COMMUTERS AND COMMUNITY ON BELL ISLAND: AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF FERRY MOBILITIES AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

by © Diane Royal

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Abstract

This thesis draws on ethnographic fieldwork with commuting workers residing on Bell Island—a ferry-reliant community located in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. At the time of fieldwork in 2015, registered work commuters traveling daily from and to Bell Island comprised approximately one-fourth of the island's population. The commute itself is multimodal, involving a five-kilometre ferry trip across a short stretch of ocean, as well as travel by road at either end of the ferry. This thesis was undertaken as part of a large team project called On the Move Partnership, researching employment-related geographical mobility in the Canadian context. In studying the work-related mobilities of Bell Island ferry commuters, this research engages with literature on social reproduction and considers individual, household, and community-level patterns of unpaid labour. This thesis used ethnographic fieldwork methods of participant observation, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews with Bell Island residents. It analyses the ways commuters form 'support networks' with other ferry passengers, contribute meaningfully to their own households, as well as 'help out' across households and participate in island-wide volunteer work. As such, this research highlights the many ways in which Bell Island commuters support one another, reinforcing their island community and cementing a commitment to people and place amidst demanding off-island commuting practices. It is through these everyday activities of social reproduction that Bell Islanders are shaping and re-shaping their island community. By considering the unwaged labour patterns that are part of the daily work commute itself, this thesis ultimately asserts that commuting in the Bell Island context is also a form of work.

Acknowledgements

On a fall afternoon in 2015, I stood bundled up in a dark, abandoned iron ore mine shaft listening to local tour guide Bonnie Spracklin sing an old miners' song. Her striking voice filled the space, echoing off the walls, and was recorded a year later for a CBC Ideas radio documentary made by Paul Kennedy.[1] "I swear to God, if I ever see the sun…" she mournfully crooned, singing deep from her heart. Similarly, the total darkness and enveloping chill of those early morning commutes sticks with me, long after fieldwork, and akin to the reverberating mine shaft with Bonnie on that November day.

This thesis is dedicated to the many commuting Bell Islanders. I hope this research, in some small way, highlights your commitment to the "extra effort" behind what some may think is an everyday, mundane task of getting to and from work. Special thanks to Harriett Taylor—you were a true teacher in the lessons and experiences of commuting. Also, to Glenda Tedford who did so much more than offer me a place to stay. Finally, to the Bell Islanders who are featured in this thesis, as well as the many others who so thoughtfully contributed in myriad ways. You welcomed me into your homes and community spaces; I am forever grateful. This particular watery route requires structural improvements to better service the whole island community. With this thesis and beyond, I remain committed to 'mobility justice' for all Bell Islanders and am hopeful for the future.

To Dr. Sharon Roseman, your dedication to me as a student in many ways mirrored the "extra effort" required to passenger this route. A heartfelt and deep thanks for being my 'co-passenger' on this longer-than-planned journey. Further thanks are owed to Janet Oliver and

[1] CBC Ideas host Paul Kennedy was a media partner with the On the Move Partnership. The full episode "On the Move from Bell Island: Crossing the Tickle" can be accessed here: https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/crossing-the-tickle-1.3345293.

Danielle Devereaux of On the Move Partnership, as well as to Joshua Barrett, who provided a supportive work space; and Dr. Barb Neis for shepherding the larger On the Move Partnership project with unmatched leadership and vision.

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Chapter 1—Introduction

On a fall afternoon during my first trip out to Bell Island, Ken Kavanagh, a local resident, activist, and long-time Bell Island advocate, got right to the point:

> *The ferry system is the heart and soul of Bell Island. It affects everything; families, individuals, small business, social life…everything. It can be a unifying issue or it can be a divisive issue. It can be a system that helps Bell Island socioeconomically or it can be one that hurts it. It's everything.*

By saying so, Ken summarized the key context of this island study: ferry commuting. But the "heart and soul" of this ethnographic research remains the relationships between and among commuting workers, as well as other island residents. No doubt these relationships enabled the arduous, work-related mobility patterns to and from the Newfoundland mainland. As I argue throughout this thesis, commuting is a form of work. But in further contextualizing unwaged labour patterns as part of the commute itself, I assert that it is through these everyday activities of social reproduction,[2] that Bell Islanders are shaping and re-shaping their island community.

In looking at the individual, household, and community-level patterns of work mobilities this study used ethnographic fieldwork methods of participant observation, including everyday observations of social life, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews with Bell Island residents, including former and current commuters as well as their families, and non-commuting community members. In analysing Bell Island wage labourers' experiences of commuting, this thesis' ethnography will address:

A. Commuting experiences of wage labourers from Bell Island who use the ferry to commute.
B. Activities of social reproduction within households of commuting workers on Bell Island.

[2] Within this thesis, I follow the definition of social reproduction as the "reproduction of labour on daily, weekly, and annual temporal scales, as well as through generations" (Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015: 183, also see Bezanson and Luxton 2006, Laslett and Brenner 1989).

C. Commuters' cross-household and volunteer work within the broader Bell Island community.

As such, findings within this thesis are threefold. First, in studying work-related mobilities, this thesis benefited greatly from considering both waged and unwaged labour, and the ways in which an everyday, intertwined reliance on both forms of labour existed among working commuters (also see Roseman, Gardiner Barber, Neis 2015). Next, especially in situations of "transport disadvantage" (Delbosc and Currie 2011) such as the Bell Island Ferry system, attention should be paid to patterns of social reproduction and the ways they are rooted in past practices and shift over time—especially following an "exit" from work mobilities (Cresswell, Dorow, Roseman 2016; Dorow, Cresswell, and Roseman 2017). Finally, I maintain that a deep attachment to Bell Island as a home community (Low and Altman 1992) is actually reinforced through these intensive off-island commuting practices. By considering the unwaged labour patterns that are part of the daily commute to waged labour jobs, this thesis asserts that commuting in the Bell Island context is also a form of work.

My hope is that readers come away from this thesis with a respect for the many Bell Islanders who commute daily to and from paid employment. But I also hope that readers come to appreciate commuters' engagement in the ways they work to reproduce themselves as well as others in the community (see Chapter 4), contribute meaningfully to their own households (see Chapter 5), and further bolster the Bell Island community by 'helping out'[3] across households and by participating in island-wide volunteer work (see Chapter 6). This is ultimately a story about the many ways in which Bell Island commuters support one another, reinforcing their

[3] Throughout this thesis, I utilize single quotations for words or phrases commonly used by Bell Islanders during the fieldwork period.

island community and cementing a commitment to people and place amidst demanding off-island commuting practices.

This research falls within the scope of a large team project that studied employment-related geographical mobility in the Canadian context (On the Move Partnership 2020). Led by Dr. Barbara Neis, On the Move was a multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional project "investigating workers' extended travel and related absence from their places of permanent residence for the purpose of, and as part of, their employment" (On the Move Partnership 2020: n.p.). As a part of On the Move Partnership a core of anthropologists and other social scientists in different parts of the country conducted research on work mobilities. Fieldwork in Newfoundland and Labrador included those who move intraprovincially as part of work, those who commute from Newfoundland and Labrador to other Canadian provinces, as well as internationally. This included, for example, workers travelling to jobs in Alberta, or 'out west', in the oil sands—also known as fly-in fly-out workers, or FIFO (Dorow and Jean 2022)—as well as research on interprovincial commuting that considers workers who drive long distances across Newfoundland and Labrador to work on provincial megaprojects (Butters 2018; Hall and Vodden 2016), among others. The team was also interested in movement as part of work—in the fisheries industry, for example (Foley et al. 2016); as well as in construction (Barber 2016). Several researchers, including myself, considered the impacts of these kinds of mobilities on home communities (Barrett 2019). One of the One the Move field projects, led by my thesis supervisor Dr. Sharon Roseman, focused on ferry employment and the use of ferries to commute to work. My project falls under this, as a shorter-term, community-type study in order to better understand the household and community level impacts of work mobilities for Bell Island residents. The primary fieldwork period started in April 2015 and continued through September

2015 (see Chapter 3). Since the end of fieldwork in fall 2015, Sharon Roseman has continued to conduct research on Bell Island. Together, we have co-published about gendered co-passengering onboard the Bell Island Ferry (Royal and Roseman 2021) as well as commuting to garden (Roseman and Royal 2018).

Setting and Historical Background of Bell Island

Bell Island is located in Conception Bay, just as the waters begin to open into the mighty Atlantic Ocean. With a population of just over 2,400 residents at the time of fieldwork (Statistics Canada 2016a, 2016b), Bell Island is comprised of the town of Wabana and smaller, unincorporated communities of Lance Cove and Freshwater. Yet all residents are dependent on the year-round ferry service that connects Bell Island with the town of Portugal Cove-St. Philips and the rest of mainland Newfoundland. The ferry ride across 'the Tickle'[4]—the term referring to the short stretch of water between wharves—from Bell Island to the town of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's is roughly twenty-minutes long, but can be variable, even harrowing in bad weather. Once at the wharf in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, Bell Islanders must drive a similar or longer duration of time into St. John's, the provincial capital of Newfoundland and Labrador, or other surrounding areas. For those travelling into work, some drive their personal vehicles, or carpool together, and others take the Portugal-Cove Taxi service—a large passenger van—that drops islanders at their various destinations of employment, and also picks them back up again at the end of workday.

[4] As defined by the Dictionary of Newfoundland English (Story, Kirwin, Widdowson 2023), a 'tickle' is "a narrow salt-water straight, as in an entrance to a harbour or between islands or other land masses, often difficult or treacherous to navigate because of narrowness, tides, etc."

Similar to other rural communities in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Bell Island's population is aging and declining in size. Yet a critical contextual component of this research is that Bell Island once boasted one of the largest populations in Newfoundland due to iron-ore mining operations that began in the 1890s and continued for over seventy-years until their final closure in 1966. Interestingly, many miners, or industry-adjacent workers during this time, commuted *to* Bell Island weekly from the Newfoundland mainland. At Bell Island's peak in 1961, its population was almost fourfold what it is today: "95 percent of which depended directly on the mining operation" (Weir 2006: 170). Following a series of massive layoffs and the eventual full industrial closure in 1966, extensive out-migration occurred from Bell Island. Some Bell Islanders migrated intraprovincially to the Newfoundland mainland or to Wabush, Labrador where another iron-ore mine operated until its eventual closure in 2014. Still others moved to Galt, Ontario, now a part of Cambridge, where manufacturing jobs were readily available; or to other places within North America. The majority of commuters featured throughout this thesis frequently recalled this impactful time period, some having briefly left Bell Island—either with their families, or as young adults seeking work. Although all research participants in the thesis project eventually moved back and engaged in off-island commuting for a time, their personal stories remained entangled with the island's history.

Within the context of Bell Island's series of industrial closures that began in 1950, extensive patterns of out-migration included that of "chain migration" or "network-mediated migration" whereby islanders relocated to destinations close to already established "kin and friends" (Brettell 2013: 107). Most commuting Bell Islanders I spoke with situated current practices of daily commuting for work within past patterns of out-migration—signaling the long-standing necessity of household, interhousehold and broader community structures that support

such movements for purposes of employment (also see Dorow, Cresswell, and Roseman 2017). For example, one of my informants, Jean Bursey, was just a child when her father was laid off from the mines in 1966. Although her family initially tried to "stick it out" on Bell Island, nine years later, many of her older siblings had moved out of province to Ontario. Jean joined them in search of employment when she was of age. As she told it:

> *...I went up with my sister, actually. She was there quite a few years before I went up – my older sister. So when I moved up, I went with her. I had a brother up there at the time too. And I had another sister. So like I was close to my family there. But I just wasn't happy with the place [and moved back to Bell Island]. And they stayed. My brother and my other sister stayed there [in Ontario].*

In this sense, as Massey et al. (1993: 449) maintain "each act of migration itself, creates the social structure needed to sustain it." Such information about those who migrated away from Bell Island fits in with other migration research going beyond the individual out-migrant as a unit of analysis and extending out to consider influences of households as well as extended kin (Brettell 2013; Massey et al. 1993). In this thesis I consider that household, inter-household, as well as broader community relations among Bell Island residents help sustain modern commuting, but they remain grounded as experiences that grew out of the wake of an industrial closure.

For those who remained on Bell Island after the series of mine closures, local employment opportunities were sparse and some began commuting to jobs in St. John's or surrounding areas. As was often described by those featured in this thesis, weekly boarding in St. John's was common among young Bell Islanders in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, with return trips home every weekend to visit. Daily commuting from Bell Island then increased in the decades that followed, as the ferry service improved and Bell Islanders opted to move back, buy a house, and be closer to extended family (see Chapter 5). As such, the ferry route across the

Tickle was in high demand within a relatively short time frame. By 1982, according to the Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador (V.II: 43-49), "of the nine provincially-operated ferry services…the Bell-Island Portugal Cove route was the most heavily used." The year prior, in August 1981, recommendations were made to the Newfoundland Government "based on growth figures and an extensive study of the service" off and on Bell Island that "larger ferries, an extended schedule and year-round, two vessel service would do much to enhance the services" on this particular route (Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador V.II: 43-49). A group of commuters featured throughout this thesis are what I term 'long-term commuters.' As some began travelling daily (or weekly) for work from Bell Island into the St. John's area starting in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in the wake of the mine closures, and are further defined as having at least two decades of commuting experiences on this route. A few have more than four decades in total, and at the time of fieldwork most were at least partially retired (see Chapter 3). Accounts of the long-term commuters throughout this thesis illustrate that various aspects of the daily work commuting experience such as onboard sociality practices have remained similar over time (see Chapter 4). Interviews with the long-term commuters further emphasized how commuting has long embodied past practices of household and cross-household social reproduction, as well as the ways in which these tasks have shifted alongside intensive work mobilities (see Chapters 5 and 6). As such, the experiences of the long-term commuters represent many of the tangible shifts that occurred over time starting with the introduction of larger boats and more capacity for passengers and vehicles on this ferry run. This group of commuters also inspired me to further "profile the passenger" within this thesis "as a distinctive historical conceptual figure" (Adey et al. 2012: 169). The 'figure' of the ferry commuter has long been a clear social identity among Bell Islanders, as will be described later in this chapter.

As was also the case starting in the 1970s and 1980s, the Bell Island-Portugal Cove Ferry service continued to contrast with the case of other ferry-reliant communities in the province as it was widely used by daily commuting workers. In 2015, at the time of fieldwork, roughly twenty-five percent of the island's population used the ferry to make a daily commute to work (Bell Island Ferry Users Committee 2015). The province's Fogo Island ferry service, for example, does not involve such a large volume of daily commuting traffic given how long it takes (about 45 minutes one-way) and that local fishing and tourism are the island's main industries (CTV News 2016). Due to Bell Island's high rate of retirees and limited on-island employment opportunities, at the time of fieldwork, the majority of Bell Islanders engaging in positions of paid employment were doing so within the context of daily work commuting practices. Put another way, the Bell Island Ferry Users Committee (2015) estimated that during the time of fieldwork, approximately 500 island residents commuted to the Newfoundland mainland daily; with roughly 700 islanders registered as 'working commuters.' The difference between these two figures is likely due to the seasonal nature of many positions; for example, a significant proportion of Bell Islanders, especially men, were employed within the trades (Community Accounts 2022). Census data for the reference week in May 2016—a year after fieldwork ended—reported "755 [Bell Island] individuals participating in the labour force" (Community Accounts 2022). Together, these figures illustrate that daily mobilities are a part of employment among the majority of working Bell Islanders. In many ways, work-related mobilities are also part of the collective identity of the island, alongside the historical background of the mining industry, wherein many commuted weekly *to* Bell Island from parts of the Newfoundland mainland. For the last part of the 20th century and then into the early 21st century, however, residents' identities became more closely tied to the prevalence of daily commuting patterns for

purposes of employment—a commute that includes a twenty-minute stretch on a ferry as part of a longer "journey to work" (Hanson 1980; also see Dorow, Cresswell, and Roseman 2017). Although the label of 'commuter' is indeed a social identity on Bell Island, official designations in the form of 'priority passes' for those who drive their private vehicles on the ferry further mark working commuters from other island residents as they queue their vehicles in a designated commuter line up on the Bell Island side[5] (also see Roseman 2020).

In addition to the many hundreds of daily working commuters, all island residents must travel to access essential services on the Newfoundland mainland—what I deem throughout this thesis as types of social reproduction that include everyday activities such as food provisioning, shopping, running errands like banking, child or elder care, among many others (also see Bezanson and Luxton 2006). Increased commuting for purposes of paid employment, as well as unpaid reproductive labour among Bell Islanders, shows in data that suggests ferry traffic from and to Bell Island is the "busiest in the province" shuttling 530,000+ passengers and close to 250,000 vehicles annually (Boone 2017). 'Going over'—short-speak on Bell Island for crossing the Tickle by ferry and travelling into the St. John's area—for reasons other than work, as well as the strategies behind incorporating types of social reproduction into the work commute, permeated daily island chatter and thus was a central theme throughout my fieldwork. After telling a story about travelling on the boat, one former commuter, Nora,[6] substantiated: "Now that was for work, I mean commuting itself, constantly, it don't stop. Because you're commuting for everything." Although the set of interviews used in this thesis are all from commuting

[5] Priority passes for commuters using private vehicles to drive onto the ferry boat are only for travel off of Bell Island. For many commuters this priority trip also occurs in the morning hours. Priority in 'both directions' is only granted in rare instances and typically for medical reasons, never for daily travel to/from work.
[6] A pseudonym.

workers who travelled this route sometime between the late 1960s and 2015, every interviewee also spoke extensively about the need to use the boats for reasons other than work.

In this way, additional structural closures within this timeframe on Bell Island have further decreased local employment and educational opportunities as well as services, thus further reinforcing the need for off-island movements. For example, the only 'trade school'[7] closed on Bell Island in 1991 after having opened in 1964 as part of educational reform under the liberal government led by Premier Joseph Smallwood (Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website 2011). Several interviewees featured in this thesis spoke about having attended the trade school and then utilizing their training as working commuters. Still others described life as commuting students—needing to travel into St. John's for post-secondary education in the wake of the closure. Several research participants who had children attending post-secondary institutions discussed their children's preference to live on the 'other side'—most often in the St. John's area—to acquire schooling, rather than to remain on Bell Island and commute. They described their children returning to Bell Island for a 'visit' on weekends, just as they themselves or others would have done given that weekly boarding in St. John's was common among young Bell Islanders in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, as described previously. An aspect of contemporary mobilities on and off Bell Island is that several interviewees maintained during the fieldwork period that their children rarely return even for a brief visit due to a dislike for 'the boats.' One long-term commuter recounted a recent phone conversation with her son: "I said to him last night,

> *'Do you think you'll be home [to Bell Island] soon?' … He said, 'I haven't got any plans, Mom.' He's got no tolerance for the boat. He can't stand the fact that… He says, 'It's always late, you never know what the schedule is, Mom.' And he said, 'You can never get on or off it when you want to.'*

[7] Although referred to among Bell Island residents as the 'trade school,' the campus was a District Vocation School (DVS) (also see Hussey-Weir 2022b).

Several in my sample described regularly 'going over' to visit kin, as in the case of the aforementioned commuter who instead made time to see her son in St. John's as part of her daily journey to work.

Another more recent local closure that necessitated increased commuting patterns was of the island's only bank branch, which closed in 2001, to be replaced by a single ATM. As a result, some of those who were previously employed at the on-island bank began commuting to work in the St. John's area. Furthermore, 'cheque runs' to the mainland were described by several interviewees as a new part of work for owners of businesses on Bell Island and those who work for them. This change is a good example of intensified commuting even for those on-island workers in the wake of another local closure, intensified in this situation implying a *new* necessity requiring regular off-island movements. Moreover, the lack of banking services on-island was described as a true hardship for many—especially retirees who comprise the majority of the island's population. This disruption promoted several interviewees to tell me that they had switched banks altogether at the time of closure due to frustration, and Ken Kavanagh described physically protesting the closure by standing in front of the bank with handmade signs. As he told it: "Scotiabank, after being there for 75 years, closed the branch. […] My picture was in The Telegram[8] as I was parading with my sign in front of the bank for several weeks." Unfortunately, his efforts did not change the outcome.

Private businesses and public facilities on Bell Island that continue to be heavily relied upon by residents include a grocery store, a hardware store, a gas station, a pharmacy, and a branch of the provincial library system that has computers and internet access. On-island hair

[8] The Telegram was a news media outlet published weekdays and Saturdays in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, acquired in 2017 by SaltWire Network Inc. based in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

salons have loyal customers, including among commuting workers. A handful of eateries include several dine-in restaurants, such as Dicks' Fish and Chips (a well-known establishment near the ferry terminal), a café by the lighthouse, a coffee shop at the ferry terminal, and a 'sub shop' that was relatively new during the time of fieldwork and opened by a recently exited long-term commuter. There are also several bars. Convenience stores distributed throughout the island offer light fare and ice cream, along with the usual items such as lottery tickets and cigarettes. During interviews I often asked which convenience store commuters used as I had discovered, through participant observation as well as my own commuting patterns, that they were convenient stop overs on the way to and from the boat. The informal name of each store, including the coffee shop, was usually the owners' first name, and the interviewees' answer to my question was a good indication of which part of the island they lived on, or perhaps even where they were raised. There is also an indoor ice hockey arena on the island.

As part of looking at patterns of social reproduction both on and off Bell Island, I asked all interviewees where they did their food provisioning, and other shopping, bought items for home maintenance or improvement, got their hair cut, and so on (see Appendix A). Patterns of mobility for social reproduction among commuting workers will be discussed further in Chapters 5 and 6, but answers further provided me with additional details about the island's history, as well as insight into the way islanders think about the services that are 'left.' For those interviewed as part of this thesis, as well those in the broader study sample, most prefaced comments about current patterns of mobility for social reproduction with memories of past patterns, describing a thriving local economy that did not necessitate frequent trips across the Tickle. As Keith Kent, a male long-term commuter featured heavily in Chapter 5, recalled:

> *It's not the same as it was when we were younger. Obviously. Because it was quite the place to grow up. It was amazing. We might get to St. John's maybe twice a year. For*

> *school, musical festival, stuff like that. But like there was everything here. All the sports you wanted to play. All the friends you needed and the town itself; Christmastime on Bell Island was just something else. I mean Town Square, which you're familiar with now, where the church is there, I mean that was wall-to-wall stores and there would be raffles. Just an amazing place. And you never really needed to go anywhere. It was a really enjoyable time.*

At the time of fieldwork, however, many interviewees described purchasing the majority of their personal and household items in St. John's. But they also emphasized the importance of spending money locally, too. "It's important to support the economy on Bell Island. I think people should be doing that," one commuter told me. "I get gas here sometimes, maybe once a month. I make a conscious effort to go to stores here." This same economic awareness and effort to spend money on Bell Island was echoed across several interviews. It is important to note that local services like the grocery store, hardware store, and library are absolutely essential for Bell Island residents who never, or rarely leave the island, some of whom do not own a vehicle. Many of the commuters described in this thesis, indicated that they had privileges of greater mobility and economic choice and those who rarely exit the island do not. The bank closure on Bell Island in 2001 is a stark example of the burden loss of local services places on some residents in remote rural communities like Bell Island.

A final example of an essential on-island service is the 20-bed Dr. Walter Templeman Health Care Centre, locally known as 'the hospital.'[9] It provides important acute, long-term, palliative, or respite care (Ingram 2013), but an off-island commute is required for health care needs beyond this scope. This includes specialist appointments, but also primary care services such as the dentist. Especially for the commuters in my sample who exited commuting and were

[9] At the time of finishing this thesis in 2023, Bell Island's 'hospital,' the Dr. Walter Templeman Health Care Center, was experiencing frequent temporary closures of its emergency department. Although other services including long-term care, primary health care, and opioid management clinic remained open, the precarity of local medical services is an ongoing issue for all Bell Island residents along with other rural residents in the province who have been facing similar closures due to insufficient staffing.

now retired living full-time on Bell Island, medical appointments—either for themselves or for their family members—were a common reason cited for needing to use the boat in their post-commuting years (see Chapter 6). In this way, island residents who require access to off-island medical and other services via the ferry sometimes collide with the schedule of working commuters. This competition for space can have a great impact on the ferry service and on particular days is made even more complex as those with 'medical notes' hold priority above *all* ferry passengers, including commuting workers. These notes are provided for those accessing medical services on the Newfoundland mainland that are unavailable on-island; and travelers usually pick up a written note from a medical professional at the 'hospital' that can be used to get in the priority vehicle line-up for the ferry off of Bell Island. This system is in place in order to ensure patients can access care when the vehicle capacity is heavily impacted, most especially during certain hours of the day. Similarly, emergency ambulance trips sometimes impact the ferry schedule. If this occurs during nighttime hours when the ferry is not already running and the ferry crew's mandatory rest period is interrupted, it causes a delayed morning start when commuting traffic is usually heaviest.

Medical notes and ambulance runs, in particular, were contentious issues among Bell Island residents, and presented additional logistical challenges for daily commuters (also see Roseman 2020: 95-96). It is worth noting that not a single working commuter I interviewed said a negative comment about the priority of medical notes over those with commuter passes, given the widespread concern for residents seeking care. Interviewees did describe, however, needing to leave extra time especially in the morning hours, in the event of a long line of medical note passengers or an emergency ambulance run. As long-term commuter, Harriett Taylor, maintained:

> *I always planned to be out the door by 6:30 [a.m.] because I learned a lesson; I got burnt by leaving it to the last minute [once], because she [the ferry] had an ambulance so when an ambulance comes in an emergency, she puts up the ramp and goes. So, I said, never again was I getting caught off guard like that. So, I always left at 6:30. Gives you some time down there to get organized.*

In this way, the contention remained with the capacity issues of the system, not with those who required medical notes or late-night ambulance rides—a nuance Bell Islanders continually reinforced with me, as well as with each other.

Despite the relatively short twenty-minute ferry trip across the Tickle, this heavily trafficked run is further plagued with scheduling issues that precipitate lengthy line-ups on either end of the ferry. This is especially the case during heavy commuting hours and fuels "a situation of precarious mobility" for Bell Island commuters (Roseman 2020: 86) whereby commuting workers are often caught in "transitory places" such as lineups and waiting spaces (Bissell 2007; also see Roseman 2020; Vannini 2011: 274). As will be described further in Chapter 4, the precarity surrounding Bell Islanders' ferry-dependent movements off and on-island is deeply embedded into the fabric of everyday life on the island and was experienced, observed, and discussed daily during the fieldwork period. Moreover, these practices were further influenced by a deeper lived history onboard the Bell Island ferries, represented by the long-term commuters in this sample. A brief history of the boats experienced by most long-term commuters, and dating even further back to the 1930s, is detailed below.

A Brief History of Bell Island's Ferry Boats

During the fieldwork period in 2015, the Bell Island-Portugal Cove run was being serviced by two primary vessels, the MV[10] *Flanders a*nd MV *Beaumont Hamel*. Generally

[10] According to the Glossary of Maritime Terms (n.d.), MV is short for motor vessel.

speaking, the MV *Flanders* was well regarded among most Bell Islanders, usually explained by its reliability and ability to navigate through this often-rough stretch of water. Built in 1990 specifically for the Bell Island-Portugal Cove run, it holds 36 cars and 240 passengers. The second primary vessel on the route, MV *Beaumont Hamel*, was built in 1985 and can accommodate 35 cars and 106 passengers. On any given day, having both boats running was unanimously considered a 'best case scenario' for all Bell Islanders, even if the boats were slightly off-schedule, as was often the case as the day progressed. Intermittently, one of the two primary vessels came 'off' of the run for sometimes undetermined time periods, typically for general maintenance or sometimes for emergency repairs. If possible, in order to retain the ever-important two-vessel schedule, a replacement vessel arrived. Characteristically, these were usually older ferries within the provincial fleet or leased boats.

Further fuelling lengthy line-ups and wait times, the two usual replacement or 'swing vessels' during the time of fieldwork, the MV *Norcon Galatea* and the MV *Sound of Islay*, did not travel at the same crossing speeds as the run's primary vessels, making for longer trips across the Tickle. They also had significantly less passenger and vehicle capacity. The MV *Norcon Galatea* claimed capacity for 70 passengers and 16 cars. The MV *Sound of Islay* could supposedly hold up to 20 'standard-size cars,' although through my observations and in accordance with informants, it usually held half that in vehicle capacity. This discrepancy may have been due to the size of the vehicles traveling, as privately-owned trucks were common on this route as well as larger vans and commercial vehicles transporting supplies. As one young person, Tiffany Brazil, who commuted both to university and work in St. John's described it:

> *But, I hate—hate's a strong word—I despise, I call it the 'cup of tea' because that's what it feels like you're riding on the water, it's the Galatea and the Sound of Islay. I don't mind backing up onto them [the ferries] but there's nothing worse than being in a big*

> *line-up and seeing that little tug boat come across the water and knowing, 'there's no way in hell I'm making it home now.'*

Waiting in the line-up, several in my sample described counting out ten cars if the MV *Sound of Islay* was on route, assuming anyone outside that range was not guaranteed on the next trip (also see Roseman 2020: 94). As a walk-on passenger, you had to be comfortable boarding onto the back of the MV *Sound of Islay*, sometimes weaving through parked vehicles, some of them still running, and ducking into a small seating space with no outside view should the exterior door be closed. This sits in stark contrast to the landscape views visible from the upper passenger lounges on either the MV *Flanders* or MV *Beaumont Hamel*. Never one to feel sea sick, even I did not relish the notion of sitting among other passengers in such a confined space with little airflow and no outside view, or an easy quick exit should anyone's stomach take a turn. I learned from regular daily conversations on the island that, due to the age and size of both swing vessels, they had additional weather-related restrictions that often kept them at dock with wind speeds that the MV *Flanders* or MV *Beaumont Hamel* would have sailed. In my observations, the MV *Norcon Galatea* often did not run on select windy days even when paired with a running MV *Flanders* or MV *Beaumont Hamel*. Because any missed or delayed trips across the Tickle cause additional delays and gridlock on either end of the ferry trip, the presence of either one of these swing vessels on the route quickly became a primary topic of conversation among islanders, and necessitated adjusted and often time lengthier commuting journeys.

Some of the former and current long-term commuting workers who were research participants had experiences riding ferry boats that crossed this stretch of water prior to the arrival of the boats, described previously. Therefore, several interviewees spoke about their memories of work commuting on two other boats that traveled the Tickle during, and in the wake of, the mine closures. These two boats were the MV *John Guy*—which arrived on the run in

August 1960—and the MV *Katharine*, which started in 1974 and ran through the 1980s until the MV *Beaumont Hamel* and MV *Flanders* began in 1985 and 1990 respectively (Hussey-Weir 2022c). The MV *John Guy* and MV *Katharine* are one focus of the discussion in Chapter 4 as they set the stage for practices of sociality among commuting workers traveling this route into the current century (also see Bissell 2010).

One of the earlier passenger-carrying ferries servicing Bell Island, not used by the any of the commuters I spoke to for the thesis project, was the *Little Golden Dawn*. The *Little Golden Dawn* sailed the Tickle in the 1930s and on November 10, 1940 tragically collided with the *W. Garland* in a snowstorm. Both boats eventually sank, and 21 passengers died in the only fatal accident to date on the Tickle (Hussey-Weir 2018). In 1940, the MV *Maneco* started on the run. The MV *Maneco* was the first car-carrying ferry built specifically to go into service on the Bell Island run, and could hold up to five vehicles (Hussey-Weir 2022a). Similarly, the MV *Kipawo* joined the MV *Maneco* in the early 1940s—primarily as part of the war effort during World War II—and could hold eight cars and up to 120 passengers (Hussey-Weir 2022a.). After the war, both vessels served as passenger, including car, and freight ferries. Several interviewees described memories of traveling on both the MV *Maneco* and MV *Kipawo* as children together with their families traveling over on a day trip to St. John's, usually for a special event. Although both boats were smaller than the vessels that followed, one of the earliest daily commuters in my sample spoke about regularly travelling on the MV *Kipawo* as well as another short-lived boat, the MV *Elmer Jones*, to reach his job on the Newfoundland mainland sometime in the 1960s. Several other commuters mentioned the MV *Kipawo* specifically as it sometimes filled in on the run for the MV *John Guy* until the MV *Katharine* arrived. Yet these early boats were not

intended for, nor utilized within in the context of the increased mobilities that stemmed from the wake of the final mine closure in 1966.

Many long-term commuters I interviewed started their commuting years on the MV *John Guy* in the late 1960s or early 1970s, and continued through the arrival of the MV *Flanders* in 1990 and beyond. As such, expressions of nostalgia in the form of preference for a certain boat from the past were common. But as long-term commuter Keith maintained:

> *Some people my age we sometimes talk. You know they're getting nostalgic and say, 'If the [MV] John Guy was running…' I say, 'Don't even talk to me.' Because with the John Guy, when I left the house in the morning, I always had an overnight bag. Every day. I didn't go without it. Once the [MV] Flanders came I never ever did it. […] So, like there was dramatic improvement when the Flanders arrived.*

Other long-term commuters agreed that the service had drastically improved over the course of their decades-long careers travelling the Tickle, although it still remains insufficient with regard to the persisting heavy demand of daily working commuters.

During the time of fieldwork, islanders were bracing for another transition with regard to the boats servicing the Tickle—the commissioning of a new larger vessel for the Bell Island-Portugal Cove run. Announced in 2013, prior to the start of fieldwork, the new boat was slated to relieve some of the run's pressure points, including wait times at either end of the ferry. "I think it will raise it to another level," Keith continued with regard to the 'new boat.' "There are varying opinions, but for me I would think it's probably going to have the same impact as what the [MV] *Flanders* had. In a positive way." Due to the size of the boat, significantly larger than either the MV *Flanders* or MV *Beaumont Hamel* with a capacity of 64 vehicles and 200 passengers, wharf construction on both Bell Island and Portugal Cove began in summer 2015, in the middle of the fieldwork period (Transportation and Works 2015). The wharf construction continued throughout the 2015 fieldwork period into 2016, and early 2017 causing additional

scheduling logistics for commuters. During the time of fieldwork, the 'new ferry,' named MV *Legionnaire*, was frequently discussed. Many islanders opted to hold judgement until the vessel's arrival, some believing it might never arrive. In hindsight, this skepticism was warranted. The MV *Legionnaire* was initially scheduled to arrive in February 2016, but did not start servicing the run until Monday, July 31, 2017. A few months later, in November 2017, the MV *Legionnaire* had already been temporarily transferred to another ferry run in the province, the Fogo Island – Change Island route, a shift that lasted for several months. Although the MV *Beaumont Hamel* was brought back into service as a swing vessel, peaceful protests led by island residents occurred on the wharf with leaders asking that the MV *Legionnaire* continue to serve Bell Island (Bartlett 2017). Early 2018 marked a series of mechanical issues with the MV *Legionnaire*, which removed it from the run for several weeks at a time. Then, in May 2019, the vessel suffered ramp damage. Transportation Minister Steve Crocker was quoted in July 2019 responding to the various 'ferry fixes' maintaining: "These are very large vessels. If you look at the Bell Island run, the very short distance across there—these vessels, people have told me, in some cases are oversized for the type of operations they're running. […] Just mechanically, if you look at the Bell Island run, the vessel is in and out of gear a lot. It's harder on a vessel, or any vehicle when it's not getting long runs" (Power 2019). In March 2022, a formal review took place noting that the Department of Transportation "did not effectively manage the constriction, operationalization, and initial operations of the MV Legionnaire," citing a number of "concerns related to operational delays, service interruptions, and unplanned costs" (Report of the Auditor General 2022). Although well beyond the fieldwork period, my research in 2015 suggests the extent to which these delays and interruptions in ferry service would have negatively impacted the hundreds of Bell Island working commuters. This further underscores Bell Island as a place

experiencing "transport disadvantage" (Delbosc and Currie 2011) at a deeply systemic level. As one long-term commuter stated, "I mean who answers to all of this? I don't know. But that's a bigger problem than me."

Although it is the short distance of the run, and Bell Island's proximity to St. John's, that has precipitated increased off-island commuting patterns in the decades following the mine closures, Bell Islanders have rightfully continued to point to the failings of the system serving this watery route. Yet the boats are a contentious issue in the provincial news cycles and I would be remiss to not mention the countless negative comments online I have read questioning 'why people live on Bell Island at all.' Although as Roseman (2021: 33) pointedly remarked in an opinion piece on "Mobility Justice, Rural Transit, and Ferries,"

> *Communications that pit roads against ferries, or some communities against others… are troubling. We don't read a spate of questions about whether there should be tolls on public roads or bridges in the province… Moreover, it is particularly hypocritical for anyone to imply that ferries are not basic forms of transportation in a place that relies on Marine Atlantic ferries to bring people and goods back and forth.*

This is a complex context as it relates to Bell Island's past, industrial closure, the histories of intraprovincial ferries and coastal boats, as well as attitudes toward hard-to-reach rural communities. My thesis research shines light on the commuters themselves, and their commitment to get from Bell Island to work, and back home each day.

The 'Figure' of the Bell Island Ferry Commuter[11]

In order to highlight the commuters themselves as part of this thesis, I draw on a concept inspired by Peter Adey, David Bissell, Derek McCormack, and Peter Merriman (2012) in a co-

[11] The foundational literature and ethnographic analysis were first presented in a co-authored conference paper (see Royal and Roseman 2016) in a paper delivered for the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting. Parts were later included in a co-authored journal article (see Royal and Roseman 2021). The concept of the 'figure' has been re-written and expanded upon for this thesis.

written piece on "profiling the passenger." Their collective writing "seeks to 'profile' the passenger as a distinctive historical conceptual figure" (Adey et al. 2012: 169). This fits well in the Bell Island context, as the 'figure' of the ferry commuter is a clear social identity. Residents talk about being work "commuters" and/or label others as such. Although Adey et al. (2012: 169) maintain that profiling the passenger "can help to add greater precision to the analysis of our mobile ways of life" (Adey et al. 2012: 169), this thesis simultaneously acknowledges that despite having many shared features, there is no "singular passenger" (Adey et al. 2012: 177). As individual passengers "move[s] and is[are] moved by infrastructures of mobility" (Adey et al. 2012: 184), experiences of work commuting even in the Bell Island context may differ widely. Yet, there are several distinguishing qualities that denote the Bell Island ferry commuter from other Bell Island residents who, as described previously, may also frequently use the ferry for purposes other than traveling to and from a place of employment.

The three key features from this research that characterize the 'figure' of the Bell Island ferry commuter include: the strong, and often long-lasting, relationships with other ferry commuters which provide each other with ever-important and ongoing practical and emotional support (see Chapter 4); their commitment to making it to and from work and home daily, whenever possible (Adey et al. 2012: 172) and in any kind of weather; and a collective attachment to Bell Island as well as to the ferry boat as a form of transportation as demonstrated in their determination to continue living on Bell Island despite the extra difficulties often associated with their commute (Low and Altman 1992; also see Roseman 2020).

As will be expanded upon in Chapter 4, relationships among commuters provide important ongoing practical and emotional support in their commitment to making it to and from work and home daily. As long-term commuter Kay Coxworthy maintained, "There's a sense of

camaraderie among the commuters. We all have a feeling for each other. We all know what it's like. We've been there, you know?" As a reminder, long-term commuters within this thesis are defined as those who have had at least two decades of commuting experience on this multimodal corridor and made an important contribution to this research (see Chapter 3). Considering the figure of the long-term passenger also contributes to a growing body of research that looks at the histories of commuting workers (Adey et al. 2012). Several of the long-term commuters who were interviewed for this research remained good friends even after retiring from daily commuting. They even referred me to one another for interviews, which is primarily how this sub-sample came about (see Chapter 3). But among Bell Island residents more broadly, individual long-term commuting figures are well-known, even after their retirement. As such, long-term commuting individuals were also often referenced during fieldwork.

Carmel Power, a now-retired commuter who travelled for over twenty years, was frequently referenced in my interviews with other long-term commuters. Several of the long-term commuters featured in this thesis insisted I try and 'find her'[12] for an interview because she so wholly embodied the emerging and reoccurring themes. Carmel was especially well-known for her camaraderie onboard the ferries, as well as the fact that she never missed a day of work during her commuting decades—embodying two of the defining characteristics of the figure of the Bell Island ferry commuter. I did, in fact find Carmel, one of my final, and highly anticipated interviews. When we shook hands, it was like meeting a celebrity as she had been so often referenced across the island.

[12] The encouragement to 'find her' was because Carmel Power was the only person in my sample who no longer lived on Bell Island. After 20 years of commuting, she moved 'to the other side,' where most of her family also resides, and continued to work in St. John's until retirement.

Carmel was initially held up by several long-term commuters as someone who traveled in their network and provided much needed support to other travelers onboard the ferry, especially for newcomers to the 'group.' She was known for her dedication to making it to work on time, her good-natured humour, and for having a consistent seating spot. As long-term commuter Kay Coxworthy told it,

> *We always sat as a group. And there was a girl called Carmel Power. There was a radiator there and Carmel always sat on the radiator with her feet on the seat and smoked all the way over. And the stories we would tell! And if we came down and someone else was sitting in Carmel's spot, we were very quick to tell 'em. 'Move over now, Carmel's coming.'*

During separate interviews with long-term commuters Kay and Carmel, I was captivated by their storytelling abilities, and could only imagine the jovial atmosphere they created onboard the ferry for other commuters. Both, however, emphasized the importance of their 'commuter friends' for providing emotional support on bad weather days, something discussed more in Chapter 4. Carmel maintained that the camaraderie among commuters included "looking after one another." Even George Hickey, someone who commuted for about 6 years, said, "I hated every moment of commuting, but some of the nicest people I ever met in my life."

Among Bell Island residents, I observed and noted a marked level of respect and appreciation for those commuting daily across the Tickle. This was especially the case for residents who were not commuters at the time of fieldwork, some of whom may have previously commuted across the Tickle daily for work. "I don't envy anyone, 14-hour days for an 8-hour day," a former commuter I call Ida[13] who had an on-island job remarked to me. Before adding, "Bell Islanders are resilient people. They are hardy because you have to be. To the outside world

[13] A pseudonym.

people think this [commuting] is crazy, but this is just what Bell Islanders have to do and do and do." As former commuter, George, maintained:

> *…commuting is just about a full-time job in itself now. It is, it really is. … My heart goes out to the people. Because I know; I know what it's like. I know what it's like. … There's people there, there's people they're whole career, 30 years commuting. My jingles that's a lifetime, b'y.*

In this way, the figure of the ferry commuter comes with the acknowledgement of their determination to continue living on Bell Island despite the lengthy and difficult daily commute.

Deeply intertwined with Viry and Vincent-Geslin's (2015) notion of intensive mobilities, as will be described in Chapter 2, Bell Island commuters remain determined in their daily journeys to work. This was a clear point of pride among the long-term commuters, all of whom approached commuting with a sincere commitment. Carmel Power, the legendary long-time commuter, was strongly referenced as exemplifying this commitment. As long-term commuter Keith told it during his interview:

> *There was a lady, her name is Carmel Power, I think she still lives in Portugal Cove, but she worked at the university [in St. John's]. And at one point she had been commuting for [over] 20 years, she never missed a day. Period. She never missed a day. Not even for sickness or through the ferry. … She said: 'Keith, I wouldn't gratify them not to be to work.' She never missed a day in all her years commuting.*

Similarly, most of the long-term commuters I spoke with had, never, or rarely, missed a day of work, Keith included. Des McCarthy, a long-term commuter, added:

> *I mean years go by and I wouldn't miss a day. Not a day. And I'm the one [at my place of work] who travelled the furthest. There's times, lots of times … it would be the biggest kind of storm out, winds would be about 78 or 80 [kph], a lot of snow down [when] I'd get up in the morning, right? I'd probably leave my vehicle in the cove, get a run down with [wife]. You're not sure if the boat's going to leave. The boat would leave. Then you're not sure if she's going to get all the way across because there's many times I've been aboard the boat and she'd turn around and come back … I get in [to work]. Then I'm not sure if I'm getting in over the road, right? I get in over the road. I get into [work]. To be told that [work's] cancelled and the boat has stopped running because the winds are too high. I'd have to stay there. … But that's just part of it. That's part of that commuting thing.*

This commitment to making it to and from work and home daily is another defining characteristic of the Bell Island ferry commuting figure. It was Carmel however, who coined the phrase "extra effort" during her interview. As she explained:

> *And I couldn't use that [boat] as an excuse [for missing work] … I think that's why the extra effort is put in … the early mornings and the line-ups and the time … you work for 7, you're travelling for 12. … for me to be living on Bell Island it's like it took an extra effort to go to work. I'd be into work when some people didn't and they weren't on Bell Island.*

In this way, the figure of the commuter on Bell Island is determined to make it to and from work and home whenever possible despite a particular understanding among commuters that "passage threatens vulnerability to danger, discomfort and potentially effort" (Adey et al. 2012: 172). As Carmel expanded, "I remember when … it was so rough. It was so rough and I remember digging the hands into the table. 'Please God if I could only get to St. John's! Once I get on the other side I'll never, never, get on this boat again.' [Laughs]. And that evening, I was on the five o'clock trip coming back home."

During interviews, participants often drew upon a comparison between the 'Bell Island commuter' and their St. John's-based co-workers. As one young female commuter named Lisa[14] joked, "I used to say, 'Don't look at me, living across the street and you can't make it to work in a storm. When I made the arrangements and the efforts to get here from overseas.' That was the joke, right? I'm from overseas." Similarly, John Hussey, a long-term commuter committed to "extra effort" himself, reflected on a memory from his early commuting days, likely in the 1970s. As he told it:

> *I had a buddy who worked across the road from my office building, and I was in every morning at 7 o'clock in the morning. I remember this one morning in particular … I left one morning I thought, 'geeze the wind was really high.' And I left [Bell Island] and I drove in. It was snowing too. And I got into work and I was driving the Volkswagen*

[14] A pseudonym.

> *[back] then, as I remember, and I parked by the door and I went in. It was 7 o'clock in the morning by the time I got in through the door. I was there for the longest time, you know. Not a soul. I said, 'Where is everyone today?' I was working away at something. Next thing, the phone rang. Boss: 'John?' I said, 'Yeah?' 'What are you doing in?' I said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'St. John's is closed down.' I said, 'Is it? Oh.' I said, 'I didn't have the radio on b'y.' He said, 'If you can get home,' he said, 'Go on down home out of it.' I said, 'Sir, I better off stay here and work.' He started to laugh. He said, 'What about Dick?' He said, 'Where's he at?' I said, 'Dick? He's not here.' 'Oh geeze. A fellow comes over from Bell Island, cross on a ferry, into work 7 o'clock in the morning, no one else can get in.' And he started to laugh. He just killed himself laughing. Anyhow I went out dinnertime, jumped in the car and went on home. I got home no problem, right? Next day he was talking about that. 'Oh?' he said, 'You couldn't get in?' There was about 8 or 9 of us working in the office, right? And he said, 'You guys couldn't get in? John was in, had the office open what was wrong with you guys?' They all looked at him and said, 'Where were you?' He said, 'Home.' Anyhow I remember that one.*

A great many stories like John's were echoed in the experiences of most in my sample, not just long-term commuters. Although Lisa had just recently exited commuting, she recalled having made plans during Hurricane Igor[15] to ensure she was into work despite the bad weather. A single mother with a small child, her account of that day began with the following statement, "I pride myself on my dependability. If nothing else, even if I don't do anything, I'm here. Anything else can be learned and can be adjusted to, but your dependability is who you are in the workplace." During Hurricane Igor she made it into work and as she told it,

> *So the [other] girl who was working there called in and said she couldn't make it. She lived in Mount Pearl. And so she was sitting across from me, my manager was, and she goes, 'I find that very interesting.' She said, 'Lisa is sitting across from me, she's from Bell Island. You're from Mount Pearl and you're calling me and telling me you can't get in here.' So that was one of my proud moments because I made the effort. I made the effort so that's the difference.*

As exemplified in these stories, Carmel's concept of "extra effort" is not necessarily one of additional physical exertion or "bodily energy expenditure" as described elsewhere in the mobilities literature (Bahrami and Rigal 2017: 87). Because of the inherent precariousness of this

[15] Hurricane Igor was a Category 4 Hurricane that landed in September 2010 and, at the time of fieldwork, was the most destructive storm on record to have hit Newfoundland.

route, it also does not fit well into commuting conditions of "active mobility," such as cycling or walking, described by Farzaneh Bahrami and Alexandre Rigal (2017: 91) who primarily highlight "expressions of the ease and comfort they [commuters] have attained in their routine daily activities." No, these two notions sit in contrast to the collective attribute of "extra effort" among commuters in this context. Non-commuting residents, including those who commuted in the past, asserted their deep respect and admiration for those so applying this "extra effort" to their journeys to work. As long-term commuter Keith explained:

> *I've often said like if I was someone who was looking to hire someone and this person was hauling their ass out of bed at 4 o'clock in the morning to get in the ferry lineup for two hours before they even start to leave, I'd be hiring that person real quick. Because that's commitment. And I'd like to have a bunch of them working for me. When I get into a discussion with people who don't understand what living here is, I make those points and invariably they'll agree. Because people from here who work in St. John's, I'll take them. If I was an employer, I'd take them anytime.*

A sense of satisfaction also existed among those in this sample, all but one of whom continue to live on Bell Island today. As Lisa added, "…everybody [at work] knew that I was on Bell Island then. And then your, I think your pride kicks in then, and it's like, there's no way I'm going to be the person who's late every day, who has to leave early, this and that. I'm not going to be that person. And then you go into overdrive so you're *not* that person." By helping each other make it to and from work consistently and committedly the figure of a Bell Island commuter is one that is continually working to sustain their home island, and (in some ways) its reputation.

As will be described further in Chapters 5 and 6, many of the commuters in this thesis expressed a heartfelt attachment to Bell Island as well as to the ferry boat as a form of transportation. One long-term commuter named Ches Maddigan expressed:

> *I suppose [Bell Island] got its ups and downs, but when you grow up here, it's no really down … So, I enjoy it immensely, as you can tell. It's quiet and not many people bothers anyone around here, even though everyone knows everybody and is friendly … For [the] years I lived in St. John's and in the evenings when you're coming home [to Bell Island]*

> *… it's just the weight off your shoulders when you're coming across [the Tickle]. Because you're out of the 'rat race' we call it.*

The underlying themes of this attachment among some Bell Island commuting figures will extend into this thesis as I examine how commuters help each other (Chapter 4), support their households (Chapter 5), and contribute to their community (Chapter 6).

Outline of Remaining Chapters

The historical context of Bell Island's ferry commuting, including the history of the boats and the ferry commuting 'figure' covered in this introduction have provided important background for the research results presented in Chapters 2 through 6. Parts of this thesis, including the subsection in this chapter on the ferry commuting 'figure' have appeared in other forms, as is indicated in footnotes throughout. As noted previously, this thesis is about the many ways in which Bell Island commuters support one another, reinforcing their island community, and cementing a commitment to people and place amidst such demanding off-island commuting practices.

Chapter Two—Theoretical Framework

The theoretical grounding for this thesis is presented within Chapter 2. In doing so, I draw primarily on three bodies of literature, including those of: mobilities studies, social reproduction, and place attachment.

Chapter Three—Fieldwork Context and Methods

The methods used in this ethnographic study are described in Chapter 3 with an emphasis on qualitative methods of participant observation, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews. This chapter also introduces the twenty-four commuters who were the main research

participants and elaborates further on the ten long-term commuters who further informed the ferry commuting 'figure' subsection presented within the introduction.

Chapter Four— Co-Passengering Practices of Commuting Workers

This chapter explores practices of co-passengering onboard the ferry, maintaining that these co-worker-like friendships provide both important emotional and practical support to commuting workers on this watery route. This is especially significant given the "situation of precarious mobility" (Roseman 2020: 86), and the "extra effort" required to make it to and from work and home daily (also see Royal and Roseman 2021). I describe practices of co-passengering that help with the planning required to 'catch the ferry' as well as details about sociality onboard—maintaining that these honed friendships contribute to the ways in which all commuters in this context are reproduced. Themes in this chapter include commuters' collective attachment to Bell Island as home, long-term relationships with other co-passengers, as well as the commitment required of this route's demanding journey to work patterns.

Chapter Five—Household Reproductive Labour of Commuting Workers

Chapter 5 considers the commuter's household as a level of analysis, exploring the interplay between commuting and the sharing of household labour. In doing so, this chapter emphasizes an additional layer of support behind commuting workers and further maintains that commuters also contribute meaningfully to their households by considering the full "journey to work" (Hanson 1980) as well as the ways household roles can shift over commuters' "life course" (Dorow, Cresswell, and Roseman 2017: 6)—as analyzed primarily through the interviews with long-term commuters. Viewed over time, social reproductive practices at the household level are yet another way commuters make and remake their commitment to place.

Chapter Six—Working Commuters' Cross-Household and Community Activities

As a third and central layer of social reproduction that commuters engage in, Chapter 6 expands beyond the household to consider "kin work" (di Leonardo 1987) as it is performed for extended family and friends across households, or as part of volunteer work for community organizations on Bell Island. As such, this chapter aims to particularly generate "a keener awareness of the work involved" in cross-household and community practices of social reproduction set against intensive patterns of work mobilities in an effort to further "dignify the labor and engender respect" (Daniels 1987: 412) for the commuters interviewed as part of this thesis research. Taken on its own, or combined with other practices of social reproduction as described in Chapters 4 and 5, I maintain that this form of extended labour remains central to "*making community*" (Daniels 1987: 412).

Chapter Seven—Conclusion

This chapter concludes with a discussion of key ethnographic themes and arguments throughout the thesis, ultimately concluding that despite intensive work mobilities, commuters remain deeply engaged in social reproductive practices, as demonstrated in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Beyond engaging in commuting to positions of paid labour, there are extensive unpaid labour practices that further sustain and support on-island life and preserve Bell Island as home. I also maintain that commuting to/from work in the Bell Island context—given that it is precarious and requiring "extra effort," as described by Carmel Power—is also a form of work.

Chapter 2—Theoretical Framework

The theoretical grounding for this thesis draws primarily on three bodies of literature, interconnecting key research themes, including those of mobilities studies, social reproduction, and place attachment. As introduced in Chapter 1, travelling across the Tickle is necessary for the many Bell Islanders who work at positions of paid employment off-island, as well as for those who may require goods and services (including groceries, clothing, health care, among others) on the Newfoundland mainland. Throughout this thesis, I draw on literature in mobilities studies, including research that more purposely considers ferry boats and the complexities of commutes that involve multiple linkages as road travel on either end of the ferry is necessary as part of most journeys to work. More specifically, I follow those who explore mobilities that are employment related. But, because both paid employment and unpaid reproductive labour are forms of work, I utilize the theory of social reproduction as it applies to my analysis. Moreover, I cite researchers who work at the intersection of social reproduction theory and mobility studies as this is most relevant to the lives of those interviewed for this research. Finally, as with some other Newfoundland-based research, the concept of attachment to place, is relevant to this thesis and explored further herein. In particular, the ways in which, among highly-mobile individuals, commuting can enhance a feeling of connection among highly-mobile individuals to their home community.

Mobilities Studies

To begin, this research is situated within the 'mobility turn' or 'new mobilities paradigm,' a shift that centralizes mobility as a part of people's everyday lives (Cresswell 2010; Hannam, Sheller, Urry 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006). It is especially applicable to the

commuting population of Bell Island residents who embody such movements. Although I consider mobilities to be a normal part of life, it is also a central concept to social life, in particular, as it operates "through constitutive relationships of movement, relative immobilities and differences in speed" (Adey 2006: 77). Among social scientists the turn toward a 'new mobilities paradigm' is in reaction to the "perceived prioritization" of "rooted and bounded notions of place" (Cresswell 2010: 551; Hannam, Sheller, Urry 2006). In this way, the paradigm begins with viewing "culture and society through the lens of mobility" (Cresswell, Dorow, Roseman 2016: 2; Cresswell 2010). This is, indeed, a useful starting place for analysing a ferry-dependent island and its commuting workers.

To be sure, the foundational work of many has shaped the 'mobility turn.' James Clifford (1997) is a notable example as he asked anthropologists more than two decades ago to situate their work in an increasingly connected world that is always in motion. Similarly, Tim Cresswell (2010: 555) advises scholars "to remember all the work on mobility that already existed before any 'new mobilities paradigm' was proclaimed" (e.g. Clifford 1997). Cresswell advocates for a "strong sense of historical consciousness" due to the simple fact that "people and things have always moved" (2010: 555). Indeed, anthropologists studying migration, travel, and tourism, among other topics have long worked to challenge notions of fixity (Brettell 2003; Gmelch and Kaul 2018). Even earlier work on foraging (Smith 1983) and transhumance (Palladino 2017) is deeply steeped in the centrality of movement for practices of social reproduction, and survival.

As noted elsewhere (Cresswell 2010; Vannini 2009), much has already been written about planes (Lassen 2006), trains (Bissell 2009), and automobiles (Laurier et al. 2008; Sheller 2004, 2007; Sheller and Urry 2000) within the context of mobilities research. While undeniably important, Vannini (2009: xvii) maintains that "the downside to all this attention to a few modes

of transport and their hosting environs is that alternative ways of moving are devoted less attention." In response, there is now an increased focus on methods of transportation such as "ferry [boats], canoeing, travelling by motorcycle and waiting in line (among other things)" (Cresswell 2010: 553; also see Vannini 2009, 2011). As Bell Island is accessible mostly by ferry,[16] this thesis follows others within the 'mobility turn' in calling for an increased focus on "alternative mobilities," a term used by an important ethnographer of ferry and other mobilities and place, Philip Vannini (2009). Moreover, Cresswell used the phrase "watery mobilities" (2010: 555) to spur research beyond that on land and in air (also see Roseman 2019a: 69). Still other scholars have used the term "aquamobilities" (Kesselring 2014; Roseman 2019a). Sharon Roseman (2019a: 69) notes that "some of the extant research on aquamobilities has touched on work lives associated with moving through and on water, but much of it has focused more on topics such as passengering." Passengering is a key component of the Bell Island ferry commute, and a term that will be described further below. In particular, this thesis builds on the work of Phillip Vannini (2012) and his ethnographic research about the mobilities of ferry reliant communities in British Columbia, Canada. Although Vannini's (2012: Parts 5-7) "mobile ethnography" primarily takes place onboard ferry boats, he similarly describes the various reasons people ride ferries, the drama of catching the ferry as well as the ways in which ferry commuting is ritualized. A key example he provides of the latter is the act of waiting in line (Vannini, 2012: Part 7; Vannini 2011).

Literature on lineups, and specifically on waiting, helped me to consider the intrinsic relationship between mobility and immobility as part of longer, mobile journeys (Vannini 2011).

[16] There are rare periods of time during which ferry travel is not possible, usually due to extreme weather, and air service is provided for residents. More recently air travel is by helicopter, but in the past, small planes were also used.

Although ultimately highlighting the complexity of lineups as "neither still nor flowing, neither public nor private," Vannini maintains that ferry lines on "small islands" are "stolen time spaces" (Vannini 2011: 275). In the case of Bell Island, waiting for the ferry sometimes takes longer than riding the ferry, or even travelling by road on either end of the termini. In following other mobilities scholars who have also written about "Waiting for Mobilities" (Bissell 2007), this thesis is further framed by the rituals, practices and also strategies behind waiting in long and uncertain cues (Roseman 2020, Vannini 2011; also see Royal and Roseman 2021). For example, Chapter 4 takes into account scholarship that has documented the impacts of, and options for, schedules, designs, congestion, and bottlenecks as part of movement (Bissell 2007, Vannini 2011). Bissell (2007: 287) described "moments of waiting as suspension" and indeed, waiting in the Bell Island context sometimes requires action and sometimes idleness. Yet the suspense of trying to 'catch the ferry' for commuting workers (see Chapter 4) is heightened by lengthy line-ups that are a trademark of this watery route (Roseman 2020). As Vannini (2011: 274) notes, although lineups are a "regular feature of everyday life … we regularly recognize them as epitomes of inadequate infrastructures, poor service, and the drudgery of the modern condition." The uncertainty of long wait times and lineups at the Bell Island ferry wharves, are associated with what Colin McFarlane (2010: 132 *in* Roseman 2019b: 87) deems, "infrastructure interruption."

More broadly, to describe the Bell Island ferry system, I use the term "precarious mobilities" and follow Roseman (2020: 87) who defines it as "a range of situations when specific individuals or groups face non-standardized, irregular, or insecure access to specific forms of essential mobility in relation to a broader societal context in which such mobilities are otherwise provided on the basis of relatively standardized, regularized, and secure conditions of access." In

this way, Bell Island is further contextualized by "transport disadvantage," a term used by Alexa Delbosc and Graham Currie (2011: 1130) whereby access to "social and economic activities" is limited, which can "lower the quality of life and exacerbate social exclusion." This is especially true for "socially disadvantaged groups or focussed on geographical locations facing disadvantage" such as Bell Island (Delbosc and Currie 2011: 1130). As Neis, Murray, and Spinks (2022: 20) further maintain, "with the growth in precarious employment, supports are dwindling as challenges increase." For example, there is "extremely limited support these workers and their families receive from employers and government (municipal, provincial, federal) with the challenges extended/complex E-RGM creates for their lives at home, on the road, and at work" (Neis, Murray, and Spinks 2022: 20). Moreover, Viry and Vincent-Geslin (2015) use the term "intensive mobilities" to describe frequent travel to and from work. They are similarly interested in the ways in which this kind of commuting impacts social, including family life. In this way, the "extra effort," coined in Chapter 1 by long-term commuter Carmel Power, is necessary to sustain such intensive and precarious commuting practices marked by "change and rupture" (Neis et al. 2019: 1178). Chapter 4 explores the long-standing support system among passengers who regularly commute using the ferry, that I consider a form of social reproductive labour as it reinforces workers' journeys to work.

The literature on passengering, as it intersects with mobilities studies (Adey et a. 2012: 173), further explores the "experience of being mobile" (Ashmore 2013: 596). Although Chapter 1 highlighted the long-term commuters I interviewed and unpacked the 'figure' of the Bell Island ferry commuting passenger (Adey et al. 2012; also see Bissell 2009), the concept of "co-passengering" among Bell Islander travelers helps analyze the practical planning required to 'catch the ferry' as will be described further in Chapter 4 (also see Royal and Roseman 2021). In

this way, passengers travelling this route are actively working to triangulate various information sources, sometimes accessed through their social resources—as is especially necessary given the recognized precarity of the ferry's schedule and lengthy line ups. Moreover, co-passengers, as I argue in Chapter 4, also provide important emotional support to one another while onboard the ferry. These co-passengering relationships may extend over many years, even decades, as was the case with several long-term commuters. While they are co-worker like in nature, as one participant noted, there are additional social dynamics given that regular commuting passengers are all from the same, small island community—and some are also kin. In this way, co-passengering in the Bell Island context further sustains daily, precarious commuting practices by providing high levels of practical, as well as social and emotional, support.

This thesis is in line with others advocating for increased attention not just to "alternative mobilities" (Vannini 2009), such as the Bell Island ferry system, but for a specific focus on how these modes of transportation are used by passengers for the purposes of getting to positions of paid employment. As Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis (2015: 176) note: "Ironically, although employment is central to most people's survival, when it is not the main focus of analysis, employment can sometimes become a taken-for-granted aspect of a 'mobile world.'" To this end, as part of the 'new mobilities paradigm,' this thesis enters into dialogue with those underscoring the importance of an increased focus on movement that is work-related (Cresswell, Dorow, and Roseman 2016; Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell 2017). To describe work-related travel, which would include the daily commuting patterns that are the focus of this thesis, the concept of a spectrum of "employment-related geographical mobility" (or E-RGM) was developed for the series of research projects undertaken as part of the On the Move Partnership (Newhook et al. 2011; Cresswell, Dorow, and Roseman 2016: 2.) For this thesis, E-RGM

serves as a framework for studying a range of research that specifically "asks about the multiple habits, practices, and meanings of mobility" (Cresswell, Dorow, and Roseman 2016: 7) particularly as they apply to movement for, or as part of, work. In this way, use of the analytical entry point of E-RGM helps underscore "the network of coordinated practices of mobility that characterize specific workplaces, job sectors, or communities" (Cresswell, Dorow, and Roseman 2016: 7). This is of particular relevance to Bell Island as mobilities, watery or otherwise, deeply shape residents and the broader community. A core idea within On the Move Partnership that extended into the design of this project and my research proposal, is the point that E-RGM constitutes a "spectrum" (Cresswell, Dorow, and Roseman 2016; Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). This spectrum ranges from comparative immobility, meaning telecommuting or working from home; to regular commutes of roughly two or more hours; to "long-distance rotational commuting;" to more "extended absences" that may last "weeks, months, or even years" (Cresswell, Dorow, and Roseman 2016: 2; Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). Framing E-RGM as a spectrum further emphasizes the ways in which mobility and work interact. As such, this framing encourages a variety of research—and not just work on a single, siloed element therein (Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015: 176; Cresswell, Dorow, and Roseman 2016). For example, within the Bell Island context, commuters are positioned across, and may also shift on, the spectrum over time. These shifts could be within a single week or even over a decades-long career.

Within the sample of commuters interviewed for this thesis, all were daily, or regular commuters over prolonged periods of at least several years, even if employment positions themselves were temporary, or seasonal. With regard to the spectrum of mobility, some in this sample experienced moving away from Bell Island for work, usually in the wake of the mine

closures, before returning and starting to commute daily to employment in St. John's or surrounding areas. Others in my sample had varied careers where they moved in and out of commuting and on-island employment. Still others described being able to take advantage of select days or weeks of telecommuting[17] as their careers progressed. Also, as part of the original research proposal, I was interested in the ways in which entering and exiting work mobilities can shift roles and responsibilities within households of working commuters (Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell 2017; also see Chapter 5). As such, this thesis further contributes to the body of ethnography that highlights patterns of social reproduction that characterize and intersect with the intensive work-related mobilities undertaken by the Bell Island commuters who were participants in this study. Similarly, Neis et al. (2019: 1179) "extend the insights of feminist time geography and rhythmanalysis" to explore the "concatenated rhythms of work, E-RGM, and home life among diverse groups of workers engaged in complex types of E-RGM." Because I highlight how both paid employment and unpaid reproductive labour are forms of work, this thesis considers activities of social reproduction in studying work-related mobilities (Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). Social reproduction is defined further below, alongside a discussion about how commuting for work can be shaped and effected by social reproductive labour patterns and relationships.

Social Reproduction

The feminist framework for the study of social reproduction, with Marxist roots, can be defined as the "reproduction of labour on daily, weekly, and annual temporal scales, as well as

[17] This was the word used during interviews by the few in my sample who, occasionally, were permitted to work from a location other than their physical office space. All commuters interviewed had physical locations of employment and were not, therefore, "remote workers."

through generations" (Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015: 183, also see Bezanson and Luxton 2006, Laslett and Brenner 1989). Analyses of social reproduction consider the provision of necessities including food, shelter, clothing, and healthcare, as well as other forms of caregiving such as regular child care (Bezanson and Luxton 2006; Laslett and Brenner 1989). These forms of labour comprise time-consuming tasks that require both planning and execution. As Benzanson and Luxton argue (2006: 6), the effort behind social reproductive tasks "involves a huge and complex amount of labour." Tithi Bhattacharya (2017: 1), starts her book by asking a series of questions including: "What kinds of processes enable the worker to arrive at the doors of her place of work every day so that she can produce the wealth of society?" Bhattacharya (2017: 1-2) then adds,

> *We get into even murkier waters if we extend the questions to include processes lying outside this worker's household. Does the education she received at school also not 'produce' her, in that it makes her employable? What about the public transportation system that helped bring her to work …?*

In this way, social reproduction is a core lens through which to consider how inequities are perpetuated. As she further explains, social reproduction theory

> *…displays an analytical irreverence to 'visible facts' and privileges 'process' instead. It is an approach that is not content to accept what seems like a visible, finished entity—in this case, our worker at the gates of her workplace—but interrogates the complex network of social processes and human relations that produce the conditions of existence for that entity* (Bhattacharya 2017: 2).

This thesis, with a focus on work mobilities, is in alignment with Bhattacharya's (2017: 2) statement that "human labor is at the heart of creating or reproducing society as a whole." This is much like how the ferry system is "the heart and soul of Bell Island," as Ken Kavanagh remarked in the opening paragraph of Chapter 1.

Scholars who adapted the concept of social reproduction within the context of feminist political economy (Brodkin Sacks 1989; Collins and Gimenez 1990, Hanson and Pratt 1995)

help to further situate the household and community level impacts of work mobilities, explored throughout this thesis, within "political economy studies of class, neoliberalism and globalization" (Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis. 2015: 1). As Bhattacharya maintains (2017: 74), "If we direct our attention to those deep veins of employing social relations in any actual society today, how can we fail to find the chaotic, multiethnic, multigendered, differently abled subject that is the global working class?" Indeed, there was a larger spectrum of types of employment and class segments on Bell Island during the fieldwork period, than is represented in my research. Yet, this thesis is underpinned by the structures of dispossession that push people to commute, including in the wake of a large-scale industrial closure, as was the case with Bell Island.

Feminist scholarship since the 1960s has also emphasized the need to consider the relationship between social reproduction and paid employment as it relates to the overall political economy (Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015: 4; Bezanson and Luxton 2006; Bhattacharya 2017; Brodkin Sacks 1989; Collins and Gimenez 1990; Hanson and Pratt 1995; Humphries 1977). Indeed, the interconnectedness between waged and unwaged labour, Jane Collins and Martha Gimenez (1990: 3) maintain, is "essential to the analysis of larger economic systems in which both waged and unwaged production operate" (Collins and Gimenez 1990:3; also see Brodkin Sacks 1989 and Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). Social reproduction plays a particularly important role in households and communities where there is a gap between the "wages earned when workers sell their labour power" and "the state programs and services often available" (Bezanson and Luxton 2006: 32; also see Brodkin Sacks 1989). Collins and Gimenez (1990) call for equal attention to both unwaged reproductive labour and waged employment, in recognition of capitalism's reliance on both. This same issue has been more

recently raised within the context of research on work mobilities (Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015).

To consider patterns of social reproduction within the context of commuting practices for purposes of reaching paid employment among Bell Islanders, this thesis joins others in asserting the importance of studying both waged and unwaged labour as part of the 'mobility turn' (Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). As Neis, Murray, and Spinks (2022: 1) point out: "Substantial bodies of research have explored work-family intersections" and this thesis contributes to a "third and increasingly important realm of activity that mediates life at home and at work: the sphere of extended/complex E-RGM." To start, the long-standing idea of journeys to work is important to the consideration of Bell Island commuters. Over four decades ago geographer Susan Hanson (1980: 229) challenged researchers to consider "travel undertaken for non-work purposes in conjunction with the journey to work." In doing so, Hanson "recognized the journey to work as part of a multiple purpose trip" and "addressed the question of trip structure, i.e., the activity linkages associated with the work trip" (Hanson 1980: 299). Activity linkages, according to Hanson (1980: 230), occur as travelers move "from one location to another." Rather than just looking at the work commute as "one travel-related action," Hanson encouraged researchers to consider stops for social reproduction, as part of the longer journey to work. Similar to the ways in which patterns of social reproduction are differentiated and can shift over time, Hanson's (1980) concept of journeys to work encourages accounts that illustrate the depth of entanglement between waged and unwaged labour (also see Bezanson and Luxton 2006; Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015), such as in the Bell Island context. Chapter 4 explores the sociality practices of Bell Island commuters and the ways in which these support the daily, and often precarious journeys to and from work.

This thesis is also influenced by the work of scholars such as Micaela di Leonardo (1987), Arlie Hochschild and Anne Machung (1989), and Meg Luxton (1980), among others, who have conducted research in Canada and the United States on the gendered division of reproductive labour. Throughout this thesis, I use the terms 'domestic labour' and/or 'household labour' to describe the daily tasks of social reproduction which, among those in this sample, included the provision of necessities as well as caregiving (Bezanson and Luxton 2006; Laslett and Brenner 1989) for commuters' own households as well as for others on Bell Island (see Chapters 5 and 6). As Bhattacharya (2017: 73) maintains, "The most historically enduring site for the reproduction of labor power is of course the kin-based unit we call family." As part of thinking about social reproductive labour both within and across households of commuting workers, I draw on di Leonardo's (1987: 442-443) definition of "kin work," which is,

> *…the conception, maintenance, and ritual celebration of cross-household kin ties, including visits, letters, telephone calls, presents, and cards to kin; the organization of holiday gatherings; the creation and maintenance of quasi-kin relationships; decisions to neglect or to intensify particular ties; the mental work of reflection about all these activities; and the creation and communication of altering images of family and kin vis-à-vis the images of others, both folk and mass media.*

To this end, as will be described further in Chapter 5, kin-work "plays a key role in… reproducing the worker through food, shelter, and psychical care to become ready for the next day of work" (Bhattacharya 2017: 73). "Kin networks" on Bell Island extend beyond the household as a siloed unit of analysis and into cross-household and community level engagement (di Leonardo 1987: 443). During the fieldwork period, I observed that many of the Bell Island commuters I knew, put in what Arlie Hochschild and Anne Machung (1989) call "second" (and sometimes 'third' or more) "shifts"—which are additional, unpaid work taken on outside of paid work hours that is in support of their household or community. As Hochschild and Machung (1989: 4) describe, this term means working "one shift at the office or factory and a 'second

shift' at home." As will be described in Chapter 4, social reproductive tasks were sometimes undertaken as part of the commuters' "journey to work" (Hanson 1980). Moreover, I further consider the ways in which entering and exiting work mobilities can shift roles, responsibilities, and expectations of household labour, in particular (Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell 2017; also see Chapters 5 and 6). Yet such an expanded definition of "kin-work" as it applies to household and cross-household patterns of social reproduction within this thesis, extends further into the "public sphere" of Bell Island which includes "volunteering and community service" (Daniels 1989: 403). By doing so, Daniels (1987: 412) notes, "one comes to focus on how institutions are changed as well as maintained." I utilize the work of Arlene Daniels (1989: 412) and her concept of "*making community*" which "arises through the efforts of many local volunteers who maintain the services and the sense of community required." As Daniels (1989: 412) describes, I observed a "sense of commitment to one another" among most Bell Island commuters that is explored in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 and emerges across a variety of social reproductive activities. This 'sense of community,' in the Bell Island context, has developed over generations—forged further for many in my sample by the shared history of an industrial closure and the intensive commuting patterns required to sustain employment off-island.

Place Attachment

Tim Cresswell (2015: 12), maintains that "the most straightforward and common definition of place" is "a meaningful location" adding that it is a "combination of location, locale, and sense of place" (Cresswell 2015: 14). It is Cresswell's 'sense of place' that carried a personal significance to many of those who participated in this research study. Indeed, as with other Newfoundland place-based studies (Gmelch 1980, Nolan 2007, Porter 1983, Wadel 1973),

many research participants expressed having some "subjective and emotional attachment" to the location of Bell Island (Cresswell 2015: 14). As Cresswell (2015: 14) notes, "…places must have some relationship to humans and the human capacity to produce and consume meaning." In this way, "place attachment," as described by Setha M. Low and Irwin Altman (1992: 4), "involves an interplay of affect and emotions, knowledge and beliefs, and behaviors and actions in reference to a place." A defining feature of the commuting 'figure,' as described in Chapter 1, is a collective attachment to Bell Island as well as to the ferry boat. As defined elsewhere, "Place attachment involves people developing, through practices, emotional bonds to locations associated with specific sets of meanings, memories, social relationships, and activities across various spatial and temporal scales" (Roseman and Royal 2018: 52; also see Low and Altman 1992). In this thesis, I consider the ways in which practices of daily commuting perpetuated a sense of place attachment to Bell Island among research participants. As noted in Chapter 1, place attachment is further influenced by past patterns of mobility, including out-migration following the series of mine closures in the 1950s and 1960s (Roseman and Royal 2018, also see Mah 2012). Patterns of out-migration remain an influential facet of attachment to place on Bell Island that predates the more contemporary daily movements off-island for both paid employment and unpaid reproductive labour that are described in this thesis. As such, I follow those who claim that place attachment plays an important role in geographies that are shaped by mobilities (Massey 1994, Cresswell 2004). In this way, place attachment in the Bell Island context very much "occurs as part of active, ongoing processes" (Roseman and Royal 2018: 52). As explored in Chapter 4, attachment to place can be reinforced through intensive commuting practices. Additionally, in Chapters 5 and 6, I consider the ways in which place attachment is strengthened through social reproduction at the household and community levels. Researchers

including Doreen Massey (1994) have long studied the ways in which social reproductive practices specifically reproduce place. As discussed elsewhere, subsistence gardening is an example of a social reproductive activity that produces food and furthers an attachment to Bell Island as home (Roseman and Royal 2018: 53).

A final part of the particular ways in which place attachment can be seen to be strong in geographies shaped by intensive mobilities is by studying other rural-to-urban movements and the way they shape home communities. As Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell (2017: 3, emphasis added) maintain, "The dynamics linking lived mobilities of work to conditioning processes are, of course, *context-specific* and contingent." Much of the supporting research returns to the migration literature discussed in Chapter 1 (Massey et al. 1993). In their study of rural to urban migration and return movements in Turkey, for example, Murat Öztürk and co-authors (2018) describe a similar context of lessening employment opportunities in rural spaces necessitating complex mobilities. In this way, the research conducted for this thesis builds on other projects that sit at the interplay of movements for work that expand beyond and between the boundaries of either rural or urban. Moreover, it pays close attention to the way mobilities influence these complex spaces, and continue to redefine attachment to place (also see Roseman and Royal 2018). To this end, Paul Milbourne and Lawrence Kitchen's (2014) call for a "rural mobilities" framework is applicable to this thesis. As, Milbourne and Kitchen (2014: 328) maintain, "rural places would appear to be positioned at the opposite end of the mobilities spectrum to cities," in part, due to the notion that rural spaces possess "persistent stabilities." Yet mobility can be a fundamental aspect of life in rural places, including on Bell Island. My thesis further engages the "new ruralities" literature that underscores the many complexities behind life in rural spaces

(Roseman, Santiago Prado, Xerardo Pereiro 2013) that are only further fueled by intensive mobility patterns.

Drawing on the three corresponding frameworks of mobilities studies, social reproduction, and place attachment, the following content chapters in this thesis enter into a dialogue with one another and utilize additional elements of analysis stemming from the theoretical approaches described herein. All the remaining chapters focus on movement to and from paid employment as well as social reproduction as key aspects of the analysis.

Chapter 3—Fieldwork Context and Methods

This chapter details the main ethnographic tools used during this research study in order to better understand patterns of work mobilities and social reproduction among Bell Island commuters during the fieldwork period. These include participant observation in various contexts on Bell Island as well as on the ferry and in parts of the St. John's area on go-alongs. I also conducted unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews with twenty-four current and former commuters and a few of their partners, as well as some documentary research specifically related to information sources about the ferry schedule. The research followed guidelines from the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans governed by three core principles: respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice (TCPS2 2010:8) (also see Appendix B). Descriptions of the fieldwork period and each of the methods are detailed below, as well as a discussion of those interviewed as part of this thesis.

Fieldwork Period

My first trip out to Bell Island was in November 2014, in the midst of the first semester of coursework for the master's degree, and a few short on-island visits sporadically continued up until the start of intensive thesis fieldwork in April 2015. On these trips that preceded the start of my own master's thesis project, I primarily functioned as a research assistant to Sharon Roseman, supervisor for this research. All of these trips gave me an opportunity to lay the groundwork for this research as I began to get a sense of what might emerge as key foci for my thesis. During these visits I also got to know several Bell Islanders, including long-term commuters Harriett Taylor and Kay Coxworthy; local advocate, schoolteacher, and former commuter Ken Kavanagh; and return-migrant Glenda Tedford. Glenda who, together with her

husband, had returned to Bell Island in their retirement, then resided on a property they had purchased that had three cottages in addition to their main home. Although they usually rented the other three cottages to short-term island visitors—including family members of on-island residents returning for periods throughout the summer months—they agreed to rent me the smallest of their cottages for the fieldwork period. At times, I shifted into one of the larger cottages depending on bookings, and when Sharon was joining me. This was a fortunate happenstance as we had learned that rentals on Bell Island tended to be in short supply. Without the series of trips during the fall, where we got to know Glenda and her husband, finding housing during the fieldwork period would have likely been problematic. Additionally, Glenda became an excellent research participant and on-island companion.

The on-island fieldwork period where I resided on Bell Island full-time spanned throughout the late spring and summer of 2015, from April 15 until August 31. As noted above, during the summer months, Sharon joined me for various periods. Throughout the month of September 2015, I made regular day-trips out to Bell Island. I also scheduled several interviews in and around St. John's, with one former commuter who had moved away from Bell Island and with several commuting workers who had indicated that it was most convenient for them to meet with me when they were in the St. John's area rather than at home. Various follow-up day trips then continued through to April 2017 with the intention to partially capture seasonal changes as well as to keep up with 'visiting' patterns common on-island.

Despite my having lived for the past several years in urban centres, informants knowingly told me that I would soon find myself much 'busier' on Bell Island than in St. John's. Indeed, after an initial settling-in period, I maintained a rigorous fieldwork routine frequently joining early morning commuters as well as conducting regular interviews and writing fieldnotes. But I

was also quickly recruited to serve on a volunteer committee, fell into the routine of joining a neighbour for regular walks around the island, frequently stopped in for 'visits' with others, sometimes joined in at the weekly yoga and meditation class in one of the church halls, played weekly radio bingo, and became interested in gardening. I also regularly attended services at two of Bell Island's churches—the Anglican Church of St. Cyprian and St. Mary and the Catholic mass at St. Michael's—where members were warm and welcoming. The two churches had vibrant volunteer groups that frequently organized meals such as a regular 60+ Community Outreach luncheon, among other activities, that usually occupied my weekends and some weeknights. At these, I was often introduced as 'the researcher studying the boat.' The analytical themes in this thesis are certainly reflective of the many opportunities to become heavily engaged within the community during the fieldwork period, all of which are detailed further below.

Many anthropologists describe difficulties in leaving, or detaching from, a field site. This was certainly my own experience, especially so given Bell Island's close proximity to St. John's, where I returned to live following the fieldwork period of residence on Bell Island. In the months following the summer and early fall fieldwork period in 2015, as is expected in the master's program, I began to analyze my data. As well, there were fewer community-type events to attend during the colder, winter season. As one long-term commuter described: "…winter, you know, very little [happening], yeah. It becomes a lot of 'in' time. There's not a lot of people around. Not a lot of activity either. People traveling on the ferry other than workers. People that really got to go, that will travel that time of the year." During the winter months scheduling delays with the ferry are also common due to weather, especially wind speeds. This seasonal context added to capacity concerns for those who really needed to travel, and was something I had been

sensitive to since the beginning of engagement and remained overly cautious about once I exited the field knowing that I was reliant on the ferry to get to and from Bell Island. In this way, upon relocating off-island, I continued to prefer to walk on the ferry so as to not take up precious vehicle space. However, unless I had a single destination upon arriving, my largely fieldwork-on-foot approach became less practicable as the weather worsened.

One noteworthy trip, however, came at the end of the fieldwork period in October 2015. The then host of the Ideas radio show on CBC, Paul Kennedy, produced a documentary about the Bell Island research on ferries. Over the course of a few days, Mr. Kennedy joined Sharon and me on Bell Island, recording hours of audio, interviewing Bell Islanders, as well as capturing sounds—both on the ferry as well as around the island. The CBC Ideas episode titled "On the Move from Bell Island: Crossing the Tickle"[18] aired on December 2, 2015. This fieldwork-like experience provided me exposure to the faster-paced methods required to produce a 54-minute radio show in the span of just a few fieldwork days. It also gave me a glimpse into the common openness of Bell Islanders who readily shared of their commuting experiences and island home in interviews with Mr. Kennedy. This openness is an ongoing theme throughout this chapter, given that the success I had in using the fieldwork methods I did was due to the willingness of island residents to actively participate in this research study in the midst of intensive off-island mobility patterns. Certainly, the extensive data collected within the scope of this research project is reflective of the Bell Islanders who willingly gave me hours of their time. Many welcomed me into their homes, personal vehicles, 'seating spots' on the ferry boat, and kindly encouraged my participation in community events.

[18] CBC Ideas host Paul Kennedy was a media partner with the On the Move Partnership. The full episode "On the Move from Bell Island: Crossing the Tickle" can be accessed here: https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/crossing-the-tickle-1.3345293.

Participant Observation

In the case of ethnographic fieldwork, the "most basic" method is participant observation whereby researchers engage in community-based activities "by both participating in behavior from within and observing it from without" (Fife 2005: 71). Prior to finalizing an interview guide and beginning semi-structured interviews, I conducted a little over a month of initial participant observation on Bell Island beginning in April 2015, with a particular focus on activities surrounding the ferry and commuting workers. A foundational aspect of my participant observation was, of course, riding the ferry during both heavy commuting hours and less intensive ferry use periods on both weekdays and weekends. Several days a week, my alarm sounded at 4:45 a.m. and I walked the 1.5 kilometres down Beach Hill[19] to the ferry terminal in order to catch one of the ferry boats most impacted by the intensive morning commute traffic at either 5:55 a.m., 6:30 a.m., or 6:50 a.m. I had intermittent access to a personal vehicle on Bell Island, usually only on weekends, and largely conducted my on-island fieldwork on foot during the weekdays. When I first arrived on Bell Island in mid-April of 2015, there was still snow on the ground and throughout the summer months, I walked down Beach Hill in the dark and returned to the Bell Island wharf from early morning return ferry trips just as the day was breaking.

It is worth noting the many details one has to take into account during fieldwork, especially with regard to riding the ferry. For example, on mornings when I had planned to ride the ferry, I stayed up to date on any delays or scheduling issues. This was usually accomplished through a combination of participant observation, once I arrived at the terminal, and also drawing

[19] Beach Hill is the name of a steep, two-lane road that serves as the island's only road access to the ferry terminal.

from the ferry's official information sources, described further below, as I readied myself in the early morning hours. As such, I would always opt to stay behind onshore should I arrive at the terminal and observe any number of issues. Bell Islanders used the older term 'wharfinger' to denote the ferry crew member(s) who managed activity on the wharves at either end of the ferry. When the boats were facing capacity issues, usually coupled with scheduling delays, it was perhaps most obvious when the wharfinger was passing out 'tickets' to 'walk on' commuters. This practice was often relatively frenzied, despite everyone's best efforts and most especially those of the crew members. Passengers walking on the ferry, as I mostly did, sometimes arrived at the terminal to find that they needed to collect a small paper ticket from the Wharfinger. This ticket would then guarantee them a spot on the next ferry run. The need to hand out tickets usually signaled greater scheduling or capacity issues, most common during heavy commuting hours, that could have an impact on individuals' ability to get to work on time. As one commuter put it, "Because you don't know when the boat is going." Strategies co-commuters sometimes used to secure tickets will be described in Chapter 4. Throughout fieldwork I was especially sensitive in the morning hours to not ride the ferry in such circumstances as I would risk taking a spot from a working commuter.

On mornings when I was not riding the ferry to Portugal Cove and then back to Bell Island, I sat at The Coffee Shop, more frequently known as 'Patsy's,' located at the base of the ferry terminal where clusters of island residents regularly gathered to assess the terminal activity and provide a running commentary over steaming mugs of coffee, tea, and a variety of quick foods such as pastries and warm breakfast sandwiches. I found the same group of men, a mixture of retirees and on-island workers, there on most early mornings throughout the weekdays. Their ever-patient answers to my many questions quickly filled notebook pages as several of them had

been meeting at the coffee shop, observing and commentating on the morning ferry and local news, for years. Moreover, The Coffee Shop is also a popular 'stop in'[20] for many commuting workers, some darting in to place an order for 'take away' before catching the boat, or perching on a stool at the window counter rather than in the ferry's waiting room just across the road. Stools are perched along a window overlooking the wharf, there is another small walk-up counter for ordering with a few more stools, and just a few tables—usually taken up by regulars—in the front. The walls feature photographs and local flyers. In this way, The Coffee Shop serves as a morning information hub where ferry passengers and non-passengers exchange various pieces of information and opinions among and between the two groups. It was thus an ideal spot for participant observation. For the most part, coffee shop conversation was regularly fixed on the ferry, island news, and some mixture of current events and helped to provide ongoing, key contextual information for the period of my on-island fieldwork.

On some mornings, I managed to both ride the ferry and stop into the coffee shop upon returning to the island for a run-down of the morning's news. While there, I was sometimes offered a ride back up Beach Hill from an on-island resident heading either to work, or back home after catching up with their buddies. Ride sharing, especially to and from the ferry terminal, was a frequent occurrence on Bell Island, described further in Chapter 5. These casual and spontaneous "go-alongs" (e.g. Kusenbach 2003), however, were consistently valuable participant observation experiences that often led to a brief, unstructured interview, or even a short 'tour' to a place of significance to the driver. One morning, for example, the offer of a ride

[20] 'Stop in' was a phrase used by Bell Island commuters to denote an activity undertaken often as part of the commute. If the 'stop in' occurred on Bell Island, participant observation taught me that there was usually a social component to it as well (i.e. exchanging morning greetings among familiar patrons in the coffee shop) that was typically part of a regularly established routine.

up from the terminal resulted in a tour of the studio of the on-island radio station, Radio Bell Island, then located inside the local high school.

Whether riding the ferry during the early morning commuting hours, or partaking in the on-island routine of observing the ferry lineups and boat arrivals/departures from the coffee shop, I usually returned home by 10:30 a.m. to type up fieldnotes from the morning. This involved transcribing from and elaborating on the shorter jottings I made in the notebook I always carried. At this point, I had been awake and working for over five hours and, as I sat down to write notes, my mind often drifted to the hundreds of commuters who had woken up at a similar time, but had only been 'on the clock' at their workplaces for a couple of hours. 'Working twelve- or fourteen-hour days only to be paid for eight' was a commonly heard phrase among interviewees and other island residents commenting on the sacrifice behind off-island commuting (see Chapters 1 and 4; also see Roseman 2020: 92). Even for someone just simulating the commute, the days often felt long and my evening schedule was quickly adjusted to accommodate for early wake-times.

In addition to participant observation on and around the ferry and termini, I also conducted extensive participant observation in public and private spaces across Bell Island. The public spaces included the following: community events, church services and other events held in church halls such as luncheons, regular gathering locations such as the Royal Canadian Legion Hall, radio station, walking trails, the Bell Island Community Museum, and small businesses such as the coffee shop (described previously), one of the hair salons, corner stores, the grocery store, the Bell Island Co-op Bakery, among others. The private spaces included people's homes, personal vehicles, and gardens. For example, on most mornings, upon returning home from the coffee shop or riding the ferry, I would join Glenda for lengthy walks around different spots on

the island. We also had chats in her vegetable garden or, more rarely, inside her home. The afternoons and evenings would often be filled with various on-island activities that included visiting; running errands to places such as the grocery store, bakery, or corner store; attending meals at the Anglican church hosted by a group of female volunteers; free evening yoga and meditation classes also at the Anglican church; and frequently circling back down to the ferry terminal on foot to observe commuting workers departing the ferry to return home. I quickly established a weekly routine as there seemed to be an almost endless supply of on-island events to attend—maintained primarily through volunteer labour (see Chapter 6). Upon seeing me regularly at community activities, many continued to comment that I was surely learning about the ways in which Bell Island life was 'far was boring.' I readily agreed, often adding, "my social calendar is much busier here than in town."[21]

As the summer brought with it an increase in community events on Bell Island, I conducted participant observation at seasonal occasions that included a community-hosted play at the high school about Bell Island's mining history, "kitchen parties" at Dicks' Fish and Chips, festivals including the annual Bell Fest which occurred during the fieldwork period, and so on. As the Wabana Town Council deemed the year 2015 a Come Home Year, some of the events were made to be Come Home Year-specific activities, but most were annual summer events. Moreover, I served as a volunteer committee member for the annual Bell Fest event that occurred in early August 2015. This was an annual, multi-day event attended by residents of Bell Island as well as extended family and friends who lived off-island but may have had island connections, locally termed 'visitors.' The committee met monthly in the town building for planning purposes and my volunteer tasks also took me off-island in search of event decorations and supplies. As

[21] 'Town' is the term used among Bell Islanders, and other Newfoundlanders, to denote the provincial capital of St. John's, located on the Newfoundland mainland.

previously noted, these many events and activities around the island are, for the most part, volunteer-dependent and hosted by various community organizations. To be further explored in Chapter 6, many commuting workers also have multiple volunteer commitments on-island that occur before and after weekday working hours as well as on the weekends. Extensive participant observation in and around these island activities led me to include questions regarding this central form of unpaid labour into interview guides and highlight patterns of social reproduction set amid intensive work mobilities within this thesis.

Indeed, after an initial period of adjustment in the field, I realized my busy days partially reflected that of many commuting workers, with the extremely notable exception of an 8-or 9-hour period of paid labour. These days comprised waking to an early morning alarm, a trip down to the ferry, perhaps a stop in at the coffee shop, crossing the Tickle, returning home to Bell Island, visiting with neighbours, either assisting with or attending a community event, personal meal preparation and other provisioning errands, as well as trying to be in bed early enough to have a restful night and wake in the early morning hours with some level of ease. But because I was not heading into an office or other work location each morning, the most important preparation for my early morning trips was the coffee maker. A proper shower and professional attire were not usually important, as they were for most of the research participants with whom I did semi-structured interviews and rode the ferry. I would typically stuff my jacket pockets with granola bars and ginger chews (if the weather looked rough) for the ferry trip, and grab my notebook before heading out, usually planning to eat a meal at the coffee shop or once I arrived at home to write fieldnotes. Nevertheless, my on-island days over the course of the fieldwork period became largely routinized. Moreover, riding the ferry, in particular, became increasingly enjoyable (and productive in terms of the research project) as I got to know commuters to ‘chat

with' while onboard. This same level of comfort was reflected in on-island patterns of visiting, and attending community functions such as hosted meals. In many ways, 'having someone to sit with' spanned across all activities (also see Chapter 4) and by the end of fieldwork I was rarely alone.

Unstructured Interviews

The series of unstructured interviews I conducted over the summer of 2015 were designed to complement my hundreds of hours of participant observation as they built upon already established key themes and helped me learn about new ones (Fife 2005: 95). Moreover, unstructured interviews helped me triangulate information so that I could better identify patterns. As defined by Fife (2005: 102), "unstructured interviewing occurs every time a researcher participates in a conversation and, upon hearing a subject come up that interests her/him, decides to keep that particular conversation alive for a period of time." In some cases, unstructured interviews occurred in public or private spaces across the island, such as in the coffee shop or at a community event. They most frequently occurred when I joined an islander on the move as they navigated the morning or evening ferry commute, walked or drove around Bell Island, among other such movements. In this sense, I utilized mobile methods of participant observation coupled with unstructured interviews in order to better capture the highly mobile and ferry dependent lives of Bell Island residents (Kusenbach 2003; M. Büscher et al. 2011). This is sometimes deemed the "go-along," a "hybrid between participant observation and interviewing," whereby the researcher joins "informants on their 'natural' outings" to "explore their subjects' stream of experiences and practices as they move through, and interact with, their physical and social environment" (Kusenbach 2003: 463).

I conducted many "go-alongs" throughout the research period both on and around Bell Island as well as with off-island commuters travelling to work on the Newfoundland mainland or as part of reproductive labour. "Go-alongs" occurred as I travelled along with residents performing daily reproductive activities on Bell Island (e.g. food preparation, gardening, child caregiving, visiting relatives or neighbours, etc.). But they also happened as I moved off and on-Bell Island. For example, I joined a participant for the full length of their work commute on and off Bell Island (see Chapter 4). I also conducted a full length "go-along" with a retired island resident travelling into St. John's to run errands for her own household and also as part of her volunteer commitments. Apart from full length off and on-Bell Island trips, I frequently travelled with islanders I knew well for specific links of their "journeys to work" (Hanson 1980), joining them in their private vehicles in the ferry line-up or riding with them on the ferry, for just one leg of their longer trip. In some instances, full or partial "go-alongs" occurred after a more formal semi-structured interview and I was able to expand upon and observe already discussed practices and themes.

Semi-structured Interviews

As suggested by ethnographic methods specialist Wayne Fife (2005: 96-97) I spent just over one month living on Bell Island before finalizing an interview guide and beginning semi-structured interviews. Following Fife's (2005) approach is one reason the multifaceted practices of social reproduction are reflected so heavily in this thesis, mirroring that of the lived experiences of working commuters that came from these weeks of initial participant observation. The interview guide was co-developed with my supervisor so we could gather similar

information for Bell Island's commuting workers and 'reverse commuters'[22] then centered around key themes including: family background, employment history, as well as waged and unwaged commuting patterns. My research followed guidelines outlined by the Tri-Council Policy Statement on emergent design that suggest "data collection and analysis that can evolve over the course of a research project in response to what is learned in earlier parts of the study" (TCPS2 2010: Chapter 10).

Participants were recruited in person at participant observation venues and snowball sampling was used after an initial set of interviews. Although obtaining consent throughout research is an ongoing process, written consent forms were used for all semi-structured interviews. Moreover, oral consent was obtained and documented for the other methods. Using both modes for obtaining consent is covered by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) and the Tri-Council Policy Statement. If participants were willing, semi-structured interviews were audio recorded. In several circumstances, detailed hand-written notes were taken during the interview and then later transferred to an electronic transcript.

All semi-structured interviewees were provided a choice to be anonymous as part of the informed consent process. Those who requested to remain anonymous on their informed consent forms remain so in this thesis; and pseudonyms are noted as endnotes the first time a name is used. There are also instances where I used a pseudonym or general descriptor such as "long-term commuter" or "female commuter" alongside quotes as an ongoing judgement call out of respect for those who participated in this research, and also when it was the preference of participants to remain anonymous. In following the American Anthropological Association's

[22] 'Reverse commuters' were those commuting from the Newfoundland mainland to Bell Island regularly. This population included teachers, health care workers, those working for the Town of Wabana, delivery drivers, and business owners, among others. Sharon Roseman interviewed a sample of this group as part of her research on Bell Island.

Principles of Professional Responsibility, that include "Do No Harm" and "Obtain Informed Consent and Necessary Permissions," I also opted to use pseudonyms or general descriptors in select instances where there was potential for unintended consequences and/or issues of privacy for kin, other commuters, or community members. For example, in Chapter 1, a long-term commuter is quoted speaking about her son who has 'no tolerance for the boats.' Although I had permission to use this commuter's name, and do so in other parts of the thesis, I opted for a pseudonym associated with this quote in order to protect her son's anonymity as he was not interviewed as part of the thesis and, therefore, did not provide informed consent. As Fife (2005: 12) maintains, however, "…not all groups of people, or individuals, wish to remain anonymous in a study and researchers have to take that into account in their work." Certainly, participant names, including full names, are used whenever possible, and as informed consent guided, throughout the thesis. Finally, as I have also remained in contact with select participants over the years, I have sent them drafts of parts of the thesis for review. The vignettes, for example, in Chapters 4 and 6 were reviewed and approved by the participants around whom they are centered. I am deeply grateful for long-term commuter Harriett Taylor who reviewed the full thesis as it neared completion. From the start of the project, her time and insights mirrored her commitment to the "extra effort" she applied during her decades-long commuting career.

Semi-structured interviews were mostly conducted in private spaces on Bell Island; depending on interviewees' preferences, they were held either at one of the two cottages we rented for different weeks during the fieldwork period or at interviewees' homes. One interview took place in an On the Move Partnership-designated office space at Memorial University as this was the most convenient meeting location for the participant. Only two interviews were conducted in public spaces; neither were audio recorded. One took place at the Bell Island Public

Library, the other at a Tim Hortons in St. John's, with both of these locations having been suggested by the interviewees. I was of course more than happy to oblige both scenarios, but the commuter who gave me, unprompted, a reason for the choice of the latter location is worth noting in relation to the focus of this thesis. This was one of the last semi-structured interviews I administered for the thesis research, and it took place in September 2015. It took weeks of advance coordination to find a convenient time for the participant, due to her busy and shift-based work schedule. Given the way the boats and taxis were running, she had explained, scheduling necessitated her arriving at work hours before her shift started. The taxi service normally dropped her at a nearby Tim Hortons to 'kill time' given its walkable proximity to her place of work; she did not own a private vehicle. The long wait time even had her considering applying for a second job at that same location, and she had the experience as she had worked at another Tim Hortons years prior. During the interview she spoke about having a young family on Bell Island and it was clear that scheduling an on-island interview with me at another time would have taken up precious time with them. In this way, meeting at Tim Hortons in the down-hours before the start of her shift was an obvious solution. This reasoning may also be indicative of why 'exited' commuters comprise a portion of those featured throughout this thesis as they had more time to speak with me. On average, semi-structured interviews lasted more than one hour, several for up to two hours. I interviewed a select few participants more than once. Moreover, as noted above, I also participated in "go-alongs" and conducted follow-up unstructured interviews with several in the below sub-sample of semi-structured interviewees.

Prior to and following the start of the intensive master's thesis fieldwork period in 2015, I either conducted or assisted in semi-structured interviews with over fifty Bell Islanders as part of the larger project led by my supervisor Sharon Roseman that also examines both Bell Islanders

and reverse commuters, key informants involved in governance and the Bell Island Ferry Users Committee, as well as volunteers. These interviews also included those who had never commuted off of Bell Island for work. This thesis, however, draws on a core set of twenty-four interviews with Bell Islanders who commuted to work by ferry. These interviews followed a set of identified working commuters who regularly engaged in aquamobilities to and from employment based on the Newfoundland mainland. I also further considered the length of engagement within work mobilities. For the purposes of this thesis, I was interested in cases of those with regular commuting patterns over the course of several years, even if a single stint of employment was seasonal or temporary in nature. This thesis project fits within the overall goals of On the Move Partnership in including a focus on workers who more recently began commuting; those who had been commuting for decades; and also workers who exited[23] commuting due to retirement, job change, or job loss, among other reasons. Several interviewees described perpetuated patterns of entering and exiting from commuting many times over the course of months or even years due to precarious forms of labour commonly held by Bell Island residents (see Chapter 1), as well as for other more personal reasons like necessary caregiving (see Chapter 5). Eighty-seven percent of the thesis research participants were over the age of forty, and two-thirds were women. The focus on middle-aged and retired commuters for the thesis project was in order to capture the long-term aspects of commuting to and from work and home. Moreover, many of those interviewed had travelled together, some for decades, and referred to one another. Although previously noted, of the twenty-four ferry commuters who were the main research participants in this thesis project, Bell Island is their primary residence

[23] This is in reference to ceasing commuting if someone has changed jobs, moved, retired, etc. Some who 'exit' may also return to commuting later even if they had not initially anticipated doing so.

with the exception of one, who commuted off-island for over two decades before relocating to the Newfoundland mainland.

As this thesis' focus is the importance of a meaningful analysis around reproduction of the household and broader community (see Chapter 2), there was a set of questions in the semi-structured interview guide that asked participants to speak about social reproductive tasks, and if those were integrated into their longer journeys to work. Responses spoke pointedly to social reproductive practices within the households of commuters as well as across households on Bell Island. For example, four of the twenty-four interviewees were also partners of commuters, and remained so after their 'exit' from commuting. This context precipitated an analysis of a described shift in the division of household labour that emerged as a theme and is discussed in Chapter 5. I also interviewed one couple together. Moreover, of the twenty-four commuting workers, fourteen discussed their active involvement over many years in organized volunteer activities on-island, thus further reinforcing the importance of considering social reproduction not just within and across households on Bell Island, but also among the broader island community. A more honed discussion of patterns of cross-household and community patterns of social reproduction as they correspond with commuting can be found in Chapter 5.

Long-term Commuting Workers

As described in Chapter 1, ten commuters featured throughout this thesis are what I consider to be 'long-term commuters'—a distinctive group of Bell Islanders who have at least two decades of daily commuting experience on this route, several with more than four decades in total. As such, the group of long-term commuters in this thesis included those who began travelling daily for work from Bell Island into the St. John's area in the wake of the final mine

closure in the late 1960s and early 1970s and could reflect on these early commuting days. At the time of fieldwork, most were at least partially retired. A few from this group continued to commute during the time of fieldwork, and I participated in a highly educational full go-along with one individual, as well as several shorter, or single-leg trips with this same participant as well as others.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the 'figure' of the commuting worker on Bell Island draws heavily upon commonalities among the long-term commuters I came to know, and these shared characteristics are a finding within this research. It is generally understood that "the nature of commuting for an individual will change over time" (Lyons and Chatterjee 2008: 188). This is because most people change jobs, or move residences. Not so with this group of long-term commuters. Moreover, many Bell Islanders, including shorter-term commuters, spoke about this group of people (see Chapter 1). As one, now-exited commuter I call Lisa noted,

> *Somebody said to me, 'takes years off your life.' How many years, say, somebody whose been commuting for thirty or forty years, how many years have they been in the line-up? How many years have they been in the waiting room? If you add it up, you know what I mean?*

The long-term commuters also knew each other, as they travelled together for decades. Several of them, in particular, were especially well-known and referenced things such as 'Carmel's seating spot,' themes that were touched upon in Chapter 1, but will be expanded upon in Chapter 4. This distinct subgroup of ten long-term commuters who represented decades of commuting offered me many hours of their time and their experiences illustrate various aspects of the daily commuting experience that have remained similar over time, and simultaneously speak to shifts that occurred on this ferry run across the Tickle.

Documentary Research

To complement the other methods described above, I also conducted select documentary research at Memorial University Libraries, specifically the Queen Elizabeth II Library and the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, and the Bell Island Community Museum. Together with secondary sources such as newspapers and local historian Gail Hussey-Weir's blog, among others that helped me to understand the years pre-dating the 1966 mine closure. It also helped me piece together a more complete picture of the history of the ferry boats stemming from verbal histories shared during several semi-structured interviews.

Moreover, as I experienced the variability in the boat schedule during pre-fieldwork trips, I began to systematically consult and collect some online information on the Newfoundland and Labrador Marine Services Status Board, also called a dashboard.[24] Through frequent screen shots, I have a collection of the status of the boats starting in 2015 through 2017. These screen shots feature the stoplight format of the Marine Services Status Board for ferry services at the time: green meant the ferry boat is 'on schedule,' yellow meant 'in service but off schedule,' and red indicated 'out of service.' To the right of the stoplight was a brief explanation, followed by the weather, and a timestamp. Because I also timestamped my screen shots, the data can be retroactively analyzed for its timeliness, and therefore relevance to commuters for any future projects. This same information on the ferry service could also be accessed via a phone recording managed by one of the ferry boat captains.[25] The message would be verbally timestamped followed by a brief update on the status of the boats. I audio recorded many such messages

[24] Status updates for the Bell Island-Portugal Cove run can be found here: https://www.gov.nl.ca/tw/ferryservices/.
[25] Since the fieldwork period, this system has since been enhanced. Upon calling the recorded information phone number, three options are now available. They include: 1) the day's current vessel operations; 2) a listing of scheduled departures from Bell Island; 3) a listing of scheduled departures from Portugal Cove-St. Philip's.

during the fieldwork period mostly in order to be able to later compare them to my passengering experiences, or observations as documented in fieldnotes.

At the time of fieldwork, the dashboard and phone messaging system were my two primary methods of initial information gathering around the boats. As weather reports (particularly wind speeds) were important to commuters, I also checked the weather multiple times a day, but especially in the evenings if I planned to ride the ferry the next morning. In interviews, commuters described their various strategies to get updates about the ferry schedule. These strategies included simply calling down to the wharfinger and asking about the status of the boats, as well as checking a private Facebook page for Bell Island commuters managed by the Ferry Users Committee and frequently updated by a volunteer who received rapid information updates from Marine Services staff. Many commuters also used each other, a more personalized social network; this essential approach will be further described in Chapter 4. News articles pertaining to Bell Island from 2015 through 2017 have also been archived as well as a selection of screen shots from the corresponding written public comments that were referenced in Chapter 1.

To conclude, this chapter covers the fieldwork context and the research methods used in this ethnographic study of Bell Island. The chapter provides details about the fieldwork period and the sample of commuters, including the group of long-term commuters. The fieldwork methods include participant observation, including everyday observations of social life, unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews of a sample population of twenty-four Bell Islander current and former work commuters, as well as some documentary research.

Chapter 4—Co-Passengering Practices of Commuting Workers[26]

"You heard the *Flanders* is off?" Frances[27] called out, striding across the parking lot. On a warm August afternoon in 2015, I had been waiting outside of her office building in St. John's. Utilizing the "go-along" method (Kusenbach 2003), as described in Chapter 3, I had already joined Frances on her morning commute. As agreed upon the evening before, we met down at the Bell Island ferry terminal with enough time to catch the 6:50 a.m. ferry off-island, walked onboard the boat together, and chatted with a few familiar faces on the trip across the Tickle. Once the boat reached Portugal Cove, we located her vehicle—left parked in the terminal lot during the week in order to avoid line-ups—and drove the 20-or so minutes into work, arriving well before start-time. This is a familiar routine for Frances, one of the long-term commuting workers in my sample, who had been making this same daily journey to work for over forty years.

Our early morning trip in mild weather had been uneventful, peaceful even. But as we loaded into Frances's car to head home to Bell Island, despite having just checked the ferry's official information outlets,[28] I remained unaware of a major schedule change. Frances, on the other hand, had received an email just before leaving work from an on-island relative telling her that the MV *Flanders* was down due to mechanical issues. The second ferry on route that day, the MV *Beaumont Hamel*, was now on a 'load and go' schedule meaning that it was running continuously between termini to make up for the loss of the second ferry during a high-traffic

[26] Parts of this chapter are published in a co-authored journal article (see Royal and Roseman 2021), including a similar opening vignette. This published article was based on a co-authored conference paper titled, "Everyday is Different": Ferry Passengering among Commuting Workers in Newfoundland" (Royal and Roseman 2016) presented as part of the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting.
[27] A pseudonym.
[28] As described in Chapter 3, the official information outlets at the time of fieldwork for ferry information were a phone line and a dashboard website.

time of day. This continuous running where the ferry boat loaded up passengers and cars before leaving immediately also meant that commuters were unable to predict when the ferry might arrive, or depart.

This news made the drive down the highway toward the ferry terminal in Portugal Cove suddenly feel more urgent than it had in the morning. Frances's sister, also a long-term commuter and one of her 'commuter buddies,' then called to say that she had secured Frances a ticket[29], but that the ferry was already "three-quarters across the Tickle" so she had "better hurry." "I don't like to rush," Frances calmly remarked to this update with both hands resting gently on the steering wheel. Her car's speed did not change, but my heartrate certainly quickened.

Approaching the terminal, we spotted her sister waiting alongside another woman and close commuter friend on the loading ramp who had more recently started commuting. She had been immediately incorporated into their group of mostly female commuters, an initiation I myself had experienced over the past few months of fieldwork. As this group of women stood waiting, I recalled that during go-alongs and in interviews, I had heard several accounts of female commuters good naturedly spilling their purse contents on the ramp in order to delay the boat for someone they knew was close by; and had no doubt her sister, in particular, would do anything to ensure Frances made it onboard. On this day, however, we made it with time to spare. "You couldn't do this without a network," Frances remarked to me after she parked her car in the terminus parking lot. We hustled to join her crew of women, and thanked them for holding her place (and mine) onboard. "Well, you are my sister," was Frances's sister's pleasant retort. I later wrote in my fieldnotes: "As the four of us crossed over the ramp and walked onto

[29] As described in Chapter 2, tickets were given out to walk-on passengers at busy times of the day in order to manage capacity onboard the ferry boats.

the ferry together, for the first time since I've been out here [on Bell Island], I got a real taste of what commuting with a group of women would be like. It's more than just 'someone to talk with.'" Without the support of at least two other women that day, Frances and I would have surely missed the boat.

Once in the lounge of the MV *Beaumont Hamel*, we all knew we would make it home to Bell Island and the tension, precarity, and work inherent in 'catching the ferry'—and avoiding hours-long waits in lengthy lineups—that had overwhelmed us just moments before was now forgotten. We settled into a table and a fifth woman joined. "There was nothing to do but chat," I wrote in my fieldnotes. "Partly it was Friday and sunny outside, but mostly there was a palpable warmth between the women," all of whom commute together almost daily. "The ferry ride was jolly and just flew by."

This chapter focuses on Bell Island commuters' 'co-passengering' relationships, such as those described in the opening vignette featuring Frances and her commuter "network." These mutually-interconnected relationships are a central part of the daily commute. They provide high levels of practical, emotional and social support in a way that sustains the intensive work mobilities off and on Bell Island. For many in my sample, without these deeply rooted support networks, daily commuting may not have remained a sustainable practice. Moreover, these highly normalized co-passengering practices among Bell Island commuters, speak to the ways in which current patterns of socializing onboard the ferry are connected with past practices (see Chapter 1). This is best represented through the lived experiences of the long-term commuters. By drawing on the group of ten long-term commuters, Chapter 1 already unpacked the 'figure' of the Bell Island ferry commuting passenger (Adey et al. 2012; also see Bissell 2009), a honed image that is both embodied and recognized among Bell Island residents, and one made possible,

in part, by co-passengering practices. I now turn to the ways in which practices of co-passengering help with the planning required to 'catch the ferry,' as well as details about sociality onboard as these practices work in service to the way commuters in this context are reproduced. I end by asserting that these social support relationships serve to reinforce a collective attachment among commuters to Bell Island as home.

Conceptual Approach

As discussed in Chapter 2, in order to contextualize the centrality of relationships among Bell Island commuters, this chapter draws on a body of passengering literature as it enters into dialogue with mobility studies (Adey et al. 2012). As Urry (2007: 20) notes, a mobilities framework situates broader transport infrastructures alongside the "complex social processes that underlie and orchestrate" people's everyday movements. The potential of Urry's framing of mobilities can be found within passengering literature. As Adey et al. (2012: 171) maintain, "the experiences and imaginations of the passenger cut across multiple modes of mobility in different historical and geographical contexts." As maintained in Chapter 1, this approach has a particular relevance to research on Bell Island as a ferry-reliant island community with intensive aquamobilities in the late 20th and early 21st centuries stemming from, in part, the historical legacy of industrial closure. Moreover, the practices of passengering on the Bell Island ferry studied in the 2010s were contextualized by an understanding of past patterns, well exemplified by the long-term commuters in this thesis (see Chapters 1 and 3).

This chapter further enters into dialogue with David Bissell's (2018) formative research on the "sociality of passengering," as it emphasizes the importance of considering "[pr]actices of friendships through/in mobile social life" (Bunnell et al. 2012: 502). Bissell's (2018: 29)

emphasis on "the social relations of the commute," as part of the broader 'passengering' literature has meaningful application in the Bell Island context as the connections individuals have with others travelling back and forth to work or other obligations constitute ongoing, meaningful relationships in a way that runs parallel to forms of reliance that can exist among co-workers. As former commuter Lisa put it:

> *And it's not that I didn't enjoy the commuting because you do get used to the people and you make your commuter friends which I miss. I must admit, I do miss my commuter friends you know because you commiserate and, you know, you get to know them and their lives this and that and their patterns and stuff. You know because even though you don't work together it's almost like you do. It's like a working relationship but you don't work together. That's what it's like.*

When I heard this verbal description of the "working relationships" of "commuter friends" during the interview with Lisa (that was early on in the fieldwork period), I can still feel my internal 'ah ha' sounding off as I absorbed the resemblance. Indeed, Lisa's quote describing the work-place-like relationships of commuters in the Bell Island setting served as inspiration for the term "co-passengering" (similar to the term 'co-working') as a way to describe an inherent coexistence among commuters as they cross the Tickle together that directly honors commuting as a form of work. Moreover, the social relationships among Bell Island working commuters are also reflective of other forms of unpaid, social reproductive labour.

As such, the use of the term co-passengering in this chapter helps to further highlight relationships forged because of the commute and the ways in which this meaningful companionship among commuting workers involves emotional support as well as practical support. This comes out of having what Bissell terms "transit skills," or "fine-grained experiential knowledges that commuters develop over time" (Bissell 2018: xx, also xxi, 1-27). Commuting is similar to other "mobile way[s] of life" as "people acquire and internalize gradually, and through mobility practices, the skills, behaviours, meanings and specific values

associated with mobile living" (Viry and Vincent-Geslin 2015: 91-93). Among those who participated in this research, much value was placed on their commuter friendships. As will be demonstrated throughout this chapter, the nature of co-passengering relationships in the Bell Island context facilitates the acquisition that Viry and Vincent-Geslin describe. As noted in Chapter 3, as well as in the opening vignette, I experienced an initiation, of sorts, into such mobile practices not only through repetition, but also by travelling with, observing and listening to commuters. Certainly, I learned more about commuting (and had more success 'catching the boat') when traveling with a seasoned commuter like Frances as in the opening vignette, or a group of commuter friends. A newer commuter in my sample experienced this most acutely when a group of long-term commuters actively included her in their traveling group. She was also a part of their long-standing communications advising her on weather patterns and timings to 'catch the ferry.' The group also had various plans for sleeping arrangements 'on the other side' should one or all of them get 'stuck.' Moreover, even outside of work commuting, this group spent time together—for example, they volunteered at the same on-island church (see Chapter 6). All examples of different kinds of social reproduction that helped them both sustain intensive commuting patterns, and contribute to their island community.

Chapter 4 thus enters into dialogue with the work of David Bissell (2018), Elizabeth Wilhoit (2017), and Eric Laurier and Hayden Lorimer (2012), to emphasize the social aspects of passengering as essential to the maintenance of the commute itself and to underscore the importance of travelling companions. Bissell (2018: 61), for one, highlights the ways in which practices of passengering can embrace sociability, like Frances's travelling group, and the ways it subtly can become relied upon. Bissell gives the example of a research participant who stopped driving to work once she lost a ride-sharing companion. Instead, Bissell's participant elected to

take public transit for one hour and forty minutes over driving alone for thirty-minutes in traffic. Similarly, one of Wilhoit's (2017: 271-272) research participants described a sociable group setting onboard a train that fits in perfectly with what I observed as practices of co-passengering on the Bell Island ferry. As Wilholt's 2017: 271-272) participant described, "We have people that we meet up with, and we all crochet or knit or we all just gossip with each other. We call it the 'Stitch n Bitch Club.' We celebrate birthdays. It's like a friendship gathering in the afternoon." Practices on the ferry among Bell Island commuters also include chatting, knitting, and celebrating milestones within the setting of one leg of the commute itself. Laurier and Lorimer (2012: 211) note the special bond co-passengers can share as well as the sociable expectations of such a relationship. As they maintain, "those who share cars to commute," can "become acquaintances of a special kind, in some ways akin to people sharing a flat" who share what they think of as "our route" but are also expected to "hear one another's news, share their troubles and their successes and more" (Laurier and Lorimer 2012: 211). Taken together, their research points to the importance of considering social aspects of passengering as ways in which intensive mobility patterns are sustained and reproduced.

As also highlighted in Chapter 1, Bell Island commuters accept that traveling this watery route "threatens vulnerability to danger" and "discomfort" (Adey et al. 2012: 172), yet they are determined to make it to and from work and home whenever possible. This is a distinguishing feature of the Bell Island Ferry commuter 'figure' underpinned by co-passengers providing emotional support to one another. To analyze these instances of emotional support, I follow Arlie Hochschild's (1983 [2012]) concept of "emotional labor." As Hochschild (2012: 7) explains, emotional labour "requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others." Especially common on bad

weather days, commuters described providing (or receiving) emotional support from one another onboard the ferry boat. Similarly, Sharon Roseman (2019b: 103) uses the concept of "emotional labor" in the Bell Island context to highlight the work of the ferry workers as they "interact intensively with passengers as well as coworkers." My research parallels Roseman's (2019: 103) as she notes the "emotional labor requirements of transportation workers" are only further exacerbated by this route's precarity.

In the Bell Island commuting context, characterized by its precarious, watery, and multimodal mobilities, I argue herein that co-passengering practices are also acts of social reproduction that directly contribute to helping mitigate the complexity of both catching and riding the ferry. Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis (2015: 189) encourage researchers to consider how "specific instances of employment-related geographical mobility intersect with the social reproduction of mobile workers." As such, this chapter focuses on social reproduction through the relationships Bell Island commuters form in order to help one another approach and sustain their complex, and sometimes lengthy, journeys to work. Individual factors behind precarity in the Bell Island context further emphasize the importance of considering how Bell Island commuters' journey to paid employment is reinforced through the unpaid reproductive labour practices involved in co-passengering. This also underscores a thread throughout this research that commuting in the Bell Island context is a form of work. As the opening vignette demonstrated, Bell Island commuters rely on each another in order to be successful in their intensive daily commuting patterns as they try to safely and efficiently make it to and from work and home. As such, the complex processes of sociality described in this chapter are deeply embedded practices that signify so much more than 'just a chat.'

Moreover, what remains striking about the Bell Island commuting context is that the co-passengers discussed in this thesis who travel together and support each other's journey to and from-work are all residents of the same small island community. Some are even kin, such as Frances and her sister. During the fieldwork period, this was most noticeable to me as a participant observer during the heaviest commuting hours in the early mornings and evenings. This observation, which also contributed to my analysis of the commuting 'figure' (described in Chapter 1) is underpinned by literature on the broader Newfoundland and Labrador context where, 'place' can have a deep and central significance. For example, as noted in Chapter 2, place attachment is strong in geographies like Bell Island that are shaped by various intensive mobilities (Massey 1994, also see Cresswell 2004, Low and Altman 1992). In this way, through well-established practices of sociality, the Bell Island commuting population is not just working to sustain itself, but also, their home island.

Catching the Ferry

"Catching," as applied to various modes of transportation, often denotes the need for speed and efficient movement, even if through pedestrianism, prior to arriving at the journey's starting point. A focus on speed and 'being on time' as a passenger fits in well with what happens once trains, planes or automobiles begin to move. But on Bell Island's inadequately serviced ferry route, 'catching the boat' is a central, and strenuous, element of commuting workers' journeys to work. In this context, ferry passengering begins well before the journey: "You rush to get to the boat. You rush to go home to get the boat. Like everything is rush, rush, rush," Beverley Kent explained. Patricia King added, "It's a lot of stress. Especially in the wintertime. It's beautiful in the summertime, commuting. Like it's beautiful to commute. But not

the way that we're commuting…" Harriett Taylor agreed, "It's a total chore; very stressful … You get up on Monday, Tuesday's a different day. By the time Friday comes, it's totally different." 'To fare' well as a passenger on this route therefore requires a period of determining whether and when you can go to work, or return home, described as active passengering (also see Roseman 2020). It also requires the assistance of other people, as in the chapter's opening vignette. With regard to catching the ferry, co-passengers help one another sustain these practices primarily by way of information sharing, emotional support, as well as ride-sharing, the latter of which is described further in Chapter 6.

Active passengering on Bell Island relies on routines related to triangulating information sources in the face of constantly changing conditions and strategic decision-making about the timing required 'to catch the boat' and avoid long lines (also see Roseman 2020). This is similar to airplane passengers actively checking on a flight's status to determine scheduling delays or cancellations, or motorists checking on highway reports (Cwerner, Kesselring, and Urry 2009). As described in Chapter 1, commuters in the Bell Island context are especially aware of the weather reports. Bell Island commuters know that, even on a 'good day' when the boats are running on schedule, they may well experience gridlock in the form of line-ups prior to boarding the ferry, and information gathering helps them to avoid such "bottlenecks" (Cervero 2013: xxvi; Roseman 2020; Vannini 2012). In this way, the group of long-term commuters discussed continuously drawing on their social relationships for practical support and scheduling information even prior to boarding the ferry.

This subsection also details the rituals, practices and strategies behind waiting in long and uncertain queues on either side of the ferries and other modes of transit (e.g. Cresswell 2010: 553; Bissell 2007; Roseman 2020; Vannini 2009). Sharon Roseman (2020) documented the

precarity of the Bell Island ferry line-ups, noting the centrality of a running commentary about them among all island residents. As Roseman (2020: 93) notes, "I was told more than once, 'people on Bell Island don't talk about the weather, they talk about the line-up.'" I maintain that such commentaries about 'catching the ferry' can be viewed within the context of social reproductive practices that underpin these everyday routines of active passengering and make them possible.

Drawing from Chapter 1 and further building on Roseman (2020), it is important to note that 'catching the ferry' was primarily strenuous due to the fact that "frequent, excessive delays in the Bell Island context had been the result mainly of insufficient capacity on the boats to accommodate the traffic, unexpected mechanical break-downs, and a lack of replacement vehicles (and sometimes crew)" (Roseman (2020: 89). In other words, harsh weather—especially high winds and ice in the colder months—was not a primary reason for the daily precarity that necessitates social and practical support as commuters work to 'catch the ferry' (also see Roseman 2020: 88-89). Indeed, an enduring characteristic of the ferry passenger figure is one who is willing to travel in any weather, and often does, but remains immobile (or 'stuck') if the ferry is broken down or unable to accommodate them due to limited capacity.

On the Bell Island side in the early morning hours, there were two kinds of commuters: drive-on and walk on passengers. Those who drive a vehicle on board the ferry more often experience lengthy line-ups and wait times in comparison to walk-on passengers due to capacity issues, made worse if there is an ambulance run in the night, or one boat is down for mechanical or other reasons. Drive on commuters, despite common practices of ride sharing among islanders, were more likely to sit alone in the line-up during these early morning hours. Although I frequently observed co-commuting friends 'hop in the car' to pass the waiting time together, or

(more common on warmer mornings) stand outside and lean into a driver or passenger window for a chat. Whereas walk-on passengers typically huddled in the coffee shop, in the small one-room waiting room[30], or outside on the pavement while they waited to board the ferry. There was also a fluidity found in the line-up. As one drive-on commuter explained, "If I was parked down close to the waiting room, I'd go in the waiting room. If not, I'd stay in the car."

Congregated in the line-up, or at the terminal, both kinds of passengers spontaneously shared information with one another. In my observations, both light and emotionally charged conversations that people had while waiting often centred around the ferry. Even when I was alone in the line-up or onboard, and as an outsider to Bell Island, I felt connected and subconsciously relied upon those around me for a smooth journey—looking around for commuting cues and established rhythms to shadow (Cresswell and Merriman 2011). I acutely felt this co-reliance among passengers was due to the harsh realities of precarious commuting and considering it a shared experience helped contribute to coping; it was an example of acts of social reproduction among commuters that contributed to mitigating the complexity of catching the ferry.

For those driving on, vehicles begin to queue in the early morning hours along the side of the road leading down to the wharf—usually between 3:30 and 5:00 a.m. As one long-term commuter named Nell[31] shared, [as a walk-on] "I get up 10 after 4 [o'clock a.m.]. When I take my car home, I'll get up at 3:30 [a.m.]. I'll get up at 3:30, because if you're not down to the boat 20 after 4 [a.m.] you're not getting on." Similarly, another long-term commuter spoke about her

[30] The one-room waiting room is part of the Bell Island ferry terminal which consists of a small space with chairs where passengers can stand or sit; as well as a separate space with a door that is considered an 'office' for one crew member (often the 'wharfinger').
[31] A pseudonym.

commuter son's early morning dedication, with the reverent tone of a co-passenger, as well as a mother.

> *Oh yeah, like my son travels the ferry every day. He's been doing it for 25 years. … He goes down to the ferry in the morning I swear to god at 3 o'clock in the morning he's on the beach. … [to catch] the ferry [at] 10 to 6. But [he] is up really early. So you know… The people who use [that] ferry every day go down really early. … Well he has to start work at 6:30. And the [first] ferry goes at 10 to 6. So he's very conscientious. He makes sure he's there. He'll go down really early. As a matter of fact he was telling me not long ago one morning, he was down there about 3 o'clock. Stupid, foolish, but he goes down there. … But a cop stopped him. A cop came up by the car and got out and came over and said, 'Hello. Uh we've noticed you've been down here a couple of nights. What are you doing down here at this hour in the night?' He said, 'Excuse me? I'm in the line-up for the ferry.' 'The ferry is not going until 6 o'clock.' 'That's alright. I want to make sure I'm here.'*

Because so many commuters park in the line-up and then sleep in their cars before the first boat off-island, "The wharfinger will go up the hill and knock on the [car] windows like ten minutes before and make sure everybody's awake to get on," one commuter shared. I often saw this practice for myself during early morning participant observation sessions throughout the fieldwork period. While the wharfinger will not walk up the full line-up, just by waking up the first few drivers, drive-on commuters then turn to alert others. I often observed cars gently honking, flashing their lights, or the like to ensure all in the line-up were ready to board on time. Various commuters commented on the strong bonds that existed between several long-term commuters and wharfingers on either side of the ferry run. A group of female long-term commuters also described bringing candy for one particular wharfinger they developed a lasting friendship with over many years. "He was good as gold," they exclaimed when elaborating on how he helped them collectively navigate parking, snow clearing, and the ferry schedule, as well as just providing cheerful conversation while waiting at the terminal (see Chapter 6).

These unspoken early morning patterns provided support for those committed to commuting under such difficult circumstances. As Des remarked, "As a commuter, I think one of

the main things you need is patience." The stories I heard also further reinforced the importance of observing the line-ups. My first instance of participant observation before dawn was on April 16, 2015, just one day into fieldwork. I woke at 4:30 a.m., quickly got dressed, packed some snacks, and arrived at a good vantage point around 5:05 a.m. to assess how long the line-up was in anticipation of the 5:55 a.m. ferry's departure. It was immediately clear that I was 'late' by Bell Island commuting standards as cars were already lined up all the way to the "Belle of the Bay" sign which sits near the top of Beach Hill. Although it was dark, I counted roughly 30 visible cars. Seconds after I arrived, four more cars drove up, and cars in the line-up had nearly doubled by 5:45 a.m., well exceeding the number of cars possible on one trip for the MV *Flanders*. As I wrote in my fieldnotes:

> *Around 5:45 a.m. people began turning on their cars. The ferryboat was full five minutes later (by about 5:50 a.m.) and promptly departed Bell Island at 5:55 a.m. Seconds before the ferry was declared full, everyone's cars in the line-up were off again. It was almost as if everyone knew exactly how many cars could fit on the first trip and knew right when to turn off their motors. It looked like "the wave" with the lights of each car turning off on down the line-up in the near dark. The line-up of car lights with the ocean backdrop and ferryboat was eerily beautiful at daybreak.*

On that first early morning, and for the many that followed, I noted that most drivers in the line had their heads on head-rests, eyes closed. Even for walk on passengers, with the exception of the coffee shop, chatter before sunrise usually remained at a minimum. Distinct from the lively waiting atmosphere described by Vannini (2012), Bell Island morning line-ups during the fieldwork period were often cold, dark, and quiet.

In contrast, even during early morning commuting times, walk-on passengers experienced shorter wait times with less uncertainty about whether or not they would 'catch the boat.' This is because there was a greater capacity for passengers than for vehicles on the ferry boats, as described in Chapter 1. When service disruptions are coupled with heavy commuting

hours, walk-on passengers must then scramble to secure a place on their 'normal' trip by getting a ticket. This means they often had to arrive at the ferry well ahead of their usual time window, and often on short notice.

For regular walk-on commuters, they described waking up in the 5 o'clock hour even if they took a later boat just to be able to gather information as they readied themselves for work. Long-term commuter Harriett described her morning routine and recited the ferry information line phone number stating,

> *It's encrypted. 895-6931. It's encrypted in your brain, hey? You know, that; and 772-5534—that's Environment Canada Weather Forecast. So first thing, you'd wait until 5:30 [a.m.], check that number. And then you'd call Environment Canada, get the updated weather forecast. And then that's what drove your next hour. Did I have time then to chuck somethin' in the slow cooker for supper? Yep, that's the way it went.*

Waking early and readying quickly allowed commuters to remain nimble enough to rush to the terminal should they discover delays and need to catch an earlier, or off-schedule, boat. As Harriett told it, on days where capacity issues necessitated getting a walk-on ticket she would join other commuters in a rush down to the terminal, "…by the time I get to the end of [my] Avenue, you just see the cars going. Rushing down. They're like me, getting out, they're probably in their pyjamas, yup, just going to line-up to get my ticket." She then described hurrying back home to "get ready for the day. You only got a half hour then because five to six, six o'clock, you've got a half hour then to come back switch-a-roo, hey? And that can happen frequently sometimes." The opening vignette exemplified the information sharing among co-passengers that was oftentimes necessary in these situations. This was similarly communicated in the early morning hours as well as the evening hours. For example, as her sister typically took the 5:55 a.m. boat and Frances the 6:50 a.m. boat off island, they described communicating updates, as needed. Frances knew that on mornings her sister 'called up,' she may have to

quickly go down early for a ticket, or to perhaps catch an earlier boat in order to make the crossing and arrive at work on time. The pair also described communicating among their broader commuting network of several other women. With this much fluctuation in commuters' day-to-day morning routine, co-passengers like Frances and her sister, as well as others in my sample, often relied on one another to circulate the informal and insider information needed to sustain these reactive mobilities.

On the Portugal Cove side, commuters returning home to Bell Island faced the imminent possibility of uncertain and often lengthy waiting periods. These waits were exacerbated by there not being any priority line-up for Bell Island commuters with vehicles. During my months of fieldwork, I found these return trips back to Bell Island to be the most tenuous, and many of those interviewed agreed. Although the pressure to 'make it to work on time' had faded from the early morning, the fatigue carried from a long day and not ever knowing what awaited quickly replaced it. As Lisa described about the Portugal Cove side, "But like just that anxiety that really consumes your every thought. Am I going to make the boat? Is there going to be a boat?" Another female commuter described it as, "And like, you get this, honestly, when I'm rushing to the boat [in Portugal Cove], I feel like I'm in 'Need For Speed.' And I'm like, 'Please be no cops. Please be no cops.' And my hands are shaking and I can't even concentrate. Like it's just like: 'get me there;' 'move out of my way;' 'I'm sorry, but I need to get home.' Many commuters described checking on the ferry's status and communicating with other co-passengers and Bell Island residents throughout the day to alleviate some of their vulnerability to the ever-shifting schedule. But, ultimately, there was not always certainty. As co-passengers worked hard to fill information gaps regarding the ferry schedule for each other, what was especially not known for commuters until they approached the Portugal Cove terminal was the length of the

line-up for drive-on passengers, and if walk-on passengers were required to have a ticket to board due to capacity concerns. Both types of unknowns only increased as the late afternoon and evening wore on and more commuters got off of work and made their way to the terminal.

Indeed, in the late afternoons and evenings, the line-ups for the ferries departing from Portugal Cove were filled not just with work commuters but with *all* Bell Islanders who travelled over for the day, including those doing unpaid labour activities like grocery shopping. As Harriett maintained,

> *And then you get to Portugal Cove, there's no priority, hey? Absolutely none on that side and then you've got everybody. You've got general public, you've got the commuters, so you got a whole mixed bag, and then you've got the tourists, everybody. And so once again, there's only about 40 to 50 tickets for everybody. And you've got an hour in the evening, there's more people coming at 5 o'clock than there is at 4 o'clock.*

Nowhere was this systemic strain felt more clearly than the Portugal Cove terminal as daily work commuters anxiously hoped to make it home among the other ferry traffic, including some visitors. As a still travelling long-term commuter at the time of fieldwork noted, "So it's more people traveling and so it's harder and longer waits and stuff in the line-up. We waited in the line-up yesterday evening [at Portugal Cove] over 2 hours." With nothing to do but wait, daily commuters passed the time in Portugal Cove by taking walks in the summer months, reading, bringing work to do, and socializing. As Harriett explained,

> *In the summertime, it's like everything else, it's brighter, it's warmer. So you don't mind waiting [in Portugal Cove]. It doesn't affect you as much. You go for a walk, you sit and you read, you sit and you chat. But in the winter, what do you do? You sit in the car and idle the car.*

Also on the Portugal Cove side, Keith (a long-term drive-on commuter) added that he certainly "made use of time" waiting for the ferry. As he told it, he used to, "Read. Work. … Or, updating files—all paper files back then—I'd always have a stack of files with me. You could do an hour's work that you didn't have to do the next day." Similarly, Des added, "There's just dead

waiting time. Waiting for the boat to leave, to get over. … You're such a busy person [as a commuter], it's a chance to catch up on things." Once onboard the boat, however, the active passengering required to 'catch the ferry' in both directions temporarily paused and commuters fell into regular patterns of socializing. As I observed it, for those traveling during heavy commuting hours in the summer months during the fieldwork period, waiting to catch the ferry 'home' was livelier than in the early morning hours if those waiting knew the ferry was running on schedule and on time.

Onboard Practices of Sociality

'Riding the ferry' begins when vehicles and passengers drive or walk across the wharf ramp and onto the vehicle deck, moving on from the tension that often surrounds the series of acts involved in 'catching the boat.' Once on board, the frustrations that may have occurred waiting in line, and the flurry of activity sometimes associated with barely catching the ferry, subside. As Des remarked, "Coming back, I would definitely transition [mentally]. I'd cross the Tickle and I'd put myself into a different mode all together." Building upon the existing work on the sociality of passengering, this sub-section explores co-passengering onboard the ferry as a key element of work commuting that underpins a layer of social support as a part of the longer journey to work. This social support among co-passengers in the Bell Island context had changed little over time during the fieldwork period. As former commuter Jean Bursey remarked:

> *We were like family …You couldn't wait to see these people [onboard], because you know what? … Because when you got there chatting, it was fun …We all kept one another going. I think that's why we managed like we did. Like there was no good being a loner on that. You needed people . . . That hasn't changed. You needed to get there and get in and have a few laughs.*

Given the "extra effort" necessarily expended by commuting workers reliant on this watery route, this sub-section demonstrates a longstanding, fundamental support system of co-passengering onboard the ferry that was sustained by ongoing social relationships, including those comprised of usual riding or seating spots, partners, and support groups (by which I mean emotional support). As described in Chapter 1, in this setting, the role of 'groups,' 'sitting partners' or 'commuting buddies' provided much-needed emotional support. As I elaborate on further on in this chapter, I consider this kind of emotional support among commuters to be social reproductive labour as it further reinforces worker's journeys to work.

A central theme within the passengering literature is that of "being with," including the notion that "mobilities are rarely experienced alone or in isolation from other people" (Bissell 2010: 270). James Fujii (1999: 107) notes the compound verb "mi-shitteiru" in Japanese or, "to know (thoroughly) by sight" as a word to describe "a new relationship born of repeated sightings in close quarters"—but a notable relationship that "does not involve or lead to conversation, friendship, or even visible signs of mutual recognition and acknowledgement." This passive avoidance (Bissell 2010) common in other public transportation settings, contrasts with what was observed more generally on the Bell Island ferries among passengering workers during normal commuting hours. These ferries, and particularly the places onboard where passengers gather, can be characterized as examples of "informal public gathering places" (Oldenburg 1997: 6). This is primarily because most of the regular commuting passengers are Bell Island residents, as described in Chapter 1. Many Bell Islanders view the ferry as their public space, similar to the church halls or library. Further solidifying the ferry as an extension of this small island community, framed and mounted pictures of Bell Island and of the different ferry boats that have operated on the service over time, hang on the walls of the lounge spaces. I often observed paper

signs, taped up in various places, advertising upcoming island events or general island-related notices that sometimes-sparked conversation among passengers.

In thinking about the various passenger spaces onboard the ferry during the fieldwork period, there were notably differing forms of sociality contingent (in large part) upon the riding 'spot' of the ferry passenger, or groups of passengers. To start, drive-on passengers were more likely to remain in their personal vehicles 'down' on the car deck of the ferry during the twenty-minute crossing at the time of fieldwork. This practice of 'staying in the car' has since been disallowed and enforced, with much contention especially at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.[32] 'Down' on the car deck during the fieldwork period, however, vehicles were sometimes jammed in just inches from one another and the crossing was much less sociable than in the waiting rooms upstairs. Some people opted to recline their seats and nap, others read, made crafts, or were on their phones. In my observations, there was also notable sociability in the case of those travelling together in the same vehicles (see Chapters 5 and 6 that discuss ride-sharing). Some passengers got out of their vehicles and visited with each other on the car deck in the same way they did in the line-ups. As one drive-on commuter noted, there was also a commonplace fluidity: "Mostly I stayed in the car and did whatever I was doin' [on board the ferry]. Unless I saw one of my friends go up [to the passenger lounge], and then I'd go on up for a chat, right? And then sometimes they'd come over and just sit in your car and what with ya." Another drive-on commuter, George, was always quick to shift upstairs. As he told it, "Nah,

[32] Following the fieldwork period, in 2017, provincial regulations shifted, and every ferry passenger was required to exit their vehicle to the passenger lounges/decks. This regulation was also enforced by the ferry's crew. In 2017, the Department of Transportation and Works was quoted as saying, "All ferry services in the province require the passengers vacate their vehicles before the vessel is permitted to sail and until the vessel is safely berthed." This controversial policy was considered ableist by some, as all residents must use the ferry to travel from and to Bell Island, including those who are going to medical appointments as well as those who need additional accommodations. Moreover, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, recommended social distancing would not have been possible in the compact lounges and other passenger spaces. Several protests took place both on the ferry and on land near the ferry termini.

didn't stay in the car. It's too dull there! Too dull! Like I say, I didn't like the commuting but when I got there, like get on the boat, jokin' and laughin' I didn't mind stuff like that." Still, the majority of passengers who boarded the ferry boats during heavy commuting hours were walk-on passengers.

When the ferry docked, and the ramp banged down against the terminal's concrete, walk-on passengers were first to load. This group, crossed the loading ramp and trailed one another up several sets of staircases. Most swung open heavy metal doors into the primary lounge space, and settled into their 'usual' seats. Passengers then dropped their purses, bags, and lunch coolers onto the floor, unoccupied seats, or perched them on their laps if it was especially crowded. Onboard, groups of co-passengers were often seen clustered together in these cafeteria-style lounges which enabled co-passenger conversation. In the ferries operating during my fieldwork period, the lounge spaces mainly consisted of long tables with two passenger-facing benches, as well as bench seating similar to that on subways where most passengers faced each other across a floor space. In this way, the passenger lounges onboard the ferries were where most of my participation observation took place, and where most interviewees described sitting during their crossings. This was especially so for the long-term commuting figures.

'Up on top' in the lounges or outside on the decks (on pleasant weather days), the most common sight in the early mornings and evenings was passengers conversing. George laughed when I asked if he chatted with anyone on the boat during his years commuting. He replied, "Yes, yes, girl, yes. Talked to everybody. You have to do something! Some of the b'ys played cards, poker. Stuff like that. … The b'ys would be up on the top flack, we'd be down on the next one, down below. Jokin' and laughin,' skylarkin, whatever. That's what made your day. That's what made your day!" In my many rides on the ferry during heavy commuting hours, a low hum

of friendly chatter usually filled the lounge space onboard. As described previously, regular commuters are all mostly familiar with one another being from the same small island community, although they did tend to limit socializing with their direct seating partners. As such, I did not observe a lot of physical movement around the lounge spaces once the ferry started moving, but certainly a non-verbal acknowledgement, in the form of a wave or a head nod, or verbal greeting across the room to another co-passenger seemed common.

Regardless of commuters' usual riding spots, either down on the car deck or up in the passenger lounge, a sociality among Bell Island work commuters was formed and then fostered because of their shared commuting experiences. As Bissell (2009: 271) notes "the degree of acquaintance that characterises these relationships, to a large part, mediates the type of communication that takes place between passengers." Indeed, some commuting workers who travelled this route were already familiar with one another (being kin, neighbours, or friends). As such, 'riding the ferry' was continually framed as a distinctively social experience—similar to the comment from Lisa about co-passengers being like "work friends." As Ches, a long-term commuter, maintained: "And that's the good thing about commuting too. You sit with people day in and day out for 350-360 days a year. And it's really good community-wise. I suppose, because you're dealing with these people on an everyday work-basis that you might never see if you weren't commuting." In this way, Ches speaks toward the ways in which co-passengering also reinforces Bell Island as commuters' shared home.

While the most common activity among co-passengering commuters is to 'have a chat,' several other ways to 'pass the time' were also described in interviews and observed onboard. This reinforces a notion within the new mobilities paradigm that "activities occur on the move," and that "being on the move can involve sets of 'occasioned' activities" such as those that occur

onboard the Bell Island Ferry (Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006: 12-13). The long-term commuters discussed how some of these activities also took place in earlier periods of commuting. Card games, for example, were popular among men in particular—facilitated by the lounges' seating arrangements with tables ideal for playing. As long-term commuter Ches explained to me: "For the most part you just have a chat with your buddies. On the boat for years a lot of people play[ed] cards. A friendly game of poker or 'pass the ace' or 120—and then other people just get together and yak and just call each other down just to get a laugh. We just pick on each other basically, right?" I also observed other groups of commuters sitting together knitting (and, of course, simultaneously chatting). As Jean shared, "Now some of us took our needle work. A lot of us done that … You'd have room enough to take the knitting needles out where it wouldn't poke somebody's eyes out. We did that a lot too." While many commuters interviewed for this thesis said that they read while waiting in the line-ups for the ferry, few attempted to read onboard, as it was common that someone would approach them for 'a chat.' "Sometimes I'd be reading my book [onboard] and somebody come along and sit with me anyway and I'm like, 'Can't you see I'm trying to read?'" Lisa told me, laughing good naturedly.

Sociability onboard the ferry was often cited among research participants as the most enjoyable aspect of commuting. Similar to the way Bissell (2018: 61) described the ways sociality can be relied upon by co-passengers, by giving the example of the commuter who opted for a longer journey to work on public transit rather than the shorter drive alone. In this way, for many commuters journeying from and to Bell Island for work, under these precarious and sometimes dangerous circumstances, co-passengering was what made it not just sustainable, but 'fun'—further underscoring a solidarity among commuting buddies that built up a kind of resilience. As Kay Coxworthy, a long-term commuter, said, "And I came to meet great variety of

people you know in those years [commuting] … So while commuting wasn't always the wonderful thing it seems to be, it was lots of fun. We had hard times but we suffered them out together." Jean added, "We were like family. And if somebody didn't show up that morning, like everyone said, 'What happened? How come? They must be sick.' And everyone was concerned. 'How come they're not here?'"

Despite socializing being a noted highlight of the lengthy journey to work for most co-passengering workers, for some, the ferry part of their commute incited nerves, sickness, and even sometimes 'panic;' the "suffering," as alluded to in Chapter 1. As Jean shared, "I got sea sick millions of times, yeah. … Mostly when it was really rough." Under these circumstances, the role of co-passengers shifted to provide much-needed emotional support. As noted in Chapter 2, I further consider this additional layer of emotional support to be social reproductive labour as it importantly reinforced workers' journeys to work, and helped commuters remain resilient. Also discussed in Chapter 1 in the subsection on the "commuting figure," the need for emotional support was exacerbated especially on bad weather days, or in rare instances of near-emergencies. Throughout the interviews, these passengers were often described as 'nervous commuters.' As Harriett recounted:

> *We had one lady in particular who was terrified of commuting. I often said I don't know how she got through it. After she retired she said, "I wouldn't have done it without ye, …. There …. In the morning to say, 'oh, 10 more minutes, hang on, 10 more minutes, we are going to be there!'" Or someone would get up and say, "Come on, we'll go down and stand up by the door, you'll make it." She was terrified, had anxiety. But there was always someone to say, "Won't be much more longer …"*

Similarly, even after commuting for more than three decades, another interviewee shared that she still frequently fought sea sickness during the crossings and remarked, "You know what? The older I'm gettin' the sicker I gets. And I don't know, I be more nervous…" This commuter relied on a tight-knit group of women who boarded together, often waiting for her so she never had to

ride alone, knowing that she was the self-described "lady that's afraid of the boat." Once onboard, her network of commuting friends sometimes relocated together out of the lounge and onto the lower deck to mitigate the effects of the boat's motion, and to ensure additional privacy in the event of illness. Indeed, nerves for all commuters were discussed as being heightened on bad weather days, but co-passengers nevertheless fell into defined roles (although fluid depending on the day) of providing or receiving support. As Adey at al. (2012: 171) maintain: "Thus, the passenger might be constituted and supported by other 'passengers.'" In this way, commuting workers on the Bell Island ferries are very much sustained, "constituted and supported" (Adey at al. 2012: 171) through the sociality of co-passengering.

Passengers also described falling into organic, sometimes in-the-moment, roles of providing or receiving support, especially in instances of extreme weather. Kay Coxworthy easily recalled a rough trip in late December 1980 when many of the women in her group had descended into empty crew quarters onboard to "read or something, and hang on and pray." Kay then thought she heard "someone [else] on top of the stairs crying. As she told it,

> *It was so rough that I heard my friend crying. I crawled out and said, "What are you doing?" She said, "I'm frightened to death. I can't go down and I can't get up." I said, "I'll come get you— you come down to me." So I crawled up over the stairs. I never thought we'd see land. […] Anyway I got her down over the stairs, she was a big girl too, and I put her in the room [with the others] and said, 'Stay there, don't move.' She always said to the day she died, "Oh Kay, she's some girl. She looked after me one day when it was some rough on the boat!" She didn't know how scared I was!*

Similarly, despite usually having "great laughs and great fun," Carmel Power recalled the importance of often setting aside her own fears on rough rides. As she told it, "The boat would be rough and I'd say, 'Yeah, but that's nothing. You got to look at the positive side, we're going to come back up again!' You know, like that. Trying to keep the positive going … Of course, I

was frightened to death myself too." As described previously, this aligns well with Hochchild's (1983[2012]) concept of emotional labor.

In rare instances of near emergencies cited in our interviews, commuters most often recounted the people they were with, and how they helped one another, rather than the event itself. In these uncommon and extreme circumstances, several women described receiving emotional support based on seating proximity, familial relationships, or both. For example, Frances described a February morning travelling with family member when a heavy storm precipitated a near-disaster onboard. As she told it:

> *I wasn't [normally] scared, because I figured, the ramp is up now. It's in someone else's hands and I trust these people [captain and crew]… But the morning … that [MV] Norcon Galatea and she lost her ramp, that was February 2, 1999 … It was dark and it was the first trip out of here in the morning and it was a rough old morning because they weren't sure they were going to run. And I remember sitting with my cousin in his truck because the other folks [her commuting buddies] either they didn't go or they had stayed the night before … And he's pretty solid, bulky man and he knew I was petrified. He kept talking to me, said, "we're fine." All of the sudden we make a dip and I looked at him and said, "I'm sure the ramp just fell off of this." And he wouldn't own up to it. He said, "I knew you'd freak." And I said, "listen to it. You can hear it hitting the bottom of the boat!" He said, "No, it's not." And then when I see all the water come on the deck, … I just got so close, you know, and here I was pounding. I'm not realizing what I was doing. I was freaked out and he's trying to calm me down…*

Although, Frances's usual 'support network' was not travelling with her that morning, she still sought out someone to sit with as her kin also happened to be commuting to work that morning. This highlights the many layers of relationships that existed among commuters. This also could, at times, extend beyond their normal grouping (and also their usual seating spot). In this way, Frances's story also illustrated how she chose her 'seating spot' that morning based on who she was travelling with—otherwise she normally sat in one of the passenger lounges. As she continued,

> *When we got in the Cove and we docked and that, I said to him, I said, "I probably would've died," I said, "without ya." And he said, "You're going to be alright." I got in the car and drove to work …*

In this way, the emotional and even physical support Frances's family member provided to her that morning was (to her mind) essential.

> *Next day it had hit the airways and people[co-workers] said, "were you on yesterday morning?" I said, "yes." "How come you didn't mention it?" "I couldn't relive it," I said. "I got that big of a fright." But couple of days later I ran into my cousin after that all settled down. He said, "Come here, I'll show you something." He rolled up his sleeve, buddy he was black from here to here. Bruised on this side. I got that big of a fright.*

Several other commuters I spoke with also described the harrowing experience of being on the MV *Norcon Galatea* the day 'her ramp fell off.' Some described where they were sitting and who they were with—the importance of emotional support further heightened in interviews many years later in the memorable instance of a near-emergency. Similar to Harriett, all interviewees described arriving at work that morning, and 'carrying on.'

Although these instances of near emergencies underscore the importance of sociality onboard the ferry, it was the daily camaraderie that remained memorable for many of the since retired commuters I interviewed. As long-time commuter Keith simply stated:

> *Commuting was a social thing too. When you got on the ferry… there was lots of jokes and fun. I never played cards but lots of card games so people made the most of it. You didn't realize, I don't think, that it was… people would perceive it as difficult. You had to do it, so …There was a group of us that would probably get in the same seats, solve some of the world's problems.*

The phrase 'solve some of the world's problems' was repeated by several long-term commuters I interviewed with respect to socializing onboard the ferry. In this way, practices of onboard sociality, and the importance of 'commuter friends,' remained a highly normalized element of passengering that changed little over time during the fieldwork period. As Jean, a former commuter, maintained,

> *No, that hasn't changed. You talk to anybody commuting today. My husband did a lot of commuting there last year and he'd come home and tell me stories about the boys and you know you get on and you're waiting for the other one to get on and it's just a joke and a laugh from the time they get on the boat until the time they get off. He said before you know it, that boat is over there. It's still today like it was when we were going back and forth [in the late 70s]. … Oh definitely, it's still like that today. There's no doubt about it.*

The strong and long-lasting co-passengering relationships, formed by just 'having a chat' between commuters from the same small island community journeying on the same vessel, remained a defining characteristic of work commuting during the fieldwork period. Moreover, this practical and emotional support of the 'commuter network' infused fun and helped absorb the many hardships of traveling daily across the Tickle.

Conclusion

The defining characteristics of the ferry commuting figure described in Chapter 1 are further highlighted in this chapter by the longstanding relationships that provide support to help navigate the tension, precarity, and effort that goes into the daily journeys-to work for Bell Island work commuters. As discussed, calling a passenger who may need to go down to the terminal to get a ticket, striking up a conversation while waiting to board the ferry, or comforting a nervous passenger onboard are all ways commuters in this context generated long-lasting commuter friendships, and supported one another in their determination to make it to and from work, whenever possible and in any kind of weather. Through co-passengering practices, some of the everyday precarities inherent in travelling this watery route, were alleviated. In describing these practices, this chapter drew on the body of passengering literature in the context of mobility studies (following Adey et al. 2012, in particular). It also utilized David Bissell's (2018) formative research on the "sociality of passengering" to underscore that the "extra effort" behind

commuting is made possible by practices of co-passengering; and further built on the concept of co-passengering as described in Royal and Roseman (2021). In considering the work-place-like relationships of commuters onboard the ferry, the term co-passenger is intended to directly honor the way commuting in the Bell Island context is a form of work. Similarly, this chapter further emphasizes the ways in which individual factors behind the precarity of both 'catching' and 'riding' the ferry further emphasizes the importance of considering how Bell Island commuters' journey to paid employment is reinforced through the unpaid reproductive labour practices involved in co-passengering.

This chapter also considered the longstanding camaraderie among work commuters from Bell Island as a highly normalized element of passengering that changed little over time. As described in Chapter 1, commuters in this context speak of each other with respect and acknowledge that what they are trying to do as individuals is fundamentally difficult. In this way, the complex processes of sociality onboard the ferry during the fieldwork period were deeply embedded practices, extending well-beyond the concept of a co-passenger as "someone to talk to." In turn, Bell Island commuters were meaningfully contributing to each other's journeys-to-work, providing emotional support, helping reinforce a long-standing culture of work commuting, and reputation of a highly mobile and ferry dependent community.

Chapter 5—Household Reproductive Labour of Commuting Workers

When I asked long-term commuter Keith Kent what it was like to live on Bell Island he thoughtfully responded, "Well, I guess in two words, it's home. It's always been home." Like many of the long-term commuters in this sample, Keith started traveling back and forth daily in the early 1970s, in the wake of the mine closures, and continued for almost forty years until retirement. After growing up on Bell Island, as a young man, and then a newlywed, he briefly lived and worked 'in town.' Following the birth of his first child, Keith and his wife then moved back to Bell Island. Originally intended as a "temporary thing," they quickly decided to stay put. As he explained,

> *…we decided we would move back here [to Bell Island] for a few years. Because [my wife] wanted to stay home with the baby. I figured well, we're paying 450 dollars a month for a basement apartment. Let's look at something on Bell Island, back home, for a few years. And so we wrapped the baby up and bought this house in here and that will be 41 years coming up. Been there ever since.*

Five children later, Keith's wife continued to "stay home" during the bulk of his early commuting years. As he explained it, she managed the majority of household chores and this only intensified when his job required more extensive travel during the work week: "I travelled a lot in my work. All over Newfoundland, up to Labrador, sometimes Nova Scotia, New Brunswick. So last going off I was probably in hotels three nights a week, last ten years." While only a few of the commuters interviewed as part of this research had jobs that required extensive travel of this sort, all spoke about the frequency of needing to be away overnight due to weather or due to scheduling issues with the ferry. It was during these overnight absences for both Keith's household and others in this sample that living on Bell Island with close-by familial support became particularly important. As he told it, "…her parents lived up the street. Mine

lived two minutes away in the car. Well, we didn't need babysitters a lot because she was home, but we had family support too."

In the latter years of his career, and as their youngest children got older, Keith's wife re-entered the workforce and they commuted together for several years. Although his wife had mostly managed the household when their children were younger, her commuting necessitated a shift in their household division of labour. "All shared," he noted during that time, "and it's totally shared now," as they both recently entered retirement. "Actually, I enjoy it to tell you the truth. Not that there's a lot now with the two of us, just two of us." He went on, "I usually cook breakfast, make the beds, wash clothes. I don't mind doing that stuff … I do my share now. I'm not embarrassed by the amount that I do. I do my share." Although none of their now grown children live on Bell Island, visiting back and forth is frequent (also see Chapter 1). "Our house is a revolving door," Keith happily remarked. As their family continues to grow, he concluded, "Now there's grandchildren. So your day gets filled."

Beyond the longstanding camaraderie among work commuters, described in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 explores how commuting impacts the ways in which reproductive labour is divided in households. I also describe how reproductive labour in households sometimes changes over time in response to shifts in the commuting patterns of individuals. In doing so, this chapter emphasizes an additional layer of support that further sustains precarious work mobilities off-island. Conversely, it maintains that commuting workers also contribute meaningful labour to their households. To do so, I highlight the importance of considering working commuters' full "journey to work" (Hanson 1980). With specific emphasis on the social reproductive tasks commuters undertake for their individual households as part of their commute, I then turn to the ways in which household roles can shift following an exit from work mobilities (Dorow,

Cresswell, and Roseman 2017). This is of particular relevance to the chapter and is exemplified by the long-term commuters, like Keith, who was featured in the opening vignette. I assert that intertwined within intensive daily work mobilities, commuters in this context constantly engaged with social reproductive practices at the household level. Viewed over time, this form of unpaid labour is yet another way that commuters demonstrated their commitment to Bell Island as home.

Similar to Keith, within this sample of commuters, a high level of consideration for work mobilities began right at the point of forming their families and physical place of residence. As young couples, some commuters in this sample shared that they spent considerable time deciding 'where to live.' One long-term commuter, Nell, recalled the process of looking at houses on Bell Island over many months claiming she was hesitant to move at first: "I said but '[husband], I don't want to move home, I don't want to move to the island.' I was so used to livin' in St. John's, I didn't mind livin' in St. John's. … I loved it over there. I was quite contented." Adding, "Well, he [wouldn't] have to commute everyday." Together, Nell and her husband understood that moving back to Bell Island would mean engaging in work mobilities. As she maintained, "Yep. That's part of living on Bell Island, being a Bell Islander, is commuting. You want to live here on this island… [but] the jobs are very few and far between here on Bell Island. And so, like I said, if you wanted a job…" Other commuters I interviewed spoke of similar discussions with their partners, ultimately reaching the same agreement that commuting was inherently intertwined with calling Bell Island home. As Jean, a former commuter who traveled for about a decade starting in the late 1970s, along with her still-commuting husband, maintained,

> *[Commuting] was a natural thing to do. … We got to get up and we got to do this. … Now maybe today, with the people that are going today, it's probably natural for them too. … Like 'cuz you had to survive. If you didn't have a job here, you had to commute. There's no doubt about it. … If you haven't got a job on the island, you can't make a*

> *living, you've got to get it. You've got to do that. And I think that's why it comes natural to people 'cuz in their minds they're thinking: 'Well, I gotta survive.' So, this is how we do it, right? Even though you're probably working, punching in 12, 14 hours a day for an 8-hour shift. But like that was hard, but you did it. To me, it was just natural.*

The trade-offs cited for many included being close to family, affordable housing, safety, and quiet. Several in my sample, like Keith, simply maintained, "it's home."

For many, calling Bell Island home had much to do with their own upbringings on the island and commuters spoke candidly of how decisions to settle were based on memories of how growing up on Bell Island was peaceful and safe surrounded by family. As long-term commuter Harriett told it,

> *…it's never been complicated for me because even throughout my work career, you know, I remember talking to people and they say, 'How do you live over there?' And I said, the only thing I can tell you is, is that I said, 'When I hit the top of the road that hits the airport,' I said, 'There's a feeling that comes over you. I feel like I've left everything behind me.' … And you know we grew up here and, I guess, we weren't a rich family. Dad worked, mom ran the household. Like we never had a lot of parks or anything like that, you know. Nothing like that. But you know something? Having a good family… It was just all good I found. Like there was nothing, you never felt unsafe at anytime, hey? And that's what inspired us when we decided to get married … you know we knew we wanted to have a family. And we knew if we were on Bell Island we had those supports. It was smaller, my family is there, [his] family was there. We knew that there'd be no issues. I wanted to continue to work, that can be done.*

In this way, living on Bell Island with cross-household support further enabled Harriett to continue to work, even if it meant engaging in intensive commuting practices, something that will be discussed in Chapter 6. Similarly, many commuters spoke of Bell Island being a good place to raise children, as it had been when they were young, even if current commuting patterns meant increased time away. One young female commuter, Lisa, explained her thought process around 'moving home,'

> *I decided to move back for a year when I was on maternity [leave]. That was like seven and a half years ago, so, I'm still here. I kinda got stuck—not stuck, but it was a more convenient situation for me in regards of childcare because my parents are here and that kinda thing, right? So… you know, and I always say, 'If I haven't had any children I*

> *wouldn't be back here' and I don't think I would. You know, but now he's started school and it's a good community and it's a safer environment for children. So that's why I'm here at the moment.*

As demonstrated in the quote above, household and cross-household patterns of reproductive labour remained intertwined for many in my sample. While another, more recently initiated commuter, named Lydia[33], moved to the island primarily because her partner wanted to move back (and she was candid about her hopes to eventually move away). Lydia did share in her interview that she preferred it for her young daughter, just as Keith and Lisa described, practically stating, "Bell Island is a good place to raise kids. She has a lot of freedom." In this way, some research participants opted to commute in order to prioritize their families and households.

Conceptual Approach

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, social reproduction is the "reproduction of labour on daily, weekly, and annual temporal scales, as well as through generations" (Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015: 183). Generally speaking, tasks of social reproduction encompass the everyday unpaid reproductive labour practices connected with food shopping and cooking, as well as caregiving (including health care), among others (Benzanson and Luxton 2006). Central to this research, scholars also emphasize the "attitudes, behaviours, and emotions, responsibilities and relationships" behind these daily activities (Laslett and Brenner 1989: 382). Similar to the "extra effort" of commuting on this watery route, as described in Chapter 1, the effort behind these social reproductive tasks is also immense (Benzanson and Luxton 2006: 6). As I argue in this chapter, and throughout the thesis, commuting both enables and further

[33] A pseudonym.

complicates the everyday, unpaid social reproductive tasks that need to occur in addition to commuters' regular routines of getting from and to their places of employment. Although social reproductive acts in and of themselves are dynamic, meaning ever-changing, they need to be contextualized to the Bell Island commuter in order to understand how they fit into this specific social setting. As Luxton maintains, "By itself, social reproduction offers little more than a fancy term to describe the ordinary activities of daily life" (Benzanson and Luxton 2006: 6). As such, social reproduction theory provides tools with which to analyze these activities and relationships. Similar to the ways in which a simple chat onboard the ferry fostered other everyday commuting practices (see Chapter 4), this chapter builds on the concept of labour power and ways it is reproduced through multiple, interconnected processes (see Chapter 2) in the Bell Island context. Some of these activities, as Tithi Bhattacharya (2013: n.p.) explains, "regenerate the worker outside the production process and allow her to return to it. These include, among a host of others, food, a bed to sleep in, but also care in psychical ways that keep a person whole." Moreover, these activities that reproduce the worker and are "done completely free of charge for the system by women and men within the household and the community" (Bhattacharya 2013: n.p.). This, as argued by many feminist scholars, is the foundation of capitalism (Benzanson and Luxton 2006; Bhattacharya 2013; Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). Chapter 5 aims to conceptualize the ordinary, social reproductive tasks performed by the commuting workers in my sample for their households all while they simultaneously engaged in the intensive work mobilities described in Chapters 1 and 4.

As discussed in Chapter 2, long-standing feminist scholarship on the gendered division of household labour in various societies and time periods, including Canada in the 20th and 21st centuries, concludes that unpaid domestic labour has unequally burdened women (di Leonardo

1987; Hochschild and Machung 1989; Luxton 1980; Porter 1980). Drawing on my observations and interviews, this thesis also explores men's reproductive labour at the household level. As demonstrated in the opening vignette, men's contributions were ever-shifting, often dependent on who in the household was engaging in work mobilities. Similarly, I am also interested in the ways in which unpaid domestic labour is fundamentally more difficult for lower income commuter households by considering issues of occupation, type of employment contract, and class. At the time of fieldwork, Bell Island had lower average incomes among households and higher rates of unemployment, as compared to the province (Statistics Canada 2017). As such, this research acknowledges that commuters in this context "might be differently produced (with varying wages and differential access to means of social reproduction)" (Bhattacharya (2015: n.p.). Several research participants noted that many commuting Bell Islanders had jobs wherein, as Ches put it, "In 90% of the cases, you don't show up for work, you don't get paid." Another young female commuter explained how, in many jobs, there was also a constant atmosphere of uncertainty due to potential layoffs.

> *There's a lot of impact [to commuting]. Like people can't be there for their families…people are working long hours, they're coming home, they're tired. … The overall stress of not getting to work and then people getting fired, or let go, or laid off. … [My commuter friend] gets laid off all the time. Because if there's layoffs he gets laid off right away because of the boats. … That's a real big stress. And not only like a mental stress, there's a physical stress to it. And there's financial burden. You lose your job and you can't afford to even go to town to even look for fresher produce … you don't get to see friends. You can't make lasting relationships.*

Although these quotes highlight that circumstances of precarious employment (Vosko 2005) were common for Bell Islanders, they contrast with several research participants who told me that they had some flexibility in their jobs and could make up the time if they came late to work, for example, because of the ferry's ever-shifting schedule. In this way, my research follows those, who in recent decades, have expanded the focus of household divisions of labour away

from the "categorical binaries of state and society, work and home, production and social reproduction" (Mitchell, Marston, and Katz 2003: 433). This chapter explores how social reproductive tasks are organized within the household, and enacted differently for workers who are highly, and sometimes precariously, mobile.

For the purposes of this research, I draw on a point of differentiation found among, what van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 340) term "commuter families." The term "commuter families" entails "the geographically dispersing pulls of work and family [that] have led to a relatively new geographical adaptive strategy" (van der Klis and Karsten 2009: 340). Karen D. Hughes and Willam A. Silver (2020: 926) argue that "a stronger dialogue between work-family and mobilities perspectives can greatly enrich work-family research." Household, including domestic labour contributions of both commuters and their partners in this context remains central to our evolving understanding of how Bell Islanders make and remake their households and subsequently, their island home. In this way, I also follow others in considering the ways in which "multiple inequalities" inform the relationship between waged and unwaged labour in service to the household (Bakker and Gill 2019: 505; Benzanson and Luxton 2006; van der Klis and Karsten 2009; also see Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). As well as gender and class, as I did in the previous chapter, I consider the transport inequities that fuel such precarious work mobilities in the Bell Island context, and the ways in which these differentiations are experienced and perpetuated in contrast to other commuters not living on Bell Island. As was highlighted in Chapters 1 and 4, Bell Islanders reside in a place characterized by transport disadvantage, whereby commuters are often uncertain if they will be able to seamlessly arrive to work and home on time due to a sometimes-unreliable ferry service that is the primary transport link (Roseman 2019b). As previously discussed in Chapter 1, two modes of transportation (i.e.

pedestrian or automotive[34]) connect travellers with work and home at either end of the ferry. Therefore, the "journeys to work" concept pioneered by geographer Susan Hanson (1980) serves as a useful analytical framework for this chapter. Early on it was Hanson (1980: 229) who "recognized the journey to work as part of a multiple purpose trip" and "addressed the question of trip structure, i.e., the activity linkages associated with the work trip." As noted in Chapter 2 and demonstrated in Chapter 4, "activity linkages" for Bell Island commuters are complex as they must coordinate combinations of walking, driving, and taxiing at either end of the ferry. Yet linkages are also where social reproductive activities for the household are most likely to occur. As such, I draw on Hanson's (1980: 229) long-standing call for researchers to consider "travel undertaken for non-work purposes in conjunction with the journey to work," as well as the ways in which these trips are differentiated by gender and class (Hanson and Pratt 1995; also see Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015: 177). The subsequent section draws on journeys to work as an analytical lens for demonstrating how, despite lengthy commuting days, commuting workers remain deeply engaged in social reproductive activities for their households regardless of gender.

I further acknowledge the ways in which commuting workers' engagement with household social reproductive practices can change over time, as encouraged by Roseman, Gardiner Barber, and Neis (2015: 177). Much like the rest of my thesis, this chapter discusses the interplay of waged and unwaged labour patterns starting in the late 1960s. These continue to be best demonstrated by the long-term commuting sample, many of whom, like Keith, started commuting in the wake of the mine closures and spoke candidly about shifting divisions of labour as household members entered and exited work mobilities. To better elucidate shifts such

[34] Although cycling was possible, it was rare.

as this, I follow Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell (2017: 6) who apply a long-used term "life course" within the context of work-related mobilities. Tamara K. Hareven (1996: 2) calls this: "A life course perspective," or a framework that "provides both a developmental and historical" view that "enables us to understand how patterns of assistance and support networks were formed" and then "carried over into the later years." Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell (2017:6) also explain that considering the life courses of work commuters, in particular, helps draw out "individuals' transitions—including entry into, experiences of, and exits from work—in relation to temporal shifts in families, institutions, and societies." Indeed, commuting workers I interviewed provided narratives demonstrating how household patterns of social reproduction vary in relation to the impact of commuting, and can shift over time. Hughes and Silver (2020: 925) also draw attention to "expanded understanding[s] of work-family dynamics" as part of work mobilities given that this is a reality that is increasingly present in the national and global workforces.

The following chapter's subsections emphasize that work commuters I interviewed needed more than just the practical and emotional support behind the sociality found among fellow commuters to support their off-island mobilities (see Chapter 4). They needed an additional layer of support from their own households. This chapter further emphasizes that commuting workers in my sample also engaged significantly in household labour when taking into account the full journey to work (Hanson 1980) as well as the ways in which entering and exiting work mobilities can shift roles and responsibilities within households of working commuters (Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell 2017). As is the case with others, viewed over time, commuter families in the Bell Island context remained deeply engaged with social reproductive practices at the household level. Their labour reproduces, supports, and sustains

commuters and their households as they engage(d) with the intensive and precarious work mobilities inherent in the Bell Island context.

Practices of Intra-household Social Reproduction

Similar to the labour that goes into the support network between and among commuters described in Chapter 4, household labour undoubtedly serves as an additional layer that makes the "extra effort" behind getting to and from work tenable. As van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 340) maintain, although "work has undergone a scaling-up process from the local environment in the vicinity of the family home to the regional or even (inter)national scale, family care and the everyday practices of family life still take place predominantly on the local scale." The latter part of this subsection describes the many notable ways commuters contribute to their household's social reproductive activities, but I begin by first detailing the critical support Bell Island-based household members provide.

Given that the majority of my core sample were women (see Chapter 3), several of whom candidly discussed their reliance on non-commuting male partners to manage household tasks in their absence, this analysis is further informed by how other forms of differentiation shape divisions of domestic labour (Bakker and Gill 2019, also see Roseman Gardiner Barber, and Neis 2015). As van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 342) note, "work family balance in commuter families is different from that of the usual nuclear-residence dual-earner family." Hughes and Silver (2020: 926) argue that "precisely how ERM [employment related mobility] shapes work-family dynamics, however, is a question that is vastly under-examined relative to its growing importance." This chapter seeks to consider the ways in which work mobilities in the Bell Island context play a large role in who is primarily responsible for domestic labour at the household

level and the ways in which this can change over time, perhaps even more so than gender. For example, toward the end of the fieldwork period, I met the young female commuter I call Lydia at a coffee shop in St. John's, just before her all-night shift began nearby. She sat across the table from me and instead of detailing the division of household tasks between her and her non-commuting male partner, as I had asked, she nonchalantly waved off my questions. "He does the majority of the house stuff," she maintained. While in the day-to-day, divisions of domestic labour are more layered, in the Bell Island context they can remain heavily dependent on *who* in the household engages in work mobilities.

Cooking and meal preparation, especially in the evenings, was the most often mentioned domestic task made difficult by intensive commuting schedules. Former commuter Jean (whose husband was still commuting at the time of fieldwork) recalled the years when they were a two-commuter household. She explained that evening meal preparation presented a particular challenge. As she told it,

> *The thing is I found that was the hard part for me was like, gettin' home in the evening, preparin' a meal. What are we going to have? It's 6:00 now in the evening you haven't got time to cook so everything was kind of fast. Then you were trying, okay, while you were eatin', while you were havin' a snack, putting somethin' else on so you had something half cooked or done before you went to bed that night so you'd re-heat it.*

Keith similarly described that when his wife was also commuting their arrangement was, "Whoever was home first, cooked." Several commuters I interviewed, both female and male alike, explained that their non-commuting partners were the ones who primarily managed supper for the household while they made the evening trip 'across the Tickle.' As former commuter Nora remembered, "When I was commuting, I would come home, he'd [husband] have supper and stuff on."

For many of the commuters this "everything was kind of fast," meal preparation was a significant departure from their Bell Island upbringings, and an example of the ways in which food and evening meals, in particular, remain historically marked. In the context of thinking about her commuter-driven eating habits, long-term commuter Carmel Power first recalled with great fondness family meals growing up:

> *Always had enough to eat. Had plenty. … [Mom] made bread every day – homemade bread every day, and of course when she made the bread she made the toutons too. And the toutons were made for lunch. If dad worked in the mines now he was on two shifts, right? He went to work in the morning and came home at 4. If he came home at 4, there was suppertime. She'd have the big supper no matter if it was fish … But dad loved it. She'd cook it for him. … That was then. … It's like I said, now we weren't raised on steak, but there was lots of like pork chops and chicken, roast beef. We always liked the salt fish and potatoes and scrunchions. … We always used to have toast in the morning and porridge. You were not allowed to go to the door without a bowl of porridge and toast.*

Other commuters in this sample similarly spoke of meal times growing up on the island. But after beginning to commute daily in 1970, Carmel's then decades-long work mobilities necessitated a different approach to food than that of her upbringing, and this was largely the case for others in my sample. Although her fondness for evening meals remained thanks, in part, to her then on-island husband's meal management, the porridge breakfast and homemade bread of her childhood was traded out. As she told it,

> *Like I never took lunches [to work]. I never ate. Still today I don't. That's true. … I love my supper. I do and I guess it was the way I was raised. I love a nice supper. But for lunches and that no, I don't bother. I'll have a bowl of fruit. I'll have a yogurt and something like that but… just grab it. But if I have to go preparing it, I'd just soon do without it. Too much trouble, Diane, too much trouble.*

With a demanding commuting schedule, and "because I don't like to cook," Carmel's then-husband who worked on-island "did all of the cooking" in the evenings. As she recalled, "He cooked. [He] was a great cook. I never cooked. … I cleaned up, he would prepare and even today

I do that." In the midst of chaotic commuting, she added, "Managing [to] at least get one meal into you a day" was the goal.

Aside from meal preparation, most other household chores were said to be organized on a weekly basis as interviewees claimed there was generally 'just no time' for anything beyond commuting. As George, explained, "There's some evenings you wouldn't get home till 7:00 [p.m.]. And then time you got your supper, you got a shower, time to go to bed out of it. I was up 4:00 in the morning." Another commuter, Beverley, added, "I think most people, well I'm going by myself, like when you come home in the [weekday] evening you don't have the energy or the incentive to do anything else. You just prepare for the next day and that's it. And like I say, come Friday you're wiped. Saturday or Sunday you might do something, but only if you got to." This is in line with van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 340) who maintain in their research, among 30 commuter couples in the Netherlands, that a division of household responsibilities among "commuter families" often exists "not on a daily basis, but in weekly timeframes." Indeed, several commuters described Saturdays as a shared day for domestic labour within households. As now retired long-term commuter Carmel explained, "Because I had to get up early. So my day consisted of just work and sleep. That break, you didn't have any time. And I remember Saturdays I used to sleep in. That was my day to sleep in was Saturdays. It would be 12 o'clock before I'd get up. And then of course you did your housework. On Saturdays that's what you did." Several commuters, including some long-term commuters, also spoke of needing to commute on non-work days solely for purposes of social reproduction, the latter of which will be described further in this subsection.

But, as I discovered during participant observation, a commuter's journey to work actually facilitates certain provisioning practices. Although household and cross-household

patterns of social reproduction undoubtedly sustain commuting workers' daily mobilities, the latter of which will be expanded upon in Chapter 5, commuters also remain singularly active participants in household reproductive labour as part of their journeys to work. As one former female commuter, Nora, detailed, "Gotta stop into this store because we gotta buy this, this, and this. Because I don't want to spend another day. Even now when I go for work, I'll do work and then I'll punch out, and go do some personal stuff at the same time because I'm over there." Moreover, the lengthy hours Bell Islanders spend commuting sometimes makes it difficult to do some of these same tasks on-island. As Lisa explained,

> *Like often times I'd go on my lunch break or after work and pick up things in town and just bring um home. Because it was just a time saver for me. You know what I mean? Like 'cause I used to work across from Cohen's [a store] and then I worked across from the mall. So like if there was anything I needed picked up I'd just go get it and then go home, ya know what I mean? Rather than get home. Because the other thing was, by the time I got home, the grocery store [on Bell Island] was closed. It closes at 6:00. So, I could never make the store except for Thursdays and Fridays because every other day of the week it was closed by the time I got home. Little things like that, right? I could never make the post office. My mother had my post office key for like two years, 'cause I could never check my mail, right? How could I?*

As in the quote above, commuters include stops for groceries, 'picking up' something, getting gas in the car, among other activities, as part of their journeys to work. A group of female commuters laughed on a Monday evening when I posed a question about provisioning 'on the other side' and responded:

> Harriett: *If that lineup at Portugal Cove is any indication in the morning. There was a traffic jam at that gas station this morning.*
>
> Patricia: *That's just as bad as a highway. That road, Portugal Cove Road.*
>
> Harriett: *... But certainly, the traffic spilled out onto the Cove Road this morning from the gas station. ...*
>
> Beverley: *Gas [prices] go down a lot?*

> Harriett: *I figured it was the people home [on Bell Island] for the weekend with their cars that just had enough fumes to get 'em to the gas station. They were filling up before they went to work, hey?"*

Lengthy line-ups at the gas station near the ferry terminal in Portugal Cove, for example, were also observed and experienced as part of my ride-alongs.

Commuters' engagement in social reproduction importantly also occurs at different times throughout the workday, not just before or after work. As Lisa described, several other interviewees also spoke of taking provisioning trips during lunch hours, or while on scheduled breaks. Beverley, maintained that she usually runs her errands in the middle of the workday stating, "Lunchtime. 'Cause once I get off work I just head straight to the cove. That's it." A primary reason cited for this mid-day break spent on errands is the ever-present need to 'beat it back to the ferry.' In this context of extended and complex mobilities, journeys to work for Bell Island commuters also include provisioning journeys-while-at-work in order to prioritize making it to work, or home, smoothly given this route's precariousness.

These mid-day trips also speak to the importance of spontaneous engagement with social reproduction for commuters. At times, this is due to the unpredictable ferry schedule, and commuters use their wait times to 'be productive.' For example, Harriett spoke of evenings when if she knew of scheduling delays with the ferry, or the line-up was too impacted, she quickly pivoted to then utilize what could become a lengthy waiting period for social reproductive tasks instead. As she told it,

> *And you know when I worked evenings like that, you know what I did? I go and do my errands and I'd come back later. Because I knew I wasn't getting on 4, 5 or 6 o'clock. So I'd hang around town, do my errands, go have lunch or a cup of coffee with some friends, maybe a bite and then I'd come in for say quarter to nine then was the ferry. You knew that was gone then, you could get on that, didn't need a ticket. Done. But then it took away the frustration of being there.*

Spontaneous trips also risk increasing wait times, especially in the evenings, as commuters act to be responsive to last-minute requests received from their families or friends on-island. For example, as experienced during a ride-along, the commuter I was travelling with quickly stopped into a St. John's grocery store on our way to the Portugal Cove ferry terminal to meet a provisioning request that had come in during the workday. Although the store was not out of the way, this brief stop nearly caused us to miss the ferry as it happened to be experiencing capacity issues that evening (also see Chapter 4).

Generally speaking, on-island households count on commuters' engaging in social reproduction as part of their journeys to work. Former commuter Jean spoke about her still commuting husband managing their family's shopping. As she told it, "He does the majority of it. And, moreover, this time of year, because I'm here 7 days a week and I don't like to give up my day. So, if he's going to town [for work], like there's a big list that I need and he'll pick it all up when he's over there." In this way, shopping among my sample was not necessarily gendered, but in fact dependent on who commuted. As George explained, during his commuting years, "I shopped in town. See, then I had to work every second weekend [in St. John's]. So, on the weekends that I worked, if I needed things, go out and do a bit of shoppin', the wife needed stuff, I go do stuff like that." Or, as Keith added, "I wasn't much at clothing or stuff like that. I'm not very good at picking those things out for her [my wife]. But [in] terms of groceries, I'd often pick up some grocery items that she wanted."

Extra ferry trips on non-work days or 'days off' was also common among this sample, especially for those with on-island partners and children, as these journeys most often occurred for food provisioning or other shopping. In the Bell Island context, shopping for some households is a major social reproductive task that often requires ferry trips, usually with a

vehicle, in order to get into St. John's and perhaps even stop in at multiple stores. These trips are also an example of the ways in which commuters participate in both commuting *and* domestic labour on their non-work days. This practice was described by those with the longest histories of commuting in this sample, as well as more recent commuters. As Eileen Foley, the spouse of long-term commuter Leo Foley told it, in the early days of commuting in the late 1960s, "Everything was closed on Sunday. We had to go on Saturday. So, we got up on Saturday morning with the four of them [children] and get on and go over to get groceries. Twice a month. Because he used to get paid every two weeks." Still other current commuters pointed out the need for traveling on their days off primarily due to shift work and not being available to shop during normal store hours. As long-term commuter Patricia, explained, "When I do twelve-hour shifts. I'm up for the first boat, right? I get up at… Well, I have to go down there twenty to five to get the first boat and I don't get home until after 9:00 at night. And I'm not getting much sleep in between." When asked about shopping in the midst of her shift work she added, "I do mine on my day off. I don't have time with twelve-hour shifts." Similarly, commuters who do not travel with their own vehicles and instead carpool or take the taxi into town spoke of needing to come back to St. John's on their days off, usually with household members in tow, because that is when they have access to a vehicle. Finally, for other "commuter families," especially ones with an island-based adult, saving social reproductive activities for weekends or days off created a reason to get off of the island. As now semi-retired Harriett explained,

> *I've often said, 'I only sleep on Bell Island.' Because when you're workin', by the time you come home, and particularly when [my son] was smaller, he was in hockey, get him to that. Get home, do lessons, time to go to bed, hey? Yep. And [my husband] finds that too. 'Cause I remember when we'd be workin', come Saturdays you would dread… 'Don't ask me to go to town. I am not going into the city today.' [My husband] would say, 'You don't understand what it's like to be here seven days a week.' Yup, and I didn't until I retired. He said, 'You've got to get out of here.' He said, 'You've got to get out of here, you've got to change your environment.'*

In this way, household rhythms even on non-working days remain connected to commuting patterns as households still organize, orchestrate, and act around work mobilities.

In this context of extended and complex commuting, many daily travelers further described Sundays as being on 'weather watch.' Especially in the winter months, the precarity of this route further impacts commuters' abilities to consistently engage in social reproduction for their households. As unpredictable overnight stays 'in town' are common in the Bell Island context often due to bad weather, I build on van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 341) who discuss the ways in which "geographical household strategy raises questions about how commuter families create a work family balance in a situation of a geographical incongruity of the scales of work and family life." Most common on Sundays, commuters spoke of carefully watching the weather and relying on household members to fill in at home should they need to go over 'the night before.' Indeed, van der Klis and Karsten's (2009: 341) framing of a nuclear family applies well within this sample of commuting workers where "the spouse who lives in the family home (the home-based parent) becomes a part-time single parent and the spouse who leaves the family home for work (the commuting parent) combines long-distance parenting during workdays with membership of the part-time nuclear family during weekends." This example is especially pointed in circumstances where Bell Island commuters must be absent for longer stretches of time than just the working day.

No doubt there is a significant household impact behind the passengering figure's "extra effort" described in Chapter 1 as the determination of making it to and from work often requires a last-minute shift in household labour responsibilities should the commuter need to leave suddenly in the evening hours. As Carmel explained, "…we'd have Sunday dinner so you had to clear up from that, but I remember like when the ice would be in, well that's… like your mind,

my mind was always going." She added, "There was the weather and the boat—I was always ahead of the game. You had to be. Like if I knew which way the wind was [if] it was north east winds, that was it. Specially if they were high winds, well, then I'd leave and come over early. If the winds were gonna be up Monday morning, I'd leave and come back [to town] Sunday evening." Des added in his interview that family members, especially partners of commuting workers, were often just as knowledgeable about winds and weather. As described in Chapter 1, commuters may also stay over 'on the other side' for lengthier stretches of time due to weather or ongoing mechanical issues with the ferry boats so as not to miss work.

A couple interviewed as part of this research was similar to Carmel Power in their local reputation as important 'passengering figures' (also see Chapter 1). Leo Foley was well-known among Bell Islanders. He was one of the earliest commuters—having begun his career on Bell Island in the mines, but started commuting in 1967 after being one of the last workers laid off as part of the series of closures. His wife Eileen Foley, a teacher, spoke openly about her home-based role that ultimately allowed him to enter and sustain daily commuting for decades under difficult conditions as his shift work often did not line-up with the ferry schedule. At one point, part of his commuting schedule was regularly spending the night in the Portugal Cove waiting room terminal. As she explained, "The boat used to leave here [Bell Island], with a last run of 10:30 at night, and she'd leave Portugal Cove and come back after 11 [p.m.]—and he used to get off work at 12 o'clock [a.m.]. Couldn't make it." To manage, he would sleep a few hours in the waiting room, take the first boat home and sleep a bit more, then travel back to work in the afternoon. She added, "He had a bed roll, a sleeping bag and a pillow and everything." During the winter months, they spoke together of lengthier absences from home and times when she had to singularly manage losing power on the island and having to shovel out while simultaneously

caring for their four youngsters. “So I spent quite a few nights here alone,” she stated practically. “I had to manage. I’m a pioneer woman.” Des, a long-term commuter, also spoke about having to spend the night in his car, at the Portugal Cove waiting room, and then in later years at his place of work. As he told it, “I’d stay at [work]. At the old [workplace] I’d used to sleep in a [room], in the new [workplace], I’d sleep in our [common] room.” He added, “You find a lot of commuters are the same way. They sleep anywhere. You often heard tell of people: ‘My god, you’d sleep on a bed of rocks.’ I find a lot of commuters sleep anywhere, anytime.” Beverley exemplified this statement when she told about a time period, prior to finding full time work, when she juggled two part-time jobs. Given the length of the commute back to Bell Island, she would sleep in her car between jobs. As she told it,

> *Well, when I first started in town, I had a part time job I used to work from quarter after four to quarter after seven [p.m.]. So I used to go on the ten to three [p.m.] boat. And then I used to get off quarter after seven [p.m.] and I used to work at [large retail store] from eleven o’clock at night to seven in the morning. And I used to go out—I can’t believe I did it like when I think back now, I was out of my mind—I used to go to the [large retail store] parking lot and I had a blanket and I used to go sleep for a couple of hours before I went to work. And then get off seven o’clock, come back to the Cove, go home, up again at 1:30 [p.m.], get the ten to three boat again. I can’t believe I did that.*

Another female commuter described working shifts at a motel in St. John’s where she was sometimes offered a room if the weather was bad. “So I was literally living at work,” she stated. This same commuter explained the impact commuting can have on relationships. “My schedule really affected my relationship with my ex-boyfriend. And I think it’s hard to make relationships here on the island. Because if you’re dating someone in St. John’s, you’ve got this boat issue and, well, you want to go to a movie, but I can’t go to a late movie because I’ve got a ‘curfew.’[35]

[35] This commuter used the term ‘curfew’ in reference to last boat of the evening to depart Portugal Cove. During the fieldwork period, and as weather or other scheduling issues permitted, this would have been around 10:25 p.m.

Even when commuters do make it home each evening, daytime, on-island events cannot be readily adjusted for commuters' schedules. Several commuting mothers spoke readily about having to miss on-island events, in this case, school functions were often mentioned. As van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 350) note, "When we look at the time allocation of the commuter parents' efforts at home, it is clear that they simply cannot compete with the home-based parents." Likewise, Harriett, who traveled until her son's last year of high school, spoke of her non-commuting husband needing to attend most school functions. As she told it,

> *When [my son] was in school there was days like special events in school—like opening and closing ceremonies. Probably collided with year-end or collided with major proposals going through [busy times in her office job], [I] couldn't be there. [My husband] went. When it was the letter M day I know I couldn't go. Absolutely couldn't arrange it so I said, 'the best M is going with you, the F, your father.' [Chuckles]. So [his father] had to go. Like [my husband] said, 'You got to turn it around. You got to tell him, people understand and I won't be the only one who won't be there.'*

Another female commuter, Patricia, spoke of a general sadness at 'missing out' adding, "You missed… like... you lost a lot of time with your children. Anybody that got a young family today, they lose a lot of time with their children. That's a sad thing." In their own research with commuting families, which took place in the early 2000s, van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 350) documented similar concerns stating, "The commuting parents are themselves aware of their shortcomings, particularly towards the children. In this respect they fear unexpected events that have an impact on the emotional well-being of their children." But, as Harriett's husband suggested, "You got to turn it around," meaning, 'find the good,' and several I spoke with approached commuting and missed time with children with similar resilience.

As this subsection denotes, commuters receive support from other household members in managing domestic labour tasks that further facilitate mobilities in this precarious context. Moreover, commuters also engage heavily in social reproduction, both as part of their journeys

to work, but also on their days off. All of this unpaid labour works in support of the reproduction of the household and is organized in and around commuting patterns, not necessarily by gender. As this subsection demonstrates, female commuters spoke about having male partners at home managing evening meals, childcare, and taking over tasks if weather forced a sudden, or extended trip 'to the other side.' Moreover, male commuters described engaging in social reproduction for their household both during non-commuting times, but also as part of their journeys to work. In this way, work mobilities as they both hinder and facilitate social reproductive practices for the household are an accepted part of commuter families living on Bell Island.

Shifting Household Roles Upon Exit

As in the opening vignette of long-term commuter Keith and his family, I now turn to the ways in which patterns of household labour often shifted over time, but remained fundamentally connected with the complex off-island work mobilities experienced by everyone in this sample. In doing so, I draw on the life course of working commuters in this context, and the ways in which their work mobilities are historically contextualized, negotiated, and experienced over time (Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell 2017; Hareven 1996; Hughes and Silver 2020). As Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell (2017: 6) maintain, "A mobility lens on work and the life course has shifted attention toward the interactive effects and meanings among many moving parts and people, including within households." This analysis, much like that regarding the gendered division of household labour, also has feminist roots (Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell 2017). Indeed, for many I spoke with during interviews, divisions of household labour were often organized around the particular timings of household members entering and exiting

commuting. As such, engagement in work mobilities was a thoughtfully discussed and constantly negotiated topic within households in my sample. This is primarily because, although commuting is a deeply engrained and understood part of residing on Bell Island, it is also extremely difficult and, for some households, unsustainable—especially as various household members move, grow, or change.

For households with children, discussions around entering and exiting work mobilities due to caregiving responsibilities are commonplace. This is reflected in the literature more broadly as parents often (re)consider and re-negotiate work-family balance during the childhood and adolescent phases of their children (Brannan 2005; Luxton 1980). Former commuter Jean described the thinking in her household as she exited commuting to care for her young child, then later re-entered all while her husband continued to commute:

> *I dearly loved it [my job]. Didn't want to quit. But got pregnant. … at the time I couldn't get a sitter. … I wanted somebody to come in. I didn't want to drag her [my daughter] out every morning. But at that time... Like I used to have to go down to the ferry at 4 o'clock in the morning. But even to try and get somebody to take her out of the home, like there wasn't anybody I could get. And I only had so long to make up my mind and my husband was working at the time and he said, 'You know what? It's not worth it. Stay home.' I stayed home and he provided for us for quite a few years until I went to work again. And I found at that time you weren't getting that much money, so by the time you paid the babysitter and you paid your money out for commuting I was probably comin' home for twenty-five bucks and it wasn't really worth it.*

Another young female commuter, Lydia, and her male partner more recently made a similar decision with him opting to stay home and provide care for their child. As she described it, they also had challenges finding babysitting on the island. So, they had opted for him to leave his job in construction and stay home for a few years. As she explained, "He'll go back to work when our daughter is around 12 and she's old enough to stay home by herself." Lydia acknowledged that they know that, when he re-enters the workforce, he will again be commuting long hours.

Another individual I interviewed, Lisa, was a single parent ultimately driven to exit after attempting to commute for many years with a young child. As she put it,

> *Like, I mean I had a little boy in kindergarten who had his little kindergarten homework waiting for his mother to come home and do his homework because he wouldn't do it with anybody else and rightfully so. You know what I mean, rightfully so. It was important because I didn't want anybody else to do it with him and neither did he. I felt like my parents were doing more – above and beyond their part as it was. You know what I mean? And that was hard. And that was like, I mean I'd be gone sometimes 12, 15 hours a day. Only getting paid for 8, right? And, I mean, it was unfortunate at the time that the boats went the way they did … Because if we had two reliable ferries that were crossing perfectly? Maybe it would have been different.*

As highlighted in Chapter 4, this same commuter showed the same determination and applied considerable "extra effort" to her daily commute. She described frequently going over on Sunday evenings, and staying for long stretches 'on the other side,' to ensure she was able to make it to work. But this dedication simultaneously meant losing out on precious time with her young child and she ultimately transitioned to a hard-to-find on-island position.

As children grew, several commuters spoke about the ways in which they had become engaged in household labour that better facilitated complex commuting practices. Although this age group still requires "substantial parenting time," as van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 350) point out, "this is more about 'being there' than about 'doing care'." As Kay, a long-term commuter remarked,

> *Oh my kids? Yes! They were excellent. All my kids could wash and sew on buttons. They used to make a, I remember a list on the fridge, and say who was doing what. 'On the weekends mom was home, but she's worked all week.' …One would strip and make the beds up and the other one would do this that and the other thing. They grew independent because mom and dad [my husband and me] were not always here. ... They were quite independent. They had to be. … I really didn't do the organizing of the chores. They did. … Mom [I] did her share but they generally tried to help as much as they could. … I remember my son used to make pizza on Friday nights, that was his job. He would make the pizza. And, uh, we still talk about that. My son was over the other day and I said, 'Remember the pizzas?' He said, 'My god they were some good.' Can't buy pizzas like that anywhere.*

Similarly, Van der Klis and Karsten (2009: 350) speak to this household shift in their own work noting, "… when the home-based parent is in fact a single parent, some household and care responsibilities, like cleaning and childcare, are contracted out. In the families with teenagers, the children do substantial chores, such as cooking, helping out with the laundry, or keeping the house tidy." In this way, my research also shows that it is age and not just gender to consider with regard to the division of reproductive labour in commuters' households.

Beyond household chores, some older children in the household of commuters also engaged in work mobilities themselves for income in the form of part-time jobs (Power 2022). In these instances, they often joined their parents usually as part of a shared journey to work. One long-term commuter spoke about her son commuting with her and getting to know her 'network' (see Chapter 4). As she told it, "So as he became older and I remember when he took a summer job one year at Dominion [a grocery store in St. John's], after, I think it was grade 11, and he was commuting then because he was working in the vegetable section down there. And he'd come home in the evening and say, 'Oh I seen Bridget or Margaret at the supermarket today,' he'd say, … But he knew from sitting at the table and they were with me or something!" In adulthood, most commuters in this sample explained that their children opted to move off of Bell Island and settle on the Newfoundland mainland, or elsewhere in Canada (see Chapter 1). In retirement, however, a central activity for former commuters was described as traveling to visit children and grandchildren 'on the other side.' They also often participate in care giving, described further in Chapter 6.

In this way, for several of the long-term commuters I spoke with, a shift occurred when they retired and exited commuting, which often coincided with children being 'grown' and mostly out of the house. As Keith explained, there is undoubtedly less demand on domestic

labour when there are two people rather than seven, for example, in a household. Des, a long-term commuter who was semi-retired at the time of fieldwork spoke similarly about a recent shift in his household's meal preparation. As he told it,

> *When I was gone all day [commuting], [wife] would always have the supper meal prepared. Always did, right? It's only since the children left that I kind of took over everything. But it's only since then that [wife] is involved in so much now, she's working all day she punches in a lot of hours here, right? So, I will always make sure that there's an evening meal prepared.*

A female long-term commuter whose husband remained on-island throughout her career shared that a shift in domestic duties occurred with regard to household labour upon her exit from ferry commuting:

> *Oh, he did all that while I was gone [commuting]. He was mister house husband. Now he doesn't because I'm home. Although he'll put the washer on or the clothes in the dryer for me or hang it out or whatever he's going to do. But uh, generally, I'm the one that does the cooking and the cleaning now that I'm retired…*

This was also the case for others, like Keith in the opening vignette, who naturally adapted and changed their own engagement in household labour. Similarly, another long-term male commuter, now in retirement, John, agreed that his own household circumstances had changed since his exit adding, "The two of us pretty well pitch in."

In considering the "life course" of commuting workers, as Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell (2017: 6) suggest, this subsection highlights important points of entering and exiting work mobilities in the Bell Island context, as well as the ways in which commuting and non-commuting household members' engagement in household labour shifts over time. Similar to the previous sub-section, the division of reproductive tasks between commuters and their partners remained organized and influenced primarily by who engages in work mobilities.

Conclusion

To conclude, Chapter 5 considered commuting and the gendered division of household labour by emphasizing an additional layer of support that further sustains precarious work mobilities off-island. But it also showed the ways in which commuting workers contribute meaningfully to their households' domestic labour tasks. By utilizing Hanson's (1980) concept of the working commuter's full journey to work, I drew on an analytical lens that had me asking questions and observing activity linkages, or stopovers before, during, and after the workday. I then utilized Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell (2017: 6) suggestion to consider points in the life course of commuters (and other members of their households), ultimately considering the ways in which household roles can shift following an exit from work mobilities. As such, intertwined within intensive daily work mobilities, commuters in this context remain deeply engaged with social reproductive practices at the household level. Especially viewed over time, this form of labour continues to make and remake commuters' commitment to their island home.

Chapter Six—Working Commuters' Cross-Household and Community Activities[36]

Sitting at Nell's kitchen table in July 2015, I had prepared for our conversation to revolve mostly around her twenty-plus years as a working commuter. As a female long-term commuter in this sub-sample, at the time of our conversation, Nell was still travelling off of Bell Island five, and sometimes six days a week into St. John's. Having been employed in the same job for the duration of her two-decade-long commuting history, Nell was a seasoned and hearty traveler; despite being a 'nervous commuter' and prone to seasickness, she still caught one of the first boats off Bell Island in the dark, early morning hours. But upon returning home in the late afternoon much of the rest of the evening was devoted to her uncle who had recently fallen ill. She had even requested a shift in her work schedule to better accommodate caregiving. As she explained: "I get off at 3 o'clock. … By the time I get home, get his supper ready for him, get over [to his house], give him his pills, do his eye drops, and pick up his laundry and stuff like that I get home here probably after 5 o'clock. And then I'm gone to bed 9 o'clock!"

This extended beyond a daily evening ritual, as Nell had long opted to work the Saturday shift whereby one weekday was then designated for travelling with others to medical and other appointments off-island and back into St. John's. As she told it, this mid-week day was initially set aside to help care for her aging parents, and was now consistently spent with her uncle. Nell's recently semi-retired sister—also a long-term commuter of over forty years—now often joined her on the mid-week trips. As they explained, this allowed for a coordinated drop-off at the front entrance of the health clinic while one of them then waited in the car or parked. Together, along

[36] This chapter is adapted and expanded from a published book chapter (see Royal 2022) titled, *"*You do it for other people": Social reproduction practices outside the home among commuting workers" found in the collection *Families, Mobility and Work* edited by Barbara Neis, Christina Murray, and Nora Spinks.

with their third sister who works on-island, they have all long shared in the care of each other, as well as family members across various generations.

As previously discussed, despite the daily commutes of working Bell Islanders being lengthened and increasingly complicated by frequent ferry delays and cancellations in this context of sometimes extreme "transport disadvantage" (Delbosc and Currie 2011; also see Roseman 2020), it was observed throughout fieldwork that many also put in 'second' and 'third shifts' (Hochschild and Machung 1989) doing unpaid work both on and off Bell Island, as well as part of their "journey to work" (Hanson 1980) and over their "life course" (Dorow, Roseman, and Cresswell 2017; also see Chapter 5). This chapter emphasizes practices of social reproduction as they extend into the households of others as well as within the broader Bell Island community. In doing so, I assert that, despite having paid employment and enduring intensive daily work mobilities, commuters in this context simultaneously maintain long-standing social reproductive practices outside of the home. Moreover, it is not just the reproductive work of the commuters that is so central to Bell Island, but also that of those assisting them. Taken on its own or combined with reproductive efforts described in subsequent Chapters 4 and 5, this form of labour ultimately is central to "*making community*" (Daniels 1987: 412) in the Bell Island context.

Returning to Nell, whose social reproductive practices ranged across her decades of commuting from tasks she has done for members of both her immediate and extended family, as described in the vignette above, to assistance provided to friends, neighbours, and also lesser known acquaintances. Some of these patterns occurred on Bell Island including food sharing and assisting with household chores in the homes of others such as cleaning and laundry. But additional unwaged labour patterns emerged as part of her daily off-island journey to work

including fielding information about the boat and road conditions, nearly constant ride-sharing, errand running and bill paying on behalf of others, as well as dropping off 'packages' from the on-island families of hospitalized Bell Islanders temporarily located in St. John's. Indeed, some of these themes were touched on in Chapters 3 and 4. As Nell teased, "At one point I almost felt like I was a taxi service." Her amiable approach to this form of work mirrored my broader experiences on-island as a central theme of this fieldwork, whereby intensive patterns of social reproduction indicate a continuity with historical patterns, and largely normalized among residents. These are in-built examples of what Arlene Daniels (1987, 403) argues is "invisible work." As such, this is work that is otherwise "involved in the social construction of daily life maintenance and development of institutions" that often "disappears from our observations and reckonings when we limit ourselves to the conception work" (Daniels 1987, 403). As upheld in Chapters 4 and 5, these social reproductive patterns sustain on-island life and complex work mobilities. Yet commuting continues to remain a central theme in the lives of all Bell Islanders.

Conceptual Approach

Building on already established social reproduction theory (see Chapters 2 and 5), the ethnographic material in Chapter 6 demonstrates ways commuters contribute meaningfully to other households as well as the broader Bell Island community. As Daniels (1987: 413) asserts, examining this form of work allows us to "regard the workers in a new light, appreciating both their effort and their skills." Indeed, considering cross-household and community reproduction is an additional layer highlighting the dedication commuters in this sample manage to continuously apply and sustain across multiple domains. For this chapter, I was particularly influenced by di Leonardo's (1987: 441) assertion that documenting cross-household social reproduction—what

she terms “women’s work and family domain”—provides two outcomes: the first is its “elevation to visibility;” the second is a formulation of unwaged labour outputs as “products of continuous strategy.” The latter fits well within the Bell Island context. As noted throughout this thesis, commuting figures are continuously strategizing—about the ferry schedule, the weather, making to and from work and home on time, food provisioning, caregiving, and so on (see Chapters 1, 4 and 5). As Nell demonstrated in the opening vignette, tasks related to cross-household and community reproduction also require thoughtful planning, especially in the midst of intensive commuting patterns.

As noted in Chapter 2, feminist theorists emphasize the importance of considering the ways in which household labour is essential to the workings of everyday life (e.g. Benzanson and Luxton 2006). Moreover, this chapter builds on findings in Chapter 5 to consider cross-household and volunteer work within the community. As described in Chapter 2, Micaela di Leonardo (1987: 442-443) terms some forms of cross-household work, “kin work” and maintains that “it is kinship contact across households, as much as women's work within them, that fulfills our cultural expectation of satisfying family life.” In the Bell Island context, similar to Chapter 5, men also remain active participants, planners, and supporters of cross-household and community-wide social reproductive labour. As with all forms of unpaid labour, feminist political economy scholars have long argued that these often serve to fill a gap where governmental services remain inadequate (Benzanson and Luxton 2006; also see Chapter 2). Similar to other places in Canada and North America, on Bell Island, there was a historical shift in the 1970s and two-income households have become more necessary, further perpetuating the issues of second and third shirts (Benzanson and Luxton 2006). Writing with regards to volunteer work, specifically, economists Lup and Booth (2019: 599) maintain, “As the

involvement of modern states in the delivery of public services diminishes, it is hoped that citizens will help deliver some of these services through volunteering." As noted in Chapter 5, Bhattacharya (2013: n.p.) maintains that these social reproductive activities are maintained by individual community members and "done free of charge for the system." Work mobilities, understandably, can have a negative impact on local volunteerism (Lup and Booth 2019: 603), and some in my sample indicated that they would do more if they were not commuting. Still others were participating in a significant amount of volunteer work despite their commuting and were strongly committed to assisting the Bell Island community in this way.

Indeed, these closely-knit household, cross-household, and community structures on Bell Island, historically common among rural Newfoundlanders (Porter 1983, also see Chapter 1), were viewed by many in my sample as contiguous units of analysis. In practice, this interconnectedness required a certain level of inquiry that took this into account. After a ride-along or participant observation, for example, I had to dive deeper about these seemly routine activities asking myself questions like: 'Was that trip to the store this afternoon to only provision for their household? Or were they assisting with meal planning for another household? Or an upcoming community event?' This level of consideration required me as the researcher to know participants and the setting well, a foundational tenet behind anthropological fieldwork (Fife 2005: 96-97).

As noted in Chapter 3, early months of participant observation confirmed the importance of asking questions about unwaged labour practices and those interviewed as part of this research were asked to describe patterns of reproduction in both private and public spaces. In this way, I remained intentional in my approach to record these practices given how normalized and 'invisible' (at least to me as a researcher) they remained—similar to the practices described in

Chapters 4 and 5. As Daniels (1987, 413) asserts, examining this form of work allows us to "regard the workers in a new light, appreciating both their effort and their skills." As such, Chapter 6 emphasizes experiences of balancing intensive commuting alongside social reproduction across households or for the Bell Island community. Or as Nell so unassumingly put it: "…the way I look at it, you know one day I might need help. And I do know, like if I need anything done, people are more than willing to help you and stuff like that. Because, like I said, you do it for other people."

Practices of Cross-household Social Reproduction

Participants talked about their memories of the prevalence of these patterns of cross-household and community social reproduction during their childhoods as well as later when they commuted as adults. Several commuters interviewed as part of this research referred to their on-island upbringings and the ways in which joys and burdens were effectively shared across households, especially among tightly-knit extended families. In this way, current practices of cross-household social reproduction are continuous with the past. But, as di Leonardo (1987, 443) asserts, "Maintaining these contacts, this sense of family, takes time, intention, and skill," and is thus deserving of attention. Raised on Bell Island in the mid-1950s, long-term commuter Harriett reflected on an 'inclusiveness,' as she called it, across households among their extended family members. As she explained:

> *'Cause our grandparents were always there. Every evening, you know after supper. If it wasn't my grandparents on my dad's side, my mother's mother and father. There was always somebody who came. And even if it was just a cup of tea they had, but they always came to see the kids, and to, I guess do any sort of business and whatever was on the go. That kind of thing. But it was so inclusive.*

This is an example of di Leonardo's (1987, 442) delineation of "kin work" as part of domestic labour, and visiting, 'helping out,' and maintaining close bonds across households remains commonplace on Bell Island, just as it does elsewhere in Newfoundland and Labrador, and in other parts of the world such as the Italian-American population di Leonardo studied in Northern California in the late 1980s. The following subsections are organized by categories of social reproductive tasks, as they are undertaken beyond the household. Although each task is indicated separately, in reality, most commuters engage in several tasks at one time. In this way, some commuters may regularly contribute many hours working to support other commuters, their own households, as well as other households and the broader Bell Island community. As demonstrated throughout the chapter, this is by no means a group of work commuters who 'just' get to and from work and home daily.

Food Provisioning

At the time of fieldwork, food provisioning was a central aspect of cross-household reproduction among commuting workers. Many in this sample initially described strategies around picking up groceries on their journey to work, during lunch or on their way back to catch the evening boat (see Chapter 5). It also became increasingly clear through participant observation that groceries were shared across households, or more often prepared as meals for others. In the opening vignette, Nell described regularly preparing meals for her uncle, but this responsibility is also shared with her two sisters and niece. "So he's well looked after because someone will always do stuff," Nell added. "Because lots of days [one of them will call and say] 'I got fish cooked, he loves fish.' I said, 'Go for it. You bring him in fish. That's alright with me. What I got for him I'll bring it in another day to him.'" Another former commuter also spoke

about these more spontaneous acts of food preparation for her aging parents, noting that she stops in to their place "at least six days a week."

> *But for my mom and dad like I always go down and I clean or I do a bit of cookin' or bakin'. Now my mom still does a lot of cookin' and bakin' but sometimes I'll go down, my dad will say, 'Do you know what? I'd love to have apple pie now.' And I'll say: 'Would ya?' 'Yes,' he said. I said, 'While I'm here now, I'll make an apple pie for you.' And my mom will come and say, 'Now if you had tell me that I would have had that done.' But, you know, you just keep'em goin. You clean up. Just the little things, right?*

As I discovered, these commonplace practices of cross-household food preparation existed alongside the commuter-stated difficulties associated with cooking a daily meal described in Chapter 4. In this way, commuters applied dedication to 'helping others' sometimes above themselves.

Moreover, the maintenance of garden spaces[37] also involved task sharing across households, and usually among kin—it also carried a connection to the past for several commuters (also see Roseman and Royal 2018). Long-term commuter, Harriett, recalled childhood memories of her family's shared garden with her grandparents. Decades later, while commuting off-island for work, she helped attend to her father's garden during evenings in the summer months. She would then meet up with her sisters to preserve the harvest through bottling. As she told it, "Particularly his beets when they'd come up then, he'd say, 'When they are ready to come we'll get them bottled.' I said, 'You boil them down, we'll help ya.' So that's what he would do. We'd go in [to his house] and preserve them for him." The preserved beets would then be gifted out to family members for their Christmas Day suppers. Although Harriet did not fully pick up gardening in her own yard until after an exit from daily commuting. Similarly, long-term commuter, Des McCarthy, first remembered learning how to garden from

[37] This paragraph highlights key themes (and individuals) who are well known gardeners, and were all former commuters, on Bell Island. More about this topic and these specific gardeners can be found in the co-authored article titled, "Commuting to Garden: Subsisting on Bell Island" (Roseman and Royal 2018).

his father in-law when he was a newlywed living on Bell Island. Although he did not keep a large garden during his commuting years, in semi-retirement, after decades of commuting, his own garden blossomed and Des keenly spoke of 'going over' to help his adult daughter start her own family's vegetable garden 'on the other side.' Not keeping a garden during heavy commuting years was common among commuters I interviewed. Another prolific Bell Island gardener, George Hickey, who did not 'keep it up' while engaging in work mobilities said, "…commuting is just about a full-time job in itself now. It is, it really is." Although this remains an example of shifting cross-household responsibilities upon an exit from commuting (see Chapter 4), as argued elsewhere, multi-generational gardening practices meaningfully contribute to how places like Bell Island are made and remade (Roseman and Royal 2018).

Although volunteer work is discussed in a separate subsection below, food preparation was often a part of volunteer work for community organizations on Bell Island. Because of the challenges associated with daily meal preparation among commuters more generally (see Chapter 4), this was something several commuters described as something they had to 'plan ahead.' Late one Monday evening I sat around the kitchen table with three female commuters—Beverley Kent, Patricia King, and Harriett Taylor—when our conversation turned into 'menu planning' for a Friday potluck at the church, following their regularly scheduled volunteer meeting. They dialogued:

> Beverley: *I think most people, well I'm going by myself, like when you come home in the evening you don't have the energy or the incentive to do anything else. You just prepare for the next day and that's it. And like I say, come Friday you're wiped. Saturday or Sunday you might do something, but only if you got to.*
>
> Harriett: *That's like we're [all] going to a potluck Friday night and I'm saying to myself, 'How the hell am I going to arrange this?' 6:00 [p.m.] Friday…*
>
> Beverley: *What am I going to cook for that? I don't get home till 5.*

Harriett: *Yesterday [Sunday] I was cooking so I said 'I'll make some sauce.' It's easier then I can do the ground beef on Wednesday, roll out cabbage on Thursday, heat it on Friday and take it with me. Cabbage rolls.*

Patricia: *I was thinking about doing wings. BBQ and honey garlic. Fresh wings.*

Harriett: *But even something as simple as that now on Friday night when you're working so you don't get home till 5 and 6:00 [p.m.] is the meeting and the potluck is after so it takes you a week to get ready for an event Friday night.*

Beverley: *I guess I'll have to get stuff Thursday and cook it Thursday night. Maybe I'll get meatballs. Sorry, this is diverging. [All laughing]…*

Harriett: *We're planning a menu.*

Patricia: *This is planning while you're working. This is what we do! [Laughs.] We all volunteer with the church group so we're having the meeting on Friday night, but we're having a potluck so you come from work and you go to your meeting.*

Harriett: *But it has to be on your radar because Friday night… you can't come [to] Friday night not ready, unless you're going to Costco [on the way home].*

Patricia: *And at 4:00 [p.m. on Friday] I've got the religion program!*

As demonstrated in Chapter 4, this conversation (or similar) could have also occurred on the ferry boat. As the one commuter noted, "This is planning while you're working." Additionally, although this dialogue perhaps exposes a more formal approach to volunteer work than that of kin work, it also demonstrates the tremendous amount of thought and effort required for active participation. Especially so for commuters because, as Harriett noted, "it has to be on your radar" given the planning and time investment required. In the dialogue, the female commuters are starting to mentally plan for the Friday meal as early as Sunday.

Ride Sharing

Ride sharing was another reproductive task that commonly extended across households, and into the broader community. For several long-term commuters who participated in organized

ride-sharing, it was also an activity connected to their early commuting years in the 1970s and 1980s. One male long-term commuter, John, who frequently transported passengers during this time explained: "They paid for my week going back and forth with gas and so on. That's about it. I didn't ask for much more. I said, 'No, I'd just love to get ya to work.' […] I'd drop off. It would be a big loop. Where I worked was off Water Street, see? So I just made a loop and came in and parked by the office. I was in before anyone else." Nell brightly remarked that she has probably hosted a passenger in her car "90 percent of the time" over her commuting career. Although she did describe driving 'regular' passengers to work—one woman commuted with her for five years, for example—Nell also spoke about frequently having someone along with her for short stints or even one-offs. "It be good company and stuff like that," she added. In this way, "the car journey becomes a setting for family, friendship and acquaintanceship … transport shifts from being individualistic to sociable" (Laurier and Lorimer 2012, 209-210; also see Royal and Roseman 2021). This is also a prime example of the ways in which co-passengering practices like ride sharing support and sustain such intensive commuting patterns (see Chapter 3), and a marked pride among some to help each other get to and from work on time.

During fieldwork an even more spontaneous form of ride sharing was pervasive on Bell Island, especially if you were walking to 'catch the boat.' Kay, a long-term commuter agreed:

> *You can't go for a walk here. Everyone stops you and tries to pick you up. That was one joke we always had. You can't go for a walk on Bell Island. Everybody stops you. 'No I'm only out for a walk thanks! Bye!' Because everybody knows everybody. You know? … If I saw anybody or anybody wanted a run [down to the boat] we always gave 'em one.*

As such, practices of ride sharing have somewhat evolved into less formal arrangements than in the past. Once I had lived on-island for a few months, it was also not uncommon while on foot for someone I knew to stop and offer me a ride down to the ferry, or indeed, back up from the terminal. These brief rides offered friendly, informal chatter, usually about the boat. In this way,

several commuters spoke about being open to 'giving a ride,' but not wanting to take on regular passengers. As one long-term commuter told it, "Usually I didn't have any passengers. I didn't mind giving people a ride, but I didn't have any full-time passengers because that come with obligations, hey? And I just needed to get to work." Although this same long-term commuter had described ride-sharing as a passenger in her early commuting years, this shifted once she got her own vehicle and needed to just 'get to work,' and home on time—likely corresponding with an increase in household or interhousehold responsibilities including caregiving for children and aging family members.

Snow Clearing

As described elsewhere, Bell Island commuters remain committed to getting to and from work and home in any weather conditions (see Chapter 3). Snow clearing is a necessary part of the morning routine to get off-island in the winter months that is further integrated as a reproductive responsibility. Several commuters helped manage snow clearing for other households, most especially neighbours. Harriett described a scenario whereby, for years, she and her husband shoveled two driveways on their lane: one for elderly neighbours "in case we need an ambulance," and the other for a long-distance commuter "while he's away so we could check on the house." She then went on to explain a recent shift to these responsibilities as her across-the-street neighbours—two recently initiated commuters—purchased a truck with a front snow plow in order to better facilitate their own work mobilities of 'catching the boat' well before 6 o'clock in the morning. "He's done this road and our driveway," she explained—gesturing to their lane—as well as the other two neighbours' driveways she normally manages. "[He] was a real saviour when he bought that system." In previous years, after a snow storm, this

same commuter described opting to walk down their unplowed lane and out to the main road, rather than digging out her car, knowing that another commuter 'going to the ferry' was likely to stop and offer her a ride down.

For commuters who have one car on Bell Island, and the other in Portugal Cove—typically a time-saving benefit—snow clearing was described as double the work. As one long-term commuter Harriett maintained,

> *People say it's nice to have two cars, but with two cars comes two lots of scraping, two lots of shoveling, two lots of warming up. So I leave here in the morning, I go out, we scrape that car, clean it, and warm [it] up, and clean the driveway. Then I go to the ferry terminal here, you might have to shovel out a place to park her down there. So you do that. You get off in Portugal Cove, you're nice and warm and cozy, after getting off the boat, what have you got? Car that's in a snow bank. Start it up, warm it up, scrape it, get it going. And that cuts into your time to get over the road on time. And this is what I'm saying.*

As described in Chapter 4, a 'commuter network' of women described their friendship with a local wharfinger who would clear the snow off of their cars in the Portugal Cove parking lot as they travelled across on the early morning ferry. As Nell told it,

> *He had a group, six of us at the time, and honest to god, he wouldn't take a nickel from us. Nope. If you left your keys, he would start your car and warm it. … he would have her all cleaned off. All you had to do was get in, start her, and go. All he would ask, 'Bring me some candy.' Yup! All he wanted was candy. And that's what he used to do.*

This is an example of the deep bonds that were sometimes described among long-term commuters and wharfingers on either side of the ferry. Indeed, the relationships between wharfingers and commuters are a further example of the cross-household support needed to sustain daily commuting practices, as many contribute to getting commuters to and from work on time.

Caregiving

Similar to Nell's description of caregiving for her uncle, related responsibilities were noted by other commuters in my sample—particularly devoted, ongoing commitments to aging or ill parents along with other close family members, most of whom resided on Bell Island. Elder care, in this sense, was framed as being shared between and among siblings, or other family members. As Ches, a male long-term commuter maintained, "…you're lucky if you got more than one sibling right? Because if you don't you got one person that has to do it all and a lot of the jobs [commuting] doesn't allow it. And then you have to depend on neighbours and friends, right, that do it."

Arranging schedules to accommodate for off-island transport to medical and other appointments was another central element to caregiving efforts. As described in Chapter 1, although Bell Island has a medical centre that provides important acute, long-term, palliative, or respite care (Ingram 2013), an off-island commute is required for anything beyond this scope. Several commuters described family members who required regular 'treatments' which necessitated near weekly trips into St. John's. In these circumstances, commuting workers sometimes leaned on kin for at least 'one leg' of the journey; 'meeting up' in St. John's, if their work schedule allowed. Still others, like Nell, arranged to work Saturdays in exchange for a weekday off to cover such routine trips.

Taking family members or neighbours for medical appointments or treatments was a common activity for retired commuters as well, highlighting that commuting never stops for Bell Islanders, even once they have exited from daily work mobilities. Ches explained taking his parents for medical appointments during his commuting years: "I did when both of my parents were ill, but both of them are deceased now." This pattern has continued upon his exit as his wife

and her sister are now responsible for transporting their mother, and I am certain he helped out as well.

Incorporating caregiving as part of the journey to work was less common within the broader sample, although Nell spoke of "dropping packages off to people" who were temporarily hospitalized in St. John's "and they needed more clothes." She also described bringing their "clothes home to be washed"—implying that this practice was just briefly assumed to 'help out' given that she was already 'going in that direction.' One long-term commuter described aging parents who had permanently relocated off-island sometime during her decades commuting. As she told it, "First of all they lived in Portugal Cove and of course I always drop in to see them before I went home. Every single day I always dropped in to see them. … I'd always stay for 10 or 15 minutes then I had to go down and catch the boat. But I'd always drop in." Her initially brief visits later turned into hours-long intensive caregiving, that continued even when she moved off of Bell Island. "That was more convenient for me now," she noted.

> *I'd always go and feed my mother and I remember my brother used to look after dad. Dad was on one floor and mom was on the other. [..] When I'd leave work I'd stop in and I'd feed mom because she was slow at eating and of course no nurse… […] I didn't want anyone to feel that they had to sit there for an hour. Let me do it. I'll do it. And I kept the patience and that with her. And then Sundays I'd always go up Sundays. I used to do her hair and do her nails. She used to love that. And I'd do that for her. But yes until she died. We both did it until both of them passed on.*

Among female commuters especially, childcare was a much-discussed topic. As maintained in Chapter 4, entering and exiting work mobilities to care give for children was common in this sample. In Chapter 4, I cite several examples of former commuters who exited due to complications managing childcare and commuting. Still others continued to commute because they had cross-household support. As long-term commuter Harriet explained, "Childcare was never an issue. None whatsoever, hey?" She maintained that she and her husband could both

work because of an interhousehold support system: “Because my mom and dad was here, hey? And my sister-in-law was here because they had just moved back from Ontario and she wasn’t employed at the time so she did babysit [my son] right up until he was six.” For several others in my sample, caregiving for young children came in the form of a hired babysitter, but it was clear the ideal was for family members given intensive commuting patterns with unpredictable schedules and the need to continuously apply principles of the “extra effort.” As former commuter Nora explained,

> *You had to pay the babysitter based on the hours you’re gone, not the hours you’re working. And then there was times you’re asking the babysitter too, ‘Can you please put something on for me for supper? Put a meat in, at least.’ Then at the end of the week you had to give them extra money because they were there longer than what you had agreed upon, right? All that comes into play with it too. … I managed to find older ladies, but they had their families, right? So you didn’t have those luxuries of being able to say, ‘Hey could you stay at my house with the kids?’ They had their families, they wanted to go home too. … Now it’s hard to find a babysitter. … Lots of nannies and poppies doing it, which I didn’t have that luxury. I had the opposite.*

Even for commuters who did not have family members participate in regular caregiving for children, they described a fluidity across households. John described residing across the street from his in-laws, and when I asked if his wife worried about him commuting, he answered,

> *She did, yeah, a little. I think my mother-in-law did more than she did. Because every evening when I’d be coming home, I’d see her in the window. She’d be across the road. She’d be looking for me. She used to call in to [my wife] and say, ‘He home yet? It’s awful windy. It’s rough on that water today.’ She knew the winds, and she used to say, ‘When’s he gonna get home?’ She’s say to [my wife] see … if I wasn’t getting home, ‘Now take the young ones and come on, come over here.’ Walk across the road.*

In this way, kin and family networks were similarly tied in to such intensive commuting practices. Another example of the fluidity between households for children, Lydia noted that her daughter enjoyed spending much of her free time with her grandmother, called ‘Nan,’ even though she was not her primary caregiver. Adding, “She’s soft like that,” by way of explanation. This same commuter matter-of-factly explained to me how she had provided instruction to her

daughter on how to check for a pulse and call 9-1-1, even having her conduct a mock call with a friend who is a paramedic. Although this can be considered an example of caregiving practices being passed onto the next generation, this is also notable as a skillset developed for her own waged labour being translated back into the private sphere for use within the context of caregiving. This commuter asserted that there should be First Aid and CPR training offered for children on-island, especially given that so many spend much of their time with grandparents.

Several in this sample described regularly commuting to babysit grandchildren in the St. John's area, but that was usually only after exiting work mobilities (also see Chapter 5). As Keith, the male long-term commuter from Chapter 5, explained, "As I mentioned we've got 4 of our children [on the other side] …We go over, we go out to dinner couple of times a month, stay at my daughter's or stay at one of my sons' place. They've got a room there for us. … Next week [my wife], she'll go over. [My son] and his wife, they've got two boys and they pay 1400 bucks a month in childcare. So in the summer, what we do between us and his wife's parents and their vacation, we try to cover off the whole summer." One young female commuter I interviewed, Tiffany, helped enable her grandmother's cross-household babysitting practices as she described frequently house and pet sitting for her while her grandmother stayed in St. John's during the week taking care of her cousin's children. As she put it, "So, where she's in town all the time, her cat's home by itself I go up and I've got, she's got a three-bedroom house so I have a room set up there and everything." This illustrates the way work commuters' reproductive activities outside of the home can, in turn, facilitate the cross-household practices of others.

Volunteer Work

Above all, this sample of commuters demonstrated an intense willingness to 'step in' and 'help out' across households on Bell Island. In fact, as described above, this cross-household reproductive labour was a reason cited for not being more active in on-island volunteer work for community organizations—not daily commuting patterns, as I had initially suspected. A former commuter, for example, first described not being 'involved.' But as the interview progressed, I discovered that even with young children she had been active in several clubs, catering, and other volunteer work with the Anglican church. Only in now caregiving for her grandchildren had she stopped most of her volunteer work. As she told it, all of her 'volunteer work is with the grandchildren.' Similarly, another former commuter, Jean, explained how caregiving for her aging parents prevented participation in volunteer work:

> *No. People always ask me, 'How come you're not involved? You know you should do that!' And I'm looking at them thinking, 'Where do I get the time?' I'm from here to my mom's, right? And like they're in their eighties and to me they're number one. Every spare time that I got, I'm there and I'm helping them. Like I'll go up and do the grass or clean up. I said no, 'I don't have time.' Now when I'm sixty five, and I've got nothing else on my plate maybe I'll be able to do that but I can't do that now.*

Although "lack of time" is cited as a reason people do not engage in more volunteer work (Lup and Booth 2019: 602), this was certainly not the experience of many commuters despite the time-consuming social reproductive labour for their own and other households on Bell Island. Indeed, engagement in volunteer work for community organizations on Bell Island was common in this sample of commuting workers.

Daniels (1987, 408) highlights the importance of considering volunteer work as unwaged labour outside of the home, maintaining that it also requires "skill and effort" and is part of understanding "how the social fabric of life is constructed." Yet despite the 'skill and effort' as well as time required of volunteer work on Bell Island, a trope that began to emerge was research

participants would downplay their contributions. Instead, they would answer my standard question around their community engagement with something to the effect of, 'I don't do much volunteer work…' but then proceed to list extensive board, committee and position commitments, as well as areas of interest with plans for future involvement. This was the case with Kay Coxworthy, a long-term commuter featured in Chapter 4 who also unassumingly prioritized extensive on-island involvement during her commuting years:

> *Okay. I was President of the Legion. Uh for a little while I was on the board of the Boys and Girls Club back in the 80s. I started and chaired Lancers for most of the 20 years they were in existence, I was the chair. The breast cancer group, ten years with them. The Bell Island Breast Cancer Awareness Group. We do big fundraisers in October every year. Like I said, this is our 10th year. […] We are a very close-knit group. What else did I do? Oh I'm the secretary on the Co-Op board, which runs the seniors home and I chair the seniors home board. Where do I get time?*

In this way, volunteer work was a more formalized arrangement that required regular time commitments and needed to fit into a commuter's schedule, as demonstrated in the 'menu planning' example in the subsection on food provisioning. Several participants, including Kay, spoke toward their volunteer groups adjusting meeting times to better accommodate working commuters. Ches, a long-term commuter, was the former president of an on-island organization during his commuting years adding,

> *I'm still a member [even though I'm not president anymore]. I said I'd stay for this year just to see if I can contribute. For years I was on the ferry's user committee. I coached minor league hockey. I was on the minor league hockey executive. And I did a lot of [other] things over the years, but I sort of cut back because when you have kids and that, you've got to have time for those things too. … Very shortly I'll probably be a member of the Masonic. The main reasons for that is those people work a lot with the Shriners (for kids) and that's my interest. I want to help out where I can. And what little time I do have right now. Over the next couple of years, time will increase that you'll be able to give to that.*

Like Ches, several other men in my sample, in particular, devoted years of time to the Bell Island Ferry Users Committee, originally named the Commuters Committee. This committee naturally revolved around the intensive work mobilities of their volunteers (also see Roseman 2020).

Although many in my sample engaged in this form of community labour, volunteering was only mentioned by a few commuters in this sample as something they did to 'relax.' One former commuter, Nora, answered my standard question of "What do you do to relax?" with: "For me, like I said, it's volunteer work for me." For the most part, however, commuters spoke about the stress of commuting—more frequently citing activities like walking and watching TV as relaxing. Indeed, many commuters talked about the 'evening fatigue' and falling asleep on the couch. As Des noted, "A lot of commuters … when they get home in the evening and they have their supper and that—probably 7 or 8 o'clock by the time all that's straightened away—very few of us can sit down and watch TV. Because, within minutes, your head is back and you're asleep." Another commuter answered my question with just one word, "Nothing." With this in mind, I follow others in asserting that volunteering in this context is 'work' and not 'leisure' (Daniels 1987). Moreover, there is a publicly announced 'need' for active and on-going volunteerism on Bell Island that sits in contrast with the more subtle ways in which cross-household practices were produced and reproduced. In public spaces, like churches, there are frequent requests for volunteers for various committees, events, or other functions. This contrast was also present in my own fieldwork experiences, as I was quickly invited to join a committee, as described in Chapter 3. Other activities, as noted in Chapter 3, that I frequently joined in on included the weekly yoga and meditation class at the Anglican Church, radio bingo, and community organized meals. While perhaps considered leisure for participants, large amounts of work went into managing and hosting these activities and events. As such, volunteer work for

community organizations, was viewed with regard by many in this sample as something of great value to the Bell Island community. Indeed, several commuters spoke passionately and openly about the 'cause.' As Kay maintained:

> *Volunteering is such a worthwhile thing to do. I mean it's…I know everybody says it…the clichés are worn out, but I get a great deal of satisfaction out of it. Knowing that I did it [during commuting] looking back. I couldn't do it now. But looking back, you know. So it's a good thing to do. And I support other groups. We all do on Bell Island. Like I'll always support anything that is on the go over here.*

Similar to kin work, volunteer work for community organizations was a highly normalized activity on Bell Island, with many commuting workers having engaged in this form of work throughout their careers and serves as another example of the ways in which the Bell Island community is made and remade.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter draws on the experiences of commuters who include cross-household and/or volunteer work as part of their daily, weekly, or monthly routines. In building from Chapters 4 and 5, I assert that tasks of cross-household and community reproduction have endured despite extended and complex daily work mobilities. From food provisioning, to ride sharing, snow clearing, to caregiving, as well as volunteer work within the broader community, this chapter aimed to generate "a keener awareness of the work involved" in an effort to further "dignify the labor and engender respect for the workers who do it" (Daniels 1987: 412). Moreover, the featured accounts of commuting workers in this sample further reveal the ways in which patterns of social reproduction remain normalized among some Bell Island commuters. As Nell and others demonstrated, these interwoven patterns have long reinforced a deep commitment to one another, as well as to Bell Island as home.

Chapter 7— Conclusion

As stated in Chapter 1, my hope is that readers come away from this thesis with a respect for the hundreds of Bell Islanders who regularly commute to the Newfoundland mainland for employment, before returning to places of residence on Bell Island following their paid work hours. Yet, as was demonstrated throughout this thesis, Bell Islanders are engaging in so much more than intensive, and precarious, commuting patterns for purposes of paid employment. I highlighted commuters' sociality onboard the ferry boat as well as the ways they provide practical and emotional support to their co-passengers as a central way those in this research worked to reproduce themselves as well as others in the Bell Island community (see Chapter 4). Research participants interviewed as part of this thesis, also contributed meaningfully to their own households in spite of such intensive commuting practices (see Chapter 5). Although, for many in my sample, patterns of household labour shifted over time, and specifically in association with an exit from mobilities connected with employment, I assert herein that viewed over time, this form of unpaid labour is yet another way that commuters demonstrated their commitment to Bell Island as home. Finally, research participants' social reproductive activities were not bound within the household level, but extended out into the Bell Island community when they 'helped out' across households and participated in island-wide volunteer work (see Chapter 6). As maintained in Chapter 1, this thesis is ultimately a story about the many ways in which Bell Island commuters supported one another, which further reinforced their island community and cemented a commitment to both people and place amidst demanding off-island commuting practices.

As discussed throughout this thesis, my fieldwork about the lives of ferry commuters explored how social reproductive labour helped to support and sustain commuting individuals,

their households, as well as others in the broader Bell Island community. Although these patterns evoked memories from the past for some participants, they were also central to the contemporary work mobilities, both precarious and complex, for the hundreds of daily commuters who travelled this ferry-dependent route during the fieldwork period. The long-term commuters in my sample—those defined as having at least two decades of daily commuting experience on this route, with several having more than four decades in total—embodied an enduring dedication to getting to and from work on time. Some extended themselves further and made efforts to help others do so as well. While the collective experiences of the long-term commuters featured throughout this thesis demonstrate aspects of the daily work commute experience that have changed little over time, this group also represents many of the tangible shifts that have occurred on this route.

As in many places, commuting to waged labour and engaging in extensive unwaged labour patterns perpetuates a long-standing resolve to sustain life on Bell Island. The 'figure' of the ferry commuter described in Chapter 1 encompasses an extraordinary determination among working commuters in this particular context. Indeed, the 'figure' of the ferry commuter is a clearly ascribed social identity whereby Bell Islanders described themselves as being work "commuters" and/or labeled others as such. As explored in Chapter 1, the three key features from this research that characterize the 'figure' of the Bell Island ferry commuter include: the strong, and often long-lasting, relationships with other ferry commuters who provide each other with ever-important and ongoing practical and emotional support; their commitment to making it to and from work and home daily, whenever possible (Adey et al. 2012: 172) and in any kind of weather; and a collective attachment to Bell Island as well as to the ferry boat as a form of transportation. The latter, I argue, is demonstrated in the long-term commuters' determination to

continue living on Bell Island despite the extra difficulties often associated with their commute (Low and Altman 1992; Roseman 2020). Although commuting is a much-accepted reality of living on Bell Island, as seen through the analysis of the ferry commuting 'figure,' I would be remiss to not contend that the high levels of engagement in social reproductive patterns are intensified due to the sometimes extended, and complex trips off-island. One commuter put it simply, "It's our choice to live here, but it's not our choice to not be able to get off [the island] when we want to get off. Not everybody has the money to live in St. John's. Why should they leave their house that they grew up in?" Unfortunately, schedule shifts, mechanical issues, and weather delays mean that 'smooth sailing' is not always the case for this aquamobile stretch across the Tickle (also see Roseman 2020). As a young commuter, Tiffany Brazil, shared during her interview, "But I get so worked up about the boats that it hits me in the right place. It's so frustrating. You just feel like the government doesn't care, really. They say they care but it doesn't seem like it."

Partially to cope with the insufficient infrastructure needed to support daily commuting patterns off-island (Report of the Auditor General 2022), those in this sample described helping each other 'catch the ferry,' making the most of their time onboard by socializing and sustaining one another by providing both practical and emotional support—sometimes over decades. As long-term commuter Kay Coxworthy contended, "But it was a closeness you know? They were your family. They were your family. I spent more time with the people commuting than I did with my family." Yet commuters also contributed significantly to support both their family and neighbours, those they lived with, and those in other households—often dedicating parts of their journeys to work, caregiving, ridesharing, and snow clearing, to highlight just a few examples from this thesis. Moreover, these activities extended even further into the Bell Island community,

for some, in the form of volunteer work. As described in Chapter 6, volunteer work for community organizations was a highly normalized activity on Bell Island, and among my research participants. Although I cite other research that suggests "lack of time" is often the reason people do not engage in volunteer work (Lup and Booth 2019: 602), this was certainly not the experience of many commuters despite the regular hours of commuting, time spent at positions of paid employment, along with time-consuming social reproductive labour done for their own and other households on Bell Island. The dedication to volunteer work, seen most acutely among the long-term commuters I interviewed, contributed in a myriad of meaningful ways to the Bell Island community. Former commuter, Jean Bursey, grinned during her interview, "Now to tell other people what you're doin' [commuting] they were thinkin', 'oh my god. There's no way! I could never do that!' But like us, us people were like, 'oh no, that's what we do.' [Laughs]. Right?" Even though this quote was said in reference to commuting it also speaks to a normalization of the sheer number of activities those in this sample managed to *do* every day.

As such, the overall findings within this thesis are threefold. First, in studying work-related mobilities, this thesis benefited greatly from considering both waged and unwaged labour, and the ways in which an everyday, intertwined reliance on both forms of labour existed among working commuters (also see Roseman, Gardiner Barber, Neis 2015). As Bhattacharya (2017: 2) notes, this "framework thus seeks to make visible labor and work that are analytically hidden by classical economists and politically denied by policy makers." As discussed in Chapter 3, methodologically, I had to be intentional in my questions to research participants around their social reproductive patterns as well as in my participant observation related to these. I encourage other researchers to do the same. Next, Bell Island has for some time experienced a situation of,

at times, tense "transport disadvantage" (Delbosc and Currie 2011) that has influenced patterns of social reproduction. Such patterns are rooted in past practices and also do sometimes shift over time. This is especially noticeable at the household level following an "exit" of one-or more household members from their regular work mobilities (Dorow, Cresswell, and Roseman 2017). This can also be seen at the cross-household or community level in cases when some commuters in my sample remained dedicated to 'helping out' and/or volunteer work—both practices of "*making community*" (Daniels 1989). Still other practices, such as sociality onboard the ferry boat during heavy commuting hours, have changed little over time. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, these co-passengering practices are so much more than 'just a chat' as, for some research participants, commuter friendships helped support decades of intensive off-island commuting. Finally, throughout this thesis, I maintain that a deep attachment to Bell Island as a home community (Low and Altman 1992) is actually reinforced through the commuting practices described herein.

Above all, by considering the unwaged labour patterns that are part of the daily commute to waged labour jobs, this thesis asserts that commuting in the Bell Island context is also a form of work—one that requires a huge amount of complex, social reproductive labour to initiate, maintain, and sustain. As the long-term commuters featured throughout this thesis demonstrated, Bell Islanders are not unfamiliar with the application of Carmel Power's concept of "extra effort" and applied it in many facets of their lives including at work, home, in their community, and as part of their regular commuting. Another nearly retired (at the time of fieldwork) commuter, Patricia King added, "…people tell you a lot of stories but they try, you know there's so much stress in it all, you try and forget a lot of it." Yet the documentation and analysis of the extent of these practices was a central aim of this thesis.

Appendix A: Interview Guides

As referenced in Chapter 3, three interview guides were used as a basic framework for semi-structured interviews: 1) Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Commuting Workers; 2) Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Partners of Commuting Workers; 3) Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Volunteers.

Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Commuting Workers

Family Background

1. Were you born and raised on Bell Island, or did you come here later on?
2. Do you have family ties to Bell Island?
    a. Do many of your relatives live here now (children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts/uncles, etc.)?
    b. Where do most of your other relatives live and/or work right now?
    c. Did any of your relatives ever commute to work between provinces/territories, etc.?
    d. Did some live away from Bell Island and then return? If so, when did they come back?
3. How long have you lived on Bell Island?
    a. Did you ever move away or think of doing so?
4. Can you describe what it's like to live here?
    a. How is the situation today different from earlier periods in your lifetime?
5. Can you tell me a little bit about the differences between the seasons on Bell Island in terms of who's around and the various activities that take place? Has this changed over your lifetime?
6. Do you live with anyone right now?
    a. If they just say children, ask: How many children do you have? How old are they? Do they all live with you right now? If not, where do they live right now? When did they move out? What are they doing right now? [work, studying, apprenticing/training, etc.] Do they ever come back to live/stay with you?
7. What are the main things that you [and your partner] do to relax?

8. Are you involved in any community organizations?
9. Do you do any volunteer work?

Interviewee's Work

10. Do you have a part-time or fulltime job right now?
    a. Do you ever take on other jobs to make some income?
11. Who do you currently work for?
    a. What does your employer/company do?
    b. How long have you worked for this employer?
    c. Did you do other jobs at the same place?
12. How is your work schedule set up? Do you have any options (e.g. flex time)? Does this vary from previous jobs you've held?
13. Describe your average workday.
14. How did you get started in [insert sector]?
    a. (If appropriate: can you talk about where you got most of your training/education for this job? Do you have training/education for other jobs also?)
15. Does/has anyone else in your family work/worked [insert sector]
16. How does it compare with other jobs you've had?
17. I was wondering whether you knew many of the people you work with before beginning this job? Are they mostly from the province? From elsewhere?
18. Is the work schedule seasonal?
19. Is there much turn-over where you work or is it pretty steady?
    a. Do many people work for the [company] part-time or on and off?
20. Is the work unionized?
21. Are you ever been asked by an employer to stay late at work or to come in early? If so, how do you manage such a change with respect to the ferry schedule?
22. Have you ever asked your current or any past employers to switch or adjust your shifts due to the ferry? On a permanent or semi-permanent basis or when one of the ferries is down?

Commuting [Waged]

23. Can you tell me your impressions of any changes in the ferry service over your lifetime?

    a. Have you heard much about what the ferry was like before you were born?
24. What is your normal commuting schedule?
25. If you have to adjust your work commute schedule, does the experience of catching and taking the ferry vary at different times of the day?
26. About how long is your regular commute? [Distance, time, etc.] Longest time? Shortest time?
27. Are you a commuter with priority access? If so, when did you first get this status?
28. Do you regularly have trouble getting on the ferry?
29. How often is your commute affected by delays or cancellations?
30. How do you normally find out about delays or cancellations?
31. Do you have any arrangements in place with your employer in cases of delayed or cancelled ferry trips?
    a. Has there ever been a problem related to your arrival at work being impacted by the ferry service?
    b. Can you have a flex-time schedule?
32. Do you have arrangements in place for alternative housing on the Portugal Cove side if you are stuck there because of a delayed or cancelled ferry?
33. Are there other people from your work who also commute?
34. Do you ever travel with others going to and from work? Did you in the past?
35. How do you organize your commute in terms of road travel on either end of the ferry?
    a. Do you ever park a vehicle at either end of the ferry? If so, how often? More/less now versus in the past?
    b. Does someone drop you off/pick you up at the ferry terminal? If so, who?
    c. Do you share a vehicle? Probe: Drop off/pick up on the BI side.
36. What types of things do you most often do when you are waiting for the ferry in Bell Island or at the Cove?
    a. Does this change depending on the time of day and the season/weather?
37. What do you normally do during ferry rides?
    a. Does this change depending on the time of day and the weather?
38. Are there differences in traveling to work versus traveling home from work?
39. Do you usually or sometimes take a vehicle on board?

    a. Is that ever a challenge for you in terms of positioning your vehicle?
    b. In different types of weather?
    c. Do you worry about damage to your vehicle?

40. What do you like about riding on the ferry? Are there differences according to which boat you take? According to the time of year or the weather?
41. Are there things that you dislike? Are there differences according to which boat you take? According to the time of year or the weather
42. Do you ever change your commuting schedule because you prefer one boat over another? Does that depend on weather? On if you have a vehicle?
43. Do you remember past ferry schedules that you liked more or less?
44. What would the ideal ferry schedule be for you to meet your commuting to work and other needs? Please explain why this would be ideal.
45. Please also comment on your ideal regarding the kind of features you would like to see on the ferries themselves (e.g. how you get on, seating,)?
    a. In the parking system and waiting areas?
    b. In the information system?
46. Can you describe what it's like to commute by ferry in different seasons and in different kinds of weather?
47. In your mind, what are the pros and cons of commuting versus working on Bell Island?
48. Did you ever have a job on Bell Island?
    a. When you were first looking for a job, did you assume that you would have to commute to get to work?
49. Do other family members or friends of yours travel to get to work?
50. How much longer do you expect to be traveling to get to work? Probe: ideal arrangement, exit plans
51. At your work, do many people commute in from different places? Where are they commuting in from? Probe: changes over time
52. What is the average cost per week/month for you to commute to work?
53. Is there a particular story about traveling to/from work that you would be willing to share with me?

54. Did you commute to other jobs (or to go to school/postsecondary education or other training) in the past?
55. Do you buy most things for home maintenance (e.g. for gardening, renovations) on Bell Island or elsewhere?
    a. What about big purchases? Where do you buy furniture and appliances, for example? Vehicles?
    b. Do you and your partner find that you need more than one car/truck? If not, have you in the past?
56. Do you tend to spend your vacation days at home or go away? (If the latter, probe as to recent trips away from NL. See if they have a cabin or go to friends' cabins, etc.
57. Overall, what do you think is the impact of men/women working away from Bell Island?

Commuting [Unwaged]

58. Do you live with anyone else who also relies on having some access to the vehicle(s) you use?
59. Do you take the ferry a lot on non-working days for reasons other than getting to work?
60. Do you ever take neighbours, friends or relatives shopping or to medical appointments and such? If so, would it sometimes be part of your own regular commute route or on separate trips?
61. Do you take care of snow clearing in front of your home on your own or get help?
    a. Do you ever have trouble with commuting because of road snow clearing on either end?
62. Where do you usually buy gas for your vehicle(s)?
63. Where do you do much of your shopping for basics such as groceries and clothes? Get haircuts?
64. Where do you access services such as doctors, the dentist, the bank?
65. Do you often stay on the main island past your work time or come back across on the ferry to attend evening or weekend events?
66. How would you say that your commute affects how you organize the rest of your life?
67. Do you think commuting is having/had an effect on your health?

Home

68. Does anyone else in your family commute to work now? In the past?
    a. Do your older relatives ever comment on how it is the same or different from your commute now?
69. Do your family members have thoughts about the ferry service and other aspects of the commute?
70. How do the members of your family feel about you commuting for work? Probe for partner, children, parents, in-laws, etc.
71. Do you have family living in other communities nearby? In town [St. John's]?
72. Is there anyone who helps out your partner when you're at work? Who would that be? In what ways do they help?
73. What, if any, do you think is the effect on your kids of you commuting?
74. What do your kids say about your commuting? About you being away? Probe: Different reactions from children depending on age, sex, etc.
75. How do you think the need for you to catch a ferry to get to work and the timing related to that impacts on your partner or kids? Do they ever talk about your commute?
76. Do you feel you miss out on any activities because you are a commuter? If yes – what kinds of activities do you feel you miss out on? (e.g., sports, school activities, volunteering, birthdays, church, etc.)
77. Has your commuting ever affected your partner's employment options?
78. How do you communicate with your partner while your commuting/at work? Kids? (Mode of communication e.g., texting, calling, etc.) How often?
79. When you first started working, how did you communicate with your partner? Kids? Probe: The change of communication's mode and frequency over time.
80. Is there anything that I should have asked and didn't?
81. Is there anything that has not been touched on here that you would like to comment on?

Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Partners of Commuting Workers

Family Background

1. Were you born and raised on Bell Island, or did you come here later on?
2. Do you have family ties to Bell Island?
    a. Do many of your relatives live here now (children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts/uncles, etc.)?
    b. Where do most of your other relatives live and/or work right now?
    c. Did any of your relatives ever commute to work between provinces/territories, etc.?
    d. Did some live away from Bell Island and then return? If so, when did they come back?
3. How long have you lived on Bell Island?
    a. Did you ever move away or think of doing so?
4. Can you describe what it's like to live here?
    a. How is the situation today different from earlier periods in your lifetime?
5. Can you tell me a little bit about the differences between the seasons on Bell Island in terms of who's around and the various activities that take place? Has this changed over your lifetime?
6. Do you live with anyone other than your partner right now?
    a. If they just say children, ask: How many children do you have? How old are they? Do they all live with you right now? If not, where do they live right now? When did they move out? What are they doing right now? [work, studying, apprenticing/training, etc.] Do they ever come back to live/stay with you?

Interviewee's Work and Commuting in the Family (Present and Past)

7. Do you have a part-time or fulltime job right now?
    a. If yes, is it on Bell Island or do you commute?
    b. Do you ever take on other jobs to make some income?
8. Does anyone else in your family commute to work to/from Bell Island now? In the past?
    a. Do you notice/your older relatives ever comment on how it is the same or different from your partner's commute now?

9. Did you have jobs in the past that were on Bell Island or involved commuting? If so, can you tell me about them and your past schedules for getting to work?
10. Do you have education/training for specific jobs?
    a. Have you been able to get work that was relevant to this education/training?

Partner's Commuting

11. Where does your partner work right now?
    a. Has s/he worked there long?
    b. Does s/he have education/training for specific jobs?
    c. Has s/he been able to get work that was relevant to this education/training?
12. What is your partner's normal commuting schedule?
    a. If s/he has to adjust her/his work commute schedule, does the experience of catching and taking the ferry vary at different times of the day?
13. About how long is her/his regular commute? [Distance, time, etc.]
    a. Longest time? Shortest time?
14. Is she/he a commuter with priority access?
    a. If so, when did she/he first get this status?
15. Does she/he regularly have trouble getting on the ferry?
16. How often is her/his commute affected by delays or cancellations?
17. Do you communicate with one another about delays or cancellations? [Calling, texting, social media, etc.]
    a. Has this changed over time?
18. What is the weekly/monthly cost of your partner's commuting (including ferry rates, gas, etc.)?
19. Do you have arrangements in place for alternative housing on the Portugal Cove side if your partner is stuck there because of a delayed or cancelled ferry?
20. Does your partner ever travel with others going to and from work?
    a. Has she/he in the past?
21. How does your partner organize his/her commute in terms of road travel on either end of the ferry?

a. Does she/he ever park a vehicle at either end of the ferry? If so, how often? More/less now versus in the past?
b. Does someone drop him/her off/pick you up at the ferry terminal? If so, who?
c. Do you share a vehicle? Probe: Drop off/pick up on the BI side.

22. Does he/she usually or sometimes take a vehicle on board?
    a. Is that ever a challenge for him in terms of positioning the vehicle?
    b. In different types of weather?
    c. Do you worry about damage to your vehicle?
23. What types of things do you most often do when you are waiting for the ferry in Bell Island or at the Cove?
    a. Does this change depending on the time of day and the season/weather?
24. What does your partner normally do during ferry rides? Does this change depending on the time of day and the weather?
25. Are there differences in traveling to work versus traveling home from work?
26. Can you describe what it's like to have a partner who commutes by ferry in different seasons and in different kinds of weather?
    a. Do you worry about your partner commuting? [E.g. in bad weather, after long shifts, etc.]
27. What does your partner like about riding on the ferry?
    a. Are there differences according to which boat he/she takes? According to the time of year or the weather?
28. Are there things that your partner dislikes?
    a. Are there differences according to which boat you take? According to the time of year or the weather?
29. Does your partner ever change his/her commuting schedule because he/she prefers one boat over another? Does that depend on weather? Or if you have a vehicle?
30. Do you remember past ferry schedules that you (and your partner) liked more or less?
31. What would the ideal ferry schedule be for your partner to meet his/her commuting to work and other needs? Please explain why this would be ideal.
32. Please also comment on your ideal regarding the kind of features you would like to see on the ferries themselves (e.g. how you get on, seating,)?

a. In the parking system and waiting areas?
b. In the information system?

33. In your mind, what are the pros and cons of commuting versus working on Bell Island?
34. Has your partner ever had a job on Bell Island?
    a. When she/he was first looking for a job, did you assume that she/he would have to commute to get to work?
35. How much longer do you expect she/he will be traveling to get to work? Probe: ideal arrangement, exit plans
36. Is there a particular story about your partner traveling to work that you would be willing to share with me?
37. Can you tell us your impressions of changes in the ferry service over the your lifetime?
    a. Have you heard much about what the ferry was like before you were born?
38. Overall, what do you think is the impact of men/women working away from Bell Island?

Home Life (Unwaged Work and Commuting)

39. How do you and your partner organize your general daily and weekly schedules around the commute?
    a. Does the commute influence who does certain jobs around the house? In terms of shopping, banking, etc.?
40. Where do you do much of your shopping for basics such as groceries and clothes?
41. Do you buy most things for home maintenance (e.g. for gardening, renovations) on Bell Island or elsewhere?
    a. What about big purchases? Where do you buy furniture and appliances, for example? Vehicles?
    b. Do you and your partner find that you need more than one car/truck? If not, have you in the past?
42. Do you own your home or are you renting?
    a. Do you own/rent property elsewhere? Have you in the past?
43. Where do you access services such as doctors, the dentist, the bank, etc.?
    a. [If it is across the Tickle] How are these trips organized?

44. When planning trips across the tickle (e.g. to visit family/friends, go grocery shopping, etc.), do you normally go alone? With your partner? Family/friends?
45. Do you ever take neighbours, friends or relatives shopping or to medical appointments and such across the Tickle?
46. Do you think commuting is having/had an effect on your partner's health?
    a. What about the impacts your health?
47. Do you tend to spend vacation days at home or go away? (If the latter, probe as to recent trips away from NL. See if they have a cabin or go to friends' cabins, etc.)
48. Is there anyone who helps out you out when your partner is at work?
    a. Who would that be?
    b. In what ways do they help?
49. [For those who have children] How do/did you organize...
    a. Childcare?
    b. Transportation to/from school?
    c. Transportation to extra-curricular activities (e.g. sports teams, etc.)
50. Do you help out relatives or neighbours with caring for children, aging relatives, etc.?
51. How do you think the need for your partner to catch a ferry to get to work impacts you [and your kids]?
52. Does your partner ever miss out on any activities because she/he is a shift worker or a commuter?
    a. If yes – what kinds of activities do you feel they miss out on? (e.g., sports, school activities, volunteering, birthdays, church, etc.)
53. How do you communicate with your partner while she/he is commuting/at work? Kids? (Mode of communication e.g., texting, calling, etc.)
    a. How often? Has this changed over time? Probe: The change of communication's mode and frequency over time.
54. How do you/your family manage snow clearing?
    a. Do you help anyone else out with snow clearing? Do you or your partner help others?
55. How do you/your family manage home repairs and renovations?
    a. Do you help anyone else out with repairs and renovations?
    b. Does anyone help you? Do you help others?

56. Do you/your family have a garden? If so, what do you have in your garden? Do you help anyone else put in/tend to their garden?
    a. How do you/your family manage yard maintenance (e.g. mowing, etc.)?
57. Has your partner's commuting affected your employment options?
58. We are trying to get a sense of people's main financial areas of regular expenditure and priorities. Which are the top ones for you (mortgage/rent, vehicle loans, general groceries, etc.)? Has this changed over your lifetime?
59. Do you think that people in general are feeling certain financial pressures right now? What are these? (Helping out children/grandchildren? Making bill payments? Saving for retirement? Etc.)
60. What are the main things that you and your partner do to relax?
61. Are you involved in any community organizations?
62. Do you do any volunteer work?
63. Is there anything that we should have asked and didn't?
64. Is there anything that has not been touched on here that you would like to comment on?

Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Volunteers

Family Background

1. Were you born and raised on Bell Island, or did you come here later on?
2. Do you have family ties to Bell Island?
    a. Do many of your relatives live here now (children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts/uncles, etc.)?
    b. Where do most of your other relatives live and/or work right now?
    c. Did any of your relatives ever commute to work between provinces/territories, etc.?
    d. Did some live away from Bell Island and then return? If so, when did they come back?
3. How long have you lived on Bell Island?
    a. Did you ever move away or think of doing so?
4. Can you describe what it's like to live here?

    a. How is the situation today different from earlier periods in your lifetime?
5. Can you tell me a little bit about the differences between the seasons on Bell Island in terms of who's around and the various activities that take place? Has this changed over your lifetime?
6. Do you live with anyone right now, or are you on your own?
    a. If they say children, ask: How many children do you have? How old are they? Do they all live with you right now? If not, where do they live right now? When did they move out? What are they doing right now? [work, studying, apprenticing/training, etc.] Do they ever come back to live/stay with you?
7. What are the main things that you do to relax?

Interviewee's Work and Commuting in the Family (Present and Past)

8. Do you have a part-time or fulltime job right now?
    a. If yes, is it on Bell Island or do you commute?
    b. If no, have you had a part-time or fulltime job in the past?
    c. Do you ever take on other jobs to make some income?
9. Did you, or anyone in your family commute to work to/from Bell Island now? In the past?
    a. Do you notice/your older relatives ever comment on how it is the same or different from your partner's commute now?
10. Did you have jobs in the past that were on Bell Island or involved commuting?
    a. If so, can you tell me about them and your past schedules for getting to work?
11. Can you tell us your impressions of changes in the ferry service over the your lifetime?
    a. Have you heard much about what the ferry was like before you were born?

The Ferry

12. How often do you take the ferry?
13. What types of things do you most often do when you are waiting for the ferry in Bell Island or at the Cove?
    a. What about other things that you do sometimes?
    b. Does it depend on the time of day or the season/weather?
14. Do you usually or sometimes take a vehicle on board?

a. Is that ever a challenge for you in terms of positioning your vehicle?
b. In different types of weather?

15. Do you ever park a vehicle at either end of the ferry?
    a. If so, how often? More/less now versus in the past?
16. What do you like about riding on the ferry?
    a. Are there differences according to which boat you take?
    b. According to the time of year or the weather?
17. Are there things that you dislike about riding on the ferry?
    a. Are there differences according to which boat you take?
    b. According to the time of year or the weather?
18. Do you ever change your commuting schedule because you prefer one boat over another?
    a. Does that depend on weather?
    b. Or if you have a vehicle?
19. Do you remember past ferry schedules that you liked more or less?
20. What would the ideal ferry schedule be for you to meet your commuting to work and other needs? Please explain why this would be ideal.
21. Please also comment on your ideal regarding the kind of features you would like to see on the ferries themselves (e.g. how you get on, seating, food service)?
    a. In the parking system and waiting areas?
    b. In the information system?
22. Are there any other aspects of the ferry service that you would like to comment on?

Volunteerism

23. What organizations do you volunteer with on the island right now? In the past?
24. Do you participate in activities run by community organizations that you do not volunteer with?
    a. How often/long have you participated in these activities?
25. When did you start volunteering [at each organization if more than one]? What about those you might have volunteered with in the past (how long did you do so)?
26. What prompted you to volunteer your time [at each organization if more than one]?
27. About how many hours per week do you spend volunteering?

28. As a volunteer, what are some of the tasks you perform/position(s) you hold?
29. What events/activities are hosted by the organization you currently volunteer with? Those you volunteered with in the past?
    a. Do these events vary seasonally?
    b. Have these events changed over time?
30. Do the organizations you currently volunteer with need additional volunteers? Those you used to volunteer with?
    a. Is the organization you volunteer with currently recruiting new volunteers? [Is it difficult? Easy?]
    b. How do the organization(s) you have volunteered with recruit new volunteers?
    c. Has the need for volunteers changed over time?
31. Do you attend volunteer meetings now or have you in the past?
    a. How often and when (day and time) are these meetings usually held?
    b. How are meetings scheduled? Probe for meeting times around people's work schedules, if they are dropping off/picking children up from school, etc.
    c. Has this changed over time?
32. Do most volunteers consistently attend scheduled meetings?
    a. What are some of the reasons people might miss a scheduled meeting?
    b. Has this changed over time?
33. Do the organizations you have volunteered with rely on the ferry service for specific organizational tasks/activities/events? Probe: for people to come to or from Bell Island? For specific supplies?
    a. If so, does the current ferry service (type of boats, schedules) work well for these purposes? If not, what changes would improve things?
    b. Are there differences in terms of season/weather?
    c. Are there any major changes with regard to how the ferry service worked in the past?
34. Who else volunteers [at each organization if more than one]? Probe for: average age, majority male/female, change over time, etc.
35. Do you spend time with the people you volunteer with outside of your volunteer activities? Probe for: family members, friends, etc. and change over time.

36. Overall, do you think there is an impact on volunteerism of men/women working away from Bell Island? Probe for: change over time.
37. Is there anything that I should have asked and didn't?
38. Is there anything that has not been touched on here that you would like to comment on?

Appendix B: Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

Research Grant and Contract Services
St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864 2561 Fax: 709 864 4612
www.mun.ca/research

ICEHR Number:	**20152074-AR**
Approval Period:	April 14, 2015 – April 30, 2016
Funding Source:	SSHRC, RDC, CFI [Related to: *On the Move: Employment-Related Geographical Mobility in the Canadian Context*; PI: Neis, ICEHR #: 20130810]
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Sharon Roseman Department of Anthropology
Title of Project:	*Commuting and Labour on Bell Island, Newfoundland*

April 14, 2015

Ms. Diane Royal
Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Ms. Royal:

Thank you for your email correspondence of April 9, 2015 addressing the issues raised by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) concerning the above-named research project.

The ICEHR has re-examined the proposal with the clarification and revisions submitted, and is satisfied that the concerns raised by the Committee have been adequately addressed. In accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*, the project has been granted *full ethics clearance* to April 30, 2016.

If you need to make changes during the course of the project, which may raise ethical concerns, please forward an amendment request form with a description of these changes to icehr@mun.ca for the Committee's consideration.

The *TCPS2* requires that you submit an annual update form to the ICEHR before April 30, 2016. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance, and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer requires contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you need to provide the annual update form with a final brief summary, and your file will be closed.

The annual update form and amendment request form are on the ICEHR website at http://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr/applications/.

We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Gail Wideman

Gail Wideman, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research

GW/lw

copy: Supervisor – Dr. Sharon Roseman, Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts
Director, Research Grant and Contract Services
Head, Department of Anthropology

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