-binary. I had considered Jack unquestionably cis-gendered male, until Fearon suggested that the character might be more gender-fluid than heteronormative.

Anita Best likewise suggested that young girls and adult women who see themselves as Jack characters, further complicate Jack's gender identity, which I humbly admit I had incorrectly assumed. If women are "seeing" themselves as Jack, and emulating the character in their lives and in their actions, then Jack becomes female. Or, these women in the process of "becoming like" or "seeing" themselves as Jack, enact a transformative process by which they become men. Jack is no longer every*man*, they are every*woman* as well.

Lastly, through Alice Lannon's retelling of *Jack and the Cat*, Jack can be seen as both a homoerotic and homosexual character that has been completely normalized and accepted. Jack, though identifying as male in this story, is not attracted to women. He marries a man and finds happiness, prosperity, and acceptance at the end of the story. Though the conclusion that "love wins" might be a strong one, or "all love should be accepted" even stronger, the most salient piece is following Lovelace's 2001 article which asserts that Jack tales provide a primer that guides the ways for young boys "to be". In this way, Lannon's story gives permission for young boys and young girls alike to follow Jack's example. The "way to be" is accepted as gay, lesbian, trans, straight, or any variation of the LGBTQIA+ communities. As long as a person emulates

Jack's character qualities, it should not matter how the individual identifies their gender, because Jack never does.

In all these cases, Jack as a character has clearly empowered those with marginalized voices in the province – Newfoundlanders, women, young girls, and members of the LGBTQIA+ communities. "Ways to be" through Jack tales are no longer lessons specifically for cis-men and boys as members to uphold the patriarchy, but for those of all gender-fluid identities to challenge oppression. Despite Overton's assertion that Jack represents an "idealized Newfoundland character," my community partners clearly see Jack as a coalesced set of abilities, characteristics, and attributes worth emulating regardless of, or because of, gender. Jones literally identifies Jack as the "ideal kind of character" that "is part of the psyche of the Newfoundlander who was part of the independent fishing family" (Jones, 2019, Interview). This viewpoint cannot and should not be trivialized.

By embracing Jack, my interviewees embody the character and pull what Overton suggests is "idealized" into a firm reality. Jack, in this way, is used to empower those whose voices are otherwise quieted, or have been overlooked. Jack is a force of rebellion against power structures sustained by patriarchy and who problematizes historic, and traditional views of gender within the context of a home country, home province, or home town further supported by Best, Lovelace, and Greenhill's assertion that "Fairy tales in oral tradition see the world from the bottom up; in their natural state they are inherently revolutionary" (Best, Lovelace, & Greenhill, 2019, 10).

It is in this intersection of multigendered folklore where I see significant need for further scholarship. Jack tales problematize how culture is considered through the lens of gender. There might be other women, men, or non-binary individuals who see Jack in similarly complicated

ways as Fearon and Best, that would provide further depth and nuance to Jack narratives in the 21st century, but these avenues have yet to be studied. Gender is a social construction that Jack tales can actively disrupt or dissolve rather than reinforce. Traditionally considered a character that upholds the patriarchy, Jack can give insight about dismantling this structure from the inside by showcasing how the patriarchy affects everyone, and not just those it privileges.

5.5 In Search of an Equitable Conclusion

Ultimately, the questions that I have asked through this modified functionalist framework, and that should be continued to be asked as the study of Jack tales continues – who is Jack, and who, or what, does Jack represent? Why are they represented in this way, and what role do they play in folk culture? – are incredibly broad, vague, and interwoven with contextual ephemera that when examined closely, tangle and invert traditional gender roles, ideologies, societal expectations, and genres. Pondering who Jack is, and what he means for others is an incredibly important undertaking that should be explored in classrooms and through the viewpoints of marginalized communities such as women, non-binary communities, and persons of color. Only with this in mind, can we as folklorists empower new perspectives that are, like Jack, clever, nuanced, and equitable.

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Appendix A

Jack and the Ghost

As told to the author by Mary Fearon

"It's all about Jack sent out by his mother to get some firewood, but Jack is so distracted by life that he never really gets the firewood. He sees – but he's really smart, so he can name every bird in the trees, every bush, every berry, every flower. Like, he's really, um, intelligent, but he can't just get the damn wood cut, or fix the window. So his mother's driven crazy.

So one day he goes out in – it's the last day before the winter's coming – and his mother says, "Jack this is your last chance, we're expecting snow."

And Jack says, "Well okay today's the day." And he takes his axe and off he goes. And he sees a bird in the tree. And he says, "Well, I don't know that bird." So he follows the bird deeper and deeper into the forest until he at last for the first time in his life, he doesn't know where he is, in the woods. And it starts to rain. And he gets soaked right through, 'cause it's pouring. And he thinks to himself, "Well, I'm gonna have to try to figure out how to get home."

And he looks off in the distance and he sees a light so he makes his way toward the light. And when he gets to the light he sees that it's a little cabin. And when he opens the door, the door swings open with a great creak, and there is an old woman sitting in a rocking chair rocking back and forth, back and forth. "Welcome Jack, she says, I've been expecting you."

Jack says, "Oh," and he steps over the threshold of the house.

She said, "You're soaked right through, Jack." She's got a big roaring fire going and she says, "Why don't you take off your sweater, Jack, and give it to me here."

And Jack says, "Okay," so he takes off his sweater and she-she rings it out and she folds it all up and puts it in a pile next to the fire. And then she just rocks back and forth, back and forth.

"Now Jack," she said, "take off your boots and your vamps."

And Jack says, "Okay". So he takes off his boots and his vamps and she puts the boots down, squeezes the water out of the vamps and folds those up and puts those on top. And she starts rocking back and forth, back and forth.

"Now Jack," she said "give me your pants". Jack takes off his pants and she rings out the water, folds them all up nice, and puts them on top of the pile and she rocks back and forth, back and forth. And Jack's standing there in his underwear. "Now give me your underwear, Jack." So Jack takes off his underwear, and she squeezes out the water, and folds it all up and Jack's standing there and she says, "Now Jack, give me your skin." And just like that Jack's skin falls right off of him, and he hands it over to the old woman. And she just fol- she rings out all the water, folds it all up and lays it on top of the pile. And she rocks back and forth, back and forth.

"Now Jack," she says, "Give me your bones." And Jack just starts handing over the bones. And at last he hands her his – her – his head and she puts it on top of the pile. And Jack feeling kind of exposed sees there's a daybed on the side of the room, and crawls under a quilt and falls fast asleep to the sound of the old lady rocking back and forth, back and forth.

And just before the break of day, Jack woke up, and he looked, and there was the old lady sound asleep in the rocking chair. And there was Jack's bones and skin and all of his clothes. And Jack got up as quietly as he could, and put all his bones back together and then he pulled on his skin and it fit just like a glove. Then he put on his long johns, he put on his pants and his boots, and his sweater and he ran from that house. And he ran and he ran and he ran and when he looked up, he knew exactly where he was. And he went in and there was his mother sitting in a rocking chair by the stove. She said to Jack, "Jack, where have you been I've been waiting for you?"

And Jack said, "Oh my God mother."

She said, "Sit down, don't worry about anything." She said, "Eat your breakfast then you can go out and chop that wood today"

Jack said, "Okay." Then he ate a great big hearty breakfast and then he picked up his ax. He went out that very afternoon and he cut himself enough wood to last at least two years. And he never complained once. He never got distracted or anything. And that's the story of Jack."

Appendix B

Jack the Little Fisherman

As told to the Author by Andy Jones

So if I can tell that story now, if I can remember. Once upon a time there was a young fella born, he was always a little fella and they used to call him little Jack, sometimes little Johnny. And when he was a baby, his mother and father died so he was brought up by his Grandmother. Now there wasn't a lot of money around in those times, not like now, so little Johnny used to go down every day fishin' by the side of the beach by the side of the ocean, and that's how he fed he and his Grandmother. Now there was a king in that country and the king give out one time that "whoever caught the three prettiest fish was in the sea would get his daughter's hand in marriage."

Now Jack never heard anything about that. No. No one never bothered to tell Jack. But anyway after the proclamation was made, Jack went down to the beach one morning and God the beach was lined with all kinds of big shots with all the best kinds of fishing equipment to try to catch the prettiest fish to win the daughter's hand. But like I said, Jack didn't know nothing about that and he was fishing away and fishing away and no one talked to him, of course. And Jack was caught two or three fish and he was just about to go home when he turned and he looked down and say, "My god!" The prettiest fish he'd ever seen in his life so he said, "Oh my, that's the prettiest fish I've ever seen I gotta catch that and bring it home to my Grandmother." So he got his line together and put his fish down and got the fish, reeled it in, put it in his basket and away he go back home to his Grandmother.

But on the way home he meets the king's daughter. She says, "Hello, Little Johnny".

He says "Hello".

She says, "Whattaya at?"

He says, "I was just out fishin'"

"Oh how'd you do?"

"I didn't do too badly," he said. He said "I got a pretty fish today."

"Oh my, Johnny, let me see it." And so he shows the princess.

So she says, "Oh my, Johnny, I've got to have that fish."

"No, no I can't give you that fish. I'm bringing it home to show me Grandmother."

And she say, "Oh, Johnny," She says, "Oh, Johnny. I'll give you five dollars for that fish."

And he says, "No, Miss," he said, "I can't do that."

She said, "Five dollars is a lot of money, Johnny."

He said, "Oh yes," he said, "You're right." In them days five dollars was a lot of money. They had no money then. So he says. "Alright Missus, you can have the fish." So he gives her the pretty fish and he takes the five dollars home – brings it home and gives it to his Grandmother.

Well, the Grandmother sees five dollars and she nearly dies, "Fff-my God, Johnny, five dollars. Where'd you get that? You must have stole that!"

"No, Grandmother, I didn't steal it."

"Yes you did," she said, "How would you get five dollars if you didn't steal it?"

"No Grandmother," he said, " I caught a pretty fish and I give it to the king's daughter," he said. She give me five dollars.

"All right." And she takes the five dollars and she says, "What's good enough for the king's daughter is good enough for me," And she goes downtown with the five dollars and buys all kinds of stuff, and she buys a doily – a lot of doilies for the house like a Grandmother would.

The next day Johnny goes fishing again like he always did. And, jeez, the place is lined off with all the big shots and they have the best kind of mountain co-op equipment and everything like that, and Johnny only has a little stick, and a hook, and anyway he fishes away and he fishes away. And no one talks to him, of course. And he finishes for the day – got a good basket of fish, and just when he is about to leave he looks down and sees a pretty fish, a prettier fish than the day before. He says, "Oh Gosh! I got to take that home to show me Grandmother." So get he gets the fishing line and puts it in the water and shore enough he baits it up, pulls out the fish, and puts it in his basket. And he's going home and meets the king's daughter again.

She says, "Oh. Johnny, how'd you get on fishing today?"

"Oh, Miss," he said, "I got a better fish today than I got yesterday."

She says, 'Oh my let me see it." She says, "Oh, Johnny, that is a pretty fish," she says. She says, "Oh I got to have that fish."

Johnny said, "No no. I gave you one yesterday you're not getting this fish. I got to go home and show it to me Grandmudder."

And she says, "Oh, Johnny, I'll give you ten dollars for that fish."

Ten dollars oh my God! That's a lot of money in them days. Ten dollars! Oh my God he'd never seen that much money by himself. He says, "Alright, Miss," he says, "I'll give you – I'll give you the fish if you give me the ten dollars." He brings the ten dollars home to his Grandmother.

"Hh my God. Johnny," she says, "You must have stole that money." She says, "That's the second day you come home now you got ten dollars."

He says, "No Grandmother," he says. "I caught another pretty fish and I gives it to the king's daughter," he says, "And she gave me ten dollars.

She says, "Alright. What's good enough for the king's daughter is good enough for me." So she goes down and she buys all kinds of grub, and she's like the merchant's daughter when she goes downtown.

So the next day Johnny gets up again and goes down to the beach again, and it's all lined up again with all these big shots and their best equipment trying to catch the prettiest fishes in the sea. Like I said, Jack doesn't know anything about the contest see. His catch is a pretty good day, oh pretty good day fishing. He's about to knock off around 5 o'clock and he looks down, and my God doesn't he see the prettiest fish than the other two he'd already caught. So, "My I got to get this fish. But, this one I'm definitely going to bring it home to my Grandmother." So he baits the hook and pulls the fish up on the bank and puts it in his basket and he goes home. This time he goes home a different way. He doesn't want to meet the king's daughter this time so he goes, there's a small brook he has to cross, a kind of a small brook he has to crawl over, a grassy hill; he goes over the grassy hill. He goes down, heads across the brook again, and when he heads across the brook again, there standing there was the king's daughter.

And she says, "How'd you get out with the fishing today, Johnny?"

"You won't believe it," he says, "But I caught a prettier fish today than they two I already caught."

She says, “Let me see the fish.”

He says, “Alright I’ll let you see the fish, but you’re not going to buy it. I’ve got to bring this one home to me Grandmother.”

She says, “Oh I just want to look at it. Oh my!” She says, “Oh, Johnny,” she says. “I got to have that fish.”

And Johnny says, “No, Missus. I don’t care what you offer me, I got to bring that fish home to me Grandmother.”

She says, “Oh, Johnny, I’ll give you twenty dollars for that fish.”

Twenty dollars! Johnny just about dies at the thought of twenty dollars. That’s a lot of money. So anyways it doesn’t take very long before Johnny agrees. He gives her the fish and she gives him twenty dollars.

He's just about the leave when she says, “Before you leave I want to tell you something,” she said. She said, “I got the three fish. I kept them all the three you gave me. Tomorrow night there’s going to be a contest and the king is going to pick the three prettiest fish in the sea,” she said, “And there’s going to be a reward. If you got three pretty fish.”

He says, “Oh yeah that’ll be alright.” But she doesn’t tell him what it is. And so Johnny says, “I can’t go to the castle.” He says, “Poor boys like me aren’t allowed to go.”

She said, “Alright, Johnny, here’s what I’ll do,” she said. “I’ll give you another twenty dollars.”

“Oh boy!” says Johnny.

“You go down to the store and you buy the best cut of clothes you want to buy. You walk up to the castle tomorrow night.”

So Johnny goes home and he goes to his gram and he gives her twenty dollars. Well she, I don’t know if she has a heart attack, but she seems to have strange pains and she thinks the devil ate Johnny to steal the money, and Johnny yells at her, “Grandmother calm down would ya! I caught a pretty fish,” he says, “and I give it to the king’s daughter,” he says, “and she gave me twenty dollars for it.”

“All right,” she says.

She’s just about to go off and shop, “And also,” he said, “she gave me another twenty dollars.” Oh my! Grandmother can’t believe that. He says, “To buy a suit of clothes cause I’m invited up to the palace.”

“Well,” she said, “no way,” she said, “you goin’ to the palace. Don’t make me laugh, Johnny.”

“Yes,” he said.

“No, Johnny, you can’t go up to the palace, the poor boy like you.”

“Yes,” he said. “The king’s daughter’s after inviting me. She gave me this money to buy a suit of clothes!”

Well it took a long time to convince her but, “Alright, Johnny,” she says. “Whatever you say.” So she goes down and buys her twenty dollars worth of stuff, and Johnny goes and buys a beautiful suit of clothes.

And then he goes up to the castle, and the princess gives him the three fish back, and he lays the fish – and all the big shots are there and they have their plates of fish laid out there like that. And the king’s going around looking at this plate of fish, “Oh very nice very nice,” like that right? And he says, “Oh little Johnny’s here too.”

“Oh little Johnny’s here after catching fish.”

And the king laughs, “Oh, Johnny, little Johnny after catching fish.”

And the princess says, “Oh yes, dad, right here. That’s the three, pretty fish.”

The king was looking around, and he sees them three fish. Well he knows and everyone in the room knows, that’s the three prettiest fish was never in the sea caught. And he looks at the fish and don’t know what to do. He realize this is it. Johnny’s after winning his daughter’s hand in marriage. But the king, he can’t do that, “There’s no way,” he says. “Johnny, he says, “b’y it’s true you got the three prettiest fish, but I can’t let you marry me daughter. I can’t let a poor boy like you marry my daughter.

And the princess starts bawling and she says, “Daddy, you promised!” And Jack, you know, he didn’t know, this is the first time he’s hearing about this and he didn’t know what to say. And the princess says, “Yes, Daddy, you told me dat.”

And the king says, “I know I did.” He says, “but I can’t. There’s not a way.”

The princess says, “Take it away.” She’s crying her eyes out. Johnny goes away. He gives him some money to help his Grandmother to fix up her house. And that’s all there was to it. That’s how it was in them days.

So Johnny they got a bit of money, he’s still got to go fishing next day. He goes down fishing again, fishing away, and fishing away, and this big ship comes into the harbor. Drops anchor; fella gets little Johnny a look and says, “What are you doing?”

And Johnny says, “Oh fishing.”

“Oh yeah?” He says.

Johnny he says, “Yes. That’s how I feeds me Grandmudder.”

“Well that’s too bad about your Grandmother,” he says, “because you’re coming with me.” And he grabs hold of Johnny and ties him up in a jolly bow and make him aboard the boat and throw him in the hold, and they sail out to sea like that.

Johnny wakes up and gets up a couple of days later and they’re way out in the middle of the ocean. These fellas is after capture. They keep Johnny there and Johnny’s like a slave on that boat for about a month like that. Finally they come into port and there’s an old fellow there in the port and he sees Johnny like that. He asks the captain, “What’s with that young feller?”

“Ah no, just a young feller we picked up along the way.”

The old feller knows what’s going on here. So he says, he says, “I’ll buy the young fellow off you,” he says.

Well they didn’t want him to take him. So he says, “A couple of hundred pounds I suppose.”

And he buys the young feller. And this old man is kind, good, got a lovely wife like that and they take Jack in. They don’t know where they are, hundreds of miles away thousands of miles away from Johnny’s home. Turns out the old man is a doctor and he says to him he says, “Johnny there’s a king of Spain,” he says. “He's blind, I knows how to cure him.” He says, “But,” he says, “I’m too old, I can’t travel over the border, but I’m going to teach you how to do it and you’re going to go to the king of Spain and cure his blindness.”

So Johnny, my God, he teaches him everything he knows about doctoring. He’s the best kind of doctor in the world probably. Johnny learns everything. Eventually a ship does come by heading off to Spain; Johnny gets on the ship. He lands on the shore in Madrid, and anyway, and the king’s there on the beach walking back and forth blind as a bat, right? He introduces himself to Johnny and Johnny tells him who he is to one of the fellows like that with the king, and so he called – the king calls him over, “I hear,” he said, “you’re a doctor.”

And Johnny says, “Oh yes b’y,” he says, “I knows a bit about doctorin’.”

And king says, “Well tell you the truth, I’m blind.”

Johnny says, “That’s too bad.”

He says, “Is there anything you can do to help me?

And Jonny says tell you truth, “I haven’t cured a lot of eyes, but I’ll do my best.”

King says, “Alright, Johnny.”

Says, “Now what you’ve got to do is get a white horse, the most beautiful white horse that’s in all your stables, and I’m going to take that horse and I’m going to ride around town in three circles.” So Johnny gets on the horse and he rides around the town like that right? And he says something to the horse, I don’t know, some words that the doctor told him and the horse stops. And he goes over and he’s sniffing around some leaves. Johnny goes over and gets some of the leaves, and he goes around again and the horse stops again and sniffs around some other plans there Johnny takes the plants like that. Johnny takes the horse and he goes three times around the town at the end of it Jack has all these plants. And he takes them with a mortar and pestle and he grinds them down to make a paste, and he goes over says to the king he says, “Oh I’m going to put some of this on your eyes.”

“Oh my god, oh the, oh the pain ooooh my God the pain!” The king is thinking, “Oh my God it would be better to be blind, the pain is so awful like that.” But after a while the pain starts to go away, and Johnny says, “Open your eye.” Says to the king, “Can you see anything?”

The king says, “B’y I can see a glimmer.”

Johnny says, “Just you wait a minute now.”

And the king says, “Oh my God I can see me ships down in the harbor.” And oh my God he can’t thank Johnny enough, he’s so happy and like that, Johnny says, “What about the other eye?”

“I don’t know boy,” he says. “I’m pretty happy with one eye. I don’t know about the pain.”

And Jack says, “Well it’s up to you, but you can have two eyes if you want ‘em.”

“Alright,” the king says, “go ahead.”

And he puts the same salve onto his eye and oh my God the pain oh there’s no pain like it on earth. I’m sure the king is in all this pain his eyes horrible. He regrets right away, “I shouldn’t have done it. I should have been happy with one eye.” But after a while the pain starts to go away and Johnny says, “Open the other eye.” So he opens the other eye and closes the other one. “Can you see anything?”

“Boy,” he says, “I can see a glimmer.” After a while he says, “Oh my God I can see me ships in the harbor,” and he says, “Johnny,” he says, “What do you want? If there’s anything in this world I can give to you, I’ll give it to you,” he says.

Johnny says, “I wouldn’t mind a few bags of money.”

The kings says, “Send in the bags of money.”

“But what I want most of all is a ship, the best ship you got, that wants to be taken back to the island I come from. I want to meet the fella that taught me to be a doctor and I want to go home. One thing I want,” he says, “I want a golden pistol,” he says, “a golden gun,” he says, “that can fire golden bullets.”

“No problem,” the king says. He gets the gun that fires bullets like that.

Jack gets on a ship and goes back to the island and picks up the doctor. He’s happy to see him. They got the best cut of accommodations for the doctor, he’s old and not very well now, and takes him back.

Johnny goes back to where he come from. He goes into the harbor like that. Now, he goes up to the wharf and what’s he do but takes out his gun, and he fires the gun and puts a bullet

right into the big post by the wharf like that right? People will see that. People will see that this fellow here firing golden bullets.

The princess, she happens to be down at the wharf. She happens to hear about that and she says, “Oh I gotta meet this fella” She goes up and little Johnny gets off. She doesn’t recognize him. He’s got a big beard now, she says to him, “You must have done well firing golden bullets.”

“I’ve done alright.”

“Where are you from?” she says.

“Well actually,” he says, “I’m from here.”

“Oh really?” She says.

He says, “Oh yeah I used to live here, but me Grandmother over there on the other side of the harbor.

And she says, “No. You’re not little Johnny?”

He says, “Yes, Missus, I am.”

“Oh little Johnny!” She says, “I’m some happy to see you.”

Johnny says, “Have you seen me Grandmother? Is she still alive?”

She says, “Yes, your Grandmother is still alive,” says, “We’ll go on and see her.”

So Johnny goes down and meets his Grandmother. Oh my she’s old now, some old. She can hardly see herself, and she’s sitting there so he says, “Grandmother you’re getting old.”

“Yes,” she said. She said, “I’m pretty old I’m an old, old woman.”

“You live here all by yourself?” He says. “Grandmother you lives here all by yourself?”

And she says, “Yeah. I had a little fella live with me one time, little Jack,” she said. “He went down fishing one day; I never seen him since.”

And he said, “Well Grandmother,” he says, “you won’t believe it, but I’m little Johnny.”

“Well,” she said, “you’re not little Johnny.”

And he says, “Yes I is.” And she throws her arms around him and they hug and kiss they done it all she says, “I haven’t had a good bit of fresh fish since you left,” she said.

And anyway, turned out the princess - she ran home and said, “Dad, you got to come down here. That young fellow that fired the golden slug that’s little Johnny. He’s back!”

The king says. “I know I know. You’re still in love with little Johnny. You go ahead and tell him to go ahead and get married.”

And she goes back and talks to little Johnny, and sure enough he’s still in love with her. Next thing you know they’re getting married.

So they did, and it turned out the king, because the queen had been dead for many years, the king fell in love with Johnny’s Grandmother and they got married. And the old doctor was there, and the doctor’s wife was there, and they had a wonderful wedding ceremony. And they had babies in basketfuls, and when I left they gave me a slipper and a glass, and all I come home sliding on my ass.

That’s good a bad version as you’re likely to get.