ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL VERBAL CONTROL: THREATS AND THREATENING FIGURES IN NEWFOUNDLAND FOLKLORE

PART I

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

TOTAL OF 10 PAGES ONLY
MAY BE XEROXED

(Without Author's Permission)

JOHN D. A. WIDDOWSON

TIGHT BINDING

ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL VERBAL CONTROL: THREATS AND THREATENING FIGURES IN NEWFOUNDLAND FOLKLORE

PART I.

JOHN D. A. WIDDOWSON

TIGHT BINDING

ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL VERBAL CONTROL: THREATS AND THREATENING FIGURES IN NEWFOUNDLAND FOLKLORE

by

John D.A. Widdowson (C)
M.A. (Oxon.), M.A. (Leeds)

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English Language and Literature
Memorial University of Newfoundland

St. John's Newfoundland

December 1972

TIGHT BINDING

ABSTRACT

Adults in many different cultures employ certain traditional verbal devices to control the behaviour of children. These verbal controls, which frequently take the form of threats implying punishment or retribution, have existed at least since the days of ancient Greece and are still widely used. From the many entities which are regarded as frightening, each culture selects certain figures as focal points in the threats. These figures and the linguistic structures which incorporate them exist in bewildering variety in each culture. Both the threats and the figures, however, exhibit certain typical structural and semantic features which reflect the social context in which they are used. The threats may be classified into a small number of fundamental structural categories which are expressed in a myriad different ways, including the potentially infinite variation of the central threatening figure. The figures themselves include not only supernatural or invented entities but also living people, animals and inanimate objects.

A survey of traditional verbal controls in Newfoundland in the five-year period 1963-1968 reveals something of the wealth of such usages in the Province and reflects similar findings in other parts of the English-speaking world and beyond. The wealth of data contributed in both manuscript and tape-recorded form to the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive not only illustrates the

TIGHT BINDING

considerable range and linguistic variety of such structures but also shows that they have an important functional role. Their primary function is to control unacceptable behaviour, but they are also used for such specific purposes as the protection of the child from the hazards of his environment. Further, they serve as a release mechanism through which adults give vent to their anger and frustration, and they act as a substitute for physical punishment.

While supernatural and invented threatening figures continue to be used in Newfoundland, as in other parts of the western world, belief in them is declining. Alongside them, a number of living people, especially those who have authority or who are abnormal in some other way, appear very frequently in threats and their use is apparently increasing. Society endows them with the aura of supernatural beings and makes them appear more fearsome in their threatening role. The considerable variety of figures used makes it difficult to evolve a comprehensive typology, but in itself indicates something of the richness of these traditional usages in Newfoundland and elsewhere. This study therefore makes available a substantial body of data which demonstrates the linguistic, semantic and functional complexity of the verbal controls and provides a basis for alternative interpretations of the material.

PREFACE.

When I was about five years old and living in a rural area of North Derbyshire in England, my mother would occasionally say to me, if I was misbehaving: "I'll give you to the gipsies!" This threat was usually said in a playful way, but if it failed to obtain the desired effect my mother's tone became more serious. After a while the threat grew less effective as I got used to it. Then one day a gipsy woman happened to call at the house to sell clothes-pegs. She was very dark-skinned and had broken, dirty teeth. She was splay-footed and wore men's shoes and a man's fawn raincoat tied at the waist with a piece of string. On her head was a dirty red scarf, and she carried a large basket of clothes-pegs on her arm. My mother was clearly uneasy about her, but I was really frightened and took the threats about gipsies very seriously for quite a while afterwards.

This incident has stayed in my mind ever since, along with other childhood memories, and I remember many other things which my mother and other members of the family told me about how I should behave and act. As time went on I gradually came to realise that adults in every family have certain ways of speaking to children as a means of guiding and controlling their behaviour. Indeed, it seems that all over the English-speaking world, as well as in other cultures, similar verbal devices are used.

With this discovery fresh in my mind, I became aware

TIGHT BINDING

soon after I first came to Newfoundland of the rich traditions of the Province in so many aspects of folk belief and practice - traditions which have often been modified or lost in the parent cultures from which the Newfoundland settlers originally came. Children living in small isolated outports around the coast of the Province were, and to some extent still are, in need of protection against such obvious dangers as venturing near water, ice, marshes, woods, cliffs and the like. These are dangers shared by people in similar natural environments, wherever they may be. Equally important are the checks and constraints necessary to guide children into those paths of behaviour which are acceptable to the family and to the society at large. Similar constraints, though their constituent elements may vary, are of course universal, and they operate in a myriad ways in all cultural groups, and in both urban and rural environments. Their strength and practical usefulness is perhaps best seen in communities, such as many of those in Newfoundland, where adults accept and exercise a collective responsibility and concern for the children, and strive to protect them from danger and guide them in their behaviour and social development. Many of these verbal controls are playful, although they are often effective because children believe or half-believe in the figures mentioned in them.

This study of traditional verbal social controls in Newfoundland folklore originally began with an enquiry into the various figures which frighten children, some of which are

TIGHT BINDING

used in controlling children's behaviour. Further investigation revealed that although some of these figures have long been noted and discussed by folklorists, their employment in threats, and also the linguistic structure of the threats themselves, have been neglected. This study attempts to redress the balance somewhat by treating both the figures and the linguistic structures which contain them as integral parts of the same verbal control system.

Fears experienced in childhood may be very real for the child. He may believe in the existence of the various figures presented to him in threats, whereas the adults believe in them rarely, if at all. Although such fears are often overcome by the individual in the light of his own experience, they sometimes persist, and, supported by oral tradition, they may be used for such important and practical social ends as the disciplining of children through threats and other verbal devices.

TIGHT BINDING

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My first debt of gratitude is to all those who either as collectors or contributors have provided much of the Archive data used in this study. I should like to thank the students in Folklore and English classes at Memorial University who contributed material, and also the many people who offered their help and hospitality so generously during my fieldwork. Without their co-operation and assistance this study could not have been undertaken. My thanks are also due to those colleagues, teachers and students who acted as local contacts during the fieldwork and who often shared the interviewing. Among these I am especially grateful to Dr. Harold Paddock, and to my good friend and colleague Mr. Fred Earle who taught me so much about Newfoundland. I should also like to acknowledge the help of Miss Jessie Mifflen, the late Reverend John Moss and many other individual collectors who contributed information about the use of verbal controls in the Province.

My thanks are also due to Professor Patrick Henry, who made available to me a copy of his article "The Goblin Group" and other information on Celtic sources; to Miss Theo Brown for references to frightening figures in the English West country; to Dr. Hilda Ellis Davidson for references to the work of H.E. Allen and other scholars, and to Mr. Anthony Green, who kindly sent me copies of his work on children's threats in the Leeds area. I am grateful to Dr. Wolf-Dietrich Bald for

TIGHT BINDING

numerous references to Germanic frightening figures and their etymological interrelationships; to Miss Nanna Hermannsen for bringing Miss Östling's work to my attention and for many other references to and translations of Finnish and Scandinavian material; to Miss E.M. Hintikka, Miss A. Kemppainen, Mrs. A.H. Koivurinta, Miss A. Leino, Miss A. Siikanen, Mrs. E. Takala and Mrs. E. Weckstrom for assistance with translations from Finnish; to Professor Herbert Jackson and Miss M.E.M. Fraser for translation from German, and to Professor John Hewson, M. Maurice Berland and Mr. Gordon McBride for assistance with translations from French. I am particularly indebted to Professor Roger Pinon who not only drew my attention to the work of Cramer, Tommola and Tijskens, but has also provided a wealth of European references, especially from French.

I am also indebted to my colleagues and fellow graduate students at Memorial University who have offered much advice and encouragement. In particular I am most grateful to Dr. Neil Rosenberg, Mr. David Hufford and Mrs. Violetta Halpert for their valuable assistance, especially in the locating and classifying of material during the period of my research in the Folklore and Language Archive, and to Professor Ronald Seary for much helpful advice on placenames and other aspects of the research.

To the members of my supervisory committee I owe a special debt of gratitude. In particular I am grateful to Professor William Kirwin who read much of the manuscript and whose constructive comments and meticulous scholarship have

TIGHT BINDING

been a constant source of encouragement. Professor George Story not only scrutinised the manuscript at various stages of its development, but also offered many valuable suggestions on both content and presentation, in addition to several important references. My greatest debt is to Professor Herbert Halpert who not only introduced me to folklore but also aroused my enthusiasm for this field of research. He generously made available to me his extensive personal folklore archive, including his collected examples of threats and threatening figures from many parts of the world. He gave me free access to his unique library, provided many of the basic references for the study and gave generously of his time to discuss every aspect of the research and to spur me on with his infectious enthusiasm. Many of the ideas expressed here are derived from our discussions and are often more his than my own.

Finally, I should like to thank Dr. Colin Stork for assistance with proof-reading and for many helpful suggestions on the linguistic analysis, and my thanks are also due to Mrs. Joyce Cook for checking the proofs and to Mrs. Lilian Gray for her exemplary typing of a difficult final draft.

TIGHT BINDING

C O N T E N T S

		Page No.
Preface		(ii)
Acknowledgments		(v)
Abbreviations		(x)
Part I		
Chapter 1:	Introduction.	1
Chapter 2:	Methodology..	25
Chapter 3:	Threats and other aspects of verbal social control	38
Chapter 4:	Threats and their structural patterning...	62
Chapter 5:	The social function of threats: some general observations	98
Chapter 6:	The function of threats in Newfoundland folklore	120
Chapter 7:	Aspects of belief in threatening figures	137
Chapter 8:	Towards a typology of threatening figures	150
Part II		
Section A		
	Introductory notes on the classification and presentation of the Newfoundland threatening figures.	167
Class A:	Supernatural, mythological, fictitious and invented figures	173
Section B		
Class B:	Human beings as threatening figures.. ...	409
Section C		
Class C:	Animals, objects, locations and natural phenomena..	521
Some concluding observations...		551
Archive sources		561
Bibliography.		562
Appendix:	Examples of questionnaires used during fieldwork	592

TIGHT BINDING

TABLES

		Page No.
Table 1:	Newfoundland Threats (Direct Speech): Relative Frequency of Occurrence	79
Table 2:	The Structure of Affirmations: Relative Frequency of Single, Double and Multiple Elements	80
Table 3:	The Typical Verbals of Direct Speech Threats	95

TIGHT BINDING

ABBREVIATIONS

I.P.A.	International Phonetic Alphabet.
(N)	personal name.
Q	questionnaire.
rec.	recorded by.
ref.	reference.
T	tape, tape-recorded example.
TF	threatening figure.

TIGHT BINDING

PART I.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 1.

Introduction.

This study examines some of the traditional verbal devices which adults use to control children, and shows how these controls operate in a single geographical area, the Province of Newfoundland, Canada. It attempts to demonstrate something of the variety and complexity of the linguistic patterns used in such controls, and links them with the broad spectrum of supernatural, invented and realistic figures which are their most prominent feature.

The deliberate use of threats and other traditional types of verbal social control in adult-child relationships has been observed in many cultures. It is common, for example, in much of Europe and North America, and available references from Africa, Polynesia and the Far East suggest that its distribution is probably worldwide. In the references to which I have had access, however, there have been very few comprehensive studies of these traditional controls and there is no serious extended study in English which might compare, for example, with recent analyses elsewhere in Europe. The figures of fear which are prominent in these traditional controls have attracted the attention of philologists, anthropologists, folklorists and others, many of whom have been interested primarily in the origins, etymology and interrelationships of the figures themselves. Little has been said, however, about the linguistic patterning of the verbal controls or of the ways in which they operate in a given culture. Scholars from various disciplines have been interested in the figures of fear from their own particular

TIGHT BINDING

viewpoints, but there have been no interdisciplinary studies which have approached the subject both intensively and extensively for a specific geographical region. Further, no large-scale attempt has been made to treat both figures of fear and the linguistic structures which embody them as aspects of an integrated system of verbal social control.

The present study, which is based on material collected in Newfoundland, approaches the subject of traditional controls from the viewpoints of both linguistics and folklore. Linguistically, my interest is primarily in the living patterns of verbal usage typical of such control mechanisms. Both linguistics and folklore, however, become closely interrelated in a study which investigates the infinite variety of fearsome figures and devices favoured by society to fill the nominal slots in threats and similar structures of verbal control. These chosen nominals are found to have certain typical linguistic and semantic patterning which suggests that their evolution and function have a permanent basis in cultural tradition.

A study of this kind presupposes some investigation not only of the effects of fear upon individuals and upon society as a whole, but also of the way in which our fears are conceptualised. Fear is a constant aspect of human life, and people in all cultures are frightened by a wide range of concepts. Among these one might distinguish for example, fears which centre on certain "realities". These include fear of the actual, the known; of what is physically present to the senses or scientifically proved to exist. Here we might place our fears of other

TIGHT BINDING

people or animals, of natural disasters, physical injury, disease and death and of the myriad things which can cause us actual harm. These might arbitrarily be referred to as "realistic" fears. One might also recognise fears which, although they may be closely linked with those things which can actually harm us, derive principally from vague concepts which exist mainly in our minds and have little or no basis in the real world. Such fears, which one might equally arbitrarily term "unrealistic",[1] are often characterised by a fear of the unknown, the inexplicable, of mysterious forces beyond human control. We may perhaps conceptualise such forces as malignant supernatural entities whose capricious behaviour is thought to have a bearing on our lives. On a more immediate level our fears may reflect our cultural environment on the one hand and our individual psychological makeup on the other. For instance, we may fill the darkness and the unknown with imaginary figures which symbolise or reflect our fears both public and private.

It is probable that such figures of fear have existed since the earliest stages of man's cultural evolution. The deities he worshipped, for example, inspired fear and awe and a whole cosmos of frightening entities tended to develop in each culture. References to such figures are found in early literature[2] and certainly from classical Greek times writers have occasionally

---

[1] Clearly such distinctions as these which are here labelled for convenience "realistic" and "unrealistic" do not stand up to rigorous scrutiny. They overlap and interrelate at many points and any formal or rigid classification obscures the similarities between them.

[2] For some basic references, see, for example, C.F. Potter, "Fear of the Abnormal", in M. Leach, ed., Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend (New York, 1949-1950), I, 372-373.

TIGHT BINDING

noted that some of these figures may be used to threaten children. In classical Greek literature, for example, such entities as Alphito, Lamia, Brontes, Arges, Steropes[3] and Mormo[4] were sometimes employed in this way.

The few early printed references, however, are mostly incidental, merely indicating that such figures existed and commenting only in passing, if at all, on their possible threatening function. This suggests that whereas the figures were probably common in folk-belief, they would be transmitted for the most part orally and would not normally appear in literature except incidentally or in the few treatises on the supernatural or on social history and similar subjects.

Early collections of fables also include occasional references to figures of fear, including the wolf:

> "Erwähnungen von K[inderschreck]en aus dem deutschen Mittelalter sind spärlich und werden erst um 1500 deutlicher: Wenn in Boners Fabelsammlung (um 1350) eine Mutter ihrem schreienden Kinde droht: der wolf nimt dich, so stammt das wörtlich aus Boners lat. Quelle."[5]

Certainly from the sixteenth century onwards writers begin to give larger and more complex lists, again sometimes referring to their use in threats. One of the earliest European lists, which is especially significant because of its relevance to the

---

[3]See, for example, R. Graves, The Greek Myths (New York, 1959), I, 84, 184, 205-206.

[4]See Sir W. Smith, A Classical Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography, Mythology and Geography, revised by G.E. Marindin (London, 1919), p. 573.

[5]F. Ranke, "Kinderschreck, Popanz", in E. Hoffmann-Krayer and H. Bächtold-Stäubli, eds., Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens IV (Berlin and Leipzig, 1931-1932), col. 1371. The Handwörterbuch is hereafter cited in footnotes as HDA. See also Motif J 2066.5, "Wolf waits in vain for nurse to throw away the child", in S. Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk-Literature, IV (Bloomington, 1957), 173.

TIGHT BINDING

English-speaking tradition, is that of Reginald Scot in 1584:

> "But certeinlie, some one knave in a white sheete hath cousened and abused manie thousands that waie; speciallie when Robin good-fellow kept such a coile in the countrie. But you shall understand, that these bugs speciallie are spied and feared of sicke folke, children, women, and cowards, which through weaknesse of mind and bodie, are shaken with vaine dreames and continuall feare. The Scythians, being a stout and a warlike nation (as divers writers report) never see anie vaine sights or spirits. It is a common saieng; A lion feareth no bugs. But in our childhood our mothers maids have so terrified us with an ouglie divell having hornes on his head, fier in his mouth, and a taile in his breech, eies like a bason, fanges like a dog, clawes like a beare, a skin like a Niger, and a voice roring like a lion, whereby we start and are afraid when we heare one crie Bough: and they have so fraied us with bull beggers, spirits, witches, urchens, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, pans, faunes, sylens, kit with the cansticke, tritons, centaurs, dwarfes, giants, imps, calcars, conjurors, nymphes, changlings, Incubus, Robin good-fellowe, the spoorne, the mare, the man in the oke, the hell waine, the fierdrake, the puckle, Tom thombe, hob gobblin, Tom tumbler, boneles; and such other bugs, that we are afraid of our owne shadowes: in so much as some never feare the divell, but in a darke night; and then a polled sheepe is a perillous beast, and manie times is taken for our fathers soule, speciallie in a churchyard, where a right hardie man heretofore scant durst passe by night, but his haire would stand upright. For right grave writers report, that spirits most often and speciallie take the shape of women appearing to monks, &c: and of beasts, dogs, swine, horsses, gotes, cats, hairs; of fowles, as crowes, night owles, and shreeke owles; but they delight most in the likenes of snakes and dragons."[6]

An interesting list of figures, together with comments on their effect on a child's imagination, is given in Robert Burns's letter to Dr. John Moore, dated 2nd August 1787:

> "In my infant and boyish days too, I owed much to an old Maid of my Mother's, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity and superstition. - She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the county of tales and songs

---

[6] R. Scot, The Discoverie of Witchcraft, (London, 1930); p. 86.

TIGHT BINDING

> concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, deadlights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, giants, inchanted towers, dragons and other trumpery. - This cultivated the latent seeds of Poesy; but had so strong an effect on my imagination, that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a sharp look-out in suspicious places; and though nobody can be more sceptical in these matters than I, yet it often takes an effort of Philosophy to shake off these idle terrors."[7]

With the development of interest in the language and folklore of the people, stemming ultimately from the Romantic Movement, numerous references to frightening figures began to appear in printed sources in the early nineteenth century. This in turn stimulated further research in kindred fields with the result that a wealth of printed references to such figures is to be found from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. From this one might gain the impression that the figures burgeoned into a complex group only recently and over a short period of time. It is more likely, however, that the group has been extremely complex since much earlier times and the evidence suggests that it has long been part of oral tradition in many cultures. One possible mode of development could be the proliferation of figures over a long period of time as original distinctions between them perhaps became blurred or confused. In addition there would be a tendency for cultural and regional variations in the nomenclature of the figures to multiply in many different languages and dialects. The oral transmission of such names would also inevitably render

---

[7] R. Burns, Poems and Selected Letters (London and Glasgow, 1959), p. 358. I am indebted to Professor G.M. Story for this reference.

TIGHT BINDING

them subject to change.[8]

The great variety of figures, and the problems of their origin, distribution and nomenclature have interested a number of European scholars. In the nineteenth century various large-scale works dealing mainly with the conceptualising, distribution, etymology and interrelationships of mythological figures paved the way for later more specialised analyses. Foremost among the studies is Grimm's monumental Deutsche Mythologie,[9] the rich materials of which are made available in English in the Stallybrass translation.[10] Scholars such as Grimm, although they may note the fact that some of these figures were used in threats, were interested primarily in the historical evolution and etymology of the figures and in their relationship with nature and the theory of the decayed gods.

Research into the etymology and interrelationship of figures of fear has continued during the present century. Among many studies of this kind, those of Allen,[11] Henry[12] and the Wassons[13]

---

[8]The proliferation of variant forms even within a single language is illustrated, for example, in the listings of such figures in HDA and in O.A. Erich and R. Beitl, eds., Wörterbuch der deutschen Volkskunde (Stuttgart, 1955). Many of these figures are drawn together under the main entries on "Kinderschreck, Popanz", "Kinderscheuche, Kinderschreck" and "Schreckgestalten" in these respective works. The entries under the individual names of the figures should also be examined.

[9]J. Grimm, Deutsche Mythologie (Göttingen, 1835).

[10]J. Grimm, Teutonic Mythology, trans. J.S. Stallybrass (London, 1883-1888).

[11]H.E. Allen, "Influence of Superstition on Vocabulary: Two Related Examples", PMLA, L, 63 (1935), 1033-1046; PMLA, LI, 60 (1936), 904-920. I am indebted to Dr. Hilda Ellis Davidson for drawing my attention to this important reference.

[12]P.L. Henry, "The Goblin Group", Études Celtiques, VIII, 2 (1959) 404-416.

[13]V.P. Wasson and R.G. Wasson, Mushrooms, Russia, and History (New York, 1957). I am most grateful to Professor G.M. Story for pointing out this fascinating and little-known work.

TIGHT BINDING

are of particular interest in that they indicate the vast range and complex etymological relationships of the figures in a variety of European cultures. The analysis of the Germanic figures, beginning with Grimm's work, appears to have been the most thorough and the most comprehensive, not only regarding their etymology but also their mythological aspects. European studies such as those of Mannhardt,[14] Runeberg[15] and others tend to follow this interest in mythology.

Folklorists such as van Gennep[16] and Loorits[17] among others have also commented on figures of fear and noted that some of these may be used in threats. Major European journals such as the Revue des Traditions Populaires[18] and some of the folklore atlases also include valuable information. Neither this material nor the vast resources of the Human Relations Area Files and Annual Reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology, however, have been drawn upon within the limited scope of the present study, except through

---

[14] W. Mannhardt, Wald und Feldkulte (2nd edn.; Berlin, 1904-1905).

[15] A. Runeberg, Witches, Demons and Fertility Magic (Helsinki, 1947).

[16] A. van Gennep, Manuel de Folklore Français Contemporain, I, III and IV (Paris, 1937-1958).

[17] O. Loorits, Grundzüge des estnischen Volksglaubens (Lund, 1949-1957).

[18] Many of the relevant entries in the Revue des Traditions Populaires are listed in van Gennep, Manuel de Folklore Français Contemporain, IV (1938), pp. 642-643. See also his discussion of croquemitaines in Manuel de Folklore Français Contemporain, I, Pt. 1 (1943), 157-159.

TIGHT BINDING

individual works based on their collected data.

Studies of such figures, however, are rare in the English-speaking world and for the most are confined to miscellaneous and sometimes rather vague lists or fairly brief comments. Such lists are drawn from a rich area of supernatural lore which of course includes figures of fear. Both Brand[19] and Brewer[20] include some examples, and a more extensive list appears in The Denham Tracts.[21] Important information is also to be found in most of the provincial glossaries published in the late nineteenth century by the English Dialect Society and also those published privately by individual scholars. These sometimes give the usages in context.[22] A large number of figures are also scattered through The English Dialect Dictionary[23] and The Oxford English Dictionary.[24] A selection from the former is gathered together in Elizabeth M. Wright's Rustic Speech and Folk-Lore,[25] but the rich materials

---

[19] J. Brand, Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain, ed. Sir H. Ellis (London, 1849), II, 512-513.

[20] E.C. Brewer, "Names of Terror", The Reader's Handbook (Philadelphia, 1899), p. 743.

[21] J. Hardy, ed., The Denham Tracts, II (London, 1895), 77-80.

[22] The material from the English Dialect Society glossaries, and indeed from the nineteenth-century antiquarians in general, is not uniformly reliable as regards spelling or phonetic representation. Nevertheless, these studies are extremely valuable and not only provide evidence of past usage but also a most useful basis for further research.

[23] J. Wright, ed., The English Dialect Dictionary (London, 1898-1905), hereafter cited as EDD.

[24] J.A.H. Murray, et al., eds., The Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford, 1933), hereafter cited as OED.

[25] E.M. Wright, Rustic Speech and Folk-Lore (London, 1913).

TIGHT BINDING

in both these dictionaries and many other smaller English dictionaries and glossaries still remain to be excerpted.[26] The journal of the Folklore Society[27] also includes scattered material on figures of fear and more specific references are to be found in the County Folklore series published by the Society. Material from these publications of the Folklore Society was excerpted in full as background references for the present study, as were also the many entries dispersed through Notes and Queries.[28] Because of their particular relevance to the settlement patterns of Newfoundland, the Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association, Old Cornwall and Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset were also excerpted.

In addition to these fairly general and scattered references, there are a number of more specialised lists and studies. These include the lists of figures in Gomme's The Handbook of Folklore,[29] and in Lean's Collectanea.[30] Such

---

[26] Because of the limited scope of the present study, only occasional items were excerpted from the numerous British and American dictionaries, glossaries and journals used as reference sources.

[27] I.e. Folk-lore Record (1878-1882), Folk-lore Journal (1883-1889) and Folk-lore (1890—).

[28] Note especially the entries under "Boggarts, Feorin, etc.", e.g. those by J. Higson, Notes and Queries, 4th ser., IV (December 11, 1869), 508-509; 4th ser., V (February 5, 1870), 156-157; and by W. Bavies, 4th ser., V (February 19, 1870), 216.

[29] G.L. Gomme, ed., The Handbook of Folklore (London, 1890), pp. 30-31. This list is not dissimilar from that in The Denham Tracts, and in the absence of further evidence one might question, for example, the accuracy and authenticity of such forms as Horner Jack(= Jack Horner?) and Fost Jack (= Jack Frost?).

[30] V.S. Lean, Collectanea (Bristol, 1903), II, Pt. 1, 460.

TIGHT BINDING

regional studies in the British Isles as that of Jeanne Cooper Foster[31] also contain useful material. Of particular importance for the British tradition are the lists and discussions of numerous figures of fear in the works of Katharine Briggs.[32] Dr. Briggs's lists were a useful starting-point for my continuing investigation of British figures of fear which was an essential preliminary to studying the function of these figures in threats.[33]

All the works referred to in the foregoing brief résumé concentrate attention on the figures of fear and comment only occasionally on their possible function in threats and other types of verbal control. Since the late nineteenth century, however, a number of scholars have made more detailed and specific studies of the function which such figures have in various systems of social control. In 1882, Ploss noted this function and gave many references in his general survey of customs pertaining to children.[34] A number of anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists and

---

[31] J.C. Foster, Ulster Folklore (Belfast, 1951), pp. 106-107.

[32] K.M. Briggs, The Personnel of Fairyland (Oxford, 1953), pp. 189-226; The Anatomy of Puck (London, 1959), pp. 184-196; Pale Hecate's Team (London, 1962), pp. 156-157; The Fairies in Tradition and Literature (London, 1967), pp. 213-231. The lists and references in these studies are particularly valuable in that they draw together a considerable number of figures, primarily from literary sources.

[33] Other literary sources include the various books of cautionary tales such as H. Hoffmann, Struwwelpeter (London, 1903). For the use of such figures in lullabies, see L. Daiken, The Lullaby Book, (London, 1959), pp. 25-27.

[34] H. Ploss and B. Renz, Das Kind in Brauch und Sitte der Völker. I have had access only to the 3rd edn., revised by B. Renz (Leipzig, 1911).

TIGHT BINDING

others, especially those interested in the rearing, training and socialisation of children, have also discussed the function and effects which figures of fear have in controlling children. Although no attempt has been made in the present study to survey this material extensively, one might mention, for example, the work of Chamberlain,[35] whose wide-ranging discussion includes such figures as the Hebrew Lilith, the Greek Strigalai and the Roman Caprimulgus and Silvanus.

An early study of a specific culture is Kidd's Savage Childhood,[36] which includes graphic instances of figures and threats used in traditional controls and discusses the effects of fear on Kafir children in South Africa. One of the most valuable early twentieth century anthropological studies is that of Elsie C. Parsons[37] who, in her investigation of what she terms "the discipline of fear" among the Pueblo, concentrates attention on the masked figures used in threats and similar controls in the context of a specific culture, that of the Zuñi Indians of the southwestern United States. Although a number of anthropologists previous to Parsons also recognised the important social function of certain figures of fear, it was not until the work of von Sydow[38] that European folklorists redressed the balance against

---

[35] A.F. Chamberlain, The Child and Childhood in Folk-Thought (New York and London, 1896), pp. 140-142.

[36] D. Kidd, Savage Childhood (London, 1906), esp. pp. 131-142.

[37] E.C. Parsons, "The Zuñi A'Doshlĕ and Suukĕ", American Anthropologist, new ser., XVIII, 3, (July-September, 1916), 338-347.

[38] See, for example, C.W. von Sydow, Selected Papers on Folklore (Copenhagen, 1948), esp. No. 4, "The Mannhardtian Theories about the Last Sheaf and the Fertility Demons from a Modern Critical Point of View", pp. 89-105, and No. 8, "Comparative Religion and Popular Tradition", pp. 166-188.

TIGHT BINDING

the mythological approach in such studies. Von Sydow demonstrated that functional analysis of the European-oriented material reveals many of the figures to be jocular in application rather than serious objects of belief.

In his classic work Chaga Childhood,[39] Raum gives a valuable summary of previous major anthropological and psychological studies which include material on child rearing, training and socialisation. He also discusses, with excellent and detailed examples, some of the figures and methods of verbal social control among the Chaga. The subject of child-rearing and socialisation has also been of continuing interest to many American anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, John and Beatrice Whiting and their colleagues and students.[40] Of particular interest for its methodology is the work of Sister Hilger among the American Indians.[41] Studies of this kind, together with the work of sociologists and psychologists elsewhere in the English-speaking world, illustrate not only the range of the verbal controls used but also the developing

---

[39] O.F. Raum, Chaga Childhood (London, 1940).

[40] See, for example, M. Mead, Growing up in New Guinea (Harmondsworth, 1942); B.B. Whiting, Six Cultures: Studies of Child Rearing (New York, 1963); J.W.M. Whiting, Becoming a Kwoma (New Haven, 1951), and J.W.M. Whiting and I.L. Child, Child Training and Personality (New Haven and London, 1953).

[41] Sister M.I. Hilger, Chippewa Child Life and its Cultural Background (Washington, 1951); Arapaho Child Life and its Cultural Background (Washington, 1952); Field Guide to the Ethnological Study of Child Life (New Haven, 1960).

TIGHT BINDING

methodology of analysing them. In exploring the relationship between the figures used in threats and the world of the supernatural one is inevitably drawn into the fields of anthropology and psychology. Equally, one is faced with the whole field of child psychology in dealing however cursorily with patterns of childlore and child-training. Although not a social scientist, I have found it necessary in this study to relate these figures to their socio-psychological context, and this has inevitably involved commenting on a whole range of threatening devices, including the use of physical violence, and how these are expressed in threats.

Since 1931, European folklorists, notably Friedrich Ranke,[42] Cramer[43] and von Sydow[44] have made major contributions to the study of figures of fear and their function in threats. It was not until the 1950s and 1960s, however, that full-scale studies on this subject were published in Europe by Tommola[45] and Tijskens[46] on Finnish and Walloon figures respectively.

In addition, both general references and notes on

---

[42] F. Ranke, "Kinderschreck, Popanz", HDA, IV, cols. 1366-1374.

[43] F. Cramer, "Galloromanische Kinderschrecken", Volkstum und Kultur der Romanen, IX (1936), 118-148.

[44] von Sydow, "The Mannhardtian Theories" and "Comparative Religion and Popular Tradition".

[45] B. Tommola, "Yliluonnilliset Olennot Lastenpelotuksina", Suomi, CVII, 2 (Helsinki, 1955).

[46] J-P. Tijskens, "Les Noms du Croquemitaine en Wallonie", Enquêtes du Musée de la Vie Wallonne, X (1965), 257-392, and XI (1966), 1-59.

TIGHT BINDING

individual figures are to be found in various North American publications.[47] In his notes to Randolph's The Devil's Pretty Daughter, for instance, Professor Halpert makes the observation:

> "Both in England and America there are references (rather than stories) to many mythical monsters, some of which are apparently derived from local demons or boggarts. Such terrifying figures are chiefly used to frighten children..." [48]

Statements of this kind are found only rarely in the recent work of both British and American folklorists and the few scattered references have not as yet been brought together in a single work.

The only general study of figures and threats in the English-speaking tradition to which I have had access is Professor Halpert's unpublished paper delivered in Toronto in 1967.[49] The paper not only outlines the history of studies in this field but also comments on the collection and classification of the material. It includes a summary and

---

[47] Among these, the following are of particular interest: H. Halpert, "Raw Head and Bloody Bones", in "Down Our Way", Kentucky Folklore Record, I,1 (January-March, 1955), 7-8; A. Taylor, "Raw Head and Bloody Bones", Journal of American Folklore, LXIX (1956), 114,175; A. Taylor, "Raw Head and Bloody Bones", Kentucky Folklore Record, VI (January-March, 1960), 19-20; W.D. Hand, ed., Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from North Carolina in The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, VII (1964), 155, cited hereafter as Brown Collection.

[48] H. Halpert, note to "Old Wall-Eyes" in V. Randolph, The Devil's Pretty Daughter and Other Ozark Folk Tales (New York, 1955), p. 172.

[49] H. Halpert, "Some Observations on American Frightening Figures"; unpublished paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society, Toronto, 1967.

TIGHT BINDING

an evaluation of the important European studies, especially with regard to their typology. More important, it emphasises the relationships between the figures and the linguistic structures which incorporate them, noting also that these structures tend to have certain distinctive patterns. Although the paper was concerned mainly with data collected from the U. S. A. it also drew to some extent on the Newfoundland material.

The Newfoundland figures had also attracted the attention of members of the Institute of Social and Economic Research at Memorial University.[50] The exchange of views between Professor Halpert and members of the Institute acted as a stimulus to further co-operative research, especially after the circulation of the preliminary questionnaires utilised in the present study.[51] This co-operation was also ultimately responsible for a brief exploratory study of my own which indicated the range and complexity of figures of fear such as the bogeyman and suggested some of the ways in which they might be used in the threatening

---

[50] See, for example, M.M. Firestone, Brothers and Rivals (St. John's, 1967), pp. 122-123; J.F. Szwed, Private Cultures and Public Imagery (St. John's, 1966), pp. 79-82, and J.C. Faris, Cat Harbour (St. John's, 1966), pp. 100-102,132.

[51] The co-operation resulted in the publication of a collection of essays in anthropology, folklore and history: H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland ([Toronto], 1969). Several of these essays commented on the use of mummers as threatening figures.

TIGHT BINDING

of children.[52]

That paper dealt mainly with the figures of fear and mentioned their threatening function only briefly and in general terms. The present study, however, concentrates attention specifically on the threats themselves and the figures used in them. The threats which are the principal means of verbal social control under discussion here centre on the use, both jokingly and seriously, of certain figures drawn from the enormous range of frightening entities which man recognises, conceptualises and names. These traditional usages reflect various typical linguistic patterns which help to transmit certain essential information in a culture.

They survive and persist for two principal reasons:

1. They are felt to be essential or at least useful in a given culture.
2. Their linguistic form is patterned in such a way that the culturally transmitted items are easily remembered.

If they are to survive they must therefore serve a useful purpose and they must also be patterned in a certain way. This patterning sets them apart from commonplace usage and one might perhaps regard threats and other types of traditional linguistic control as a kind of conventionalised poetic utterance, used in certain well-defined contexts of social interaction. The analyst therefore cannot content himself simply with an examination of

---

[52] J.D.A. Widdowson, "The Bogeyman: Some Preliminary Observations on Frightening Figures", Folklore, LXXXII (Summer, 1971), 99-115.

TIGHT BINDING

the supernatural figures which until recently have been the focus of attention. Not only do the verbal controls include many figures which are not supernatural, but also all the figures and devices used, whether natural or supernatural, are an integral part of the various traditional formulaic linguistic structures employed.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, people in all cultures may fear a wide range of concepts, many of which are symbolised by figures regarded as intrinsically frightening. These one might designate "frightening figures". This term, however, is somewhat ambiguous, and may be used indiscriminately to designate not only figures which are intrinsically frightening, but also those which are used in threats and other types of verbal social control. In some studies, various figures are mentioned which are actually or potentially frightening, but it is not always clear which of these, if any, are employed in threats and other verbal controls.[53]

Although some entities may not be intrinsically frightening, some aspects of their behaviour or appearance may be potentially frightening. In Newfoundland, for example, a mummer or a person dressed up as Santa Claus is not specifically intended to frighten, but certain characteristics such as wearing odd clothing or masks, speaking in unusual voices and so on make such figures appear

---

[53] The list of figures in Gomme, for example, makes no distinction between those which are intrinsically frightening and those employed in verbal controls, although many of the figures are typically used in threats.

TIGHT BINDING

different and strange. It is upon such foundations that society builds up the frightening aspects of a figure until it may be used in threats. To the child, the masked and disguised adult may already seem frightening.

Both adults and children often have a natural fear of the unknown. This is illustrated in the story, beloved of linguists, in which a person walking along a dark lane at night hears something coming towards him. Until the approaching figure gives a greeting or otherwise identifies himself as a human being he is an unknown and potentially fearsome entity. Cultural contact is maintained through various signals and we identify concepts by means of such signals. If we have a concept of the Devil, for instance, we may recognise him by certain signs, for example, a cloven hoof, tail or horns. If we are taught to regard this concept as frightening then we may well be afraid if we see identifying signals similar to those associated with it.

In the same way, children may be afraid of concepts which they do not understand or for which they have no precise identification. Ghosts and other manifestations are often vague and shapeless and an entity may sometimes be more frightening because one has no clear visual conception of it. When a figure is named in a threat, even if some identifying details are mentioned, the child may regard it as something terrifying and then his imagination takes over and he forms his own concept of what the figure is like. Some of the child's ideas are based on traditional descriptions, often of similar

TIGHT BINDING

figures, but he brings his own horror to each and personalises the description, interpreting it according to his individual imagination.

There appears to be no unambiguous English equivalent for such terms as the German Kinderschreck and Schreckgestalt, or the French croquemitaine, which specifically denote figures used in threats. Words such as bogey or bugbear have wider connotations in English,[54] and are not sufficiently precise for adoption as technical terms. In the present study the term "threatening figure" is therefore used to designate a fearsome figure or entity deliberately employed in threats and other types of verbal usage aimed at influencing or controlling the behaviour of children. The term "threatening figure" denotes all the figures and devices used in a threatening way to children. It suggests the practical application of frightening figures in a social context. Its more specific connotation also enables "frightening figure" to be retained as a general cover term designating all frightening entities, irrespective of their potential use in traditional verbal controls. This distinction is of considerable importance in the developing methodology of social control analysis. It enables us to distinguish between the figures and devices used in a threatening way to children

---

[54] In J.H. Friend, D.B. Guralnik, et al., eds., Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, college edn. (Cleveland and New York, 1960), for example, bugbear is defined not only as "an imaginary hobgoblin or terror described to frighten children into good conduct" but also in the much more general sense of "anything causing seemingly needless or excessive fear or anxiety".

TIGHT BINDING

from those not used in this manner.[55] Typical threatening figures represent only a selection of the vast range of frightening figures known to man. By concentrating attention on the threatening figures it is possible to disregard the wider complex of frightening figures, except as essential background material.

Both frightening figures and threatening figures[56] are often supernatural in connotation, and personify the unknown, nameless, inexplicable fears beyond the normal range of human experience. Sometimes they may be specified and have certain characteristics, but basically they represent something less tangible. Man deliberately creates, develops or adapts this terrifying cosmos with the express function of controlling behaviour.

The entities which are used most, and in greatest variety, in threats, are those which are not present to the senses as living flesh and blood. Although their nomenclature may be arbitrary, threatening figures have certain basic characteristics and their behaviour is similar. To the child who is threatened, though not necessarily to the threatener, they are often nebulous,

---

[55] For example, ghosts, fairies, and other entities which some British folklorists class as "goblindom" are clearly frightening figures, but one of their functions may be to serve as threatening figures in the social control of children.

[56] In this study the word "figure" normally signifies the being, form, representation or mental concept of something material or immaterial which is intrinsically frightening (i.e. frightening figure) or used in threats (i.e. threatening figure).

TIGHT BINDING

ugly and strange. Predictably, they are also malevolent rather than benevolent and their nomenclature, which is often strange or mysterious, is emphasised in threats. They may be frightening to some people and not to others, but it is against this general frightening background that the threatening figures are used.

Although the field from which threatening figures are selected is extremely wide, cultures in different parts of the world tend to limit their choice to certain fundamental types and to invest them with strikingly similar characteristics. Many frightening figures exist in a given culture, only some of which are used in threats. From the wide range of intrinsically frightening entities, society selects those which are to be used for the threatening of children. The characteristics of such figures mark them out as abnormal in some way. The child is encouraged to fear or dislike them, at least in certain cultural contexts and for a limited period of time, so that he is led to recognise what is culturally normal or acceptable and what is not.

In the present study attention is therefore confined to threatening figures. Those frightening figures which are not used in a threatening context in the corpus of Newfoundland material are omitted, except as background information. Not all threatening figures, however, are reported in fully expressed threats in the corpus. Some are simply listed or noted as threatening figures in questionnaire responses, dites and other sources in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and

TIGHT BINDING

Language Archive.[57] The study is largely synchronic and is not concerned with the complex problem of origins, much of the evidence for which is irrevocably lost. Nor does it claim to be comprehensive, even within its strict geographical limits. It demonstrates how a wide variety of figures is used in the threatening process and indicates some of the ways in which this verbal control system operates, as revealed in material collected from a particular region over a period of five years.[58]

The study does not attempt a socio-psychological analysis, but presents patterns and examples of mostly verbalised behaviour, with some general conclusions. The intention is to present the linguistic and documentary evidence for some of the ways in which the threatening processes operate, rather than to analyse the complexities of their motivation. It takes no account of the world picture except by occasional reference, but it is an attempt to suggest fruitful lines of further investigation on a world-wide basis across and through related disciplines. In a wide-ranging survey it is inevitable that many references will elude detection and the present discussion is not intended to be in any way exhaustive, even for the Newfoundland material. Although my own collection of relevant data, together with that

---

[57] Referred to hereafter as the Newfoundland Archive.

[58] Although this study is confined to data collected between 1963 and 1968, a considerable amount of further material has since been contributed to the Newfoundland Archive on this subject.

TIGHT BINDING

in Professor Halpert's unpublished material, includes many parallel examples from Europe and elsewhere, this study is not intended to be comparative. The European and North American parallels, however, suggest the widespread similarity of threats and threatening figures in many different cultures and environments. One aim of this study is to suggest that those figures and linguistic structures under review in the Newfoundland material reflect and are in turn reflected by the predominant patterns in other areas, both in the obviously similar practices of closely related cultures and also those of very different and more exotic ones.

The Newfoundland data, however, cannot be considered in isolation. It is important to bear in mind not only the European context from which the material ultimately springs but also the specific areas, especially those of south-west England and southern Ireland, from which most of the settlers originally came. Again, some figures typical of Newfoundland tradition may not be found in other parts of the world and vice versa. Superficially at least, the Newfoundland threatening figures and the linguistic structures which incorporate them run parallel with those from other parts of the world. Even a cursory survey of the available material suggests that similar patterns may be world-wide. It is not unreasonable to suppose that further investigation on a wider scale would reveal similar groupings, albeit with some modification and considerable augmentation.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 2.

Methodology

The present study originated from an enquiry into the derivation and identification of a frightening figure whose name was recorded during linguistic fieldwork in England in 1962.[1] This was the first step in an etymological investigation which had ramifications far beyond the purely philological focus of the original work. It aroused my continuing interest not only in the boo/ bogey group of figures but ultimately also in the use of such figures in systems of traditional verbal control.

In 1963, the etymological problems prompted me to ask the advice of Professor Herbert Halpert, now Professor of Folklore at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, who was then a member of the Department of English Language and Literature in which I was also teaching at that time. He made available to me his extensive collection of material on frightening figures from the United States and many other parts of the world, including a representative sampling of African, North American Indian, Eskimo and other references. This collection[2] provided many of the basic references for the present study, and these were valuable not only for their extensive range but also for the possibilities which they offered for cross-cultural comparison. This also

---

[1] This apparently fictitious figure, "hairy buggy" [ˌɛərɪ 'bɒgɪ] appeared in a proverbial comparison recorded at Filey, in East Yorkshire. See J.D.A. Widdowson, "Proverbs and Sayings from Filey", in M.F. Wakelin, ed., Patterns in the Folk Speech of the British Isles (London, 1971), p. 66.

[2] Referred to hereafter as the Halpert Collection.

TIGHT BINDING

marked the beginning of a long-standing collaboration in the investigation of the figures and their social function, with special reference to Newfoundland.

The investigation was launched with a pilot survey of such figures in Newfoundland as part of my research in the Department of English at Memorial University in 1963, and the first examples were collected through my own fieldwork in the Province in the summer of that year. In September 1963 the collection of data on frightening figures developed into an independent project within the Department's general research programme in language and folklore. A brief experimental questionnaire[3] was drawn up, and this was later revised and amplified in the light of a questionnaire used by the Irish Folklore Commission.[4] At this stage the questionnaires were circulated on a limited scale. They were also used, however, in collecting-projects in undergraduate English classes at the University, especially those of Professor Halpert and myself. The replies clearly indicated not only that there was a wealth

---

[3] See Appendix, p. 593.

[4] The revised questionnaire was limited in scope and geared to certain specific reasons for threats, based partly on typical responses elicited during fieldwork. See Appendix, p. 594. The Irish Folklore Commission distributed its questionnaire in Ireland in January 1943, and the responses, both in English and Irish, are bound in Volumes 954 and 955 in the Commission's Archives.

TIGHT BINDING

of material to be collected but also that students found this an interesting research topic and could provide a first-hand source of information from many different parts of the Province.

The importance of collecting further material on a larger scale from representative areas of Newfoundland became apparent and it was decided that the investigation of frightening figures should be regarded as a major field of inquiry in future field-work and general questionnaires. This investigation ran parallel with research into Newfoundland mumming customs which was already under way. These customs had also attracted the attention of fieldworkers from the University's Institute of Social and Economic Research, and there was fruitful dialogue and co-operation between members of the Institute and the Department of English.[5]

In 1964, three second year English classes were asked to complete questionnaires on frightening figures, and further fieldwork, using a combination of tape-recording and interviews, was undertaken by Professor Halpert and myself in parts of Bonavista Bay, Trinity Bay and Placentia Bay. This fieldwork added an important new dimension to the collected material. The interviews gave valuable opportunities to learn more about the social context of threats and to observe the attitudes which people have towards them. At this point the distinction between figures of fear (frightening figures) and those actually used in

---

[5] M.M. Firestone, who was a Research Fellow in the Institute from 1963-1965, was among the first to investigate the role of mummers in Newfoundland society and to note their use in social control. The subject was first aired publicly in a paper which he delivered to a seminar held at Memorial University by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in January, 1963. See Halpert and Story, p. v.

TIGHT BINDING

threats (threatening figures) was only just beginning to emerge, and attention continued to be concentrated on the frightening aspects of the figures rather than on their use in threats and other types of verbal social control.

In 1965, the Department issued a series of experimental questionnaires on various aspects of language and folklore. These were distributed to an increasing number of English and Folklore classes. The lengthy questionnaire distributed to all first year and most second year students in the Department before the Christmas vacation in 1966/1967 included a section on frightening figures. Some 1,300 replies were received which yielded a wealth of material from many different areas.

A substantial amount of data, supported by further fieldwork, was now available in some depth from representative communities in all parts of the Province. Since that time, students of folklore at both the undergraduate and graduate levels have contributed information on frightening figures and threatening figures, among many other fields of enquiry and research. A survey based on similar techniques has also been initiated in the British Isles,[6] and it is anticipated that this will reveal further information on British figures to supplement the Newfoundland research which is itself preliminary and exploratory in nature.

The present study is based on material collected in Newfoundland in the five-year period 1963-1968, and which now

---

[6] This research project is being undertaken by members of the Survey of Language and Folklore at the University of Sheffield. See Lore and Language, No. 4 (January, 1971), 2-3.

TIGHT BINDING

forms part of the Newfoundland Archive. In order to make a critical assessment of these materials, I conducted a series of tape-recorded interviews with students who had completed questionnaires. These interviews included a specific study of the responses of thirty students, most of whom attended my class in Linguistics in 1966/1967 and who had already answered the full-scale Christmas questionnaire of 1966/1967 referred to above. This study enabled me to follow up in depth a number of specific points which required more investigation than was possible within the limited range of the questionnaire responses. The interviews proved most valuable, especially in establishing the social context of threats and analysing the attitudes which both adults and children have towards them.

It became clear that, quite apart from the intrinsic interest of the frightening figures themselves, there is a whole field of enquiry regarding the use of figures and devices in traditional systems of verbal control which is virtually unexplored. This is at least true of Newfoundland, and it appears also to be true of the English-speaking world in general. I have therefore concentrated attention on the threats and threatening figures in Newfoundland and reserved the investigation of the frightening figures for future study.

The corpus of material on threatening figures to be discussed includes relevant excerpts from some four hundred

TIGHT BINDING

tapes,[7] and some four thousand cards of manuscript data from the Newfoundland Archive, each card containing at least one reference, and some containing as many as ten or twelve. The bulk of these references is excellent in both context and expression, though some of the material contributed by first year students is of course subject to the familiar shortcomings of such work.[8] Nevertheless these manuscripts often have the advantage of being closer to the original language and tone of the informants than is sometimes the case with the more "correct" reporting of senior students. Many of the more detailed and informative examples, however, came from students in the more advanced courses, especially those in folklore and language.

The questionnaires, whether general or specific, elicited data substantially similar in content. It was rare, for example, except in the case of certain local individuals and types, for any other figures to be mentioned apart from those such as the Devil, the boogie man and so on, which appear most commonly in the reports. Thus if a given question mentioned certain figures by name, and might therefore be thought to

---

[7] A relatively small number of these contained detailed information on the topic, but in the absence of a contents index all the tapes in the Newfoundland Archive which were recorded up to the end of 1966 were excerpted and yielded some excellent material, including numerous examples of frightening figures which were ultimately excluded from the present study. The establishment of a contents index facilitated the selection and excerpting of the remaining tapes recorded in 1967 and 1968.

[8] Typical problems included ambiguous spellings and definitions, lack of contextual detail and the like. Nevertheless, the majority of the replies were written at some length and with an enthusiastic awareness of the material collected.

TIGHT BINDING

precondition the responses to some extent, another less specific question also tended to elicit the same kind of information. This suggests that the range of widely known and general figures is relatively limited, whereas there are an infinite number of local figures, often restricted to a small geographical area, which are not generally known and are therefore rarely reported.

Certain broad distinctions, however, emerge from the Newfoundland data. The material includes, for example, a range of supernatural/invented figures and also of certain other typical figures, whether human, animal or otherwise, which exist in the real world. It is inevitable, however, that the reports of specifically local or family figures, many of whom are characteristic of certain stock types of threatening figure, are unrepresentative. There are innumerable individuals in a given culture whose characteristics suggest the likelihood of their being used in threats, but the collected data reveals only a small proportion of these. Further, the supernatural/invented figures, or even the human types such as the policeman, teacher and the like, may be referred to by both informant and fieldworker without undue hesitation, for they are often felt to be impersonal.[9] There is a natural and understandable degree of reluctance, however, to name and describe individual people, some of whom may actually be living in the community concerned or whose relations are still alive. Even so, a

---

[9] On the other hand, certain of these figures may sometimes not be discussed freely for reasons of religion, folk belief and so on. For example, people may hesitate to discuss the role of a deity as a threatening figure, or they may refer to the Devil, fairies and other supernatural beings only in some euphemistic way.

TIGHT BINDING

considerable number of such figures are reported in the collected material.

While the questionnaire method produces a considerable body of valuable data, it has a number of disadvantages which need to be noted. For example, the form of the questionnaire, and the manner in which it is used by both "skilled" and "unskilled" fieldworker, to some extent dictate or condition not only the content but also the form of the responses.[10] An informant may simply furnish more or less cryptic replies to the questions asked rather than give examples from the whole range of his experience of traditional verbal controls which, though relevant to a survey of this kind, may not specifically be demanded by the questionnaire. Further, the earlier questionnaires used were devised to elicit a wide range of responses. Their experimental format resulted in some replies being specific, whereas others gave more general information. Although a representative sample of the usages was obtained by this means, the form of the responses varied considerably. Some consisted of single words whereas others were expanded and detailed accounts. Interviewers also discovered that the repetition of similar questions in a slightly different form in the questionnaire sometimes produced the same response. This occasionally resulted in duplication rather than eliciting

---

[10] The same may be said of the way in which a fieldworker influences a tape-recorded interview. Such interviews, however, might include fairly random questions as well as more specific ones. In this sense, the taped material is less controlled than that elicited by questionnaire.

TIGHT BINDING

the variants which were being sought. In addition, the material elicited, although to some extent predetermined, presents problems of classification, especially with regard to the wide variations in regional usage and individual experience involved. If the material is to be presented effectively it requires classifying; otherwise it becomes little more than a list of examples. Such a classification must, however, grow out of the corpus of material under scrutiny rather than be superimposed upon it. While not to be regarded as rigid or final, it indicates convenient dividing lines, for example, between obviously different classes of threatening figures. These in turn may be divided somewhat more arbitrarily into smaller constituent categories for ease of reference.

A tentative classification of this kind would of course be subject to variation in greater or lesser degree if additional material became available from other similar investigations. Even if these were carried out in the same areas and among the same informants, but at a different time or with a different emphasis or methodology, some variation would be inevitable. Nevertheless, even if another corpus of material from Newfoundland were analysed, whatever the methodology, similar basic classes of figures and linguistic patterning of threat structures would be evident. Moreover, these same classes seem likely to be relevant in the categorisation of comparable bodies of material from other parts of the English-speaking world and beyond.

The uniqueness of the Newfoundland material presented here consists in the fact that this is a synchronic study in some depth

TIGHT BINDING

of a particular region, based primarily on tape-recorded interviews. It is supplemented, as are many European folklore studies,[11] by extensive use of questionnaire responses and other data from a regional archive. Quite apart from its bulk the Newfoundland material is not amenable to the kind of analysis which insists on rigid categories. Such analyses tend to ignore parallels and related usages which may be significant, and it is thus all too easy to distort the total picture. Any attempt to categorise the material in the present study is therefore based on the necessity of presenting the data in some structured way, while avoiding a simple listing technique.

Since most of the tape-recorded items in the corpus were collected during my own fieldwork, it has been possible to put this material into a fuller context than that of some of the manuscript sources. Not only could the relevant tape excerpts be lexically transcribed in detail but my experience of the context in which they were recorded has proved helpful in analysing and classifying the material. It was also possible to transcribe many threats and names of figures phonetically. This was invaluable in authenticating various pronunciations referred to in the written material from the Newfoundland Archive.

The questionnaire technique usually elicits little contextual detail and the examples of threats given in the replies are often in indirect speech. The taped material, on

---

[11] The studies of Cramer and Tijskens on threatening figures, for example, rely on data from questionnaires and other manuscript material.

TIGHT BINDING

the other hand, not only presents the full situational context of the threats but also the actual form of words used. The tapes provide vivid first-hand examples of spoken threats, and these form the core of the present study. The general classification of the linguistic structures typically used in the Newfoundland threats, which is presented in Chapter 4, evolved from the analysis of those threats which were recorded or reported in direct speech.

The tape-recorded contextual details also helped to establish the fact that certain aspects of the British Isles tradition of threatening figures are reflected in Newfoundland whereas others are not. The Newfoundland corpus naturally lacks such historical figures as Cromwell and Claverhouse, which have a more localised association with the British Isles. The patterns of settlement in the Province suggest that whereas certain figures were brought over with the traditions of the early settlers, others, including such animals as the bear and the lynx which are indigenous to the Province, were then also adopted for use in threats. Although there is as yet insufficient evidence for a definitive statement to be made, it seems that the material so far collected reflects typical threatening patterns from the principal areas of the British Isles - mainly West Country England and southern Ireland - from which the original settlers came.

It has proved difficult to give detailed geographical distribution of the Newfoundland figures from the available evidence. While it is clear, for example, that the boogie man

TIGHT BINDING

is known in some areas and the boo man is not, both figures are found together in other communities in the Province. Distribution is in a sense less relevant for Newfoundland than, say, for western European countries. In contrast with the British Isles, for example, the settlement of the Province is comparatively recent and mainly around the coastal perimeter, and as a result there is a tendency for the same figures to be used over a wide area. Nevertheless, enclaves of predominantly English or Irish settlement respectively have persisted,[12] each tending to retain the traditions of its place of origin in the British Isles. On the other hand the traditions have mingled as the population has become more mobile. In recent years, the resettlement of isolated communities into larger, more accessible centres, and the general movement of population to urban areas have continued to complicate the distributional patterns of both threats and figures used in controlling children.

The discussion which follows will first make some general observations on the linguistic aspects of traditional verbal controls, and then put forward a structural typology of the direct speech threats in the Newfoundland corpus. Following this, some comment will be made on the sociological function of threats in general and on their more specific function in Newfoundland. This will lead on to a consideration of the degree of belief

---

[12] The Scots and French settlement patterns should of course also be borne in mind in a comprehensive analysis of the distribution.

TIGHT BINDING

accorded to the threatening figures themselves, followed by a typology of the Newfoundland figures. In Part II, the three classes of figures are outlined, together with brief commentaries on the figures themselves and a selection of supporting illustrations from the collected material. Finally, some of the more important observations made in the study are drawn together in a series of concluding statements.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 3.

Threats and Other Aspects of Verbal Social Control

Speech is not only man's fundamental means of expression and communiation but also a primary means of exercising social control. This control frequently takes the form of threats. The OED defines threat as:

> "A denunciation to a person of ill to befall him; esp. a declaration of hostile determination or of loss, pain, punishment, or damage to be inflicted in retribution for or conditionally upon some course; a menace. Also fig. an indication of impending evil.
>
> The radical sense appears to be 'pressure applied to the will by declaration of the harm that will follow non-compliance'. It is thus indirect compulsion."

This definition contains the essence of what is meant by threat in the present study. In the systems of social control under consideration here, however, the term has a somewhat wider connotation. It might be defined as a linguistic structure, or series of structures, uttered with the specific intention of influencing or directing the behaviour of others. It demands or encourages conformity with certain norms or courses of action desired by or acceptable to the speaker and the group with which he identifies.[1] As Hertzler notes in his discussion of the language of social control:

> -"The threat, most often in the form of a verbal expression of an intention or determination to inflict

---

[1] Newfoundland adults use the verb "threaten" in the specific sense of speaking sternly to children who have behaved unacceptably, thereby warning them of possible physical punishment, or frightening them with some real or imaginary figure. See Firestone, Brothers and Rivals, p. 123.

TIGHT BINDING

> injury upon or bring harm or deprivation to another, is used to proscribe or prescribe certain action for others. The threat usually contains reference to some form of punishment for the nonconformist."[2]

Although a threat usually implies a demand or command, however, its linguistic form may be that of a simple statement, a question, or a conditional structure, as well as an imperative.

All known cultures use language in order to carry on the affairs of their society and many of them have systems of social control which include threats and similar verbal devices. There is ample evidence of such control systems in Europe and North America and also numerous references from other parts of the world. Very probably they exist in most cultures, if not in all. So widespread a phenomenon invites examination and raises a number of interesting questions. For example, one might ask precisely how various societies exercise these verbal control systems; what typical patterns are used and if these vary from one culture to another; what linguistic elements are chosen for the frightening patterns used; whether the threats are aimed at particular sections of the community; what the function of such threatening is, and so on. Many of these questions must remain unanswered, for the field of enquiry is so vast that one can hope to examine only a few of them in any detail, and attempt to suggest further avenues of exploration. In the following discussion some of the sociolinguistic and paralinguistic features of the threatening process are considered. Although this necessitates some

---

[2] J.O. Hertzler, A Sociology of Language (New York, 1965), p. 283.

TIGHT BINDING

comments on the function of threats, a more detailed analysis of the functional aspects is given in Chapters 5 and 6.

Threats of various kinds are to be heard every day, in both serious and jocular form, apparently in all levels of European and North American society. The present study, however, apart from being limited to a particular geographical area, is concerned specifically with those threats addressed to children by their elders and deliberately employed to influence or control their behaviour. Such control is exercised for a variety of reasons, ranging from a desire to acquaint the child with certain accepted norms of behaviour to the simple request or demand for obedience. The threats warn of three principal retributive consequences, either singly or in combination:

1. The intervention of some real or imaginary external figure, to which responsibility for punishment is delegated and which will take the child or harm him in some way.
2. Alienation of parental affection and revocation of familial security.
3. Physical punishment by the parent or other adult.

The interrelationship of sociological and linguistic factors in systems of social control is noted by Raum who states that "a strong tendency can be observed to ensure the efficacy of these linguistic controls",[3] and he suggests that cultures reinforce sociological controls, as he terms them, by means of language. This is done "...by employing words of high emotional tension, strong imperatives, the verbal magic of expressions of

---

[3] Raum, p. 237.

TIGHT BINDING

hope and despair, success and failure, threats and promises, curses and blessings."[4] These observations are equally applicable to the range of material in the Newfoundland corpus and to its sociolinguistic context. High emotional tension may be involved, for example, in the employment of supernatural or invented figures such as the Devil or the boogie man in the Newfoundland threats. Strong imperatives such as, "Be good, or the Devil will get you!" or, "Be home before dark!" and similar constructions are common. Verbal magic of expression may be involved, for example, in the exotic names of threatening figures and also in such threats as "I'll give you a thimble pie" where words are used in a deliberately obscure way, often as euphemisms for some kind of physical violence. Not only threats, but also promises, curses and blessings play a significant part in controlling the behaviour of Newfoundland children, as elsewhere, but they are not my immediate concern here.

Raum further suggests[5] that the formal element of other verbal usages such as the proverb may also be especially effective linguistic controls, particularly if the child has an appropriate background, a "conditioning", an automatic working of behavioural checks which are activated in certain circumstances. When the child is faced with a given situation he may therefore respond to it automatically, perhaps through knowledge of a proverbial

---

[4] Raum, p. 237.

[5] Ibid., p. 237.

TIGHT BINDING

expression,[6] a cautionary tale, or through the conditioning of threats, promises, curses, blessings and the like, used to encourage behaviour of one kind and to discourage another.

There also appears to be a direct link between threats, curses, and charms. For example, some charms, like threats, may take the form of an adjuration.[7] The linguistic structure of charms, curses and threats is often similar and the link between the latter two is especially close. In addition to their linguistic similarity, both may imply either physical harm or some potentially threatening situation, while some rely for their effect on the force of the words themselves. The uttering of a curse such as, "Blast you!" is usually a way of expressing displeasure, often with no expectation of literal fulfilment. This is also true of most threats, although some, for example those expressing physical violence such as, "You'd better be good or I'll smack you!" could be carried out. In some curses like, "The Devil take you!" or, "May God strike you dead!" the linguistic form is strikingly similar to that of many threats,[8] and the supernatural figures with religious connotations

---

[6] In Newfoundland, as elsewhere, proverbial expressions frequently take similar linguistic form to threats, e.g. "We would run as though the Old Boy was after us." The same is also true of the form in which some folk beliefs are expressed, e.g. "If you screwed up your face and the wind changed, your face would stay that way" and "If you handle jellyfish, they'll give you warts".

[7] See, for example, the form of the charm for toothache noted by F.C.H., Notes and Queries, 2nd Ser., X (November 10, 1860), 364.

[8] In this connection see also, for instance, G. Schwab, Tribes of the Liberian Hinterland (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), p. 221.

TIGHT BINDING

are not only typical of curses but are also commonly invoked in threats. Curses and threats also share the device of metaphorical usage, as in references to hell and damnation, for example, which again offer no prospect of literal fulfilment on the part of the user and their religious and moral implications are different for different people.

A curse is itself a threat, implied or otherwise, and may also threaten transformation, madness, barrenness, death or some other terrible consequence. In some African cultures,[9] threats of this type are used for such serious offences as transgressing the edicts of the tribe, against the cultural norms, just as a person in Western society may be punished by death for transgressing a criminal code. Threats of disease in Africa[10] and the frequent personification of diseases in various European references,[11] suggest that the idea of transformation often lies behind curses, threats and threatening figures.

Again, in our Western tradition threats of religious implication are used, for example, "God will be angry", or the somewhat milder "You won't go to heaven if you sin!". This latter type of threat, seen also in such forms as, "Father Christmas won't come!" and "If you aren't good you won't get any presents for Christmas!" are often milder in implication than those threatening the apparently direct intervention of a

---

[9] See Raum, p. 234.

[10] See, for example, I. Schapera, Married Life in an African Tribe (London, 1966), pp. 254-255.

[11] See, for example, K. Chrysanthis, "The Personification of Plague and Cholera According to the Cypriots", Folk-lore, LVI, 2 (June, 1945), 259-266.

TIGHT BINDING

malevolent figure. They are intermediate between serious threats of such figures and the complete absence of threats among those people who condemn the whole idea of threatening as unenlightened or positively harmful. By contrast, such threats as "You'll go to hell if you say things like that!" or "The Devil will take you!" imply that saying or doing certain things regarded as immoral puts the person concerned into the Devil's power, and various religious tenets and concepts of morality lie behind many such threats.

Threats and similar verbal usages appear to be used within certain prescribed social or cultural limits. Their sociological patterning seems to be built, certainly in the Newfoundland tradition, around the authority of the home and ultimately of society in general. These two societies, the family and the wider surrounding culture, are interrelated and interdependent in their efforts to effect social control. The methods which are employed for this purpose in the home reflect not only the attitudes and principles of the family, but also those of the surrounding culture. The controls apply particularly to children, and adults are not normally subject to the kind of threats which they themselves use against children. In Newfoundland, serious threatening of children by such figures as the boogie man, the Black Man, the stranger and so on normally ceases after a child reaches his early teens when they tend to lose their effectiveness.

The deliberate attempts by adults to control children by means of threats are directed mainly against the younger age-groups,

TIGHT BINDING

and the threats in the Newfoundland material under consideration here concern children between the ages of approximately two and twelve. The pattern of threatening in Newfoundland, like that in other Western cultures, changes when children are in their early teens, if not before. Adults and adolescents, however, threaten each other in a modified way, and although they may still be afraid of some supernatural beings and figures of authority, the fictional element so common in childhood threats tends to be discarded. They may substitute either some real person - usually an actual figure of authority - or some potentially fearsome retribution, for the often fictitious figure typically employed in threatening children. For example, they may invoke some authority figure such as a lawyer, magistrate, director, manager, foreman, inspector or anyone with official power. On another level they may threaten such terrifying realities as imprisonment, disease, mutilation, war and death. This modified type of threatening differs from the childhood threats both in conception and connotation, but persists among adults just as threats of physical violence also continue indefinitely from childhood onwards. Threats function differently, however, in the adult world where experience proves that the figures invoked often have real and tangible power to carry them out, and a clear, direct line of authority is evident. Nevertheless, some supernatural or fictitious elements persist in that threats and curses in the adult world may include references to such concepts as the wrath of God, the fires of hell and other

TIGHT BINDING

suggestions of divine retribution or supernatural intervention.

An adult may be warned for his own good against behaving in a particular way, often with no suggestion of physical violence or threatening figures. For example, one person may say to another, "If you don't take proper care of yourself you'll make yourself ill!" or "You'll get yourself killed if you drive like that!", and so on. In such ways the community voices collective or individual concern about its members whose behaviour is called in question, and appeals for their rational co-operation. Again, the linguistic form of these utterances is often similar to that of threats. Individual adults thus continue their attempts to influence others by a variety of verbal means, modified though these may be in function and effect from those used specifically to control children.

Young sees the various forms of control as a continuum:

> "The means of control are not always sharply set off from one another. We may, in fact, consider them as ranged along a continuum from the direct positive rewards through a great number of symbolic ones to the negative extreme of the death penalty."[12]

A general theory of social control takes account of a wider range of control mechanisms than is found in those behavioural relationships between adults and children on which the present study is centred. Such a theory includes many controls which are non-verbal, though language usually has an important function in their application. Young lists some of these general means of control

---

[12] K. Young, Handbook of Social Psychology (London, 1946), p. 548.

TIGHT BINDING

in the following table:[13]

Direct physical and positive rewards	Positive symbolic means of control	Negative symbolic means of control	Direct physical and negative control by punishment
Awards and prizes and other material rewards: wealth, power over others.	Positive gossip, indoctrination, persuasion and propaganda, advertising, flattery, praise, badges and honorific evidence of high status.	Commands to desist, threats to punish, censure, satire, ridicule, epithets, name-calling, negative gossip.	Death penalty, banishment from group, physical torture, imprisonment, fines, censorship.

These controls operate at both the informal and the formal levels and vary in interpretation and application:

> "Most of these means of control are matters of common experience... They operate at the informal level through talk, the mores, and public opinion, and at the formal level through the application of constitutional and statute law, judicial precedent, and the formal codes and regulations of various institutions. None of these - discussion, public opinion, mores, law, or group code - is independent of the others. It is the law and the group code, however, which are the most rigid and objective. But even these must be interpreted by individuals with particular biases and ideas. Moreover, people can change these formal controls by resort to the informal controls."[14]

The controls act as a normalising or stabilising influence on the individual and the group within a culture. They may be

---

[13] Young, p. 549.

[14] Young, pp. 548-549.

TIGHT BINDING

repressive or on the other hand they may encourage acceptable behaviour by rewarding it:

> "...control may be either negative or positive and may be exercised either by overt force or by the use of symbols. The negative means of control include those which are repressive in nature, such as stoppage of free speech and outright physical punishment. The positive means range from such symbolic rewards as honorific badges and other marks of status to such direct physical rewards as wealth and power over others."[15]

The present study concentrates attention on what Young terms "negative symbolic means of control", and more specifically still on "commands to desist" and "threats to punish". More than one type of control, however, may be used in a given situation, each contributing to the coercive effect.

Parents and other adults in Western society employ various methods of controlling children, not all of which, of course, are verbal.[16] These include:

1. Physical action, including bodily contact, movements inflicting pain or injury, torture, confinement, use of implements such as belts, straps, sticks and slippers; threatening gestures and facial expressions.
2. Threat plus physical action.
3. Threat alone.
4. (Threat plus) other verbal warning, e.g. proverb, cautionary tale etc.
5. Rational explanation, coaxing, cajoling, bribery, encouragement, praise, reward or other "positive" control.

Physical action to control the behaviour of children may be criminally severe, but corporal punishment in modern Western

---

[15] Young, p. 548.

[16] They may of course take no action at all, or may even ironically appear to encourage wrong behaviour in the hope of correcting it.

TIGHT BINDING

civilisation is normally carried out within certain accepted limits. This usually means that the punishment is reasonably in proportion with the offence committed. Physical action may replace or accompany threats and thus merits brief mention here. Gestures and facial expressions may also accompany the administration of such punishment and contribute to its effectiveness. Although the present study does not concern itself with physical violence in which no verbal threats are involved, there is, however, a relationship between such violence and the use of threats. The latter are often employed because for various reasons the adult does not wish to administer physical punishment. He may regard it as distasteful or believe that it is harmful for the child both physically and mentally. A number of interesting psychological and sociological problems are raised here which invite investigation. Do some adults, for instance, threaten and also take direct action? Do some threaten and never act with physical violence? Do some always use physical violence and no threats? Again, the answers to such fundamental questions as these must await further study.

A spoken threat may be accompanied by some form of physical action such as a spanking or a threatening gesture so that they reinforce each other. This is partly our concern in this study in that threats may be modified in pattern because gestures or other physical actions accompany them. For example, instead of the emphatic device of repetition or other verbal intensification, the threat may be uttered once only but with a gesture which makes repetition superfluous. There is always the possibility that

TIGHT BINDING

threats of physical punishment could be carried out, and if the threats are accompanied by a smack or an angry gesture, the adult again becomes directly rather than symbolically involved in the punitive role. A combination of methods of control may therefore, be used to encourage acceptable behaviour, as Szwed observes in his discussion of intrafamilial relationships in Newfoundland's Codroy Valley, where threats and teasing are used in preference to physical punishment.[17]

Threats themselves may be uttered on at least three levels of seriousness. Firstly, at their most serious level they may be said with no attempt to modify tone of voice or facial expression to signal the possibility that the adult might relent. Secondly they may be said in such a way that both by tone of voice and facial expression the adult suggests seriousness of purpose without relentlessness and thus maintains some kind of bond with the child. Thirdly they may be said half-seriously or jokingly, often with no suggested or intended seriousness of purpose. The combination of sounds and all aspects of gesture, including facial expression, is at the centre of the whole behavioural process of threatening. Even though they may sometimes be intended playfully, gestures and expressions can be exaggerated in a way which may be frightening to the child. One example of this from Sheffield, England, mentions a wrinkled old woman who used to flatten her nose against the outside of a window-pane and grin, as a kind of game with a young child, who was both amused and rather frightened by this.[18] A parallel

---

[17] Szwed, Private Cultures and Public Imagery, p. 80.

[18] This item is taken from the Archives of the Survey of Language and Folklore, at the University of Sheffield.

TIGHT BINDING

reference from Tennessee describes how an elderly man "would peck on the windows, make - what seemed to me - a 'ghostly' face, and say: 'Raw head, bloody bones. I'm a-gonna get you!' He had a very deep voice and he said the phrase in a somewhat dead or hollow tone."[19] In the Newfoundland material, however, only occasional references are made to these ancillary features of the threatening process, and a large-scale behavioural study would be necessary to examine how they operate in their social context. The analyst is able to observe and describe certain elements of the threatening process and note that the child learns the meaning of these patterns of communication as he becomes acculturated. The analyst, however, cannot deduce how the child feels or what he understands. He can only interpret from the child's behaviour. The threatener can speak with joking tone and expression but the child may not see the comedy and his reaction may simply reflect his fear.

Not only gestures but also deliberately startling or frightening noises may accompany threats, as for instance when an adult knocks on a table or similar object, unseen by the child, and pretends, playfully or seriously, that a threatening figure such as the bogey man or some unknown creature is knocking, perhaps at the door demanding entrance. Unexplained noises are often frightening, and may be used in the threatening context to suggest to a child that something unknown and fearsome is nearby. The games and threats involving knocking and similar

---

[19] Halpert Collection.

TIGHT BINDING

noises may be scaring in the same way as those in legends of ghosts and other supernaturals, and although the enormous, uncharted area of frightening noises is outside the scope of this study it clearly invites exploration.[20] The knocking on a door, window or some other surface, the tapping on the floor with a stick and the like, unseen to the child, suggest that the terrifying figure is actually coming; that he is indeed there in the house at that very moment.

By their very nature, and especially when uttered to children in a threatening context, certain speech sounds tend to be associated with unpleasant or frightening concepts. In English, labial sounds, and more specifically the bilabial plosives /p/ and /b/,[21] frequently occur in initial position in words which, for children at least, have unpleasant or frightening connotations. The words include, for example, pooh, poop (excrement), boo, boh, bogey, bogle, boggart, bug and bugbear.[22] It is interesting to note that these initial sounds are "visible": that is to say their labial nature makes their articulation more

---

[20] For example, the frightening noise of a stick drawn across the edge of a thatch is personified and used as a threatening figure in Liberia. See Schwab, p. 220.

[21] Note also a similar tendency on the part of initial labio-dental fricatives in such expletives as "Fee, fi, foh, fum!"

[22] Most of these words are found in Standard English, although bogle and boggart may be regarded as dialectal, along with their many regional variants.

TIGHT BINDING

obvious to an observer than that of most other sounds. This is clear, for instance, in the case of the word bo, boh or boo which when used by English speakers to frighten, playfully or otherwise, is normally said loudly and with sudden initial plosion for deliberately frightening effect. This particularly violent plosion in the utterance of the word is often accompanied by pharyngeal friction;[23] a fact which the final h in some spellings evidently attempts to indicate. A whispered boh would in general have a less frightening effect as both plosion and loudness would be reduced to a minimum. It is also interesting to note here that some interjections, especially those expressing disapproval, disgust or contempt, e.g. bah, pooh, often begin with labial sounds in English, and also in German and French.[24] Not only do children seem to find it easy to imitate labial sounds, but also they seem to react more readily to them, perhaps because, as noted above, they can actually see the articulation taking place.

The idea that initial labials in English may be regarded as typical of many words connoting unpleasant or frightening concepts might be countered by the realisation, for example, that velar and pharyngeal fricatives, although the antithesis of labials and not "visible" sounds, might themselves also be regarded as having unpleasant or frightening connotations in some contexts. Exclamations expressing disgust, such as ugh, also include velar or

---

[23] Although predominantly pharyngeal it may also involve velar and uvular friction and glottal constriction.

[24] See, for example, the comments on German bah, pah, pöh, puh and French fi made by G. Krueger, "Bob-baw!", Notes and Queries, 9th ser., VII (March 23, 1901), 232.

TIGHT BINDING

pharyngeal friction. Initial labials and such fricative quality, however, are both sometimes found in the same word, as for example in interjections such as pooh, pah, bah and faugh which may have little notional content yet are frequently unpleasant in connotation. Like boh/boo, many of these interjections appeal to the child in three direct ways:

1. Through the "visible" initial labial.
2. Through the guttural nature and often unpleasant connotation of pharyngeal friction underlying the vowels.
3. Through the typical accompaniment of gesture such as raising the hand or jutting the face out towards the child.

All these manifestations are obviously part of an elaborate behavioural pattern and the very saying of such words as boh or boo demands some ancillary facial expression, whimsical or serious.

Not only does there appear to be a tendency in English for these initial labials and final pharyngeal friction to be found either separately or together in such interjections, but initial labials are also common in the names of many of the apparently invented threatening figures. In some ways this may be regarded as crucial to the probably unanswerable question of the origin of many frightening terms and the threatening figures so closely connected with them. What do we mean by bogey, bogey man, boo man and the like? Fundamentally, we simply mean "something frightening", and the precise significance

TIGHT BINDING

of each figure is often irrelevant. What is important is that the figure represents a fearsome and unknown entity, an alien and uncontrollable creature beyond the bounds of normal existence. Just as the frightening interjections such as boh/boo appeal to the child in that they are "visible", the child also sees the lips pucker up and the bilabial sound being made when the names of such threatening figures as the bogey man are articulated. The same is true on the more playful level of "peek-a-boo" games but here the potentially frightening sounds are toned down so that the child enjoys the game without being frightened. Whether the context is playful or serious, the child is given ample opportunity to associate the term boh/boo with the idea of something or someone appearing suddenly and unexpectedly, at least in a mildly frightening way. The word itself implies surprise, and is normally a fast, unexpected utterance.[25] On the other hand there are of course a number of words beginning with sounds such as /bɒ/ or /bu:/, e.g. book, boost, boot, booth, and booty which have no basically frightening associations.

The effect of the initial plosion in such words as boh may be reinforced by the pharyngeal friction which colours the following vowel. To carry this a little further, it is interesting to note that many threats are characterised by pharyngeal quality throughout the whole of their urgent and half-whispered articulation. The effect of this, in combination with the initial "visible" and prominent

---

[25] The OED defines Bo/Boh as "A combination of consonant and vowel especially fitted to produce a loud and startling sound .... An exclamation intended to surprise or frighten."

labial, is often by no means pleasant to a child brought up in the Western European linguistic tradition. In English this is partly because pharyngeal friction lacks significance in the phonemic system of the language. Its function is directly semantic or symbolic[26] rather than phonemic in that it helps to convey attitudes and emotions, often of disapprobation.

Threats are often uttered with a special voice quality. This frequently is a hushed or low tone which includes a note of urgency and inspires fear and mystery. Again pharyngeal friction is commonly employed as a disquieting or even menacing undertone in such utterances. This is apparent in a number of the tape-recorded Newfoundland threats.[27] The tone of voice obviously has a great deal to do with the impact which the threat has on the child. Adults can convey something of the potential fearsomeness and the alien quality of the threatening figure simply by employing a tone of voice which suggests these. Threats involving supernatural, fictitious[28] or invented figures are often spoken in a comparatively quiet yet excited tone, and they

---

[26]The notion of "phonetic symbolism", which implies an intrinsic correspondence between sounds and meanings, offers a possible rationale for the development of certain clusters of words with similar meanings and similar phonetic structure. See I.K. Taylor, "Phonetic Symbolism Re-examined", Psychological Bulletin, LX, 2 (1963), 200-209. I am indebted to Dr. D.S. Hart for this reference.

[27]E.g. this tape-recorded threat from Brigus: "'Watch! There goes the Janneys! The Janneys'll get you!' [said in urgent, half-whispered tones]". See B7.10, p. 424.

[28]Used here as listed under sense 4 in the OED: "Feigned to exist; existing only in imagination; imaginary, unreal".

TIGHT BINDING

are also typified by certain distinctive intonation patterns.[29] Threats involving living figures such as people with authority, strangers and the like, are often expressed in normal conversational tones, but they may also sometimes be said in a loud voice. Threats of direct physical violence, however, tend to be uttered loudly or even shouted, but this is not to ignore the fact that they may sometimes be said with a controlled and ominous vocal restraint in which the threatener himself assumes the aura of mystery and menace which normally surrounds the supernatural, fictitious and invented figures.

The importance of the tone of voice in threats is further emphasised by Raum's discussion of what he calls the "conditioning term".[30] This is "one of the first controls used" by Chaga parents and involves the uttering of a word in a stentorian voice in certain presumably prohibitory or cautionary situations. As the child gets older the verbal control is elaborated by the personifying of the conditioning term, and the child himself then

---

[29] Intonation and rhythm may become so insistent as almost to constitute a ritualistic chant, especially in the often-quoted example: "The boógie man will gét you if you dón't wátch oút!". Professor Halpert draws my attention to what appears to be the only attempt in North American printed sources to represent the tone, rhythm and tempo of a threat. This is the Hoosier poet's famous last line:

"An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!"

J.W. Riley, "Little Orphant Annie", in The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature, comp. M.H. Arbuthnot (Chicago, 1952), p. 131.

[30] Raum, p. 237.

TIGHT BINDING

comes to use the utterance in appropriate situations, for example in referring to things he dislikes. In this way the very term itself may assume the aspect of a bogey or monster to the child because of its unpleasant and prohibitory associations. As a further step:

> "Round this figure a number of stories are invented to give it verisimilitude. In addition, a great variety of stories describing the natural and moral consequences of certain types of behaviour are used to create in the child automatically working checks activated in certain situations."[31]

Specific words uttered in such a threatening tone in such situations serve to condition the child's responses. This form of linguistic control is parallel with the use of certain exclamations in English to discourage a child from touching or doing something it should not.[32] Such exclamations often appear to have no intrinsic "meaning". Rather they are a succession of sounds which together express prohibition: the sound sequence is itself a warning. It is interesting to speculate that the use of such sound sequences or practical morphemes, which have a

---

[31] Raum, p. 237.

[32] An interesting example of this is the use of the term bobba or bob-baw in parts of Northern England and simply implying "Don't touch / Don't do that". This word may be followed immediately by an action such as a smack or a threatening gesture. Although the term has phonological similarities with words like boo and bogey, and its apparent cognate, babba, signifies faeces, it does not appear to have been elaborated or personified in the same way as the African conditioning terms. See the notes by H.S. Ward, A.Mayall and Ap Cadrawd, "Bob-baw!", Notes and Queries, 9th ser. II (October 29, 1898), 354-355, and by R. Wallis, "Bob-baw!", Notes and Queries, 9th ser. III (March 18, 1899), 213-214. Dr. W-D. Bald draws my attention to the parallel use of the term bebe in German.

TIGHT BINDING

considerable affinity with the conditioning terms, may themselves form a part of a similar system of elaboration and personification. In this way their development might possibly suggest one origin of other frightening words such as the names of many threatening figures. Some of these names contain elements which were perhaps exclamatory in origin, such as the initial element in boo man. A conditioning term may begin simply as an exclamation used in various cautionary situations and perhaps not too far removed from the "primitive" tradition described by Raum. One might even speculate that the development of such a term,[33] first simply uttered in cautionary situations and then elaborated and personified, might help to explain, for example, the complex relationship between the surprising number of threatening figures, frightening terms and words of unpleasant connotation which begin with /b/, /p/ and /f/ in languages of the Indo-European family. This might lead to the hypothesis that this rather broad group of related concepts, culminating in their personification into various threatening figures, may have developed from the same root, from whatever basic term or terms, meaningful or otherwise, were used in the original context of social control.

Children are often very sensitive to mood as expressed in the stress and pitch of an utterance, the tone of voice, gesture

---

[33] For instance the possibility that a term or terms expressing the idea of swelling or bulging, both literally and metaphorically, might lie behind the cluster of related words centring on bo(h), boo. For a full discussion of this notion see Wasson and Wasson, I, 92-96.

TIGHT BINDING

and facial expression. They often know immediately if one is merely putting up a pretence. If, however, the adult apparently connives with some external agency to frighten the child into obedience he may be convinced that the adult is serious when this is not in fact the case. A vivid example of this is given in Ben-Dor's description of the Eskimo Naluyuks,[34] where the masked threatening figures actually come into the home. Although it is the child's awesome responsibility to answer the questions of the Naluyuks, the parents sit alongside the children and embrace them, indicating that parental protection may still be offered. Although they may pretend that they cannot help the child against the Naluyuks, the mere presence of the parents implies that they may defend him; he has a last hope that it may be possible to get help.

It is interesting to note that the linguistic form of many threats is often a conditional, and from this form of words the child may have the impression that either the parent or the threatening figure might relent. If a child takes advantage of this, however, the threats may be made to appear more serious, perhaps through the use of a more severe tone or more demonstrative action. One particularly vivid example of such deliberate intensification of threats is an instance reported from Sheffield, England, where a mother threatened, "I'll burn your fingers on the stove, if you don't stop biting your nails!"[35] When the threat

---

[34]S. Ben-Dor, Makkovik: Eskimos and Settlers in a Labrador Community: A Contrastive Study in Adaptation (St. John's, 1966), pp. 122-123.

[35]From the Archives of the Survey of Language and Folklore.

was not carried out and so proved ineffectual, the mother actually seized hold of the child one day and rushed him with fingers outstretched towards the bars of the stove. The child then really thought she was serious and he screamed and struggled to escape. Once the threat had been intensified to this degree, however, it could be taken no further, and the mother never used it again. It seems, therefore, that even the more dire threats of physical violence are often carried out only to a certain limited extent, or a realistic pretence is initiated. This re-emphasises the important point that such threats are often made with the express purpose of avoiding the administration of physical punishment in which the parent may particularly wish not to be involved. The child, however, eventually discovers that the threats may not be fulfilled, just as he also comes to realise that many threatening figures are fictitious and therefore powerless.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 4.

Threats and their Structural Patterning

The threats used by adults in controlling children may be divided into two principal types:

1. Those implying physical action by the threatener.
2. Those transferring the potential punishment onto some other agency.

If taken literally threats of physical action often sound extraordinarily severe to the point of brutality as the following examples from the Newfoundland material illustrate:

"I'll knock the stuffings out of you!" (67-12).[1]
"I'll knock you into the middle of next week!" (67-12)
"I'll take you down to Casey Street and beat the face off you!" (66-1).
"I'll beat your teeth down your throat!" (66-13).
"I'll beat you black and blue!" (67-12).
"I'll beat your head as soft as your bottom!" (67-12).
"So help me, I'll cleave you in two!" (66-16).
"I'll cleave 'ee open!" (66-13)
"I'll pick your eyes out and use them for alleys!" (66-13).
"I'll put your head where your ass is to!" (66-13).

It is clear, however, that threats differ in semantic content from other types of discourse. Although their surface structure may be identical with that of many other sentences in English, their deep structure is often more complex. For example, there is clearly a different semantic level between such utterances as,

---

[1] The numbers in parenthesis are those of the relevant accession in the Newfoundland Archive.

TIGHT BINDING

"I'll meet you at six o'clock" and "I'll knock the stuffings out of you!". Whereas the first has verbal context which Joos calls "adequate casual assurance"[2] of a referent ("meeting") when six o'clock comes, there is apparently no referent for "knocking the stuffings out of" a person. Threats are thus metaphoric and hyperbolic, and have a different semantic content from the individual words and structures of which they are composed.

Although such threats may be followed up by physical action perhaps similar to that which is threatened, it is more often the case that the threatened punishment is not carried out, but rather that the horrifying implications of the words themselves are a sufficient deterrent. It is as if by making these threats terrifyingly violent, and often adding gestures and facial expressions to emphasise them further, the intention is to exercise control over the children simply through the frightening effect of the words used. There is always the possibility of the threats being carried out, at least as far as the child is concerned. Although he may not be convinced of this, he may be sufficiently persuaded by the serious tone and threatening gestures of the adults. Unless and until the threat is weakened by repetition with no consequent carrying out of the designated punishment, it will still act as a deterrent.

Both in the Newfoundland material and in many other references from Europe and North America there is an inverse

---

[2] M. Joos, The English Verb (Madison, Milwaukee and London, 1968), p. 156.

TIGHT BINDING

relationship between the violence of the threats and their being actually carried out: as a general rule, the more violent the threat, the less likelihood of its fulfilment. In using a violent threat, plus gesture and facial expression, the adult is able to release some of his annoyance over the offending behaviour concerned, and once this release mechanism has operated in this verbal way it is perhaps less likely that his anger will vent itself in direct physical action. The threat may thus take the place of such action in obtaining the required response. It is clear, therefore, that although many threats may be preliminaries to physical violence, some are efficacious in themselves, in which case the designated action is unnecessary, and the form of words, which resembles a ritualistic pattern or formula, with accompanying gesture or tone of voice, procures the desired effect.

The threats of physical violence are intermediate between physical action and those threats involving an often fictitious external agency. It is not normally possible for the latter type of threat to be carried out. A child cannot literally be given to the Devil or to the bogey man in reality, but the possibility of this may nevertheless be made very real to him, and he may believe or half believe that what the adults threaten could actually happen. Threats which involve living authority figures such as policemen or doctors would be carried out only rarely or to a limited extent, if at all, especially as they are often based on some fictitious or grossly exaggerated characteristic or capability. It is interesting to note, however, that whereas direct action can obviously be carried out and often is, threats

TIGHT BINDING

of such violence, as mentioned above, frequently remain unfulfilled. Even so, the knowledge that they could be reinforces their effectiveness, especially if the child has previously experienced their fulfilment. Such threats put parent or adult at the centre of the punishment, rather than shifting responsibility apparently or actually onto some other agency. The fact that they are often accompanied by violent gestures and delivered in an angry, loud, apparently serious tone itself frequently marks a distinction between these threats of physical violence and those involving imaginary or supernatural figures. The adult knows that in virtually all cases the fictitious threats cannot be carried out, and he may simply make a kind of game out of them, conniving with other adults present who join in the fun while at the same time collectively enforcing the agreed social control.

Apparent seriousness of tone is typical of threats of physical violence, even if this is an assumed or acted seriousness which other adults present recognise as such. In many cases, nevertheless, it may be perfectly serious. On one hand the threatener may say, "I'll tan your hide if you don't watch what you're doing!" but smile, and not really mean it. On the other hand he may say, "I'll put your head where your ass is to!" (66-13) and yet this action is physically impossible! Or again, one can threaten physical punishment in a quiet voice and the child will know that when the adult speaks in this way he intends the threat to be serious. There is thus a relationship between the

TIGHT BINDING

way the threat is expressed and the potential violence implied, even though a threat could be followed by as much violence if said quietly as it might be if said loudly. A contributor to the Survey of Language and Folklore at Sheffield notes that his mother would often threaten in a kind, pleasant way, and would even laugh sometimes when threatening.[3] She would then say for instance, "And that's no idle threat!" or "I mean it, you know!". Several other similar riders might then be added and then she would eventually carry out the threat occasionally, if sufficiently provoked. Again it is clear that the more threats the less likelihood of action.

Of course, the violence of such threats as, "I'll knock you into the middle of next week!"(67-12) or "I'll beat your teeth down your throat!"(66-13) is not meant literally but usually just implies that the child will be smacked, or perhaps the punishment may be meted out simultaneously. The threats involving an external agency may be said in a serious or a joking tone, but the adult is only involved in the punishment by the apparent abrogation of his protective role. In the threats of physical violence, however, he takes upon himself the whole responsibility for warning, correction and punishment, and he may feel it necessary to use exaggeratedly cruel and violent threats

---

[3] Laughter, a smile or similar suggestion of lack of seriousness again tends to nullify the effect of the threat, but may appeal to the child's better nature so that he refrains from disobedience at least temporarily.

TIGHT BINDING

which he may have no intention of carrying out. The threats of such violence are similar to those involving external agents in their graphic expression of exaggerated cruelty.

Coupled with the exaggerated violence and the graphic nature of the threats is the distinctive use of colourful words to express the potential violence. In Newfoundland, the child is told that various threatening figures will not only come for him, get, have or take him, but also chase, grab, eat, burn, bite or sting him, or gobble him up, stick needles into him, pull out his teeth, carry him off in a bag or other receptacle, throw him down a hole, bar him in a cupboard, put him in hospital, or lock him in jail or in a dark attic or cellar. Adults threaten him directly with a spankin', trimmin', lickin', hidin', lacin' or lynchin', or with the back of the hand, smacks, "claps" under the ear, a "pholtague" (slap) or a "kirlogue" (slap), or that he will be punished with a stick or "split", an ironing-cord, a belt, a strap or a knife. This violence could be expressed in a variety of ways, but as these few examples already indicate, certain verbal and semantic patterns tend to predominate, and the choice of words, often using vivid metaphors, plays an important part in the process of threatening.[4] The form of words itself may provoke an immediate response in the child, whether or not he understands their meaning.

Some threats in the English-speaking tradition are expressed

---

[4]Professor Halpert draws my attention to the metaphorical expression of such threats as, "I'll tan your hide!" which raise the poetic concept of what the tannic acid in the wood paddle will do to the untanned skin. See A.M. Trout, "Greetings", Courier-Journal, [Louisville, Kentucky] (October 7, 1950).

TIGHT BINDING

in such a way that they can have little real meaning, especially to the child; for example such euphemisms as, "I'm going to give you a dose of peach tree tea!" and "I'm going to put you through a course of sprouts!".[5] Similar threats also occur in Newfoundland: for example, "If you don't be quiet, I'll show you the four corners of the room!"(66-16), "If you torment me when I'm sewing, I'll give you a thimble pie!"(67-22) and "If you don't stop, I'll introduce my shoemaker to your tailor".(66-1)[6] In this type of threat the adult deliberately disguises an otherwise innocuous concept, and threatens the child with something it does not recognise or understand,[7] in the same way as one might use put-offs. There is a link between these apparently meaningless words which euphemistically imply intended violence and the many names of the nebulous supernatural and fictitious figures which the child again only partly comprehends, if at all. He does not really understand what the figures are but their nebulous nature frightens him. Similarly, he may not know what such euphemisms as "thimble pie" mean, but he is unable to equate them with anything and therefore they have an intriguing, extra-normal quality. The form of the words in such threats is

---

[5] See A.M. Trout, "Greetings", Courier-Journal, [Louisville, Kentucky], (April 23, 1952).

[6] Many other threats of violence in the Newfoundland material are partly euphemistic, e.g. "Be quiet or I'll give you an oiling [i.e. a beating]!" (66-5) and others may be self-consciously sarcastic, e.g. "Go stand in the corner until I find time to shoot you!" (67-12).

[7] The child may, of course, get the impression that some kind of physical punishment is intended.

TIGHT BINDING

important in that it may provoke an immediate response in the child. He may ponder it in the same way as he ponders put-offs which also amuse and puzzle at the same time.[8] If he works the puzzle out, the threat, like the put-off, ceases to be effective unless it is followed by the physical punishment implied.

As we have seen, threats involving either physical violence or some kind of frightening figure lie at the heart of the verbal processes of social control. Although adults may use the proverbs and cautionary tales[9] to warn children of the consequences attendant on misbehaviour, it is the threats which are the commonest and apparently the most effective verbal means of ensuring obedience. It is inevitable that the collecting of representative data on various verbal control mechanisms from a given area is somewhat random and inconclusive. The present exploratory study, however, indicates that threats tend to follow certain basic structural patterns. These patterns are constantly repeated, with variation of the agent or figure invoked. In the English-speaking world, in other Indo-European languages and also in other language groups threats are expressed in a formulaic way. The same is true of other verbal devices such as charms, curses, proverbs, blessings and

---

[8] Although put-offs are usually jocular or half-serious, they have many features in common with threats. Both are used in language games which emphasise the group solidarity of the adult world into which the child is as yet uninitiated.

[9] The use of proverbs, cautionary tales and such other devices as Wellerisms as means of verbal social control clearly invite attention. As a study of each of these genres is inevitably extensive, however, they have been disregarded in the present account.

TIGHT BINDING

the like which play a part in traditional social control. In the Newfoundland material the linguistic formulas of threats are few in number and predictable in form. They include the following typical patterns:

(The) _____ will come / get you etc.

If you ___(e.g. do/don't do that)___, (the) _____ will come / get you etc.

(The) _____ will come / get you etc., if you ___(e.g. do/don't do that)___.

Watch out for / be careful about (the) _____.

Be good / don't be naughty, or (the) _____ will come / get you etc.

Don't be bad because (the) _____ will come / get you etc.

Be good and (the) _____ won't come / get you etc.

Do ___(e.g. what I tell you)___ so (the) _____ won't come / get you etc.

The questionnaires and other methods of collection used in assembling the present corpus of Newfoundland material elicited two principal types of response:

1. Examples of threats in direct speech, expressed in Present

TIGHT BINDING

or Future tense form,[10] and addressed directly to one child or more: for example:

"The Old Black Man will have you!" (Q 67-504).
"The boos are out tonight!" (Q 67-504).
"The boogie-man will get you!" (Q 67-684).
"The Boo-man'll carry you off!" (T C355, 67-31).
"The Devil will take you!" (Q 67-674).
"I'm goin' to give ya a lacin'!" (Q 67-340).
"The mounties are comin'!" (Q 67-528).

2. Examples of threats in reported speech, either in a Present, or more usually a Past, tense form, not addressed directly to a child. Examples are:

The bear would get them (Q 67-389).
We were often warned that the "Black Man" was after us. (Q 67-1309).
If a child disobeyed, he might be told that the Boo-baggars would get him if he did not behave (Q 63 B).
The parents would tell the children that the bully-boo was coming to get them (Q 67-1074).
... if I stayed there after dark, the fairies would have me (Q 67-1234).
... Jack Frost would get their noses (Q 67-829).
Mummers ... might take them away (Q 67-1051).
If you were bad, you would be told to be good or the policeman would come and take you and put you in jail. All you would get to eat [was] hard bread and a glass of cold water (Q 67-106).

The corpus of material upon which this study is based includes a total of some 3300 threats. Of these, approximately 57% are of the direct speech type described under (1) above, and 43% are of

---

[10] For convenience, tenses are given their traditional designations here and a more complex analysis involving modality, present/present-non future/non-past etc. is avoided.

TIGHT BINDING

the reported speech variety described under (2). For convenience of presentation, the following analysis is based on those threats expressed in direct speech. These vivid threats are examples of those actually used by adults or older children in the living context of social control. It should be borne in mind, however, that the threats which are expressed in reported speech have similar basic structural and linguistic patterns to those in direct speech. They differ mainly in tense structure and pronominal usage and can be regarded as transformations of the direct speech patterns. Their more complex linguistic form, dependent as it often is on parts of the context of utterance which lie outside the threat itself, suggests that in the present analysis they are best regarded as valuable supporting data for the more straightforward typology of the direct speech threats.

Although inevitably subject to considerable linguistic variation in individual utterances, the direct speech threats in the present corpus follow other folklore genres which are characterised by a limited number of typical patterns indicating the main paths of cultural transmission. These basic patterns are also typical of threat-structures in other parts of the English-speaking world and beyond,[11] suggesting that different cultures tend to express threats in similar ways with appropriate linguistic variation.

The Newfoundland direct speech threats fall into three principal structural patterns, as the following

---

[11] Parallels are to be found, for example, in the British Isles, North America, Europe and Africa.

TIGHT BINDING

selection of typical examples[12] will illustrate:

1.

"The Devil will eat you up" (Q 67-931).

"The Black Man will have you" (Q 67-749).

"The fairies will lead you astray" (Q 67-797).

"Jack Frost is just around the corner" (Q 67-502).

"Jack the Ripper'll get you" (Q 67-832).

"The boos are out tonight" (Q 67-504).

"The boogie-man ... is coming" (Q 67-529).

"I'll give you to the ... bully-boo" (Q 67-808).

"Raw Head and Bloody Bones is coming out of the wood" (68-16).

"The janneys is comin' after ye!" (T C270,66-24).

"Now, I'm having the mountie on you" (Q 67-1261).

"The rangers are comin'" (Q 67-528).

"I'll tell the priest!" (T C417,67-31).

"I'll call the doctor" (Q 67-320).

(N) (N) will put you in his bag!" (T C418,67-31).

"The dogs is after you!" (T C270,66-24).

"A big rat ... will come out of the well and eat you" (Q 67-303).

"I'll lock you in the cellar" (Q 67-203).

"I'll bar you in the cupboard" (66-10).

"I'm goin' to give ya a lacin !" (Q 67-340).

2. "If you're not good, the Black Man will come and get you" (Q 67-1056).

"If you suck your thumb, the boogie-man will hack it off" (66-14).

"If you do not eat the crust, then the crust-man is sure to have you" (Q 67-501).

---

[12] The examples are arranged in sequence according to the type of threatening figure or element used in each. The supernatural/invented figures are listed first, followed by the living human figures and then by animals, objects and various kinds of physical violence. The following symbols are used: Q = questionnaire; T = tape; (N) = personal name.

TIGHT BINDING

"Now, if you don't be good, the janney-boos'll have you!" (T C265,66-24).

"If you aren't good, Santa won't come" (68-6).

"If you aren't asleep soon I'll give you to the mummers ... when they come" (Q 67-1043).

"If you does that once more I'll send for the policeman" (Q 67-712).

"If you don't stop banging the door, I'll tell the teacher" (Q 67-1236).

"I'm going to tell the big boo to come and carry you away if you don't stop it" (Q 67-776).

"The Sand-man will get you if you don't go to bed" (Q 67-1081).

"The ugly things will take you if you stay out too late" (Q 67-278).

"... the woman-in-white grabs little children if they are out after dark" (Q 67-988).

3.

"Watch out for the Boogie Man" (Q 67-974).

"You better be careful about the moose!" (T C360,67-31).

"Don't go near the water or the ghosts might drag you in" (Q 67-144).

"Don't go down on the wharf or the goblins will get you" (Q 67-936).

"Don't go down landwash or the mermaids will get you" (68-3).

"Be good or else the boo-man'll come!" (T C249,66-24).

"Don't go throwing rocks or I'll give you to the policeman" (Q 67-160).

"Take your medicine or I will have to send for the nurse" (Q 67-564).

"Don't go out in the dark or the wolves will get you" (68-6).

"... don't be bad because the Black Man will take you ..." (Q 67-712).

"The boogie-man is in there so you had better not open that" (Q 67-606).

"Go to bed now so Jack o' Lantern won't get you!" (T C364,67-31).

TIGHT BINDING

In presenting the considerable volume of data from the Newfoundland Archive it is helpful to employ a system of classification through which both the typical patterning and also the full scope of the material may be seen. The fundamental structural patterns of the threats may be classified by employing a typology analagous to that used by Dundes in his analysis of folktales.[13] Although the following classification is not intended to be definitive or comprehensive, the three basic patterns as exemplified in the illustrative groups (1), (2) and (3) above can now be defined:

1. AFFIRMATION (A.):

This category is typified by a simple statement or AFFIRMATION as illustrated by the examples in (1) above.

2. CONDITION plus CONSEQUENCE (COND.+ CONS.).

Threats in this category are typified by some form of conditional statement, normally followed by a CONSEQUENCE as in the first eight examples in (2) above, with an optional transformation in which the order of the two elements is reversed as in the last four examples in (2).

3. IMPERATIVE plus ALTERNATIVE, REASON or RESULT (IMP.+ ALT./REAS./RSLT.)

Threats typical of this category have an initial IMPERATIVE element, which is normally followed by an ALTERNATIVE, but occasionally by a REASON or a RESULT. In the structure IMPERATIVE plus REASON an

---

[13] See A. Dundes; "Structural Typology in North American Indian Folktales", in his The Study of Folklore (Englewood Cliffs, 1965), pp. 206-215; and A. Dundes, The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales, FFC, LXXXI, 195 (Helsinki, 1964).

TIGHT BINDING

optional transformation is found in which the order of the two elements is reversed.

An individual threat-structure (T) may therefore typically comprise what we define as an AFFIRMATION, a CONDITION plus CONSEQUENCE, or an IMPERATIVE plus an ALTERNATIVE, a REASON, or a RESULT.[14] Structures may then be linked together to give a variety of compounds. All the structural patterns of direct speech threats in the Newfoundland corpus may be expressed in the formula:[15]

$$T \longrightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} A. \\ COND.\ (+\ CONS.) \\ IMP.\ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} (+\ ALT.) \\ (+\ REAS.) \\ (+\ RESLT.) \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right\} \quad (++\ T)$$

An individual threat in the corpus may be rewritten in any one of these three basic patterns, and the formula incorporates a cycle rule which allows for optional addition of one or more threats to the basic structure. These additional threats have the same fundamental patterning as the three threat-structures already described.

Each category will now be considered briefly.[16]

1. A.

This category is neutral or unmarked and may include any threat-

---

[14] These structures show parallels with the Interdiction/Violation/Consequence motifemes of the Dundes analysis.

[15] Brackets indicate optional elements, and the sign ++ denotes the addition of one or more structures in the formation of compounds.

[16] Each category could, of course, be developed further. The intention here is simply to outline the principal categories, and in so doing to present the data in an ordered way.

TIGHT BINDING

structure which is not positively identifiable as a member of Categories 2 and 3 as defined below. The favourite[17] structure in Category 1 takes the form of an affirmative statement, but minor structures also occur.[18] The favourite structure consists of one or more statements, each of which is normally a positive assertion which affirms that some threatening figure or physical violence is impendent. It is clearly distinct from the positive or marked categories in that it does not include CONDITIONS or IMPERATIVES as defined below. Two types of statement are typical of Category 1 threats. They are the commonest of all threat structures in the present corpus, representing approximately 40% of the total. The first type, which is the commonest single pattern in the whole corpus, is typified by such threats as:

(The) _____ will get you!
I will smack you! etc.

The second is the simplest of all the patterns and is found typically in such forms as:

(The) _____ is coming!

Such a statement by itself seems to have little practical force. It is less graphic and perhaps intrinsically less frightening than a statement which implies that the figure is not only coming

---

[17] The terms "favourite" and "minor" structure are used here in the senses defined by C.F. Hockett, A Course in Modern Linguistics (New York, 1958), p. 200.

[18] For example, unmarked threats in Category 1 are occasionally expressed in the negative in such relatively mild and sophisticated threats as, "Santa Claus won't bring you anything!" (68-5). They are also occasionally expressed in the form of a question, as in, "Where's the ironing cord?" (67-9) and, "Do you want the back of my hand?" (67-9).

GRADUATE STUDIES

TIGHT BINDING

but is coming for the express purpose of administering some kind of punishment. Even so, it implies the unstated powers of the threatening figure, and in conjunction with tone of voice and other emphatic devices such as gesture and repetition, it can be as frightening as those threats which are structurally more complex.

The vast majority of threats (85%) in this category consist of a single affirmative statement. However, it is possible for an indefinite number of AFFIRMATIONS to be linked in a string of often interrelated statements. AFFIRMATIONS linked in pairs represent approximately 13% of the category, and those consisting of three or more account for approximately 2%.[19] It is difficult to separate the individual elements in these interrelated strings of AFFIRMATIONS by linguistic criteria. Some are simply emphatic repetitions, as: "Shh! The sand-man's creeping around! The sand-man's creeping around!". (67-22) Others are so semantically similar as to be scarcely separable into different structural elements. Accordingly, threats are placed in Category 1 if they consist of one or more AFFIRMATIONS.[20]

2. COND. + CONS.

The threats in this positive or marked category normally consist of two interrelated elements, the first of which is typified by one

---

[19] The relative frequency of the direct speech threats analysed is shown in Table 1.

[20] As this decision is necessarily somewhat arbitrary, the relative frequency of single, double and multiple AFFIRMATIONS is tabulated separately in Table 2.

Table 1.

NEWFOUNDLAND THREATS (DIRECT SPEECH)

Relative Frequency of Occurrence

Threat Type.	Threats recorded	Tot.	Percentage of total.	
1. A.		750	(40.16)	40.16
2. COND.+CONS.	474		(25.35)	
CONS.+COND.	130		(6.95)	
		604		32.30
3. IMP.	26		(1.34)	
IMP.+ALT.	335		(17.91)	
IMP.+REAS.	37		(1.98)	
REAS.+IMP.	5		(.27)	
IMP.+RSLT.	4		(.21)	
		407		2.71
Sub-total		1761	(94.17)	94.17
COMPOSITES.				
4. IMP. ++ A.	62		(3.32)	
5. A. ++ COND.+CONS.	8		(.44)	
6. A. ++ CONS.+COND.	7		(.37)	
7. A. ++ IMP.	7		(.37)	
8. IMP. ++ COND.+CONS.	5		(.27)	
9. IMP. ++ CONS.+COND.	5		(.27)	
10. IMP.+ALT. ++ A.	3		(.16)	
11. COND.+CONS. ++ A.	3		(.16)	
12. IMP.+REAS. ++ COND.+CONS.	2		(.11)	
13. A. ++ IMP. ++ A.	2		(.11)	
14. CONS.+COND. ++ IMP.	1		(.05)	
15. IMP.+ALT. ++ IMP.	1		(.05)	
16. A. ++ COND.+CONS. ++ A.	1		(.05)	
17. IMP. ++ A. ++ COND.+CONS.	1		(.05)	
18. A. ++ COND.+CONS. ++ IMP.+RSLT.	1		(.05)	
Sub-total		109	(5.83)	5.83
Total		1870	(100.00)	100.00

Table 2.

THE STRUCTURE OF AFFIRMATIONS

Relative Frequency of Single, Double and Multiple Elements.

Structural Type.	Threats Recorded.	Percent of A.	Percent of Total.
1. A.	641	85.47	34.28
2. A.+A.	96	12.80	5.13
3. A.+A.+A.	10	1.33	.54
4. A.+A.+A.+A.	2	.27	.11
5. A.+A.+A.+A.+A.	-	-	-
6. A.+A.+A.+A.+A.+A.	1	.13	.05
Round-off error			.05
Total	750	100.00	40.16

or more conditional clauses, usually introduced by if and expressing a CONDITION which is to be fulfilled. The second element, which normally follows the CONDITION, is typified by one or more statements indicating a CONSEQUENCE[21] which is threatened to ensue if the CONDITION remains unfulfilled, as in, "If it happens any more, I'll send for the mounties".(Q 67-538) The order of the two elements may be reversed so that the CONSEQUENCE appears in the initial position: "I'll sell you to a mean stranger, if you torment me any more".(Q 67-112) The structure of the COND.+ CONS. pattern is typical of warnings and similar utterances, and in Dundes's terminology it might perhaps be regarded as a combination of an Interdiction and a Consequence.

3. IMP. (+ ALT./REAS./RSLT.) b

This category is also positive or marked and has an IMPERATIVE, normally in the form of one or more simple commands, demands or adjurations, as its initial element, e.g. "Don't go near the marsh after dark!"(T C417,67-31) Although the IMPERATIVE may sometimes stand alone in this way (in approximately 1% of the total corpus)[22] it is more usually followed by one of three second

---

[21] The form of the CONSEQUENCE is often similar to or identical with an AFFIRMATION. It is, however, dependent upon the CONDITION to which it is structurally related and it is therefore not regarded here as a simple AFFIRMATION. Very occasionally the CONSEQUENCE remains unstated and is merely implied.

[22] This figure is obviously unrepresentative of the actual frequency ratio of commands in everyday usage, and it reflects the fact that this type of threat was not specifically sought after during fieldwork.

TIGHT BINDING

elements. Of these, one or more simple ALTERNATIVES, which will become operative if the command is disobeyed, appear by far the most frequently. This combination of IMP.+ ALT., which represents approximately 18% of the total corpus, is often introduced by the words or, or else, else and is seen in such threats as, "Be good, or the Bad Man will take you away in his big black sack". (Q 67-779)

The IMPERATIVE element may sometimes be followed by one or more statements expressing a REASON for obeying the command. This combination of IMP.+ REAS. accounts for approximately 2% of the total threats, e.g. "You can't go outside in the dark now, 'cause the witches ... are out of the woods", (Q 67-213) and occasionally an optional transformation occurs in which the IMPERATIVE element follows the REASON: "The boogie-man is watching you from outside your window, so go to sleep". (Q 67-698) Very occasionally the IMPERATIVE is followed by one or more statements prefiguring a RESULT of disobedience, "Go to bed now, so the janneys won't get you!". (T C364,67-31)

These three categories account for approximately 95% of the total threats analysed. The remaining 5% are composites in which elements or whole structures of the three basic categories are combined in a variety of ways. These will now be listed in order to illustrate what combinations of the basic structures are found in the present corpus. The examples given will also serve to indicate some of the varieties of composite threat structures which are possible in English.[23]

---

[23] Further investigation will no doubt reveal many other composite threats which are not found in the present corpus.

TIGHT BINDING

Composite threats consist of two or more of the basic categories, or elements of those categories, usually linked together by their semantic implications. Although each constituent structure of a composite can occur separately as a single threat of the types already defined, the structures are normally in some way interrelated and interdependent when they are linked together. Thus although the boundaries of the component structures are clearly marked, and often signalled linguistically by an appropriate terminal juncture, they strengthen each other cumulatively by implication. They are in effect separate threats linked arbitrarily together, reinforcing each other in function. It is interesting to note that composites represent only a very small proportion of the total, suggesting that the more straightforward basic threat-types are felt to be sufficiently efficacious in themselves.

A total of fifteen composite threats is found in the Newfoundland corpus, and these are now listed consecutively according to the number of constituent structures in each, beginning with the simplest combinations.

a. IMP. ++ A.

This is the most frequently-occurring composite threat in the corpus, accounting for approximately 3% of the total. It is formed from one or more IMPERATIVES and one or more AFFIRMATIONS, and has affinities with the IMP.+REAS. structure, as the following examples show:

"Don't go down Big Brook! There's beavers down there!" (T C353,67-31).

"Don't do that - the boos will come!" (Q 67-682).

"Don't go down there! The boo-darbies are down there" (Q 67-521).

"Eat your crusts; the Crust-Man is coming!" (Q 67-538).

"Don't go into that house - there are ghosts there" (Q 67-620).

"Go to sleep, the gun-man's going to get you" (Q 67-663).

"Don't go out there: the harn owls is out there tonight" (Q 67-121).

"Quit slinging rocks; the policeman's coming" (Q 67-1239).

b. A. ++ COND. + CONS.

This combination of one or more AFFIRMATIONS with one or more COND.+CONS. elements, like the remaining composites below represents less than 1% of the total threats in the corpus. It is found in:

"The big boo-bagger is outside the door; if you get out of bed, he will take you down into his big black hole" (Q 67-353).

"Santa Claus is watching; if you don't be good, he won't give you anything for Christmas" (Q 67-921).

c. A. ++ CONS. + COND.

This composite has the same structural basis as (b) above except for the optional transformation sequence in the second element. It occurs in:

"The boogy man is under the bed and he'll get you if you try to get out!" (67-22).

"Now they big janneys is comin' in! They'll take you tonight if yous don't be good!" (T C255,66-24).

d. A. ++ IMP.

The same constituent structures as in (a) above are found in this composite, but they occur in reverse order:

"Here comes (N) (N) ! Stay off the road!" (T C418,67-31).

"Big black dog in there! You can't go near there!" (T C364,67-31).

e. IMP. ++ COND. + CONS.

Threats in this group have one or more IMPERATIVES as their initial element, followed by one or more COND.+CONS. structures:

"Don't say that any more, Johnny; if you do, the Blackman will come when you're in bed and stick his prong in you" (Q 67-1226).

"Go to bed early tonight; if you don't the sand-man will take you" (Q 67-954).

f. IMP. ++ CONS. + COND.

This category is identical in structure with (e) above except for the optional transformation sequence in the second element, as is seen in the following:

"Johnny! Don't go away by yourself. The fairies will get you if you do" (Q 67-727).

"You better not go out there; the Old Fellow will come after you if you do" (68-7).

g. IMP. + ALT. ++ A.

One or more IMP.+ALT. structures are followed by one or more AFFIRMATIONS in this composite, as in:

"You'd better go to church, or else the Devil will take you when you die. You will be burned in the Devil's fire" (Q 67-1226).

"Now Johnny, you'd better be quiet now or the old janneys

will take you away with them. See that big stick they've got there; that's for beating bad little boys" (Q 67-446).

h. COND. + CONS. ++ A.

Threats of this type comprise the same structures as (b) above, but in reverse order:

"If you don't be good Santa will not bring you anything; and he sure comes to see you, to see if you are good" (68-7).

i. IMP. + REAS. ++ COND. + CONS.

This category is also a compound of two basic structures, and is found in:

"Don't come downstairs, because Santa Claus is down here working; an' if ... you come down, well you ... just won't get any toys in the morning!" (T C354,67-31).

j. A. ++ IMP. ++ A.

This type of threat is made up of three basic structures and appears in the following example:

"The janneys is comin'! Now git! The janneys is comin'!" (T C264,66-24).

Five further compounds, two double and three triple in structure, occur once only in the corpus. These are:

k. CONS. + COND. ++ IMP.

"He [the boo-darby] won't hurt you if you're good, so you better do as you're told next time" (67-10).

l. IMP. + ALT. ++ IMP.

"See how fast you can run upstairs before the boogie-man comes - quickly now - hurry and jump in bed" (68-22).

TIGHT BINDING

m. A. ++ COND. + CONS. ++ A.

"Now, (N), you know you shouldn't suck your thumb and if you don't take your thumb out of your mouth a big worm is going to come out of it and bite your tongue off; then what will you do?" (68-9).

n. IMP. ++ A. ++ COND. + CONS.

"Stop crying now; The boo-man is coming; if he hears you crying ..." (Q 67-366).

o. A. ++ COND. + CONS. ++ IMP. + RSLT.

"Someone done something very wrong; and the thunder is God's anger, and if you are not a good child it will come and hurt you. Be a good child and it won't hurt you" (66-8).

These composite threats illustrate the fact that it is sometimes felt necessary to link two or more threat structures together with the intention of ensuring their efficacy. For similar reasons there may also be a hierarchy of intensity in the use of threats. What might be regarded as the least severe of threats involving external agencies, for instance, state that the figure is simply coming, as in: "The Boo-man is comin'!" (T.C267,66-24). Slightly more ominous are those which state that the figure is coming to get the child: "The black man is coming to get you", (Q 67-251) and more frightening still is the idea that the figure will not only come and "get" or "have" the child but will also take him away: "The boogie-man will come and take you away!". (Q 67-1038) In a sense, all such threats may be potentially equal in severity to a child who has only a vague

TIGHT BINDING

conception of the figures concerned, but there does appear to be a hierarchy in the invocation of the figure at a distance, as it were, with just its existence acknowledged, through the suggestion of "getting" or "having" the child, to the ultimate threat of taking him away. In addition, there are a number of more exotic threats, many of which, as already noted, imply exaggeratedly cruel physical violence on the part of the external agent.

At the opposite extreme from the desire to emphasise threats by linking them into composites is the tendency to leave some threat-structures deliberately incomplete. In the composite structure (n) above we have a typical instance in which the CONSEQUENCE of disobedience is deliberately omitted and the potential punishment therefore remains unexpressed. This device in itself may be even more frightening in its effect than a fully-expressed threat in that the potential retribution is left to the child's own imagination. Such initial elements as, "You just wait...!" or even the minimal, "I'll...!", perhaps accompanied by a threatening gesture or facial expression, need no ensuing linguistic or practical realisation. The same is true of other types of threat in which the potential punishment is not fully stated, as in: "You mind your lip, or else...".(66-18) The suggestion of physical violence is usually implicit in such truncated threats, and although examples are rare in the present corpus,[24] they are commonly heard, for example, in threatening

---

[24] This is probably due to the fact that the methods of collection tended to elicit complete structures.

TIGHT BINDING

contexts in everyday usage in England.

It now remains to examine briefly the syntactic, grammatical and lexical structure of the principal threat categories. It is not the purpose of the present study to attempt a complete linguistic description, which is a study of considerable magnitude in itself, but rather to give in general terms the basic linear linguistic sequence of threats. These patterns of linear sequence also, of course, have affinities with other syntactic structures in English, but the intention here is simply to point out which sequences are typical of threats. For this purpose it is convenient to choose a simply descriptive parts-of-speech analysis. To attempt a full Immediate Constituent analysis or Transformational-Generative grammar of threats would inevitably lead to a description of the everyday linguistic structure of English sentences. A full description of this kind is not only outside the scope of the present account but also of comparatively little relevance to the efficacy of the threats themselves.

The principal linguistic features of the three threat categories are as follows:

1. A.

The typical linguistic structure of threats in Category 1 is the linear sequence

Nominal + Verbal (+ Nominal)

and two basic patterns can be recognised within this sequence:

a. Nominal + Verbal e.g. (The) ____ (is coming / will come! etc.

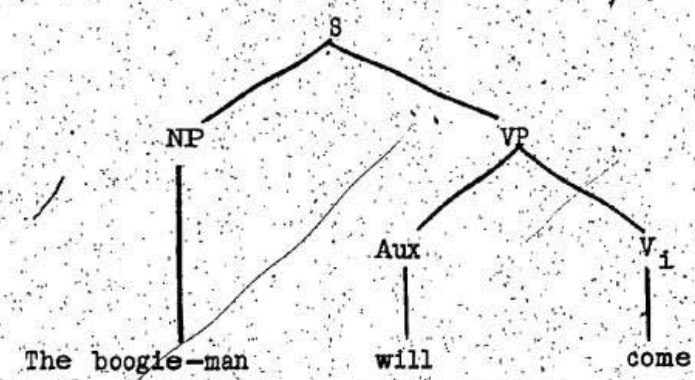
b. Nominal Verbal Nominal e.g. (The) ____ will get you! etc.

In terms of phrase-structure rules the favourite structures of both patterns may be expressed:

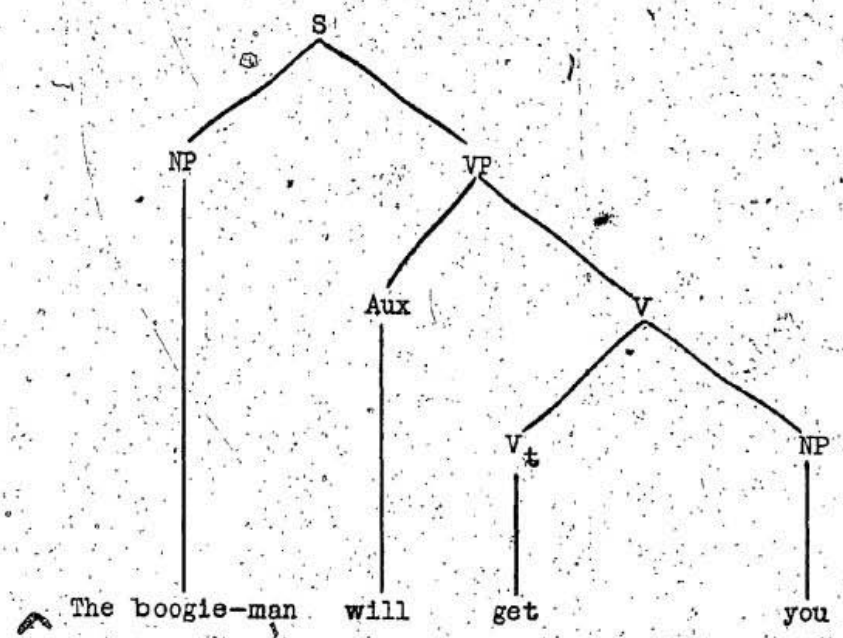
S	⟶	NP + VP
NP		Det + Nom
VP		Aux + $\begin{Bmatrix} V_i \\ (V_t) \\ (be) \end{Bmatrix}$ + NP
Det		the, etc.
Nom		$\begin{Bmatrix} (Adj) + N \\ Pron \end{Bmatrix}$
Adj		big, old, etc.
N		boogie man, boo-man, Devil etc.
Pron		I, he, she, it, they, you etc.
Aux		will etc.
V_i		come, etc.
V_t		get, have, take etc.
be		am, is, are

The phrase structure of the two favourite structures may be represented diagrammatically as follows:

(a)



(b)



2. COND. + CONS.

The typical linguistic sequence of threats in this category is:

IF + Nom + Vbl + $\begin{matrix}\text{Nom}\\\text{Adjl}\end{matrix}$ | Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

Again two basic patterns are found within the sequence:

a. IF + Nom + Vbl (+ Nom) | Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "If you do that the Black Man will take you" (Q 67-989).

"If you stay out too late, the fairies'll get ya" (Q67-1111).

"If you touch that, your hand will drop off" (Q 67-931).

"If you don't go to sleep, I'm going to run away" (Q 67-192).

b. IF + Nom + Vbl + Adjl | Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "If you don't be good, the boogie-man will get you" (Q 67-44).

"If you aren't good Santa won't come" (68-6).

In the CONS.+COND. optional transformation the patterns appear in reverse order:

Nom + Vbl (+ Nom) | IF + Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "... the goblins'll get you if you don't watch out!" (Q 67-481).

"The Black Man will have you if you tell a lie" (Q 64A).

"The mounties will come if you don't behave" (Q 67-834).

Nom + Vbl (+ Nom) | IF + Nom + Vbl + Adjl

E.g. "Santa Claus won't come if you aren't good" (Q 67-625).

"The doctor will give you a needle if you are bad" (Q 67-125).

3. IMP. + ALT./REAS./RSLT.

IMP. structures have a similar linguistic form to that of imperative utterances such as, "Stop!" or "Be good!" in general usage:

$$\text{Vbl} + \begin{pmatrix}\text{Nom}\\ \text{Adjl}\end{pmatrix}.$$

E.g. "Watch out for strangers" (Q 67-1121).

IMP.+ALT. structures appear in two basic patterns:

a. (Nom) + Vbl (+ Nom) | OR + Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "Don't go into the pantry, or the mummer will grab you!" (Q 67-84).

"You had better come in or a big bear will eat you" (Q 67-103).

"Go to sleep, or the Boo-baggers will get you" (Q 67-1308).

"Stop crying or the Boo-baggers'll come!" (T C353,67-31).

b. (Nom) + Vbl + Adjl | OR + Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "You be good - or the blackman will burn you" (68-3).

TIGHT BINDING

"Be quiet, or the boogie-man will get you" (Q 67-671).

"Be good, or the boogie-man will come" (Q 67-1263).

IMP.+REAS.

This structure again centres on an Imperative verb form and includes two principal linguistic sequence patterns:

a. (Nom) + Vbl (+ Nom) | BECAUSE + Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "Don't say that any more, 'cause the Black Man'll have you!" (T C17,64-7).

"Stay out of the woods because there are bears in there" (Q 67-771).

"Come here ... because the Boo-baggers are coming!" (Q 67-538).

b. (Nom) + Vbl + Adjl | BECAUSE + Nom + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "Don't be bad, because the Black Man will take you" (Q 67-712).

"You be good, because he [Santa Claus] can see you now" (68-11).

The optional transformation operating in the REAS.+IMP. structure simply reverses the order of the constituent patterns, which are typically linked by so:

a. Nom + Vbl (+ Nom) | SO (+ Nom) + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "The Boogie-man is watching you from outside your window, so go to sleep" (Q 67-698).

"The Boogie-man is in there so you had better not open that" (Q 67-606).

"The boogie-man is coming, so hurry!" (Q 67-380).

b. Nom + Vbl (+ Nom) | SO (+ Nom) + Vbl + Adjl

E.g. "The bullie man takes bad little girls and boys so you'd better be good" (66-7).

IMP. + RSLT.

The few examples recorded of this structure suggest that its

TIGHT BINDING

typical linguistic form is:

(Nom) + Vbl (+ Nom) | AND/SO (+ Nom) + Vbl (+ Nom)

E.g. "Go to bed now, so the janneys won't get you!" (T C364,67-31).

Although the fundamental linguistic patterning of the categories is essentially tight and predictable, other lesser features also emerge. These include, for instance:

1. Attention-arousing exclamations such as, "Look!" "Listen!" "Shh!" etc.
2. Qualifiers, such as descriptive adjectives, before nouns in Nominal sequences.
3. Modifiers, usually adverbial, which occur after nouns in Nominal sequences.
4. Names of persons addressed.

These additional features, however, are not essential to the fundamental linguistic structures outlined above, although they may add vividness and emphasis to the individual threat.

Only a limited set of verbals, with a comparatively narrow semantic range, occupy the appropriate verbal slots in the typical threat-patterns.[25] The auxiliaries are typified by *will*, but *may*, *might* and appropriate forms of the verb *be* also occur. The verb *get* is by far the most frequent in occurrence, followed by *have*, *come* and *take*. As the examples in Table 3 illustrate, the verbs most commonly used to express the threatening idea seem often to imply either alienation or physical violence, especially the notion of devouring, or both. Verbs such as *get*, *have* and *take* imply the removal of the child from parents, friends and the

---

[25] The principal verbals are listed in Table 3.

TIGHT BINDING

Table 3.

THE TYPICAL VERBALS OF DIRECT SPEECH THREATS

The TF	will/may/might/ is going to/is ___-ing to	bar be after be out bite burn cane carry catch change chase come come after come and carry come and eat come and get come and give come and gobble come and put come and strap come and take come for cut drag eat get give go away and leave grab have jump out and get keep lead like lock love put send slap stick (needle in) sting strap swallow take tow	you/'ee/ ye/yous	(in cupboard) (alive) (away/off in sack, suitcase etc) (into goat,horse etc (away) (up) (needle) (up) (in jail) (away/to jail) (open) (in water) (up) (to TF/ a smack) (in after school) (astray/away etc) (up) (in bag,jail,oven, black Maria, closet etc) (to hospital etc) (away/in sack etc/ to hospital etc) (away)
	(not) (won't)			

TIGHT BINDING

security of home to a distant, lonely, alien world. The carrying may be done in a bag, sack, wagon, or similar receptacles and vehicles, and the idea of taking away, of enforced alienation, is one of the most prominent semantic features of the threats. This alienation from the security of home and family is particularly evident in the Newfoundland material.[26] The mummers ask if parents want to give the child away. Parents sometimes offer to give him to such external agents as the boogie man or the policeman, or to send for such figures to punish him. Even in the comparatively sophisticated threats such as those threatening to keep a child in after school or suggesting that the priest will give him a lecture on good behaviour, there remains the notion of taking or keeping him away from the security of the home environment.

The basic linguistic patterning of the threats is also interesting in that while only a small number of structural variants are used, an infinitely large number of threatening figures may occupy the Nominal slots which are the heads of each construction. Indeed, the favourite structure, "(The) _____ will get you!" is able to accommodate virtually any Nominal in the blank slot, whether it be the name of a supernatural, fictitious or invented figure, a living person with authority or some unusual characteristic, or some other figure such as an animal. It is manifestly impossible to draw up a comprehensive list of the infinitely varied figures which may occupy the Nominal

---

[26] It is also a common feature of threats in many other parts of the world.

slots in threat-structures. Each new enquiry will produce additional figures, and it is especially difficult to record the immense number of local and family figures which appear in threats. If, however, we have some knowledge of the representative threat patterns and threatening figures from a given region, we may then be better equipped to discover parallels and contrasts in similar usages from different areas. When the inevitable gaps in a purely regional exploratory analysis have been filled, it will then be possible to compile a more comprehensive index which may confirm the hypothesis that certain patterns of threatening are universal.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 5.

The Social Function of Threats: Some General Observations

The threatening of children has an important social function. Threats and other types of linguistic control are used by society to ensure the continuation of certain cultural norms, beliefs and the like. If an interdiction or taboo is violated, some kind of undesirable consequence, often of a mythical nature, may be said to ensue. These threatened consequences imply social sanctions against certain types of behaviour. It should be noted that the fundamental threat-structure of CONDITION plus CONSEQUENCE is also paralleled in other folklore genres. Similar structural patterns are found, for example, in the INTERDICTION, VIOLATION and CONSEQUENCE motifemes identified by Dundes in his analysis of North American Indian folktales.[1] Furthermore, those threats which suggest that if children are disobedient certain figures will take them away have affinities with legends concerning broken taboos when a figure such as the Devil or an ogre appears and takes away those who summon him.[2]

Whether they use legends, proverbs, threats, or some other traditional means, all peoples appear to exercise verbal

---

[1] Dundes, "Structural Typology", pp. 208-212.

[2] See, for example, B.A. Woods, The Devil in Dog Form (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1959), pp. 76-77, and Motif C 25.1, "Child threatened with ogre". Latter takes child off, in Thompson, Motif-Index I, 489.

TIGHT BINDING

social control in broadly similar ways. This control may have such functions as the encouragement of individuals to keep their place in a given social system or to recognise certain precepts regarding behaviour, morality and so on. In Newfoundland, as elsewhere, threats might be seen as operating in a concentric system within which they have a variety of functions. Firstly, at the centre of the system, there is the family unit in which a child may be threatened for reasons which reflect the surrounding culture or physical environment. In addition to such important functions as the encouraging of obedience and the general control of children's behaviour in the home, threats are sometimes used within the family to discourage children from being annoying, simply for the parents' peace of mind. Secondly, threats may refer specifically to the immediate environment outside the home. Their function here includes the discouraging of children from going not only to places where they might interfere with adult activities but also to dangerous places such as wells, ponds, rivers, marshes, cliffs and caves. Thirdly, beyond the immediate environment and encircling it, there is the local culture which in Newfoundland has evolved mainly from that of the early colonists from south west England and southern Ireland, with admixtures in some areas from France and Scotland, among other sources. Finally, there are the wider ethnic divisions such as what one might term the western European culture in which Newfoundland shares. In addition, one might also recognise a "world culture" beyond the more localised ethnic boundaries, and this brings us back again

TIGHT BINDING

to the fact that certain general functions of verbal social control seem to be universal. It is therefore important to examine in more detail how these control systems operate and to discover something of their function.

The primary function of threats in controlling young children is to express society's disapprobation, either collectively or individually, of behaviour which is regarded as in some way unacceptable, either within the family or within other broader social groups. If adults wish to deter children from certain activities, they may use a threat rather than resort to lengthy and complex explanations which the child may not understand. To deter children from trampling down growing crops, for example, it is often simpler either to threaten physical punishment, or the intervention of a corn-demon or similar figure until the child is old enough to appreciate the reasons why crops should not be wantonly damaged.

A second very obvious reason for the use of threats and other verbal controls is the desire to protect children from danger, to preserve life and limb and to maintain their physical health and well-being. The employment of these verbal devices allows adults to voice their concern about their children, even though this may be done in an oblique way by what appears to be a threat of punishment, physical harm or other unpleasant consequence. In spite of their form and seemingly terrifying connotations, threats are employed mainly to avoid the use of

physical violence which is often resorted to only when the verbal controls have failed to bring about the desired effect.

A third reason for the use of threats is that they provide an important means of alleviating the adult's anger or anxiety, acting as a kind of safety valve. The very act of verbalising the threat is a release mechanism through which the person concerned can give vent to his feelings. As a result, he is less likely to seek a release for his anger in some kind of aggressive physical action. This release mechanism is also seen in threats used against animals or even objects, where they can have little or no significance for the creature or object concerned. For example, a person may threaten a dog or cat by saying, "If you don't stop that awful noise I'll kill you!" or he may say to a car which refuses to start, "If you don't start I'll take you out and dump you!" Such situations are often also accompanied by curses or other physical means of releasing aggression such as hitting or kicking the object concerned.

By deliberately exploiting their power and authority in threatening children, adults may preserve their own spheres of activity from encroachment. The threats are a means of keeping children at a distance and thereby maintaining the world of the adults as a distinct entity which children are encouraged to regard as in some way sacrosanct, and certainly as a different domain from their own. In "talking over the heads" of children, for example, we preserve something of the autonomy and the taboos of the adult world until the child is initiated into adult ways

TIGHT BINDING

of behaviour. As the child matures he is gradually initiated into these ways, and the various means used to control his behaviour are modified accordingly. In some cultures the division between the adult world and that of the child, and also between various stages of the child's own development is much more clear cut than in others. This is certainly so among the Chaga of Tanzania, as Raum describes:

> "It is interesting to note that the Chaga have a well-thought-out pedagogics of punishment. Punitive practice should be adapted to the child's age. During the time when a baby is called mnangu (the incomplete), it elicits special consideration and must not be beaten or even scolded. During the second period of infancy, the child is called mkoku (the little one who fills the lap). The toddler not only makes mistakes; he sometimes seems to be bent on mischief. He should be beaten if he eats earth, cries without reason, or spoils a valuable possession. Henceforward till about three years of age, the child is known as mwana (infant). He is considered a nuisance to parents and neighbours. Punishments must be increased to keep his spirits in check. He may be struck or submitted to fasting. A manake is a child from four to fifteen. He has greater liberties, and for boys, at least, punishments should increase in severity, but become rarer. One scarcely hears of a mleu (a youth) who has to submit to corporal punishment. His father tells him: 'I do not beat you any more. Go and look after yourself now. If you don't, you will be beaten by the beam of the house.'"[3]

This final threat, as Raum states in a footnote, is interpreted by Gutmann to be a metaphorical reference to "the collapse of the family through filial insubordination", the beam of the house metaphorically representing "conscience".[4]

Individuals may use verbal patterns of control in a variety of ways. Parents, for example, in exercising authority

---

[3] Raum, pp. 228-229.

[4] B. Gutmann, Das Recht der Dschagga (Munich, 1926), p. 731.

TIGHT BINDING

over their family, are the vehicles or agents of social control, passing on to the children the ideas and concepts held by the family, the immediate social group and by society as a whole. In this way they may influence children's behaviour by directing it into certain accepted channels. The repeated formulas in threats and similar verbal usages help to instill specific behavioural patterns, especially those concerning restrictions and taboos.

Adults, and especially parents or immediate relatives, are primarily responsible for the initiation and perpetration of most threats used to control the behaviour of children by means of what Raum refers to as "terms of constraint".[5] Adults progressively instill the idea of a constraint into the child, thus conditioning him to respond automatically in certain situations. As he is principally responsible for initiating and maintaining the system of threats, a parent or other senior member of the family might well be expected to use the more direct invocation of his own power and himself adopt the role of both threatener and threatening figure. In so doing, however, he goes against the concept of the adult relative as the child's protector. By invoking himself as a direct threat he appears to expose the child to at least a temporary lack of parental or familial security. Firestone draws attention to the suggestion that whereas parents may cause conditioned hostility and resentment

---

[5] Raum, p. 213.

TIGHT BINDING

in their children through acting the part of threatener or restrainer; this hostility and resentment may play a useful part in providing a labour force from young people who are eager to leave home. He emphasises, however, that this suggestion is one of "several condensed and oversimplified examples" of ways in which cross-cultural research can "...put to more rigorous test psychology's tentative theories" and that it should not be taken as an assertion of a demonstrated relationship.[6] Nevertheless, the suggestion, as expressed in some detail by Campbell is pertinent to a discussion of the threatening role played by parents in Newfoundland and elsewhere:

> "...in a society such as intellectual suburbia, where the parents stand alone in representing the restraints which society passes on to children, the parents will become the stimuli for conditioned hostility on the part of children, the children will perceive the parents as causing, as to blame for, their frustrations. Thus, the conditioning and/or causal perception processes predict a chronic divisive force within the modern family...one can expect that in stable societies preventive customs will have grown up around this inevitable parental-resentment problem...such as the role of shamans and kachina dancers as devices serving to deflect the discipline-induced hostility of the child away from the parent, and thus as preserving intrafamilial solidarity...one has...sympathy for those unsophisticated parents in our own culture who attempt a similar deflection of childish hostility away from themselves through invoking the sanctions of the policeman, the boogeyman, Santa Claus, or a reified God. (On the other hand, perhaps it is well that in our culture the socialization-induced hostilities are associated with parents, for our occupational structure requires new entrants to the labor force who are willing

---

[6] M.M. Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers in Northern Newfoundland", in Halpert and Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland (Toronto, 1969), p. 74, f/n 11.

TIGHT BINDING

> and eager to leave home permanently. Just such a labor force is lacking in some of the underdeveloped countries, perhaps in part because of the greater 'wisdom' of their intrafamilial relationships..."[7]

In Newfoundland, both the family and the small community tend to be tightly-knit and "closed" as distinct from the more "open" structure common in urban centres. Firestone adds that a displacement device such as that suggested by Campbell is "integrative" in function in Savage Cove; and makes the important point that the threatening figures involved serve to maintain the social structure of the family and the community.[8]

It is not illogical, however, that an adult should take advantage of his own power, especially with a small child who is particularly dependent upon him. Not only does the father play the role of threatener and punisher, he may also, of course, be used in this capacity by others, often in his temporary absence, as he is the accepted authority figure within the family and may therefore be invoked by the mother or another relative or adult. Such threats as "I'm goin' to tell your father on you when he comes!"(Q 67-528) have the possibility of impending fulfilment, and like those of physical violence, they again emphasise the

---

[7] D.T. Campbell, "The Mutual Methodological Relevance of Anthropology and Psychology", in F.L.K. Hsu, ed., Psychological Anthropology: Approaches to Culture and Personality (Homewood, Illinois, 1961), pp. 335-336, quoted in Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", pp. 73-74.

[8] Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", p. 74.

TIGHT BINDING

parent's direct authority. These threats concerning the father are also typical of sophisticated urban western usage. They appear to be a last surviving bastion of a declining system in those areas of society which disapprove of threats and replace them, for example, with attempts to reason with the child. Many of the mythological figures are no longer used, certainly in urban tradition, and the father or other authority figure is substituted. By contrast, such examples as the African: "turn back from your evil ways! Father can kill you if he likes!"[9] present the parental authority figure at his most fearsome.

Some of the Newfoundland reports suggest that mothers tend to utter threats with apparent seriousness whereas fathers sometimes tend to say them playfully. In such cases the father is evidently regarded as the administerer of the punishment, or he is used by the mothers as a threatening figure. Firestone observes that in Savage Cove on the North West coast:

> "Children can create much confusion and noise without it perturbing adults, and fathers and mothers can be badgered by their offspring only to reprimand them after great provocation. Despite this permissiveness the father maintains firm authority over the children, even though this is rarely firmly put into effect. Mothers, by and large, have less authority over their children than the father, but do not have the advantage of distance and as great a threat of potential punishment. In some households children are more indulged and cajoled than in others, while one may also find them admonished to obey and sometimes 'threatened' when they are disobedient. Threatening consists of sternly addressing the culprits sometimes with threats of punishment ('I'll get the cat-o-nine after you'), but much more often children are frightened by their being told that a stranger or someone else, real

---

[9] Raum, p. 234.

TIGHT BINDING

or imagined, will carry them off if they disobey."[10]

Parents and relatives therefore play a vital role in the threatening process at the family level, and it is interesting to note that in Newfoundland, although very rarely used as a threatening figure, the mother or another female member of the family normally administers the threats. This is due partly to the fact that the women are in charge of the young child for most of the time, and are largely responsible for the day-to-day discipline. Sometimes, however, the mother may threaten to leave home, and thus threaten the child's security by offering to take away his basic protection prop, herself. Raum gives a graphic example of this when an African child is threatened with the words: "Do not cry, my child! What are you crying for? If you wail, the leopard will devour your mother."[11] Here the threat implies that the mother and not the child will be molested and the child is, as it were, asked to react to the idea of her loss rather than to fear any harm to himself.

Even the concept of the parent as magical transformer,[12] is not entirely remote from the Newfoundland tradition. Although they themselves would not normally threaten such transformation, parents in some parts of Newfoundland may imply it through some

---

[10] Firestone, Brothers and Rivals, pp. 122-123.

[11] Raum, p. 132.

[12] The notion of transformation by supernatural means is widespread in the various basic studies of frightening figures from Europe, Africa and elsewhere. For some East African examples, see Raum, p. 234.

TIGHT BINDING

external agency, as in threats of the priest turning children into goats and other animals.

Further, parents may act the role of ally with the child or may on the other hand apparently conspire against him with the threatening figures they invoke. This is brought out very strongly in such Newfoundland examples as the following, where the boo man is used in a threat to get a child to bed: "He's goin' across the lane to the next house! [If you get] to sleep before he comes here, I'll tell him you are in bed."[13] Here the child is immediately reassured when he shows signs of obedience and the threat is more of an encouragement than a warning. An extremely vivid African parallel to this is quoted by Raum:

> "'Listen' says its mother suddenly. 'Do you hear the hyena howling? Shut up, or it will come to eat you! At once!' If this is of no avail, she puts the child down and, going outside, imitates the howl of the hyena ... But raising her voice then, she replies: 'Hilo, hilo, hilo! Oh, oh, oh! Sir, I beg of you, don't eat my little one!' She returns to the hut. 'Did you hear him?' she queries. 'He won't come back now, because I asked him for your sake. But don't you cry any more, for he might return!'" [14]

To encourage the child to obey, the mother adopts a reassuring tone to take away the fear even while she is suggesting it to him. The ambivalence of this behaviour suggests that she is aware that the child might become too frightened if the threats

---

[13] Part of a tape-recorded interview with an informant from Brigus (T C364,67-31).

[14] Raum, pp. 132-133.

TIGHT BINDING

carry real conviction. If the mother is herself afraid, and communicates her own fear to the child, then he may become really frightened. She defeats her own object by frightening him so much that he is unable to get to sleep or otherwise act obediently.

Another Newfoundland example shows that parents may summon an external figure but then reassert their protective role. In this case an unruly child is threatened with a "horrible looking" bulldog which is apparently kept at bay on condition that the child becomes obedient:

> "I would go to the door and sing out rather loud to Kirt the bulldog, or else to ... its owner, and tell her to send Kirt over after Tommy. This would close him up long enough to wash him and then to get him out of his fright someone would go to the door and tell Kirt to go back now because Tommy is good again." (67-10).

In this way the family re-establishes the domestic security which has apparently been put at risk by the summoning. Although it is implied that violation of the interdiction will result in the forfeiture of parental protection, the figure is at this point only potentially dangerous and still seems to be under the parents' partial control. If, however, the form of the threat suggests that the figure will have or get him, it may seem to the child that there is less likelihood of the parents interceding on his behalf to prevent the figure from taking him away. The external figure is thus only a potential punisher in some threats, whereas in others his actual presence is implied and, perhaps most terrifying of all, he is said to come to take

TIGHT BINDING

the child away. There is no evidence that the linguistically apparent gradation in the Newfoundland threats - from potential punishment, through actual presence to removal of the child from domestic security, is a conscious one on the part of the adult. Nevertheless, from the child's viewpoint, the wording of the threats suggests increasingly fearful consequences, culminating in the idea that the figure will not only come but will get him and take him away from the safety of home. Just as the Devil is threatened not as a tormentor of the child's soul but of his body, many of the threatening figures are portrayed as frightful monsters who will attack the child physically in some way. The predominant motif is that of "getting", "taking" or harming the child, or depriving it permanently of familial security.

Although threats of the loss of parental security would not normally be carried out, the parent himself is still the agent who apparently has the power to put them into operation. If, however, the parent invokes a figure from outside the family unit he transfers both the responsibility and the attendant guilt of punishment to this external agent. Just as the references to physical violence help to enforce parental authority, so also those threats involving external agencies serve to keep the family as a unit, intact against the alien world outside. In the close-knit Newfoundland family there is a tendency to use external threatening figures such as the boogie man or the policeman. To the child the parent seems to be in league with

these outside forces and apparently abrogates his responsibilities as protector. Instead of acting in a friendly, sheltering role the parent deliberately exposes the child not only to his own anger and physical violence but also to the vast unknown outside, to the hosts of threatening figures, real and imaginary, some of which he himself may fear and against which he would normally protect the child. The parent treads the very difficult path between giving the child the shelter of the family security and threatening to revoke such protection. Revocation is only threatened when the child steps outside accepted bounds by acting contrary to the familial or cultural traditions. Thus, although his responsibility for the child's welfare is in some ways alarmingly onerous, he exercises or abrogates it within certain cultural norms.

In some cultures, for example those in various parts of Africa, it seems that the use of threats and threatening figures is a more acceptable form of social control than in some contemporary Western societies. Although both threats and figures are still a feature of the English and North American rural tradition, there is a strong tendency in urban educated tradition to disparage the threatening of children. The use of threats in some cultures and their decline or disparagement in others, however, are both matters of social pressure in that a particular mode of social control may be less acceptable in one tradition than in another. In so-called "primitive" cultures it is often sufficient for a threat to be uttered once and it will be obeyed immediately. By contrast, in Western society threats

TIGHT BINDING

may be treated rather less seriously and may need to be repeated or reinforced. It is probable that in such societies there will be a tendency both to modify the form of threats and also to discourage the use of external figures.

The decline in the threatening of children in sophisticated urban Western tradition is also apparent when one compares, for example, the methods of weaning used in this tradition with those of other cultures. In modern Western urban culture great importance is attached to the careful weaning of a child so as to avoid the development of fears and neuroses which are felt to be attendant upon too abrupt an alienation. Yet elsewhere, for example in parts of Africa, the weaning process may involve a threatening figure and appear to be traumatically violent by modern Western standards.[15]

Adults who use threats are often fully aware of the mechanism which they are operating and there is a mutual understanding among them that they will play this language game with the children in order to achieve their aim of controlling behaviour. They may betray this conspiracy in facial expressions and gestures and regard the whole process as trivial and even humorous at times. In sophisticated Western society the attempts to enforce controls may be half-hearted. A smile or a laugh

---

[15] See, for example, Raum, p. 212. The threats involved in the weaning process, and such actions as the smearing of excrement to cause horror, disgust or dissatisfaction in the child, bring to mind the underlying parallels between some of the apparently invented threatening figures and certain words of unpleasant connotation.

may be used which softens the effect of a threat when it is spoken. Again, a threat may be repeated, or an alternative linguistic pattern used. This is in contrast with some so-called "primitive" societies which, while perhaps giving children greater freedom to find out their own ways, may operate social controls more stringently.

It is important to note that in some cultures threats are regarded so seriously even by adults that they are thought to be the actual cause of harm to children. An example of this is found in Bunzel's account of the Zuñi Su'uki personator who is asked to frighten two naughty children by carrying them off in her basket. The account ends:

> "So she pretended to carry them off. All the people thought that the children must be frightened to death. Some of them said, 'That is a good idea. She will bring them back. She is not really a katcina!' The people all thought it was good to frighten the little ones. When she had taken them out of the plaza she changed her mind and brought them back and said, 'I am bringing you back to your mother. Now you must always mind your mother and not be naughty. If you do not mind your mother I shall come and get you again. I always hear you. I always hear when the little ones talk back to their mothers, and I will surely come and eat any children that are bad.' She said this in the plaza and then she set down her basket and the Koyemci took the children out and took them back to their mother.
>
> That night the children became very sick and on the fourth day they died. Then the people were all talking about it. They said it was not right to allow the katcinas to touch the babies or to carry them around because they are dangerous. They come from the Sacred Lake. They are the dead people and they are raw. So now when Su'uki comes she does not touch the children any more. She comes and shakes her stick at them. She carries a basket on her back and she says she will carry the children away and eat them, but she never touches them. A woman whose children are naughty tells the kiva chief that she wants her children punished and then when

> Su'uki comes the children give her meat so that she will not have to eat them. They tell the children to pay her to leave them alone. So we always say to our children when they are naughty, 'I am going to send for Su'uki to eat you up.'" 16

Whatever the real reason for their deaths, a cause-and-effect relationship is implicit and such threats may be forbidden because it is felt that they might indirectly cause death.

The use of threats may result partly from conformity with certain social pressures such as the mere fact that other parents and adults use them and accept them as normal. Parents tend to do what society expects and approves and consequently they may take for granted that the figures they call upon will not actually materialise and harm the child. In some North American Indian legends the suggestion is found that it is wrong to threaten children excessively or by losing patience expose them to the power of supernatural beings.[17] Grandparents tell parents that if they lose patience with the child these beings will really come and take him away. Here we have an instance of an older generation using warnings or threats against the threatening process itself. They warn their own adult offspring in much the same way as these offspring in turn threaten their children. The implication is that the figures are not to be invoked jokingly or treated flippantly as they really exist and can act malevolently. The parent, of course, even if he believes

---

[16] R. Bunzel, Zuñi Katcinas (Washington, 1932), pp. 940-941.

[17] See, for example, D. Jenness, The Ojibwa Indians of Parry Island (Ottawa, 1935), p. 46.

TIGHT BINDING

in the figures, does not intend them actually to carry off the child. He is simply using the threat as an immediate means to an end. A strong element of belief is involved here, and indeed there is a whole tradition of legend related to the dangers of frightening, threatening and cursing, which it is not possible to deal with in the present study. Such legends raise important issues regarding the use of threats. For example, society itself may learn that threats should not be overused or disastrous consequences far beyond those intended by the threateners may follow. The function of the threats is simply to control behaviour, not to reduce the child to a state of terror. In the same way, society may approve of the physical punishment of children in certain circumstances, provided that it is not carried to extremes.

Cultures therefore build into their verbal system of social control a mechanism which has the function of inhibiting the excessive use of threats. In short, society lays down guidelines as to how children should be brought up and so joins with the parent in correcting the child. Within these guidelines correction by the parent is not only socially acceptable but also socially approved. Indeed, failure to act in this way may incur social censure, as illustrated by such sayings as: "Spare the rod and spoil the child". Whenever society changes in its views of the preferred way of bringing up children some ambivalence in attitudes is inevitable. This is true, for example, of present-day sophisticated urban western tradition

TIGHT BINDING

where some condemn the threatening or physical punishment of children whereas others approve such methods.

The contrast between "primitive" and sophisticated societies and between urban and rural traditions also illustrates significant modifications of the patterns of social control. It is probably true to say that the more sophisticated the tradition the less tendency there is to threaten children, especially with supernatural or invented figures. In urban North America, for example, such figures as the boogie man or Santa Claus often have only a brief existence, and when children cease to take them seriously society looks for substitutes. In order to convince the child whose scepticism is strong, the substitutes are often chosen from among those figures which have power in real life, such as the policeman, or even the parent himself.

The figures used in threats are themselves part of the means of social control. They are largely the invention of society and are often entirely fictitious. Those which are based on living creatures may also have fictitious aspects. To the child, however, all these figures may seem real. He believes in their existence, and he may be convinced that they could have power over him until he learns by experience that this is not so. His lack of understanding may result in a degree of awe, a dutiful respect for authority, which is allied with a measure of fear. This awe is instilled by the adults' desire to make him aware that authority exists and society is

then able to play on these themes as a means of control.

Even the most human of the threatening figures has some aspect which to the child is in some way unusual or extrahuman. To him the figure may still be the stranger, the unknown, and the limits of its power are equally unknown. It is often presented as an outside force beyond the control of adults and even though they may summon it, all power is with the figure itself. The adaptation of figures from real life often includes the exaggeration of certain characteristics far beyond normal bounds. For example, in real life the policeman normally has the authority to put lawbreakers in jail, but when used as a threatening figure his powers may be exaggerated so that it appears he will take children off to jail for not going to sleep at bedtime or for some other trivial domestic misdemeanour. Such figures are therefore endowed with some extranormal quality. Normality consists partly in a certain recognisably standard height, weight, shape, appearance and behaviour, and the typical threatening figures are outside these tacitly accepted standards.

Each culture therefore adapts elements from its mythology, its own social structure and its natural environment for the express purpose of initiating, encouraging and maintaining a measure of social discipline through its systems of verbal control. The threats and other linguistic structures used presuppose a world of frightening figures from which threatening figures may be drawn. It is natural that these figures, especially in the light of a given society's view of what such alien creatures

TIGHT BINDING

should be like, are drawn primarily from the awesome and shadowy world of the supernatural. It is equally apparent that those people within the society itself who are regarded as in some way different from the normative criteria of behaviour and appearance which that society has set up should also be adapted for the purposes of social control. The mythological figures and the living authority figures both have the distinguishing mark of power. Others, such as unusual people, or animals, are marked out as abnormal in appearance or behaviour and may also be invested with an often unattractive supernatural aura.

The threats used against children operate mostly at the family level. Within this limited social context a given threatening figure may take on a special significance which is reinforced by the complex system of rapport and communication developed within the family. In some respects the family is a miniature society, a microcosm in which the wider social context is reflected and through which the child is introduced to those attitudes and values which the society has. In its turn each society constitutes a social family in which the adults assume collective responsibility for all the members, including the children. Verbal means of social control therefore play a significant part in preparing the child within the home environment for entry into the wider society. From the shelter of the family where he is exposed to a rudimentary form of protective indoctrination, the child is later able to adapt the behavioural

TIGHT BINDING

norms which he has learned to those which obtain in the wider social environment. He has long since learned that the policeman will not take him away if he does not go to bed at the appointed time, but he also knows that the policeman really has the power to arrest and imprison anyone, of whatever age, who trangresses other prohibitions which society has built into its legal code. Before this enlightenment comes, however, the parent has long been able to exercise a measure of control over the child, partly, if not mostly, for the child's own good. At the same time the growing child learns that controls exist and that they are backed up by some kind of authority. In this way he comes to realise that some types of behaviour are acceptable to society whereas others are not, and, as Szwed observes about the children of Newfoundland's Codroy Valley,[18] the child is taught to be cautious and aware of possible deception in his social relationships.

[18] Szwed, Private Cultures and Public Imagery, p. 81.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 6

The Function of Threats in Newfoundland Folklore

Although the threatening figures used in Newfoundland have a wide variety of names, they have broadly similar social functions. The choice of a given figure depends to some extent on such factors as geographical location and social stratification. In Newfoundland the function of most of the figures is to encourage children to accept the authority of parents and other adults in matters of simple obedience and the like. A group of generalised figures tends to be used in the threats directed against disobedience and misbehaviour. Some of these, however, sometimes have a more specific function, such as deterring children from endangering themselves or from interfering with adult activities. Figures such as the boo-man and the boogie man, which are normally used for general obedience, are thus also employed to deter children from going to dangerous places, to get them indoors before dark, to encourage them to go to bed or to sleep, and so on. In the same way the Devil or the Black Man may be used against children who tell lies or act in an irreligious way.

Other figures tend to be limited to certain specific functions or are in some way restricted in their roles. For example, fairies are used mainly to discourage children from wandering away on the barrens or in the woods, or from staying out after dark. Whether natural or supernatural the Newfoundland figures have a special potency of action after dark. Their

TIGHT BINDING

frequent association with dark or shadowy places reflects the widespread fear of darkness itself. The figures themselves are often described as being black or dark, frequently in dress, perhaps in Western culture ultimately suggestive of death and oblivion. Whereas the fairies, the boogie man and other members of the boo/bogey group are primarily nocturnal in their application, however, the living authority figures, whose threatening function is closely connected with their occupation, tend to be used in threats related to daytime activities. Ministers of religion are often used in threats against children who are behaving in some way which is thought to be immoral or contrary to the teachings of the Christian church, and teachers are the typical threatening figures for misbehaviour at school or refusal to do homework. The doctor, nurse and dentist are used primarily for reasons connected with children's health, such as refusal to take medicine, malingering or refusal to eat. The policeman tends to be used when children are in danger of breaking the law, as well as for general misbehaviour. Some figures, such as Jack Frost, Santa Claus, mummers and Janneys are restricted to certain times of the year when they appear for a limited period in local tradition.

Those figures which are used in Newfoundland for general threatening, such as for disobedience, naughtiness and the like, are characteristically omnipresent, whereas those with more specific functions are often confined to particular locations or situations. Figures such as the bear, for example, are

TIGHT BINDING

associated with woods and lonely places, and marine creatures such as the shark and the whale are naturally used in threats about the dangers of going near wharves, harbours and the like. In his discussion of the German figures, Ranke identifies as his first group those which lack a well defined pedagogical task or mission (Patronat). Like the general figures in the Newfoundland material, they embody to some extent the moral principle as such in that they fetch and punish bad children.[1] The figures in Ranke's third group, however, have a more definite purpose, and their threatening role is exercised in certain places forbidden to children.[2] This group has obvious similarities with those Newfoundland figures which have specific threatening functions, although Newfoundland apparently lacks the corn-demons and other beings used to safeguard crops in the Germanic tradition and in agrarian cultures elsewhere.

It is interesting to note which areas of the young child's experience in Newfoundland seem to be subject to little or no control through threats. For example there have been no reports of threats regarding care in handling potentially dangerous things such as fish-hooks, splitting-knives or boatbuilding tools and the like with which children in many parts of the Province come into contact quite frequently. Further, although very small children may be threatened to keep them away from

---

[1] Ranke, cols. 1368-1369.

[2] Ranke, col. 1370.

TIGHT BINDING

wharves and boats etc. they learn to cope with these hazards at an early age. The tendency in Newfoundland is to warn very young children against venturing alone onto wharves or into boats but when they are with adults they are expected to adjust to the new situation. Boys are thus initiated early into certain aspects of the adult world. In contrast, however, there are also occasions when children ought to be aware of danger and yet are not. Newfoundland children, for example, often seem oblivious of the perils of playing or walking carelessly on busy roads even though they are sometimes warned about such thoughtlessness. From this one might infer that certain acts or situations appear dangerous or frightening only when culturally controlled in some way, for example by means of threats and other warnings, which, through constant repetition, alert the child to the hazards concerned.

In Newfoundland, young children are protected from numerous dangers in the natural environment by means of threats which encourage them to believe that certain places are inhabited by some powerful and mysterious being. Thus, although threatening figures such as the boo man and the boogie man appear to be omnipresent, other supernatural and invented figures often have more specific locations. These are of four principal types:

1. Places of potential danger, e.g. harbours, rivers, ponds, brooks and wells; wharves and stages;[3] cliffs, rocks

[3] In Newfoundland the word "stage" applies to the covered wooden structures at the edge of the harbour in which fish is split, gutted, salted and stored in salt bulk.

and caves; marshes, barrens and woods; old, dilapidated buildings; root-cellars.

2. Places where human beings often feel afraid or apprehensive, e.g. dark places, narrow lanes and paths, bridges, lonely places, graveyards, hollows, places shaded by trees.

3. Places from which children are forbidden, to prevent them from causing damage or otherwise interfering with adult activities,[4] e.g. vegetable gardens and fields of growing crops; barns and other buildings where animals are kept; workshops, storage sheds, and various rooms, closets and cupboards inside the house itself.

4. Places associated with some unpleasant or frightening event, e.g. localities where a murder or suicide has been committed, where unexplained noises have been heard or lights or other manifestations seen.

It is thought to be dangerous or inadvisable for children, and even sometimes adults, to visit some of these places, especially when alone. Danger might threaten there in many forms, whether from the natural hazards of the environment, or from robbery or the attack of some person or animal. In this sense, potential danger therefore links all four types of location where threatening figures are said to lurk.

Outdoor locations such as mountains, woods and water have

---

[4] Some of these may also, of course, be dangerous places.

TIGHT BINDING

their attendant spirits in the mythology of many cultures. A possible rationalisation of this is that such lonely, frightening and dangerous places seem to be more out of man's control than those near at hand where he can prevent a child from being injured, or at least rescue him from danger. The threats used to effect such control imply that the further the child strays from the security of the home and the community, the more hazards he may encounter. An important function of such threats, therefore, is to prevent children from straying away from home and going to certain places which are invested with guardian spirits utilised by the parents within the control system. The threats also serve to keep children within sight of the parents by warning them away from more distant places where, especially if unsupervised, they may make mischief or endanger themselves. Nature figures such as those which in Germanic tradition are said to inhabit mountains, woods and water, are rare in Newfoundland. Their place is often taken by the boo man or some other figure which is also used in threats against many kinds of unacceptable behaviour. These figures, therefore, when invoked in threats concerning natural hazards, take on the characteristics and function of nature spirits. Furthermore, some of the Newfoundland figures are associated with specific places in the natural environment. For example, mermaids are confined to the salt water, while fairies and the Jack O'Lantern are typically found near marshes, on the barrens or in the woods.

Whatever their location, many of the figures are represented as having the urge to take or chase children. They are often described as if they were expected to pounce on their victims

TIGHT BINDING

unawares. This is especially true of the supernatural/invented figures. Sometimes weapons are carried to assist them in the chase such as the "prong" carried by the Devil, the official "billyknocker" (i.e. truncheon) of the policeman, and the sticks, knives, and similar implements carried by other human figures. They are shown as having the desire to injure children physically in some way, and especially to devour them. Perhaps even more terrifying for the child is the frequently expressed notion that he will be taken away from the environment which he knows, and in which he feels secure, to some unknown place where family and friends will be unable to find him. In other words the figures are presented in the most frightening way possible so as to have the maximum effect in their threatening function. In addition, they are sometimes presented in a hierarchy according to the age of the child. For example, a very young child may be threatened with the boo man or boogie man, but when the child is older the Black Man is used, and later still he may be threatened with the Devil. When the names of these figures, in ascending order of potency, cease to be effective, he may be threatened with God as a last resort. Once the process has begun, it seems that the threats must be expressed with increasing severity in order to fulfil their function.

In order to encourage acceptable behaviour in the child and to discourage what is culturally regarded as unacceptable, for whatever reason, the Newfoundland adults present the child with various norms. He is encouraged to emulate the example

TIGHT BINDING

of individuals or groups whose behaviour is praiseworthy or acceptable within certain social and individual behavioural codes. On the other hand, various people who are not normal in some way are used as examples of abnormalities which the child is actively encouraged to dislike and avoid and which he often comes to regard with apprehension. When the parent temporarily identifies himself as an authority figure in threatening his children with his own power or physical strength, he also puts himself at a greater distance from the child, and by employing the mechanisms of adult verbal control he deliberately widens the gulf between the child's world and the adult world so that the child becomes at least temporarily less secure.

The power and authority of the adult world is also reflected in the fact that figures and motifs used in the threats are often said to be of large size. In the Newfoundland reports, the boo man and the boogie man, for example, are described as big and black, the Devil is said to have a big fire in which he will burn naughty children and the policeman is said to be coming in his big car. When a living person such as a stranger is used as a threatening figure, his adult status is strongly emphasised and references are made to the "big man" who will take the child away. The adult's physical stature and proportions are commented on or exaggerated to serve the threatening function. The same is true of animals used in threats, and this is especially effective when a small creature such as a mouse or rat is presented as something of monstrous

TIGHT BINDING

proportions which is more than capable of eating a child. The differences between the adult world and the childhood world are thus condensed into the idea of abnormally large size, and the bulky disguises which are often worn by the mummers, for example, may be frightening to a child simply because they distort the basic human form into something huge and grotesque.

Some Newfoundland informants reveal, however, that children are often not frightened when threatened, although in many cases the threats are nevertheless efficacious. Threats can evidently be effective on several levels without necessarily being frightening, but if one threatens a child who is already afraid, the threat, obviously, is more likely to fulfil its purpose. Direct physical action may also cause the child to obey, and although he may be resentful, upset, or angry as a result, he may not necessarily be afraid. The same child may himself already threaten other children, and later he will in his turn assume the full threatening authority of an adult. When children threaten each other, the threats are often playful. Sometimes, however, they are used in a deliberately bullying or spiteful way. Whereas an adult frequently witholds the full impact of a threat by modifying his tone of voice or giving some other indication that it may not be carried out, a child may threaten another in such a serious way that he is really frightened. On the other hand, of course, children may make light of such threats. They often enjoy frightening

TIGHT BINDING

each other and playing frightening games. In such games, the frightening is often simulated or vicarious. An English child playing the part of Mr. Wolf in "What time is it, Mr. Wolf?" only acts in a frightening way. All the players know that it is only a game. This is also true in Newfoundland of such games as "Old Man", recorded from St. John's in which an adult only pretends to catch the children and does not complete the chase. In a similar game from St. Mary's called "Old Cripple Man", one child acts the part of a cripple and the others tease him until he chases them. Here the children act out a situation which they may themselves experience if they actually tease a cripple in real life. Children sometimes even appear to enjoy being shouted at or chased by people whom they tease, despite the fact that such people are often used as threatening figures and are made to appear particularly frightening.

Newfoundland adults themselves also use the verbal device of teasing in social control of children, as noted earlier.[5] Whether teasing, threats, jokes or other linguistic means are used, however, their specific function is to effect control without breaking the bond between parent and child. The maintenance of these personal relationships, despite the divisive potential of threats or physical punishment, is best summarised by Szwed in his study of Newfoundland's Codroy Valley:

> "Children are seldom struck or spanked. On the rare occasion when they are, it is in the parent's anger, and the outburst is usually apologised for, the parent hugging and kissing the punished child. On the other hand, children are continually chided for their misbehavior and warned with dire threats of punishment. But threats

---

[5] See p. 50 above.

TIGHT BINDING

> seldom, if ever, materialize. Even when a child is told that his behavior requires a certain restitutive consequence, he is usually freed of it shortly after it has begun (as, for example, in being sent to bed without supper). Much of a mother's stream of conversation to a not-yet verbal baby or to a small child, is sprinkled with cautionary remarks, such as 'you're bad, you,' 'be good,' and 'you saucy thing.' Teasing of children is also frequent, even through adolescence, and jokes of small matter are often played on them, always followed by pats or kisses, reminders that all was 'in fun,' and nothing was serious. The child at a very early age learns that there are serious threats and teases, and there are those with no import, the latter always predominant. By context, tone of voice, and gesture, the child learns to sort out the meaning."[6]

In intrafamilial relationships such as those which Szwed describes, it is clear that threats and other verbal controls are constantly used by parents and other adults at all stages of a young child's development. It seems, however, that the specific functions of such controls as they operate at the family level have received surprisingly little attention in the various studies to which I have had access. Although it is not the intention of the present study to investigate these functional aspects in detail, it is important at least to indicate the principal reasons for the use of threats in directing children's behaviour. The evidence at present available in the Newfoundland Archive suggests that threats are used to control a very considerable range of behaviour, from the general to the particular. Their principal functions, as one might expect, reflect those which were given prominence

---

[6] Szwed, Private Cultures and Public Imagery, p. 80.

TIGHT BINDING

in the various questionnaires. These functions include:

a. Preventing or discouraging disobedience and general misbehaviour.

b. Keeping children away from dangerous or forbidden places.

c. Preventing children from interfering with animals, crops and tools.

d. Getting children indoors before dark and keeping them in during the hours of darkness.

e. Getting children to bed and/or to sleep.

When a child disobeys or does something against his parents' wishes or without their approval, he is threatened that some unpleasant consequence may ensue. He is expected to "behave properly", especially when visitors are present in the home, and threats are directed explicitly against all forms of misbehaviour, naughtiness, contrariness, stubbornness, waywardness and mischievousness. A child who behaves in these ways is said to be "unruly" and is thought to be in need of disciplining. Children are constantly chided for being bad, and are warned that if they are not good something undesirable will happen to them. In these general threats, for example, such figures as the boo man, the boo baggers, the boogie man, the bully man and the policeman are typically used, and children are told that if they misbehave these figures will harm them in some way. The same figures are also used to keep children away from certain forbidden places. These include the bedrooms, dining room, pantry and other parts of the house

TIGHT BINDING

where they might cause damage, disorder or mischief; rooms where papers or other items are kept which children are not supposed to see or with which they are forbidden to interfere; basements, cellars and attics; closets and cupboards; sheds and stores. A wider variety of figures, however, including those typically associated with certain specific locations, is used to warn children away from dangerous places such as the salt water, rivers, brooks, ponds, wells, marshes, wharves, stages, beaches, rocks, cliffs, mountains, caves, barrens, woods, roads, railway tracks and dilapidated buildings. In addition to the general figures such as the boo man and boogie man, figures such as the mermaid are typically used to keep children from beaches and harbours, the fairies and Jack O'Lantern keep them from getting lost in woods or marshes, witches and rats guard the wells, Mother Raw prevents them climbing a dangerous mountain, Henry Gouldwoody lurks on the barrens and old buildings are haunted by ghosts.

The Newfoundland material includes comparatively few examples of threats used to prevent children from interfering with animals, crops, tools and the like. This may be partly due to the fact that few domestic animals are kept nowadays, and also because there is little farming in the Province. The last thirty years have also seen a remarkable decline in the vegetable gardens which were once so important, especially in the outports. Children continue to be warned away from horses, sheep and other domestic animals, however, and are threatened

TIGHT BINDING

if they torment cats or chase chickens. Sometimes the child is told that the animal itself will hurt him if he goes near it. Such figures as the boogie man and the policeman are used to discourage children from damaging or stealing turnips, carrots, cabbages, potatoes and other vegetables, from raiding apple and plum trees and also to prevent them from touching or playing with dangerous implements of various kinds.

One of the most common functions of threats in Newfoundland folklore is to get children indoors before dark and to prevent them from going out after dusk. Children are told to be in by a certain hour, or to be home before dark if they are out playing, picking berries, catching caplin or cutting boughs. They are also told to come home early if it is foggy or stormy. Once indoors, they are threatened not to go out into the darkness for fear of the various nocturnal figures which are said to be lurking outside. These same figures, especially those in the boo/bogey group, are also used to encourage children to go to bed and to sleep. This is another very common function of the Newfoundland threats. If children do not want to go to bed, are not in bed by a certain time, refuse to settle down in bed and cover themselves up, or if they get out of bed during the night, they are threatened with the boo man, boo baggers, boogie man and similar figures. These are also used if the child refuses to go to sleep or makes a noise after being put to bed.

Threats are also used to prevent or discourage many other kinds of unacceptable or undesirable behaviour which were

not mentioned specifically in the questionnaires. Typical examples of such behaviour include the following:

1. Acting in a manner which is regarded as immoral or irreligious. E.g. telling lies, stealing, swearing, cursing, not going to church or Sunday school, not saying prayers, misbehaving in church, playing cards, doing certain forbidden things on a Sunday, such as picking flowers, playing games or skating.
2. Not listening or paying attention to what adults say.
3. Crying, especially for no good reason; throwing a tantrum or acting in a peevish way.
4. Developing bad habits such as thumb-sucking, nail-biting, picking one's nose, wiping one's nose on one's sleeve, smoking.
5. Neglecting personal hygiene, e.g. failing to wash properly or to brush one's teeth.
6. Not dressing properly, e.g. putting clothes on inside out or shoes on the wrong foot. Neglecting personal appearance and neatness.
7. Getting one's clothes dirty or wet, e.g. by playing in mud or stepping in puddles.
8. "Making a mess", e.g. by emptying cupboards, drawers, boxes and other containers, pulling off tablecloths and covers, leaving toys about, playing with water, spilling food and drink.
9. Making a noise.
10. Quarrelling, fighting, hitting an adult or another child.
11. Not sitting down or sitting still.
12. Running around in the house.

13. Getting in the way of the adults.

14. Annoying or tormenting adults or other children.

15. Showing off, especially in front of strangers.

16. Being bad mannered, especially at the table or when visitors are present.

17. Not eating meals or certain foods; refusing to take medicine.

18. Touching or eating poisonous or undesirable plants and substances.

19. Being inquisitive; meddling in trunks, drawers, boxes and the like; "picking" at merchandise in stores when parents are shopping; not leaving things where one finds them.

20. Touching or playing with dangerous things such as stoves, irons, matches, firecrackers, knives and scissors.

21. Not taking proper care of one's health. E.g. by swimming in the salt water before August when the water becomes warmer; not dressing in warm clothing when going out in the cold; leaving one's feet uncovered in bed on cold nights; going outdoors when it is raining or snowing.

22. Being late for school, not going to school or refusing to do homework.

23. Doing dangerous things. E.g. venturing onto unsafe ice, going swimming alone, going on the road after dark, playing or riding a tricycle on the road, sliding down a dangerous hill, playing "steppy-cock" by jumping from one pan of harbour ice to another.

24. Vandalism; causing damage to property or goods, e.g. breaking windows, glassware, lamps, ornaments and toys.

TIGHT BINDING

25. Throwing stones or using various weapons such as sling-shots and airguns.

26. Playing tricks; mocking or making fun of others, especially old people, recluses and those who are physically or mentally abnormal.

In addition, threats are used by adults in weaning infants, and also to encourage children to co-operate by helping parents in the home, running errands and performing many other tasks. The examples quoted above, however, are merely a representative selection of those in the Newfoundland Archive. They can do no more than hint at the wealth and variety of specific functions which a fuller and more intensive study would undoubtedly reveal. Some of the Archive reports comment on the fact that the threats are used mostly for the good of the child, although it is clear that adults also use them to encourage co-operation within the family group, and sometimes simply for their own peace of mind. Much depends on the mood of the adult who may threaten the child either playfully or seriously according to the situational context. Although the child eventually realises that the verbal controls are merely a device to encourage acceptable behaviour, the more serious threats, especially in his early years, may induce him to believe in the existence of the threatening figures themselves. This belief, however uncertain and temporary it may be, plays an important part in ensuring that the threats fulfil their intended function.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 7

Aspects of Belief in Threatening Figures

The emphasis in the preceding discussion has been on the fact that threatening figures are normally not believed in by the adults who use them to control the behaviour of children. It would be wrong, however, to take this idea too far, since adults also threaten children with figures in which they themselves partly or wholly believe. This element of belief in the actual or possible existence of the threatening figures is also reflected in other folklore genres. It is found, for example, in the Swiss legend where the would-be frighteners, who are disguised as supernatural figures, are themselves frightened when on turning round they discover that horrifying supernatural beings are actually there behind them.[1] Belief or half-belief in supernatural entities is an important aspect of the whole threatening process. Such beliefs inevitably vary from culture to culture and may be linked directly with the function of threats as, for example, when religious figures are used to discourage behaviour regarded as sinful or immoral.

In the Western world it would seem that there is proportionately more belief in the supernatural agencies which are found in the upper ranks of a given religious

---

[1] See G.P. Smith, "The Origin of an Illinois Tale", Southern Folklore Quarterly, VI, 2 (1942), 89-94.

hierarchy. In Christian society, for example, belief in God is widespread, but many people also continue to believe in ghosts, fairies, witches and the like. Belief in the diabolical opposite of a god, even though such a figure may simply be a personification of evil, is very real for some. The way in which some aspects of the Christian ethic may be explained to a child, for instance by references to the conflicting voices of good and evil or of a good and a bad angel, implies the same basic duality of presentation as that in which God is seen as symbolic of good and the Devil symbolises evil. Indeed, for the layman good and evil may to some extent be regarded as equally powerful forces constantly at war with each other.

The world of the supernatural may be regarded as man's invention, as a projection both of his aspirations and his fears. This includes the conventionally accepted deities of organised religion, all of which are supernatural or have supernatural attributes. Although deities may be regarded with mingled love and fear, it is fear, perhaps better defined as awe, which is the dominant emotion involved in the belief. Deities have power in terrifying proportions. The concepts of omniscience, omnipresence and the vengeful god, for example, inspire considerable awe in the believer. In some creeds this is ameliorated by a measure of love, mercy, compassion or other sympathetic characteristic which certain deities are

felt to possess. Nevertheless, deities are normally regarded by the believer as awesome, and, especially through emphasis on their more fearsome qualities, they may be used by society as restraining influences in the codes of conduct of both adults and children.

If a person believes in one spiritual world it is not unreasonable that he will also give credence to other supernatural entities which inspire both awe and fear. In this respect each one of us may be involved with the shadowy world of fear, and it is not illogical that we utilise this sense of fear when threatening children. We ourselves perhaps neither believe in nor fear the particular figure we use for threatening. Apart from its sociological function it may have little or no significance for us, and yet the child whom we threaten may still be afraid of it, not least because we make the figure seem especially fearsome. This is not to deny that we have experienced similar fears ourselves. As the Newfoundland reports suggest, we may remember being afraid of such figures in days gone by and perhaps we still fear them or believe in them to some extent.

Folk beliefs may also be linked with religion, as is illustrated by the remnants of belief in fairies and other supernatural creatures in Newfoundland, as well as in Ireland and elsewhere. As in Irish tradition, the fairies in Newfoundland are sometimes identified with the fallen angels

as a simple fact of Christian belief. Such beliefs are clearly very much alive in Newfoundland and von Sydow's assertion that figures used in threats are merely "pedagogical fikts"[2] therefore requires modification when applied to the local situation both in Newfoundland and elsewhere. While fully agreeing with von Sydow's admirably concise statement regarding the social function of such figures it should also be noted that not all of them are fictitious. This point has been made by Jeanne Cooper Foster who, while agreeing that the figures are often fikts, points out the possibility that supernatural beings may have been associated with certain specific locations at some earlier date, and implies that this argues some measure of belief.[3] Many threatening figures are adaptations of beings already existing in folk-belief.[4] These deep elements of belief tend to decline only slowly and although the figures concerned may have evolved for other reasons, their existence, often in certain specific locations, is utilised in the threatening process whether or not adults still believe in them.

Ranke's ideas coincide with those of von Sydow in his assertion that it is a law in the history of religion,

---

[2]Von Sydow, "The Mannhardtian Theories", p. 101.

[3]Foster, pp. 106-107.

[4]For a discussion of the degree of belief in such figures, see Tommola, 52-55.

that on the one hand beliefs, with progressive enlightenment, retire to the nursery as bugbears and on the other hand the frequent misuse of such concepts undermines any belief in them which still exists.[5] Just as von Sydow points out that many of the figures were simply humorous, Ranke holds that when threatening children one can only use figures in which there is no longer any serious belief. Ranke's assertion, however, is contradicted by those Newfoundland reports which make it clear that figures of serious belief may indeed be used in threats. For example, Christians who use God as a threatening figure may still be believers and may rely on this element of belief to help ensure that the function of the threat is fulfilled in the effective control of the child.

Nevertheless, the supernatural figures adapted for use in threats have no proven existence. Whether God, the Devil, spirits and even fairies really exist is itself a matter of faith or belief and as such is inevitably liable to cultural and individual variation. Other figures with supernatural powers, such as the members of the boo/bogey group, on the other hand, are either pure invention or else have lost any elements of belief on the part of adults which some of them might once have had. To the young child, however, all these entities, whether supernatural, invented

---

[5] Ranke, col. 1367.

LIGHT BINDING

or real, may be equally horrifying because in their threatening function they are spoken of in the same formulaic way and given the same overtones of fearsome power. The child tends to identify them all as figures of fear and to interrelate their identities. In Newfoundland, for example, the policeman and other human threatening figures are sometimes endowed with the characteristics and powers of supernatural or invented figures such as the Black Man or the boogie man, and may even be identified with them. Quite apart from their similarity of function, all threatening figures therefore have a good deal in common, especially in their extranormal powers and characteristics.

Ranke's suggestion that figures which are frequently misused as bugbears in time become less credible because the very frequency of usage makes them less potent[6] is substantially borne out in the present study. The evidence of the Newfoundland material indicates a tendency, when utilising figures in the supernatural/invented group, to employ such invented figures as the boogie man which are least believed in rather than figures of potential belief such as God, angels, ghosts and fairies. A notable exception to this is the Devil who is frequently used in threats.

In the same passage, however, Ranke is careful to point out the impossibility of deciding the degree to which certain

---

[6] Ranke, col. 1367.

figures become credible or less credible. Each figure seems to have a different credibility rating which varies from place to place and culture to culture. It is therefore virtually impossible to assess how such figures vary in potency and credibility. Just as God's power may be believed in by Christians so may that of the Devil. Belief in ghosts, fairies and witches may also be justified by reference to religious teaching. When used in threats such figures may still be felt to have fearsome powers, and even those who are sceptical about the existence of such beings may take care not to invite trouble by acting unadvisedly. The patterning of social control may also be reinforced through myths and legends, in which adults may still believe, which warn of the consequences of failure to conform to accepted modes of behaviour and belief.

While Ranke makes no claim that his list of figures is comprehensive, it is clear that they are drawn mainly from folk belief and he points out that new figures arise relatively seldom. They are more often already existing figures of belief. Indeed, both Ranke and von Sydow, together with other European scholars, concentrate their discussion upon the supernatural/invented figures and pay less attention to any human figures which have a similar function. Ranke refers to these human figures of "sober reality" in the context of the final stage of disappearing belief in supernatural

figures. He suggests that the reason for the use of such living figures as the gipsy and the policeman is solely that for the child they are associated with certain gruesome concepts.[7]

Figures of popular belief which have survived from earlier times may be adapted to new functions in modern society whether or not people continue to believe in them. In Newfoundland a number of these figures of belief are still used, and are still believed in to some extent. Alongside them, however, are found not only many invented or adapted figures with supernatural powers, but also figures of "sober reality" such as the policeman, the doctor and the teacher. Similar modifications may be seen in those parts of Europe where there is still a strong, vibrant tradition of the supernatural which is only now being replaced in the threat process by invented or living figures as the older supernatural tradition declines. The evidence from the Newfoundland material suggests that to the child the newer authority figures drawn from real life may be as fearsome and powerful as the supernatural or invented ones. Whether the figure is supernatural or not is irrelevant as long as the child believes in it to some extent. It is this element

---

[7]Ranke, col. 1367.

TIGHT BINDING

of belief which is crucial in the successful functioning of the threat process. The child's ignorance, his fear of the unknown which his limited experience cannot explain, reinforces the power which threatening figures may have and helps to ensure a measure of effectiveness in their function.

The responsibility which parents feel for their offspring, and which they share with most of the animal kingdom also plays an important part in the threatening process. Leaving children unattended and out of control may expose them to danger and in some cultures there exists the belief that various figures might really take them away. A vivid example of this is found in Zuñi mythology:

> "When the earth was soft Su'uki used to come into the village and go around. Sometimes the women took their babies to the peach orchards and put them to sleep under the trees while they worked. Then if the mother went to the spring or anywhere out of sight Su'uki would come. She was always watching. She could smell out the babies and she always waited around the peach orchards near where the mothers left their babies and as soon as the mother left the sleeping baby and went to get a drink of water Su'uki came and took the baby and put him in her basket and carried him off. Finally she came home with the baby. Then she put him down and came back and took another one and put him in her basket and took him home too. Then the mothers came back happily after having a drink at the spring, and there the babies were gone! They saw Su'uki's tracks. She went barefoot and had long toenails. Then the mothers cried very much, but they were afraid to go after their babies. Then the women who had lost their babies came home and told the people, and they all went out to look for the babies, but they never found them. Finally they came

TIGHT BINDING

> to where the people used to dry their peaches. They knew that Su'uki lived there, and they watched for an opportunity to kill her because she had taken their babies." [8]

Parents may thus use threats not only because society expects this but also because they feel it is the right thing for them to do for the sake of the child. They may believe or at least fear that if they do not act to protect the child in this way he may be in real danger either from the natural environment or from evil powers of various kinds. The natural environment also has a bearing on the methods of threatening and the figures used. In an agrarian environment, for example, variants of the Kornmutter tradition might be expected, whereas in maritime areas, or near rivers, lakes and ponds, water-spirits and demons, or their substitutes, in which some element of belief perhaps continues, might well be used. In one area adults may wish to keep children away from growing crops but in another no crops may be produced and such threats would therefore be inappropriate. Although the purely functional aspect of social control through specific prohibitions emphasised by von Sydow is important, it is by no means the only consideration. In Newfoundland, for example, threats are often used simply to discourage unacceptable or

---

[8] Bunzel, p. 938. See also pp. 113/4 above, and Ploss and Renz p. 112: "Lässt man Kinder allein auf dem Abort sitzen, dann werden sie vom „Hoggemann" geholt."

annoying behaviour in general rather than to prohibit more specific activities. Although children may be threatened for their own good not to go to certain places or to come in out of the dark, for example, threats may also be used for the more general social reason that parents feel responsible if the child is exposed to danger. It is at this early stage of the child's development that parents probably feel the strongest responsibility for protecting him just as in the folk beliefs of some cultures various prophylactics are used against the "böse Mächten", the evil powers which are thought to be especially harmful to the very young child. An individual may believe, however, that certain things are dangerous because he has been trained to believe so. Similarly, social patterning may not only give a parent the idea that the young child is particularly vulnerable but also suggest the means for counteracting this vulnerability.

In a child's early years the threats are used for his own protection, but behind the threatening process itself there lies the child's belief in the authority of the parents. The verbal controls constantly remind him that by acting against the wishes of his parents he alienates their affections. In some ways, the whole pattern of threatening might be seen as an extension of the parent's sense of responsibility. He is responsible for the safety and protection of the infant, but

[illegible]

once it has passed infancy the child is warned about the dangers and prohibitions which exist, and gradually learns to cope with them. As is amply demonstrated in the Newfoundland material, the young child assumes that parents and adults know what is going on in the world, and he tends to accept their authority, especially in his early years. If parents persistently assert that particular consequences will follow if a social convention or taboo is violated, the child is inclined to believe this, at least partly out of apprehension or fear about what the consequences may be. A young child is often easily frightened, and if adults do not explain away his fears, but play on them and exaggerate them instead, his own experience may be inadequate to cope with them and so they play an important part in directing his behaviour.

When threatening the credulous young child the parent or other adult creates, selects or adapts any terrifying figures he wishes for the purpose of social control, and encourages the child to believe that these exist and have power to punish. Even when the child outgrows this type of control, however, its original function may persist in that he has some concept of authority, often as embodied in such living authority figures as judges, magistrates and policemen. These figures and what they represent continue to make him aware of what is socially acceptable and what is not. Of course

he may react negatively against the controls, even from their earliest stages, and may deliberately violate taboos and act against the wishes of other members of society. As he gets older, however, he is assumed to be able to look after himself and the original protective function of many threats used in early childhood is no longer required.

TIGHT BINDING

CHAPTER 8

Towards a Typology of Threatening Figures

The problems of classifying the myriad figures used in threats are complex and difficult, and this is especially true of attempts to differentiate between the various supernatural/invented figures. Not only do their identities interrelate and merge, but they also tend to have certain characteristics in common which obscure their individuality. Many of these traits are apparently associated with certain widespread or perhaps even universal concepts of what such figures are thought to resemble. These characteristics include associations with darkness and the diabolical, with devouring and savage physical injury, with the power to take the child away from the known and the secure to an unknown and unimaginable doom. They involve vague shapes and shadowy figures with unnatural, inhuman and superhuman attributes of many different kinds.

The problems of classification are reflected in the variety of approaches and typologies employed in such major European studies of threatening figures as have been made. Earlier writers such as Ranke, von Sydow and Cramer concentrated attention on the supernatural/invented figures, whereas fuller and more recent studies such as those of Tommola and Tijskens

THE ST. JOHN'S

draw attention to the use of human beings and animals in threats. Most of the major studies, however, seem to have ignored the fact that all figures and devices which occupy the nominal slots[1] in threats - whether supernatural/invented, human, animal or inanimate - may have equal status and potency in the threatening context. In that context, deities may be reduced from their normal status in religious belief, while certain human figures, for example, may be aggrandised. All the figures serve the same basic function in the verbal controls. In concentrating on the mythological figures, scholars have sometimes neglected the human, animal and inanimate figures used, and have failed to note that these may also be endowed with supernatural characteristics when used in threats.

Before suggesting a typology for the Newfoundland figures, it is useful at this point briefly to review more precisely the approaches and classifications employed in some of the major European studies during the past forty years. Of particular importance is the functional approach of von Sydow. Although he does not put forward a formal typology of threatening figures, his comments on their function are particularly important. His work did much to redress the balance of research in the European-oriented material away from the earlier Mannhardtian emphasis on mythology and

---

[1] I.e. the positions typically occupied by nouns, pronouns and noun phrases in a linguistic structure.

GRADUATE STUDIES

belief. He demonstrated that functional analysis reveals many of the figures to be jocular in application, rather than serious objects of belief. His discussion brings out effectively the social function involved and merits fairly full quotation:

> "All these bogy figures that the folk scare children with: the old man of the well who catches them if they go too near the well; and the wolf, witch, etc., who catches them if they trample down the corn, etc., are purely fictitious beings that the adults only pretend exist, but do not believe in themselves. They are pedagogical fictions, which the adults fancy for the children, and want them to believe in, until they understand better, and do not get into trouble or cause damage. The elders talked about the dangerous beings in the corn before it was cut, but when it is, the beings do not appear... If there really had been a belief behind such fancies, they would have been applied in every circumstance, above all by the more artless; but this had occurred only where there was occasion for pranks and jokes."[2]

Von Sydow also delineated other types of pedagogical fikts, thus making a further contribution towards a possible typology:

> "Another group of pedagogical ficts aims at scaring children into keeping away from places where they might come to harm or do mischief. Children are warned against spending their time near the well by telling them that a dangerous brunnsgubbe (ogre of the well), or in the Scanian dialects brunn-kessa, lives there and may catch them. It is easier to make children understand that such a brunnsgubbe is dangerous to them than make them realize that some slight unwariness might have the most serious consequences. But the grown-up people do not believe in the brunnsgubbe, and when the children have come to be intelligent enough to take care that they do

---

[2] von Sydow, "The Mannhardtian Theories", pp. 100-101.

FIG. ST. BINDING

not fall into the well, they will also learn that the brunnsgubbe does not exist.

In like manner people scare children from trampling down the grain by saying that there is an evil being, man or woman, a wolf or the like, who will catch them if they go there. This, too, is a case of typical ficts credited by no grown-up person, but useful for keeping the children off the cornfields. It is natural that such ficts should be considered by the grown-ups as mere jokes, but at harvest-time it may be kept going without any pedagogical aim, when those who happen to hurt themselves are jokingly said to have been bitten by the wolf, or people when cutting the last straws say they are catching the wolf or the hag. For this is but a purely jocular continuation of the former fict and no manifestation of belief."[3]

Like von Sydow, Friedrich Ranke does not present a formal typology of the figures in his important entry under Kinderschreck, Popanz in the Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens. His study, however, published some two years earlier than von Sydow's 1934 essay, lists a considerable number of figures from the German sources and attempts to differentiate between various basic types. His exposition of a given group, however, is complicated by the inclusion of figures which, while having a function similar to others in the group, are clearly distinct from them in some respects. This illustrates the difficulty of any attempt at comprehensive classification of data in which the various figures overlap and interrelate. It is inevitable that too rigid a classification may fail to take account of these typical

---

[3] von Sydow, "Comparative Religion and Popular Tradition", pp. 173-174.

interrelationships, and Ranke is careful to note those figures which are exceptional or additional to his basic categories.

He divides Kinderschrecken into four groups. The first of these is characterised by figures which have no clearly defined pedagogical Patronat, i.e. task, mission, or domain, but embody the moral principles as such.[4] They fetch and punish bad children and their existence in contemporary popular belief is generally limited to nursery fantasy. In this group, he notes the clear patterning that the German figures have in the various implements, receptacles and the like which they carry or by which they are characterised. The figures are often said to carry a bag, a stick with which to beat the children or a hook to drag them into their power. They are also said to eat children or imply the threat of eating - the verb fressen, to devour, being frequently used.

Ranke's second group concerns figures of popular belief which still have an independent existence in the minds of the people and also have for the most part no special Patronat. However, he also includes here figures of "sober reality" - - der nüchternen Wirklichkeit - - such as the chimney-sweep, the Polish Jew with his bag, the gipsy,

[4] See also p. 122 above.

the gendarme and the Muscovite, adding that these are used only when beliefs in the other figures of this group are in the final stage of disappearance.[5] It might be objected that Ranke here is really dealing with two very different kinds of figure, one being basically supernatural and the other having an apparent basis of existence in the world of reality.

His third group has a more definite Patronat in that here the threatening is associated with certain places forbidden to children.[6] This group includes figures living in the cornfields and involves recollections of vegetation demons in human or animal form. He notes that people formerly believed in such figures and that they still persist in more or less distinct form, but nowadays usually serve merely to keep children out of the cornfields where they might get lost or trample down the corn. He adds, however, that the Bumann and Bussemann from his first group and even the Tader (gipsy), may also be used in this way, and this again adds a not unexpected complication to his definition.

The members of the fourth group appear in the form of masked figures in processions especially during Advent and Christmas time. They not only present good children

---

[5] See pp. 141-142 above.

[6] See p. 122 above.

with gifts in a kindly way but also threaten those who are bad and lazy.

The classification used by Cramer is another important early attempt to cover a wide variety of figures, although he too concentrates upon the supernatural/invented group.

His classification comprises five groups:

1. Wassergeister (Water spirits).
2. Wald und Feldgeister (Forest and field spirits).
3. Strassen und Hausgeister (Street and house spirits).
4. Wettergeister (Weather spirits).
5. Himmelsgeister (Spirits of the air).

The basis of these categories, as Tijskens points out in his analysis of Cramer's work,[7] is the grouping of figures according to the particular threat - - menace - - or, one might say, threatening domain with which they are associated. In the same analysis, however, Tijskens notes that not only has Cramer taken very little account of the various types which may be distinguished above all in the formation of the figures but also that many figures are not associated with a specific threat. Further, Cramer was aware of these difficulties, as Tijskens also notes, for he suggested possible alternative classifications based, for example, on differences of form - human, animal or indeterminate,[8] or by means of

---

[7] Tijskens, (1965), 259.

[8] Cramer's suggestion of a classification based on differences of form, especially upon human, animal or indeterminate characteristics, has parallels in the present study, although the typology put forward later in this chapter was arrived at independently some two years before I had access to Cramer's work through the courtesy of Professor Roger Pinon.

TIGHT BINDING

colour or other attributes such as the carrying of a hook, etc. The possibility of a functional classification is implicit here and this approach may ultimately offer the most satisfactory solution to the fundamental typological problems of figures which are characterised by variable and/or indeterminate form.

The classification employed by Tommola divides "mythological figures" (including figures from nature, ghosts and the dead, and the Devil) from unspecified figures such as ghosts and figures connected with a certain place, time or mission.[9] In her introductory remarks however, she points out that figures from the real world, both human and animal, are used in Finland, along with threats of physical violence. Like Cramer, however, she concentrates attention on the largest group, i.e. the supernatural/mythological. She also discusses von Sydow's fikt-theory and the psychological aspects of the figures, and makes the significant point that not all figures are fikts - some are believed in.[10]

Tijskens bases his study on the material collected for the Atlas linguistique de la Wallonie. He adopts the

---

[9] Tommola, 5-51.

[10] See p. 140 above.

classification system of the Swiss folklore atlas[11] and divides his study into seven chapters:

1. <<Babou>> et variantes ("Babou" and variants).
2. Croquemitaines de l'eau (Threatening figures of the water).
3. Croquemitaines <<occasionels>> ("Occasional" threatening figures).
4. Croquemitaines de forme humaine (Threatening figures in human form).
5. Croquemitaines de forme animale (Threatening figures in animal form).
6. Expressions et croquemitaines de forme diverse (Expressions and threatening figures of diverse form).
7. Croquemitaines appartenant à d'autres cycles de la croyance populaire (Threatening figures appertaining to other cycles of popular belief).

He finds a place for a considerable variety of figures and other threatening devices and usages in his very full listing of data from the linguistic atlas. His is unquestionably the most-comprehensive study to which I have had access, and in his introduction he also comments on several of the more important European studies. Because of the great wealth of material at his disposal, however, he

---

[11] P. Geiger and R. Weiss, eds., Atlas der schweizerischen Volkskunde (Basel, 1950-). See Tijskens, (1965), 260.

has been obliged to content himself for the most part with listing the data fully and adding complementary information from other printed sources. Consequently, he has had little opportunity for detailed comment on the linguistic structure of the threats or the ways in which they function in context. Of particular value, however, are his commentaries on the distribution of figures and their variants, and his transcription of their names in an orthography which gives some indication of their pronunciation. He also presents an admirable analysis of the baboû figures, which, like their counterparts in other languages, are a particularly complex group.

Tijskens makes the useful distinction between figures in human form and in animal form. Within each of these groups, however, he includes supernatural/invented figures, such as croquemitaines des grains, and also those based on living people, using as his criterion the "form" of the figure concerned. It might be argued, however, that the St. Nicholas group in his Chapter III, for example, and other figures of popular belief (such as the sorcerer) in his Chapter VII are also in a sense threatening figures of human form. Again we are faced with the problem of classification, and it is clear that the categorisation of a corpus of material from a given cultural area is dictated to some extent by the collected data itself.

Although the basic typology of the Newfoundland figures had already been decided upon before I had the opportunity of

TIGHT BINDING

seeing Tijskens' work, it is interesting to note that the considerable body of data in both the Walloon study and the Newfoundland material presented here seem to call for similar systems of classification. Nevertheless, the inherent difficulties of the subject-matter preclude a rigid typology.

Yet when dealing with an extensive corpus of material it is helpful to suggest some major categories into which the various Newfoundland figures may be grouped for the purposes of presentation and analysis. This attempt to distinguish between major categories is useful because it provides an opportunity to divide the great variety of figures into manageable groups for more detailed investigation and analysis. It also leads to more cogent definition of the figures and to the possibility of developing an appropriate terminology. It may be less relevant, or even impracticable, as a typology for material gathered by different means or from different areas. Each body of data may call for a separate typology, as each is derived by different means from diverse cultural origins. In the absence of a universal typology it is proposed to present the Newfoundland material as divided into certain general categories for ease of reference.

In Newfoundland, as elsewhere, a wide variety of figures may be used in threats against children. These include celestial, diabolical, mythological and invented figures. Those of religious or mythological origin may have been the subject of belief at some stage of their history, and, certainly

TIGHT BINDING

in Newfoundland at the present time, many are still believed in to a greater or lesser extent. Similar to these in supernatural connotation are figures such as the boogie man which are apparently invented for the express purpose of threatening. In addition, a number of human beings, such as people who have authority, or are strangers, or have unusual characteristics, are used in threats, as are also certain animals and objects.

Threatening figures in Newfoundland may be divided into three principal classes:

A. Supernatural, mythological, fictitious and invented figures, e.g. deities, diabolical figures, ghosts, fairies, bogeys (such as the boo man, boogie man, etc.).

B. Human beings with unusual characteristics, e.g. mummers, strangers, priests, policemen, doctors, teachers, recluses, cripples, eccentric types and individuals.

C. Animals, objects and other miscellaneous figures and devices, e.g. dogs, rats, mice, instruments of physical punishment.

This typology rests on whether the figures have a basis in reality or not. Clearly some are supernatural and normally have no reality as flesh and blood. Others are primarily living human beings, animals or inanimate objects, endowed with some special quality in the situational context of threats. Some figures, e.g. Santa Claus, may have realisations both at the supernatural level and, as when someone dresses up as the figure, in the real world. A deity, diabolical figure

or ghost may of course also be said to take on bodily substance. Even if such substance were real and tangible, however, it would still be recognised that the figure itself remains basically supernatural and that it assumes bodily substance as a means of manifesting its otherwise unsubstantial nature.

While the supernatural/invented figures form the largest group in the Newfoundland corpus, it appears that human beings, animals and acts of physical violence[12] merit equally full treatment as they are all aspects of the same basic system of traditional verbal control. In previous studies, attention has been concentrated on the supernatural/invented figures, other categories being treated only incidentally. Even within such broad groups it is sometimes difficult to assign a given figure positively to a single category. By the very nature of the material some interchangeability and overlapping is inevitable. Whereas some figures are differentiated by clearly defined characteristics, others are so similar as to be hardly distinguishable from each other. Nomenclature is not a clear guide to classification because the same name may

---

[12] The Newfoundland material includes numerous examples of threats of physical violence which it is not possible to analyse in detail within the limited scope of the present study. So far as I am aware, the first attempt to treat threats of physical violence as an integral part of the linguistic structure of traditional verbal controls is to be found in Professor Halpert's unpublished paper referred to above. His discussion notes that various expressions of physical violence may fit into the same nominal slots in threat structures as do the threatening figures. Other writers, however, have also commented on threats of physical violence. See, for example, Tommola, 6, and Raum, pp. 228-231.

be given to different frightening concepts, some of which may not be used as threatening figures.

Whatever their names, many supernatural/invented figures in Newfoundland have a great deal in common as regards their form, function, behaviour and location. They tend to merge and overlap and their characteristics are often interchangeable. Although it is often difficult to differentiate between them, it sometimes happens, e.g. with the boo man, the Black Man and the Devil, that they may be graded within a threatening hierarchy of increasing severity. Terms such as boo man and boo-beggar may also refer to a variety of human beings in addition to their more usual superhuman connotation. Conversely, human threatening figures may sometimes be referred to by such names as boogie man and boo man.[13] The latent ambiguity of this naming process, and the tendency of figures to merge and overlap, are important aspects of the creative process by which such figures are evolved. Not only does it seem necessary that the more nebulous figures should be made sufficiently realistic for the child's imagination to comprehend, however dimly, but also that those based on real people should be endowed with superhuman or inhuman characteristics.

Although the malevolent powers of various supernatural/invented figures are to some extent interchangeable, a given

---

[13] Many of these usages are of course outside the context of traditional verbal controls, but their central connotations are similar to those of the threatening figures whose names they share.

figure may have specific powers peculiar to it. In addition, each may have characteristics and functions which are independent of its role as a threatening figure, but all may be used in threats. The Devil, the boogie man, fairies, witches, ghosts and other figures each have characteristics not shared by the others but all share the threatening function. The Archive reports, however, do not always make clear whether a given figure is supernatural, fictitious, invented or otherwise. Consequently if a witch, for example, is regarded as primarily supernatural in the Archive citation, she is assigned to Class A. If she is positively identified as a living person, she is listed under Class B. In practice, problems of this kind are rare, and it is usually possible to categorise a figure according to the typical features on which each of the three classes is based.

In order to indicate something of the considerable range of the Newfoundland threats and the figures used in them, a selection of the Archive examples is given in Part II. The examples are grouped into sections according to the three classes identified in the typology outlined above and are followed by some general concluding observations on the whole process of verbal social control. It is only by quoting a substantial number of citations culled from the much larger corpus of material that it is possible to suggest something of the flavour of the living oral tradition. The presentation of a broad spectrum of examples demonstrates not only the great diversity of figures used but also the remarkable

linguistic variation which is found in the threatening utterances themselves. Previous studies have been content for the most part to give only occasional examples of the actual threats used and consequently have neglected the overall view of the variety of form and function typical of verbal controls within the social context.

The representative sample of citations presented in Part II demonstrates for the first time the cumulative effect of the vast number of threats in everyday usage in Newfoundland. Although at first sight the sheer volume of citations may seem somewhat overwhelming, this is the only effective way of illustrating the range of variation possible within a particular folklore genre. Although the process of variation is a central aspect of folk tradition, its range is rarely demonstrated. The potential variety of the Newfoundland verbal controls, however, is indicated by the fact that no two examples quoted in Part II are exactly alike, and yet these citations represent only a fraction of the total corpus. The examples include excerpts not only from the full, detailed reports in the Archive but also from those which are thinner and more pedestrian in content. Together, however, they illustrate both the depth of material in each of the three classes and the gamut of the spoken tradition as it operates in Newfoundland today.

PART II.

JUAN BAUDIN

Introductory Notes on the Classification and Presentation of the Newfoundland Threatening Figures.

As outlined in the previous chapter, the examples of verbal social control presented in the following three sections are representative of the very large number of such citations in the Newfoundland Archive. The three classes of figures will now be presented in turn, together with brief commentaries and explanatory notes where appropriate. Within each class the citations are listed in numerical order, beginning with those which include direct speech and followed by those in indirect speech which are often more complex in form. The sequential order of the citations is based on the degree of menace which each is intended to convey. The classification of the direct speech threats is therefore comparatively straightforward in that they clearly express various degrees of menace, ranging from the mildest to the most severe. The indirect speech threats, on the other hand, are often less exact in expression and consequently their order of presentation is more problematical and arbitrary. Nevertheless, it is important to quote a representative number of examples in indirect speech as these often include a fuller context of usage than those in direct speech. The differences between the direct speech citations and those in indirect speech emphasise the advantages of a collecting technique which is not too tightly structured

TIGHT BINDING

and which allows for the maximum range of response from questionnaires, interviews and individual reports. Without such flexible fieldwork techniques it would not have been possible to elicit more than a fraction of the information included in the indirect speech reports of those who experienced, witnessed or enquired about these traditional controls at first hand within their own families and neighbourhoods. The questionnaires used were therefore successful in eliciting not only a wide range of material but also a depth of response which indicates something of the social context of the verbal controls.

The difficulties of evolving a logical system of presentation are considerable and the sequential order of the examples is inevitably somewhat arbitrary. Nevertheless the structural and semantic patterns within the citations themselves provide a basis for classification. The system of classification adopted here allows the numerous examples to be presented in sequence for ease of reference according to certain characteristic features of meaning and form. It operates on three levels:

1) At the primary level, each set of direct speech or indirect speech examples illustrating the use of a given threatening figure is listed in sequence according to the degree of menace stated or implied in a given citation. The citations are then presented in sequential order, beginning with the mildest threats in which the existence and latent

powers of the figures are spoken of in general terms, continuing through those threats which suggest that the figure will be summoned or is coming, and concluding with those which state, for example, that the figure will come and get, get, have, or take the child, or harm him in some more specific way.

2) Within the primary classification there are numerous examples of threats which imply the same degree of menace but are expressed in several different structural forms. In order to accommodate these threats within the general sequence of presentation, a secondary level of classification is necessary. This utilises the typical linguistic structure of threats as discussed in Chapter 4 above. Threats implying the same degree of menace, for example several citations which state in different structural ways that a given figure will "get" a child, are therefore listed within the primary classification in the following order:

a. AFFIRMATION.
b. CONDITION + CONSEQUENCE.
c. CONSEQUENCE + CONDITION.
d. IMPERATIVE.
e. IMPERATIVE + ALTERNATIVE.
f. IMPERATIVE + REASON.
g. IMPERATIVE + RESULT.
h. Composite threats incorporating two or more of the above structures.

3) A number of threats which imply the same degree of menace and have similar structural forms, may differ from each

other in the functions which they are intended to serve. Several threats which state, for example, that a given figure will "get" a child, may be expressed in the form of AFFIRMATIONS. They may be distinguished from each other, however, by the fact that some are simply used to encourage obedience, whereas others are intended to control more specific types of unacceptable behaviour. A tertiary level of classification is therefore required so as to include within the sequence of presentation those threats which imply the same degree of menace, and have similar linguistic structure, but which vary in expressing the function of the threat. The tertiary sequence begins with those examples concerned with obedience and good behaviour, continues through those which urge the child, for example, to come indoors before dark, to get to bed or to sleep, to keep away from dangerous places and the like, and ends with other miscellaneous functions. The detailed sequential order is best seen by examining one of the lists of examples in the following sections. To give an idea of the order of presentation at this level, a typical sequence of CONDITION plus CONSEQUENCE structures which have the same degree of menace might be ordered in the following way:

If you don't do as you're told, the boogie man will get you.
If you aren't good " " " " " "
If you don't come in before dark " " " " " "
If you don't get off to bed " " " " " "
If you don't go to sleep " " " " " "

In practice, most citations can be classified at the primary

level. The secondary and tertiary levels are utilised mainly in the longer and more complex examples concerning such figures as the boogie-man which are frequently used in threats.

The figures in each class are identified by name, together with a phonetic transcription if the name has been recorded on tape. Each figure is numbered to indicate firstly the class to which it belongs and secondly its position in the sequence of presentation within that class. The numbering of the illustrative examples identifies them with a specific figure in Class A, B or C, and each example is followed by the appropriate accession number assigned to it in the Newfoundland Archive. In order to give some idea of the geographical distribution of the verbal controls, the name of the community where a given threat was used is included in parenthesis after each citation.[1] Communities with identical names are distinguished by an abbreviated reference either to a larger community nearby or to the bay or region in which they are located. The abbreviated references are as follows:[2]

CB - Conception Bay.
TB - Trinity Bay.
BB - Bonavista Bay.
NDB - Notre Dame Bay.

---

[1]The Gazeteer of Canada: Newfoundland and Labrador (Ottawa, 1968) is used as a general guide in the identification and spelling of the various communities. If the location is not specified, the name of the contributor's home community is substituted. Urban centres, especially St. John's, however, are not necessarily the points of origin of citations located there.

[2]These references are based on the distribution system utilised in Halpert and Story, pp. 222-229.

GNP:E - Great Northern Peninsula, east coast.
GNP:W - Great Northern Peninsula, west coast.
FB - Fortune Bay.
PB - Placentia Bay.
SMB - St. Mary's Bay.
Lab. - Labrador (used for all citations from Labrador).

The citations are quoted verbatim, except for minor changes in spelling and punctuation to facilitate their interpretation. The tape-recorded examples were mostly collected during my own fieldwork, which was undertaken either alone or jointly with colleagues and students. Material recorded on tape by other fieldworkers is acknowledged in parenthesis after the citations concerned. I have transcribed all the tape-recorded examples of direct speech threats, using a broad phonetic transcription in I.P.A. These transcriptions not only indicate the typical pronunciation of threats, but also the richness and variety of spoken usage in the Province. In the same way, the numerous examples of both direct and indirect speech threats in each class illustrate to the best advantage the wealth of traditional verbal controls as they operate in Newfoundland today. Although the discussion here is inevitably limited, the following examples present the evidence upon which this study is based, so that the material is made available for alternative analyses and interpretations.

SECTION A.

Class A: Supernatural, Mythological, Fictitious and Invented Figures.

The supernatural, mythological, fictitious and invented figures are by far the largest and the most important category in the Newfoundland material. They are also the most difficult to classify. Those classed as supernatural and mythological are drawn from the worlds of religion, myth and popular belief in which they already have other specific roles quite apart from their adaptation for use in threats. These figures are conventionally accepted as supernaturals and each has certain widely recognised characteristics. A large number of figures in Class A, however, and indeed those most popularly used, are not strictly supernatural. They are constructs with supernatural characteristics and are apparently fictitious and/or deliberately invented for the threatening of children but are not normally believed in by the adults who use them in this way.

The figures in Class A are unstable and often ill-defined in nomenclature, form and function.[3] It is their function as threatening figures which binds them together as a group, whatever their name or form. By their very nature, supernatural figures lack precise identification. Their origins and their

[3] Transformation and shape-shifting are typical characteristics of many threatening figures.

TIGHT BINDING

dissemination in various forms with different names and functions are often obscure or lost in antiquity. The strictly supernatural figures in Newfoundland usage include the whole range of supernatural entities, from God and the heavenly powers, through the spirit world and diabolical beings to the broad group of related figures traditionally classed by English folklorists as "goblindom".[4] All these are figures of actual or potential belief on the part of many adults. Whereas there is a considerable element of adult belief in God and the various religious figures, including the diabolical ones, belief in the other supernatural entities is considerably less, if it exists at all. There is clearly some adult belief in ghosts and fairies here, for example, but this is not the case with most other figures of popular belief.

Class A also includes the boo/bogey group and its related figures,[5] all of which are apparently fictitious. With these are grouped figures adapted from various aspects of cultural tradition, together with inventions which may be developed within a community or family, or perhaps even arise from individual usage, to serve the threatening function. These figures show clear parallels with the traditionally

---

[4] See, for example, Gomme, pp. 30-38. Such lists, however, include the boo/bogey figures and others regarded in the present study as fictitious or invented rather than as primarily supernatural.

[5] This remarkably close-knit group of figures, which are often interchangeable and interrelated with supernatural figures in both form and function, has continued to interest linguists. It was with this group that my original investigation began, but the etymological complexities have been postponed for future discussion.

accepted characteristics of those which are strictly supernatural, and they appear to be adapted or invented with such characteristics in mind. A possible reason for this lies in the fact that those who use the figures in threats have traditional concepts of what they might be like, or ought to be like.

All the figures in Class A overlap and interweave to a considerable degree because they share a number of basic characteristics which are insisted upon or exaggerated for the purpose of threatening. These characteristics are typified by their deviation from various cultural norms. Each threatening figure has qualities which clearly distinguish it from what is felt to be normal by society as regards appearance, behaviour and general characteristics. Whereas figures such as the boogie man, for example, are obviously abnormal, God and other figures of religious belief are above or beyond the normal. Although they may be anthropomorphic, the child has to imagine many of these figures. They are superhuman, unseen entities which, unlike the human threatening figures, cannot be pointed out to him. The effectiveness of the threats therefore, depends to a considerable degree on the child's belief in the figures.

The figures in Class A are presented in the following general order:

i. Supernatural figures of religious belief.
ii. Figures of mythology and popular belief.
iii. Figures of potential belief.
iv. Figures adapted from literary fiction and advertising.
v. Invented figures.
vi. Santa Claus and related Christmas figures.

SUPERNATURAL FIGURES

GOD AND THE HEAVENLY POWERS.

A1. God [gɒd] / [gɔd] / [gɒ·d].

In the corpus of Newfoundland material God appears comparatively rarely as a threatening figure, usually in a clearly religious context and as a figure of awe rather than of vengeance or punishment.[6] His power is implicit in all the references, as for example in those which explain thunder as the angry voice of God.[7] His omniscience and omnipresence, qualities which are shared by other figures such as Santa Claus and the boogie man, for example, enhance his awesome image. Unlike his diabolical adversaries, God is usually represented as displeased, grieved or wounded by misbehaviour rather than being invoked as a direct threat to take children away. The Christian concept of God as the paragon of virtue tends to restrict his use as a threatening figure to those religious contexts where he has special relevance. In the depiction of the diabolical figures, however, the whole range of mythology

---

[6] Adult churchgoing Christians in Western society normally regard God as inspiring awe and are aware of the idea that God punishes those who are evil. Believers, however, are less likely to use God's name lightly or flippantly, and therefore tend to speak of God only occasionally as a threatening figure.

[7] Dites and legends about thunder, although often intended to allay a child's fear, may also imply the awesome power of God, and thus contribute to the child's concept of God as a powerful supernatural figure.

and human imagination may be drawn upon to produce an infinite number of terrifying characteristics.

Typical threats include the following:

A1.1. "God will be sad." [gɔd$_{8}$wɨl bi sæd] (St. Lawrence) T C356,67-31.

A1.2. Well, you know, it was always "God is watchin' you." [gɔd ɨz 'wɔtʃɨn juu] (St. Lawrence) T C356,67-31.

A1.3. "God knows what you're doing." [gɔd nouz wɑt? jɔ 'duuɪŋ] (St. John's) T C367,67-31.

A1.4. "Be good or God won't love you." (St. John's) Q63B.^{9}

A1.5. "God doesn't like bad little boys an' girls." [gɔ·d 'dʌzn læik? bæ·d 'lɪtl bɔizɐn gə·rlz] (Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

Indirect^{10}

A1.6. To get them to want to go to church some parents even use God as a frightening figure, telling the children that God will not like them or do some terrible thing to them. (Corner Brook) Q67-1208.

A1.7. ....^{11}but more often in the informant's home there would be a religious threat - that God would punish you for your bad deeds. God was supposed to have recorded all bad deeds in a big book. (St. John's) Q63B.

---

^{8}The symbol T indicates a tape-recorded example.

^{9}The symbol Q denotes an example taken from a questionnaire response.

^{10}For ease of reference the examples in indirect speech are separated from those in direct speech by a dotted line.

^{11}The convention of four dots indicates the omission of one or more words. Two dots denote a pause or hesitation in a tape-recorded citation.

TIGHT BINDING

A1.8. I was always taught by my mother to never make fun of anyone crippled. This was considered to be wrong by my mother at least. She said, "These people cannot help it; this is the way they were meant to be by God."

My mother said that if we make fun of these people then God could put something on us[12] for poking fun at anyone crippled. She was deadly serious when she said it or she seemed to be. It could have been that she didn't want to do this to bring disgrace on them because in my community making fun at anyone crippled or one with speech defects is looked down on. (Seal Cove, FB) 68-13.

A1.9. If I played on Sunday or I did something I should not do, I was told that God would put me in the moon because that is how the man in the moon got there.[13] He went fishing on Sunday and God disliked it so he put him in the moon. Because I did not want to go in the moon I usually behaved on Sundays. (Port Union) Q67--1079.

A1.10. Oh, there was just this tale about, you know, seeing God on the cross, and driving the.. when you were bad you always drove..the nails in a little bit harder.... (St. Lawrence) T 356,67-31.

Children are also told that because they displease God they will not go to heaven. These threats are directly linked with those of diabolical figures and indeed have the dual implication that if children sin they will be repaid by being taken by the Devil rather than being rewarded by God.[14]

---

[12]To "put something on" a person signifies the use of supernatural power against that person in some tangible way. The same form of words is used with reference to ill-wishing and to the malevolent powers of other supernatural and mythological figures.

[13]See also the Man in the Moon (A.53).

[14]See also A5.28.

A1.11. "If you don't be a kind little boy, you will not go to Heaven, but with the Black Man where there is a great big fire and you will burn all of your life." (Embree) Q67-654.

Indirect

A1.12. They say if you don't go to church you will not be liked by God or you will not go to Heaven when you die. You will instead go to Hell and be burned in a great fire..... (Long Cove, TB) 67-11.

A2. Christ.

Occasional references are made to Christ in a threatening context, although again the threats are of the sophisticated type which suggest that Christ will suffer as a result of the child's misbehaviour.

A2.1. I remember when I was about ten years old (1952), my mother, ...told me that whenever anyone said a swear word (or cursed), Christ's wounds used to pain (the wounds he suffered on the cross). I can't remember why she told me this. I know I used to swear when I was out of her hearing range, but I'm pretty sure she didn't hear me. However, I feel pretty sure that I was told this to try and discourage swearing, in case I had started.

I remember for a while I never swore, and every time someone else did, I used to think of the pain Christ must have been having. After a while I realized that with so many people swearing, the few curses I said every now and then, would make no difference, so I forgot all about what my mother told me. (Shoal Brook) 68-1.

A3. Angels.

Although angels are not recorded specifically as threatening figures in the Newfoundland material, they are used in

one reference in a similar context to the thunder explanation quoted above.[15] This time the threatening context is more explicit as the child's misbehaviour is said to cause rain to fall:

A3.1. "When it rains, the angels are crying because you've been a bad girl." (St. John's) 68-42.

DIABOLICAL FIGURES.

A4. Black angel.

The single reference to the Black Angel, which acts as a further link with the celestial beings, gives no description of the figure but it is not unreasonable to assume that the term is one of the several euphemisms for the Devil.

A4.1. [The] Black Angel was used to make me go to sleep or to stop talking while in bed for fear of waking my younger sister. It did not have the same potency as the Devil or Bogeyman but it usually worked. (Belleoram) Q64A.

A5. The Devil ['dɪvl] / ['dɛvl].

The Devil is a popular figure in the threatening of children in Newfoundland, as elsewhere. Although he seems to be used in threats primarily because a child has acted sinfully, he is also used simply as a general threatening figure for behaviour which is not itself sinful, and for

---

[15] See pp. 87 and 176.

more specific reasons such as getting children indoors before dark, warning them away from dangerous places or inducing sleep. As he represents the powers of evil and is automatically regarded as the embodiment of it, he is likely to be used frequently in threats against all kinds of sinfulness and wrong-doing. While he is conceived as the contriver of evil, he also appears in the role of punisher of sins.

All the diabolical figures, although sometimes confused with or identified with the boogie man and other boo/bogey figures, centre around the conventional concept of the Devil as a terrifying black (or sometimes red) creature with horns, tail and cloven hoofs, carrying a "prong"[16] which he uses to catch the child and carry it off to burn in the fires of hell. This association with hell and burning is also shown in the direct threats of hell, "the (old) dark place", "the dark hole" and "the black hole",[17] and in the less explicit threats of burning which are reported from several informants, examples of which are given below.[18]

There is considerable evidence that the word "Devil", like the word "hell", was considered a "bad word" in Newfoundland and deliberately avoided in favour of one of a number of euphemisms. Such euphemisms, which are common elsewhere, are

---

[16] I.e. a pitchfork used in haymaking or, more commonly, in throwing fish from the boat into the stage.

[17] These terms, along with "pit hole" or "pity hole", also signify the grave. The Devil and other figures are sometimes said to live in a particular (dark) place or (dark) hole.

[18] See A5a, A5b and A5c.

FIGHT BINDING

indicative of the Devil's awesome power. He is threatened in his own name only rarely in comparison with the euphemistic threats of the Black Man. Less frequently still, he is threatened as the Bad Man, the Old Man, the Old Fellow, Old Nick, the Old Holly, Satan or Old Black Joe. Most of these pseudonyms have the effect of toning down his diabolical nature, either by prefixing the word "old", which is commonly used in friendly, informal modes of address such as "old man", "old uncle _____" and the like, or using a name such as Nick or Joe which again has a ring of familiarity about it and makes the figure seem less distant and more human.

A5.1. "I'll tell the Devil you were bad." (Gander) Q67-318.

A5.2. Because they were naughty: They were threatened by being told, "The Devil is watching you and he'll get you." (Curling) Q67-698.

A5.3. "The Devil is coming." (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-920.

A5.4. They'd say, "Look! You minds, now. Don't.. don't you say a bad word because the Devil is right ready to catch you!" [lɔk | jɯu mɑindz mɛu | dount | dount jɯu sɛi ə bɛd wə:rd bɪ'kɔs ðə 'dɛvl̩ ɪz rɛit 'rɛdɪ tə kɛtʃ jə] (St. Shotts) T C526,68-43, (rec. H. Halpert).

A5.5. The devil of course, was used "almost once in every two breaths"....in expressions like "the devil will chase you".... (Fox Cove) Q63B.

A5.6. "....the devil will get you." (Avondale) Q67-295.

A5.7. "If you go near that pond once more the 'Devil' will jump out and get you." (Heart's Delight) Q67-76.

A5.8. "Don't do that or the devil will get you." (St. John's) Q67-18.

A5.9. "Don't go there or the Devil will get you." (St. John's) Q67-126.

A5.10. "....the Devil will have you." (Victoria) Q63B.

A5.11. I remember my mother saying to my younger brother, who was extremely naughty as a child, "The Devil will have you yet." (Harbour Grace) Q67-1234.

A5.12. The Devil, was used as a threat to make children behave. The common expression was, "If you don't do a certain thing" (the topic of dispute at the time) "the Devil will have you!" or "The Devil will be after you!" The Devil did not exist in any particular form, just something with great power, and that power would be used to harm you in some way. (Champney's East) Q63B.

A5.13. Devil - A mother would use this expression if a boy or girl would not go to church. They say, "If you don't go to church the divil will have you." (Long Cove, TB) 67-11.

A5.14. "....the Devil was the worst person in the whole world and if you were caught by him you had to be bad, if you were good he would leave you alone. He was supposed to live under the ground in a flame of fire. Threat: "If you tell lies, the devil'll have you." (St. John's) Q67-1111.

A5.15. "If you go steal, the Devil will have you!" [ɪf, juu gou stiːl ðə ˈdɛvl wɪl hæv juu] (North River) T C417,67-31.

A5.16. ....if they curse they are told, "If you don't stop that the devil will have you." (North River) Q67-571.

A5.17. "....the devil is gonna have you if you don't stop telling lies." (Norman's Cove) Q67-663.

A5.18. "You better be good or the devil will have you." (Burin) Q67-936.

A5.19. Parents sometimes use the devil to frighten children also, by saying, "Don't go in there or the devil will have you." (Trinity, BB) Q67-103.

A5.20. "The Devil is comin' to take you." [ðə ˈdɛvl ɪz ˈkʌmɪn tə tɛɪk jə] [said in a loud and threatening voice]. (Pilley's Island) T C325,66-25.

TIGHT BINDING

A5.21. "If you don't be good the devil will take you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

A5.22. "If you go out in the dark the devil will take you." (Flower's Cove) Q67-683.

A5.23. The Devil: A black man with horns who carries a prong and breathes fire. Usage: "If you tell lies the devil will take you." (North West Brook) Q67-989.

A5.24. When children are fighting or quarrelling she [the mother] says to make them behave, "The devil is going to take you if you don't be good." (St. John's) Q67-391.

A5.25. My parents would say, "The Devil will take you away if you are a bad boy." The Devil was supposed to have lived in the center of the earth among flames. (Lewisporte) Q67-334.

A5.26. "If you say that bad word again the devil will take you down in the black hole with him." (Calvert) Q67-221.

A5.27. "Jimmy! The Devil will come and carry you away to hell if you don't be good." (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

A5.28. If parents wanted their children to go to Sunday School or church they would threaten them by saying, "You'd better go to church or else the Devil will take you when you die. You will be burned in the Devil's fire." (Little Harbour East, PB) Q67-1226.

A5.29. "The devil takes bad children and eats them up." (St. John's) Q67-881.

A5.30. Because they were naughty - "The Devil will eat you up." (St. John's) Q67-931.

A5.31. "If you swear or tell a lie the devil will stab you with his prong and throw you in the fire." (Old Shop) 66-1.

Indirect

A5.32. The children were often threatened with the Devil when they were bad. At such times they were told that the Devil would come and get them. (Wabush, Lab.) Q67-724.

A5.33. The Devil was always doing bad to everyone and if you do bad the Devil will get you. (St. John's) Q67-684.

TIGHT BINDING

A5.34. My grandmother would also tell us that the Devil would come and get you if you weren't good and take you away. But somehow you could get away from the Devil; he wasn't so scary. (Aguathuna) Q63B.

A5.35. The Devil. When I'd do something wrong I was afraid the devil would come and get me. To get me to be good, my grandmother would warn me about the devil....These threats were quite serious on my grandmother's part and I took them pretty seriously too; I felt quite scared when threatened. (St. John's) Q63B.

A5.36. When children were naughty they were usually told that....the Devil would have them if they weren't good. (Lewisporte) Q67-411.

A5.37. Well the Devil is associated with Hell, of course, with religion....An' the Devil will have you if you do something bad. Of course the Devil wouldn't have you immediately; he'd have you after you die. (North River) T C417,67-31.

A5.38. The Devil is an ugly man who takes bad people and throws them into the fire. He has a big pitchfork that he takes them on and throws them into the fire. (Blue Cove) Q67-177.

A5.39. The Devil was said to be the Father of lies and if a child told a lie he would have to live with the devil who was very ugly and mean and an awful person. (Avondale) Q67-313.

A5.40. The Devil would grab us away into a place of darkness, if we did wrong deeds such as stealing. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1163.

A5.41. The Devil: this was described to me as a hairy man with two horns on his head, a tail, and a prong in his hand. He lived in Hell and would take you there with him if you said curse words, or swore, didn't say your prayers, missed Mass or misbehaved in Church." (Curling) Q67-698.

A5.42. ....the devil was supposed to swoop down from the sky and stab bad boys and girls with his prong. (Terra Nova) Q67-466.

A5.43. One of my friends has told me that her mother used to tell her that if she wasn't good the devil would come and put his hoof through the roof of the house. (Carbonear) Q67-1093.

TIGHT BINDING

A5.44. The Devil was another thing used to frighten children. A child was often told that if you ever struck your parents then the devil would make your hand stick up out of the grave, forever.[19] (St. John's) Q67-364.

A5.45. Also the Devil's name was spoken of if a child wouldn't say his prayers at bedtime. (Clarke's Beach) Q67-814.

A5.46. The Devil was used mainly when I did something bad such as disobedience or swearing. I was really scared for a while until I forgot it. (Belleoram) Q64A.

A5.47. The Devil was also used to scare her sometimes but she wasn't as frightened of him [as of the Booman]. (St. John's) Q63B.

A5.48. The Devil was used as a last resort if everything else failed. (Corner Brook) Q67-1017.

A5.49. As a child I was threatened continually with the Devil....The Devil was to me something huge and black with a long tail and horns. Of course he carried a pitchfork just like the one Dad used to throw cod onto the wharf. In the daytime this threat didn't have much effect but if I had to go upstairs or down in the cellar alone, boy, would I shake! In the night I was really scared. Nothing was more real to me then than this "Devilman" who breathed out flame and whose eyes were burning coals. (Gambo) Q63B.

A5.50. The terrible stories surrounding the Devil were sometimes used to scare us when we were young. To keep us off the street after dark mother always told this story: A girl she once knew was walking the road one night alone when she met a strange man. He stopped and asked her for directions to a certain road. He turned to go and as he did so she looked down and saw the cloven hoof of the Devil. There were many stories such as this one involving the Devil. They were quite frightening to me as a child, and I tried to be near as possible to home if it were dark.[20] (Bell Island) Q63B.

---

[19]The motif of the hand sticking out from the grave is also common in dites and legends recorded in the Province.

[20]Legends about the Devil, like many other stories, are used to great effect as cautionary tales which reinforce the threats. A study of such tales would involve a large scale enquiry and only occasional brief examples are listed among these citations.

TIGHT BINDING

A5.51. The Devil was in a corner grinning when I did anything wrong or bad, especially in the dark. You didn't look in the corner just in case you might see him. He would be grinning horribly, with his pitchfork, and fire spouting from his pointed ears. This picture of the Devil I may have acquired from the pictures of Dante's "Inferno", one of the books in the house that I used to read most often. The Devil was not so effective in the daylight but became very vivid in the dark. The thoughts of the Devil waiting to get me usually had a deterrent effect.[21] (St. John's) Q63B.

A5.52. One afternoon after school we were caught stealing damsons from a nearby tree. The two fellows who caught us said that the Devil was waiting for us at the Cave. And I was the only one that had to pass the Cave that afternoon. He was sitting outside with his prong. What a trying task it was to get home! I can vividly remember the crying and yelling I did and how I ran past that awful Cave, waiting every moment for the prong to get me. Such threats as these were always more than serious.[22] (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

A5.53 When I was a child there were many stories circulated of people meeting the devil in the shape of a man, or sometimes in the shape of a black dog. So realistic were the pictures of such incidents presented that meeting a man or a black dog after dark was a chilling experience. To keep children off the street after dark we were reminded of some of these stories. It was very seldom that any child or many adults would be seen on those lonely country roads after dark. (St. Vincent's) Q63B.

---

[21] Examples of this kind afford some insight into the way in which children conceive the figures used to threaten them. Illustrations in books are a not uncommon source of threatening figures and such pictures or drawings are of course deliberately used in books of cautionary stories such as Struwwelpeter.

[22] The child's imagination, perhaps especially when he feels guilty of some misdemeanour, may be so vivid that he actually feels the figure is there, waiting to exact retribution. Examples of this kind enable us to glimpse a little of the child's own view of the figures and of the threatening process itself.

A5a. Hell [hɛl].

A5a.1. "....if you do that any more you'll go to Hell when you die and live in a hole full of fire." (St. John's) Q65B.

A5a.2. "If you don't do what I tell you, well that's it! You'll go to hell for sure!" [if jo dount? duu wɑt ai tɛl juu | wɛl ðæts it? || jul gou tu hɛl fə ʃɔər] (North River) T C417,67-31.

A5a.3. The picture I had of the Devil when I was a kid at Richard's Harbour was a big black man with a three pronged pitchfork. This was what he used to throw people into the fire when they went to hell.

I can't remember if I was told this by my parents or any other adult. I do remember people saying (particularly my age group) that if you're bad when you die you will go to Hell and the Devil will stick his pitchfork into you and throw you into the fire. (Richard's Harbour) 68-42.

A5a.4. If you aren't good, when you die you will go to hell, the devil's domain. (St. John's) Q67-378.

A5a.5. Saying: 'A liar's portion is to dwell
Within the very depths of hell.
If we ever told a lie my mother would say this to us. She would also say - "The liar needs a good memory" - because you've got to tell nine lies to get out of one! Both would be said as a warning to us not to tell lies. I always thought you'd be right down there in that fire and if you tried to get out the Devil would be there with his pitchfork and push you back in again. (St. John's) 67-22.

Indirect

A5a.6. Her behaviour, she believes, was more often governed (to some degree) by lessons taught by her grandmother and/or Sunday School teachers that if she was a "bad girl" she would eventually burn in hell, the hot abode of the devil - with his horns and sharp prong - and all dead sinners. (St. John's) Q67-1000.

5b. The (Old) Dark Place [ði oul daərk? plɛis].

A5b.1. ....oh, you go to church, your mother'd.. mother'd always talk about..tell us about, "If you're not good you'll..you'll go to the Ole Dark Place!" [if juər nat? gɔd juəl | juəl gou tɔ ði oul daərk? plɛis] "Hell" is a..was another word that wasn't.. widely used, and the..and the..Black Man lived..lived in..in the Dark Place.'..my parents would say, "....you mustn't say 'Hell', but it..it's the Dark Place where bad people go after they die." (Brunette Island) T C353-67-31.

A5c. The dark hole.

A5c.1. "You'll be put in the dark hole if you're a bad boy!" This threat could thwart the instincts of the devil's most promising imp himself! The devil lives in the dark hole.. (Greenspond) Q67-765.

A6. Satan.

There are only two references to Satan as a threatening figure. One of these is in a list of figures used to get children to behave or to go to sleep. The second reference, however, draws together several of the different names for the Devil, and also comments on the euphemistic usages:

A6.1. Well generally here it was Satan. Old Nick....yes,....oh in a good many places. But....I always used the..the Devil or nothing! You know, mostly women would like to be politer or something like this. They will say..well, "Satan" or..talkin' to the children, well, if they says a bad word, well, "The Black Man'll have you if

TIGHT BINDING

you says that any more! Don't say that any more, 'cause the Black Man'll have you!

"Who's the Black Man, Mummy?"
"Oh, it's Satan! That's the Bad Man," and so on. (St. Joseph's, PB) T C17,64-7.

A7. Black Man ['blæk mæn] / ['blæk? mæn].

A7.1. When I was found out in a fib, or fought with my brother, Grandma would say: "The Black man has his mark on you." No physical harm was ever implied. The picture in my mind was one of the Devil. But I always supposed him to be red. I understood her to mean the Devil; however this was most effective until I reached the age of ten. It would still come into my mind, at night, until I reached age thirteen, at which time I ceased to believe in a corporal [sic, corporeal] Devil. However, the stories she made up about the Black man are my most vivid memory of her. She died when I was fifteen. The Black man would not strike me, but he was always looking and watching. If he was made to think that I was his friend he would come up behind me some dark night, for a talk. (Port de Grave) 67-12.

A7.2. "....big black man out tonight; be careful."[23] (Middle Brook) Q67-427.

A7.3. "....don't go in that old house because that's where the Black Man lives." (Glovertown) Q67-1137.

A7.4. "There's a big black man in there" - used when children want to see what's in closets etc. (Twillingate) Q67-1275.

A7.5. ....to keep a child from going out in the night or going into a certain room, "The Blackman is in there." (Dover) Q67-776.

---

[23]The reference here and also in A7.4, may perhaps be to a real person, and indeed in several reports children thought that a particular negro they saw was the Black Man. See also A7.13.

TIGHT BINDING

A7.6. "[The] Black Man'll be after you!" [blæk? mæn ɭ bɪ 'æftə jə] ....That come from Church of England people. They thought 'twas harm to say "Devil". (Beaumont South) T C300,66-25.

A7.7. The term "'The Black Man' is coming" was usually when a child wanted to play games or do some other activity on Sunday. (Dunville) Q67-143.

A7.8. "Johnny, if you aren't in bed before ten o'clock the Black-man will sleep with you." (Heart's Delight) Q67-76.

A7.9. "The Black Man will catch you." (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

A7.10. Parents and adults get children to behave by telling them such things as, "If you're not good the black man will come and get you...." (Hillgrade) Q67-1056.

A7.11. "Children, come in before it gets dark. If you don't the Black man will come and get you." (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

A7.12. When my girlfriend was bad during her childhood her mother would shake her finger at her and say, "Stop that or the black man will come and get you!" This would always frighten her and then she would be good. (Ship Cove, GNP:W) 66-7.

A7.13. When I was a small boy, about four years old, my parents used to threaten me if I was naughty by saying, "The black man is coming to get you." Well one day when I was playing out in the street I saw a negro passing by so I walked straight to him and told him if he ever came to my house he would get his head knocked off. Then I ran away so he would not get me. (St. John's) Q67-251.

A7.14. "The Ole Black Man is going to get 'e [i.e. thee]." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A7.15. ....I remember when I was young....always having a problem of getting my feet wet, because I used to have short rubbers an'. I..an' I used to always get my feet wet. An' I can remember my mother always saying to me, "If you go down an' get your feet wet today, the ole Black Man's goin' to get you!" [ɪf juu gou dæun ən gɛt jər fiːt wɛt? tu'dɛi | ðɪ oul blæk? mænz 'gouɪn ə gɛt? juu] (Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

A7.16. To prevent children from going to dangerous places the term "the Black Man" is used. This is impressed upon the child with much emphasis and seriousness. In the majority of cases the child is afraid of the Black Man. I have seen children scream the minute someone said, "The Black Man'll get ya." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

A7.17. If a child was out in the dark the parents would say, "The Black Man will get you!" (Bloomfield) Q67-37.

A7.18. ....if naughty - "The black man will get you for sure." (St. John's) Q67-340.

A7.19. "If you don't come in before dark the black man will get you." (Burin) Q67-326.

A7.20. When the child's behaviour is more serious, he may be threatened with the Olé Black Man. This actually frightened the child, and often after the threats were made the child would begin to cry. There are many forms of threats used, but they all convey the same meaning...."You'd better watch out or the Ole Black Man'll get 'e [i.e. thee]." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A7.21. ....a parent might say, "Come in before dark or the Black Man will come and get you and haul you over the trees." (Whitbourne) Q67-446.

A7.22. ....if a child told a lie or used bad language, the mother would say, "The....Black Man is going to have you." (Elliston) Q67-537.

A7.23. Well the usual one, an' the one that was quite common in Greenspond was the Black Man. "The Black Man will have you!" [ðə blæk mæn wɪl hæv juu] (Greenspond) T C362,67-31.

A7.24. "The Old Black Man will have you." Children were told this to get them in before dark and when they were heard cursing. (Musgrave Harbour) Q67-504.

A7.25. The threat I have heard used most commonly was the Blackman. When I cried or wouldn't go to bed on time my mother would say, "If you're bad the blackman will have you." He hasn't got me yet! I used to believe her first but I was so bad and still no blackman - I knew he had to be make belief. (Carmanville) Q67-218.

A7.26. The Black Man, of course, was used to threaten kids who were naughty and children were often told, "If you do that again the Black Man will have you." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-606.

A7.27. "If you go there the black man will have you." (Burin) Q67-326.

A7.28. ....I am more familiar with the Black Man, used both playfully and seriously to frighten children. I have often heard it in connection with telling lies, for example, "If you tell a lie the Black Man will have you." Smaller children would be frightened by this. The older children knew they had to tell the truth but they also know that no Black Man was coming to take them away if they did not.[24] (Twillingate) Q67-1284.

A7.29. "The Black Man'll have you if you do such a thing [i.e. a certain thing] on Sunday." [də blæk? mæn l ?æv jə ɪf þ duu sʌtʃ ə ðɪŋ ɑn 'sʌndɪ.] (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-31.

A7.30. The Black Man: Another name for the devil. Usually thought of as a black giant who carried a large prong that he used to throw bad people in his fire. Parents often used a threat regarding him to keep children out of mischief or to keep them from going to places where they shouldn't go. E.g., a parent would say, "The Black Man will have you if you don't stop that...." (Dover) Q67-776.

A7.31. ....mother would say, "The black man will have you if you tell a lie." (Flatrock, Carbonear) Q64A.

A7.32. To stop children from being naughty a parent might say, "Be good or else the Black Man will have you." (Bloomfield) Q67-716.

---

[24] This important comment that the children do not believe in the figure reinforces the idea that through the verbal controls children are made aware of the wishes of parents and adults, even though they may soon realise that the figures used have no existence.

A7.33. "Better get back from cutting the boughs before dark or the Black Man....will have you!" ['bɛtər gɛt bæk frʌm 'kʌtɪŋ ðə bæuz bɪ'foər dæərk sər ðəə blæk mæn wɨl hæv juu] (Greenspond) T C362,67-31.

A7.34. "If you say naughty things like that, the Black Man will take you." (Embree) Q67-654.

A7.35. "The Black Man will take you if you are naughty" - mostly jokingly. (St. Lawrence) Q67-484.

A7.36. ....my grandmother...often told my brother and I that if we swore the Black Man would come and get us with his prong. And if we only laughed she'd add this little story: "Oh you needn't laugh then, because he did carry off a little boy not too long ago because he was swearing and he'll take you too if you go swearing."
This would certainly wipe the grin off our faces. I can remember fearing the Black Man until my early teens, in 1951. (Sop's Arm) 68-10.

A7.37. "....don't be bad because the Black man will take you...." (Rodgers Cove) Q67-712.

A7.38. "The Old Black Man is goin' to car[ry] 'e [i.e. thee] off one of those nights." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A7.39. "....if you're not good the black man will come and....put you in his bag." (Hillgrade) Q67-1056.

A7.40. "You be good - or the blackman will burn you."
I remember this used by my mother when I was a youngster. The first three words were said in a high tone and relatively fast, with each word after being lower and more drawn out.
I was never told where he would take me to burn me but I associated him with the devil and hell. I used to imagine him taking me to the edge of "the fiery furnace" and throwing me in. (Francois) 68-3.

A7.41. If a child said a bad word, mother would say, "Don't say that any more Johnny; if you do the Blackman will come down when you're in bed and stick his prong in you." (Little Harbour East, PB) Q67-1226.

TIGHT BINDING

Indirect .....

A7.42. Blackman. This name was used for the Devil. He was especially bad and could harm you. The word "blackman" was also permitted to be used by children before they were considered old enough to say proper swear words. (Ireland's Eye) Q63B.

A7.43. Blackman. This was a mysterious figure who was supposed to bring harm to children. (Exploits) Q63B.

A7.44. Blackman: A man with a prong. Used to frighten me when I was bad or said bad words. (Bridgeporte) Q63B.

A7.45. One figure most commonly used was the "Black Man". In my earlier life at Elliston everyone was afraid of the Black Man. He proved to be another name for the devil. He was pictured as one with a pitchfork and large distorted teeth. (Elliston) Q67-879.

A7.46. The saying most people use as a way to get children [to] behave is "the black man". This scares the children and they wouldn't dare do the thing they were going to do. (Dover) Q67-903.

A7.47. The only one I....remember was the Black Man (who I understood to be the Devil). He would listen to all that was going on and the worse [sic, worst] thing that you could do was to please him. He was very pleased if you were bad. (Marystown) Q67-675.

A7.48. The Black Man was....a creature with horns, and a hay fork. It was used to frighten me when I was disbehaving [sic, misbehaving]. (Carmanville) Q63B.

A7.49. The Blackman is usually threatened on children when they misbehave or disobey. The Blackman always seemed to be another name for the Devil. (Doting Cove) Q67-1.

A7.50. They were threatened with the Blackman if they did anything naughty like telling lies, swearing or disobeying their parents. (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

A7.51. The term "Black Man" is used to get children in the house at a certain hour; sometimes it is before dark. As a child I can now say that there were times when I was "scared to death". I would run home at night, too frightened to breathe. There were times when

TIGHT BINDING

I would be too scared to look behind me. And I must admit that there is still a little fear of that Black Man chasing behind me. The darn thing was painted so vividly that it is difficult to imagine it was a fake. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

A7.52. The black man was sometimes used to scare children from going near dangerous places. (Western Bay) Q67-605.

A7.53. Often warnings of the Big Black-man got you into the house before dark or kept you from going to places considered dangerous. (St. Lawrence) Q67-353.

A7.54. The Black Man was threatened on a child when the truth was wanted. (Port Anson) Q67-402.

A7.55. There was also the Black Man who saw to it that you were washed and as neat as a pin. (Little Catalina) Q67-1156.

A7.56. "The Black Man" is usually used as a threat if the child doesn't want to say his prayers or says a bad word. (Appleton) Q67-1082.

A7.57. Children were told not to go into dark cupboards, under the stairs or other such place by the threat that the "Black Man" lived in there. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1312.

A7.58. In my community children are threatened with the Black Man. He is supposed to be an old man who lives behind the community in a cave and who burns alive little children. When children are naughty or have done something wrong, parents say that they are going to give the children to the Black Man. When threatened with the Black Man a child never does something wrong the second time. (Victoria) Q67-633.

A7.59. How many times did my poor mother tell me that a "big black man" would chase me if I was bad. Many's the night I used to go to bed biverin' [i.e. shivering] for fear I'd see him. I can still picture him, big, black as soot, and savage. I don't suppose I'll ever be so frightened any more in my life as I was one night about seventy years ago. I was bad all day, so she went out and locked me in for punishment. It was just about duckish [i.e. dusk]. I got on the sofa and turned my head to the wall and bivered and sniffled for an

TIGHT BINDING

hour. By and by she come back and I was nearly half dead. I could have swored that black thing was breathin' down me neck all while she was gone. (Catalina) Q63B.

A7.60. The one I heard most was the Black Man. This frightened small children, especially in the dark, when they weren't behaving very well. When their mother would say the Black Man was coming not a sound would be heard. (Clarke's Beach) Q67-796.

A7.61. We were often warned that the "Black Man" was coming after us. He was going to put us in his big bag and carry us away. I don't know where. We were threatened with this in order to make us behave and to get us to sleep at night. (Rock Harbour) Q67-1309.

A7.62. Tell un the Black Man was goin' to have 'em ....goin' after un if he didn't do such a thing, you know....Well, I suppose he was.... the Wicked One then, whatever that is! (Beaumont North) T C302,66-25.

A7.63. ....when he was about ten years old or so, his parents used to tell him to be good or the Black Man would come and get him. The Black Man, he said, carried a prong, and if he came he would drive this in you. (Bonavista) 68-26.

A7.64. In my hometown the adults usually talk about the black man. They tell the children that if they are bad the black man will come and stick a prong in them and throw them in a big fire and burn them up. (St. Lunaire) Q67-132.

A7.65. ....you see my father an' mother were both very deeply religious, and such things as card-playing, smoking, this..you know, the idea was to threaten the Black Man on you in cases like this. You..if you ever..if you ever go playing cards..the Black Man would.. would soon get you in his grasp, an' he'd have you doing everything bad. (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

A7.66. One of the most common threats used to make children behave properly is that of telling them that the Blackman will get them. About age seven I was told that the Blackman was a great big man with a very sharp prong and that if I disobeyed my parents, stole, or told lies, he would come and get me with his prong and carry

TIGHT BINDING

me off and throw me into the big fire. I did not realise him as the devil at this stage, but I can recall that by the frightening tone of voice in which his name (Blackman) was said I knew that he was more than just an ordinary human being.

I recall that around ten years of age I did think of him as being the true devil. Where he lived caused me much wonder. Even though he was often said to be down in the cellar, or up in the attic, or out into the dark woods, I often wondered why I never ever caught a glimpse of him or saw even his footprints.

I must say, however, that it had a big influence on my behaviour, in that if I told a lie I would confess it to my parents for fear the Blackman might really get me. (Sop's Arm) 68-10.

A7.67. In Bay Roberts children were constantly being threatened that the Black Man would get them and that if they said bad things, they would go down in the Pit Hole where the devil lived. (Bay Roberts) Q67-1295.

A7.68. If they said any[thing] bad or [did] not go to church the Black Man would get them. (Grand Falls) Q67-339.

A7.69. ....my mother would tell me that the Black man would get me if I did not obey. (Lewisporte) Q67-415.

A7.70. ....if my mother wanted to get me home before dark or to keep me from going to dangerous places she would tell me the Black-man would get me. (St. John's) Q67-714.

A7.71. A threat not to pick flowers in the garden on Sunday or the Black Man will put his hand up through the ground and get you. (St. John's) Q67-1077.

A7.72. He said the Black Man'll have me. (Beaumont South) T C300,66-25.

A7.73. ....the Blackman will have them if they don't be good. (St. Anthony) Q67-206.

A7.74. "The Black Man" - this was supposed to be a person who lurked about the roads at night. He was understood to be a large man dressed in black and would take children. Parents would advise their children to be in their houses before dark or the Black Man would

TIGHT BINDING

have them. This would scare them and [they] would not attempt to enter [sic, venture?] outdoors at night alone. (Sandy Cove, BB) Q67-758.

A7.75. ....probably the Black Man was associated with dark, because 'twas usually said in the evening to come home around six o'clock in the fall or the Black Man will have you. (Greenspond) T C362,67-31.

A7.76. Blackman: A man dressed in black with a black face, black eyes and fire coming from them. He came around in the dark with a bag to take people. Used if I misbehaved. (Twillingate) Q63B.

A7.77. To get them in before dark they were usually told that the Black Man would take them away. (Lewisporte) Q67-511.

A7.78. Often when children were naughty they would be told by their parents that the Black Man was going to take them. This Black Man was believed to live in no particular place but at night he would come into the community. (Sandy Cove, BB) Q67-758.

A7.79. The Black Man is usually thought of as an ugly man who does no good things. There is nothing good about him. Children are afraid of him because he is so ugly. If they are bad they will usually be quiet if they are told he will come and take them. (Blue Cove) Q67-177.

A7.80. Children are sometimes told by their parents that if they are not good and don't behave themselves....the black man will come and take them with him. (Bay Roberts) Q67-1131.

A7.81. ....the Blackman would take them if they disobeyed. (Bell Island) Q67-1143.

A7.82. Mother's mother used to live with us when I was about eight years old. I remember that she used to tell us children that the Black Man would take us if we weren't good. Mother used to tell her not to frighten us by saying that. The Black Man was supposed to carry a prong. (Harbour Buffett) 68-26.

A7.83. The Black-man was supposed to take me away, if I was bad, or did something naughty. (Grand Falls) Q67-116.

TIGHT BINDING

A7.84. To get them in before dark they were told that the Black Man....would take them if they stayed out any longer. (Newmans Cove) Q67-31.

A7.85. The Black Man would take you if you told lies.... (Foxtrap) Q67-929.

A7.86. Then there was the Black Man who was suppose[d] to be as black as tar and carried you away if you weren't good. (St. John's) Q67-126.

A7.87. I have heard parents threaten children by telling them that the Old Black Man would carry them off, if they didn't be good. Sometimes the child would want a dime and the parents wouldn't give the child a dime. The child would get fuzzy [sic, fussy] and cry. The parent would tell him to be good or the Old Black Man would carry him off. (Garnish) Q67-199.

A7.88. Black man who would carry anyone away who went out after dark. (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

A7.89. The Black Man was thought of as the devil, and he would carry you away if you didn't want to go to bed and if you didn't want to say your prayers before you go to sleep. (Glovertown) Q67-374.

A7.90. Very often my grandfather told me [at] Christmas that he was kept off the pond in the spring of the year by the threat of the blackman in the pond. He was told, he said, that if he went near to the pond, the blackman would come up through the ice, stick his fork into you, and carry you below and drown you. This was very effective he said. This is still going on today. The children are very scared of the blackman who they figure wears wings, carries a fork, and is very ugly.

Boys from ages six to thirteen are subject to this type of treatment. In some cases, these children won't go on the pond when the ice is good, they have been scared so much. (Seal Cove, FB) 68-13.

A7.91. The Black Man would be clothed in all black. A hood would cover in his whole face leaving two holes for his eyes. His skin would also be black, almost as black as his manner when or if you were to try and reason with him or give him excuses.... The Black Man would beat you up if you didn't stop fighting with your brother. (St. John's) Q67-1273.

A7.92. They would also tell them that the Black Man, who represented the devil, would find them and throw them in the fire. (Curling) Q67-526.

A7.93. I can remember when I was about six years old being afraid to go down to the brook that ran near our house because the Black Man lived there. (Corner Brook) Q67-517.

A7.94. Well, I gived up trying to teach anybody anything a long time ago, but I did raise nine children, and I spose I know somethin' about it. No, I don't see much wrong in threatenin' a youngster with the Devil or the big Black Man. At least it's one way of makin' them mind their manners. Yes, I'd do it again. (Catalina) Q63B.

A8. Black Fellow.

A8.1. When children are naughty they [i.e. parents] say, "The black fellow will get you. He sees everything you are doing. He likes for you to be naughty". (Green Island Brook) Q67-564.

A9. Black Johnny.

This name appears in a list of "figures from the dark", including the Bad Man and the Devil, from Port aux Basques, and probably refers to the Devil. Q67-999.

A10. Old Black Joe.

This euphemism is found in a children's rhyme, with no contextual detail:

A10.1. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven,
All good children go to heaven,
All bad children stay below
To keep in company with Old Black Joe.
(Green's Harbour) Q64A.

A11. Wicked Man.

A11.1. I have heard my grandmother....say things about the "wicked man"[25] if you're out after dark. (St. John's) Q67-1033.

A12. Bad Man.

A12.1. "If you don't be good the bad-man will be after you." (South River) Q67-1197.

A12.2. "The bad-man will get you if you're not good." (Coley's Point) Q67-806.

A12.3. The bad man and the black man: These words were used in reference to the devil and were meant to help children behave properly. The common expression was, "If you don't be good the bad man will carry you away." (Ireland's Eye) Q63B.

A12.4. In Foxtrap, Conception Bay, the favourite representation is the "Bad man and his Black Sack". Therefore when boys and girls misbehave their parents have frequently been heard to say to their children, "Be good or the bad man will take you away in his big black sack." (Foxtrap) Q67-779.

Indirect

A12.5. The children are led to believe that the "Bad Man" is around all the time, just waiting for anyone who misbehaves. (Foxtrap) Q67-779.

A12.6. Two children carrying on [in] the home, the mother will tell them to be good or the bad man will come and take them. (South River) Q67-1197.

---

[25] This could also refer to a human being, but seems most likely to be another euphemism for the Devil, similar to the Bad Man.

TIGHT BINDING

A13. Bad Joe.

This name appears in a list of threatening figures from St. John's, and although no further details are given it is probably a euphemism for the Devil, like Old Black Joe in A10 above. The list also includes: Bogey man, Boo man, Bad man, Bad Joe, Devil. Q67-1218.

A14. Old Fellow.

A14.1. When I was young, about four or five years old, one way my mother used to frighten me from doing something she did not want me to do was by saying that the Old Fellow would come after me. If I wanted to go out of doors after it was dark, she would say to me, "You better not go out there. The Old Fellow will come after you if you do." She said this in a slow tone and it seemed to carry a lot of weight behind it, because it took a great effect to me at the time, and I would never dare go out of the house after this was said to me. From this saying I associated a lot. First of all I associated the old man with the devil. He appeared in my mind as a great big old man with a very evil face, black whiskers, his hands shaped like claws ready to grab me and then a big bag to put me in where he had already other boys and girls who had not obeyed their parents. I imagined that the devil would then take us in and we would burn forever and there was no way of getting out: we would see other people but they would not be able to come to our rescue. Mother used to say, "If he come [sic] and get you then we will not be able to get you away from him." I think that is the reason why I imagined that no-one would be able to help me. I was never told where he would take me but I imagined that it was up on bonfire hill where we lit the bonfire every year. I imagined that he lived in a cave up under the cliff on the western side of Grole. (Grole) 68-7.

A14.2. "Get to bed or the Old Feller will have ye." This was the fear of the devil which my mother put in me if I was not in bed when my bedtime came. The "Old Feller" was a large black figure in my own imagination and I must admit that this same figure appears sometimes in my mind today. She would say it with such emphasis that I expected to see the "Old Feller" on my way upstairs. (Moreton's Harbour) 67-16.

A14.3. When I was very young (between the approximate ages of five to eleven years) my mother used to threaten me with the "Old Feller" (sometimes she called him the "Black Man" or "Devil"). She would say something like: "Now you get home before ten o'clock or the Old Feller'll have you for sure.". She was not smiling when she said this. I would conjure up all sorts of ideas in my mind about some old, evil, half-human thing that would carry me off into the woods. (Port Union) 68-15.

Indirect

A14.4. When children are naughty the one used is Old Feller. This is said in a serious manner but a parent may smile afterwards. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

A14.5. The Old Fellow was sometimes used to impress good behaviour on children. (Spencers Cove) Q63B.

A15. Old Boy.

A15.1. "You're some bad, my son; if you are not careful the 'Old Boy' will get you." (Elliston) 69-43.

A15.2. "If you stay out after dark the 'Ole Boy' will get you." (Elliston) 69-43.

A15.3. "Be home before dark or the old boy will get you." (Random Island) Q67-1104.

Indirect

A15.4. The Ole Boy. This has been used in the Trinity and Bonavista Bay areas as a threatening figure to keep pre-teen kids out of mischief. (Elliston) 69-43.

A15.5. My father says that he was threatened with the figure the Ol' Boy which was actually the devil. (St. John's) Q67-648.

A16. Old Nick(y).[26]

A16.1. ....the old woman next door would say, and I suppose still does, "Old Nick'll get ya." (St. John's) Q67-859.

A16.2. "You're playing with Old Nicky." A contrary child who will not play with other children is told, "You're playing with Old Nicky." (Old Shop) 66-1.

Indirect

A16.3. Old Nick (Devil) was used to frighten them. (Trinity, TB) Q63B.

A17. Old Scratch.

A17.1. "You be quiet - or Old Scratch will get you." This was often used as a threat against me when I was a youngster. I was approximately eight when it was used. The threat was used usually by my parents. Since that I can remember often hearing it used by various people to threaten their children. It seems to be mostly used when the children are making a noise in the house. The first three words are usually said in a fast tone with each successive word being more drawn out and spoken in a lower tone than the one before it.

No-one ever described what "Old Scratch" looked like to me. However, I always associated him with the devil and somehow when they spoke of "Old Scratch" I always got the impression he was of considerable size with large claw-like hands.

I cannot remember hearing where he was supposed to carry us or what he was supposed to do with us. The mere mention of him and

---

[26] See also A120.36, where Santa Claus is identified with Old Nick.

TIGHT BINDING

image of him was enough to keep us quiet. I also always had the impression he was hiding somewhere in the dark, always ready to pounce on me if I didn't listen. (Francois) 68-3.

A18. Cloven Hoof.

A18.1. Another frightening figure was a "Cloven Hoof". It was never used to frighten me, but many elderly people of the community said it was used to frighten them when they were younger. It is supposed to represent the devil in some way or other. (Heart's Delight) Q67-1133.

A19. Hockshaw Man ['hɒkʃɑ: mæn].[27]

There are only four reports of this figure, two of them being from the same informant who identifies him with the Devil.

A19.1. Well..he resembled the Devil, I suppose. I know I saw a picture in a magazine one time of whatever the Church, I guess, agrees is the..looks like the Devil, whoever he is! Anyway I was told this fellow was the Hockshaw Man, only he's a little bit different. He lived in the woods in a cave or something and near his cave he had a big..there was a big clifft [i.e. cliff], and he only came out at night, and if he caught you around the woods late in the evening, he'd take you and then throw you over this clifft. So he was quite frightening, this fellow! He had horns out of his head and a big tail and a spear.... This Hockshaw Man was just to keep you in, say,

[27]This term is not listed in OED or EDD and I have been unable to find any reference to it in dialect glossaries and other works of reference. The spelling adopted here is that of the Archive reports, and, like the figure itself, is not at all clear or definitive. The pronunciation ['hɒkʃɑ:] allows for other interpretations and spellings such as huckshaw, or even perhaps hawkshaw. This latter word means "detective" in American slang and as a verb has the meaning "to play the detective", "spy on others" etc. See L.V. Berrey and M. van den Bark, eds., The American Thesaurus of Slang (New York, 1943), nos. 137.11, 460.18 and 482.3.

TIGHT BINDING

in the evenings [and] so on like that, but not everybody had the Hockshaw Man. There was only..only a..you know, depending on how easily you were frightened. If you were not frightened very easily, well it was necessary to have a more horrible fellow! (St. Mary's) T C12,64-6.

A19.2. I heard it from my mother. It started when I saw a picture in a magazine - I believe it was a "Irish Christian Messenger" or something like that; it had a picture of what the Church ..how the church saw the Devil: what sort of a person he was. It was a picture of a very muscular-looking man with horns and fiery-looking eyes! And I asked my mother what it was, and she told me that he was a Hockshaw Man. And when I questioned her a little further she told me what..you know, what a weird character he was. He..he lived apparently in the woods in a cave, an' there was a clifft nearby, and at evenings he would come out around a place called "The Big Meadow" at home; this is where we often played in the evenings, and I was told that if I did not come home to my supper when I was called he would be thereabouts, with a bag, and would take the children in this bag into the woods and toss them over the clifft. (St. Mary's) T C12,64-6.

A19.3. Years ago the Hockshaw man was used as a frightening figure. (Campbellton) Q67-531.

GHOSTS AND SPIRITS.

Although there are many reports of ghosts and spirits as frightening figures they are only occasionally used in threats. In contrast with the diabolical figures, they are rarely described in detail. They are usually spoken of collectively in the plural, but certain specific named ghosts, both individuals and types, are also used in some places. Ghosts and spirits usually have a specific location which typically include lonely places,

woods,[28] bridges, narrow tree-lined paths, graveyards, ponds, salt water, and areas where murders or suicides have been committed, strange noises have been heard or ghostly lights seen.[29] Sometimes the manifestations are in animal form, and even a ghost ship is used in a threat. It is frequently stated by informants that since the advent of electricity - and also the enlightenment which has resulted from higher standards of education, and the influence of the mass media - "they old ghostes" [dɛi oul 'goustəs], as they are often called, are gone, or are dwindling rapidly.

A20. Ghosts.

A20.1. "....watch out! Ghost up there!" (Middle Brook) Q67-427.

A20.2. "Don't go into that house - there are ghosts there." (St. John's) Q67-620.

A20.3. "The ghostes are going to get you." (St. John's) 67-22.

A20.4. People said, "The ghost'll get you" or "The ghosts are coming" to get people in after dark. (Corner Brook) Q67-1017.

A20.5. Often when children were bad they were told ...."The ghosts'll have ya." (St. John's) Q67-1063.

A20.6. "Don't go near the water or the ghosts might drag you in." (St. John's) Q67-144.

[28] Like the fairies, ghosts are sometimes said to lead people astray in the woods.

[29] These locations are often themselves intrinsically frightening or at least arouse apprehension. See pp. 123-125.

TIGHT BINDING

A20.7. My mother had a very effective way of keeping my brother and me away from a well that was in the far end of our field. Whenever we were playing in the field we were always warned, "Don't go near that well because there's a ghost down at the bottom of it and any little boys that go near it will be pulled in." I say it was effective because I remember neither of us would dare go near that well and so there was no danger of us falling in and getting drowned. (Gillams) 68-17.

Indirect

A20.8. Ghosts from the graveyard would come after you if you went out after dark. (St. John's) Q64A.

A20.9. At Upper Island Cove there is an old house in which a man hung himself about twenty years ago. Now the parents tell their children not to go around the house after dark - afraid the ghost will chase them. (Upper Island Cove) Q67-1197.

A.20.10. Another....way to frighten children is to tell them a ghost....will get them. (Port au Port) Q67-123.

A.20.11. ....ghosts who could swoop down on you and get you just about anywhere where it was dark, and from whom there was little chance to escape when once caught. (St. John's) Q63B.

A21. Spirits.

A21.1. She often heard the expression "The spirits will take you." No bogey man, but spirits was used in the same way as bogey man. It was used to frighten the kids and encourage them to come in before dark and also to behave themselves. (Victoria) Q63B.

Indirect

A21.2. The spirits were supposed to be people who came back from the dead and who often appeared to people in lonely places at night. Parents often told this to children to keep them home at night. Some of the older people believed in such figures but most of the younger people did not. (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

TIGHT BINDING

A21.3. She was told not to go out after dark because the spirits were roaming about. It seems these were the evil spirits of the dead. Strangely enough, though she lived near a cemetery, neither she nor her brothers and sister were at all afraid of it. (St. John's) Q67-642.

A21.4. The dark was supposed to be inhabited by evil spirits. (Bonavista) Q63B.

A21.5. Children were induced to sleep as they were told the spirits were watching them. (Oderin) Q67-84.

A22. Headless man/woman.

A22.1. In regard to frightening figures, we have one called the "Headless Man".... It's supposed to be around to take the child when he does the "do not" his parent has told him. (Red Bay, Lab.) Q67-808.

A22.2. There was supposed to be a headless man ("a man with n'ar 'ead") in Elliston. He was associated with a place called Crawler's Hill. Somebody was said to have seen this person and ever after it was used as a threat to get the children in before dark. (Elliston) Q67-1305.

A22.3. The children were often told about ghosts to get them in before dark. They were told that a headless woman used to go along by a flake[30] when it was dark. (St. Lunaire) Q67-132.

A22.4. ....to prevent a child from going near the sea-coast or the dangerous cliffs, the parent would discourage him by saying that the headless man lurked there. (Green's Harbour) Q67-1123.

A23. Named and specified ghosts.

A23.1. Also a frightening figure was "Old (N)".[31] The place where they said he lived was down on

---

[30] Raised platform of wooden poles on which fish is spread to dry.

[31] Personal names are normally omitted from the citations and the symbol (N) substituted to indicate the omission.

the bar. This is a place in the arm at Dunfield where the water is shallow and boats have to be driven carefully over it. Sticking out in the arm is a neck of wooded land with some grassy meadows. They call it "(N)'s Neck". A rhyme about "Old (N)" is:

"Old (N) cutting his hay
And carrying it up to Spaniard's Bay."

People used to say, "'Old (N)' will be after you for saying that." (Dunfield) Q67-190.

A23.2. My grandmother used to say, "'Such a one' [i.e. some named person] will haunt you." (St. John's) Q67-859.

A23.3. In Petty Harbour children were told, "Keep away from the stage, or the coopers will get you." All children were afraid of the coopers although they had no idea what they were. They were apparitions left over from times when coopers were fixing barrels in the stages. (Petty Harbour) Q67-1295.

A23.4. "If you stay [i.e. 'stay out?] after dark Mary (N) will have you." (Creston South) Q67-1118.

Indirect

A23.5. Pirates would be lurking about the island after dark. The children were only too happy to stay in at night![32] (Oderin) Q67-84.

A23.6. Around cliffs or caves where it was dangerous for children to play they were told that it was haunted by some ghost. One such place in Petit Forte was called Chill's Cave. A man and his wife named Chill were supposed to have lived there and would come back every so often and look at their bones. (Petit Forte) Q67-1244.

A23.7. ....the drummer boy who was out after dark. (Cupids) Q64A.

A23.8. Some years ago, the exact number is not known, a woman in Petty Harbour known as (N)-(N) went up into the hills after one of her cows which had strayed. She was never seen or heard from again to this day. After weeks of futile searching by the men from the

[32] It is unlikely that the pirates referred to were living human beings, but in the absence of contextual detail it is always possible that several figures in Class A might be assigned with equal reason to Class B.

TIGHT BINDING

harbour and the police, (N) - (N) was not found. Now the children in Petty Harbour, to keep them away from the dangerous cliffs are told by their parents that (N) - (N) will catch and carry them away, never to return, if they play upon the cliffs overlooking the harbour. When any of the young boys or men go trouting or hunting in the hills surrounding the place where (N) - (N) was last seen, they are always sure to be home before dark or dusk. They still think that (N) - (N) 's spirit haunts the hills of Petty Harbour. (Petty Harbour) Q67-805.

A23.9. ....to keep the children from going on the government wharf they were told "Old Man (N) " would take them away. (N) was not a living person. (Oderin) Q67-84.

A23.10. There was a small cove along the shore some distance beyond the last house. It was called "Frenchman's Gulch", and we were told if we went there we would be spirited away by the Frenchmen. (Battle Harbour, Lab.) Q63B.

A23.11. ....if she didn't want the children to go out at night she would tell them that there were ghosts of dead fishermen wandering the road. Now the fishermen casted their nets to catch wicked boys instead of fish. (Greenspond) Q67-390.

A23.12. Ghost stories, as well as being a source of entertainment for the elders, was also used for this purpose [i.e. to prevent children from going to dangerous places]. Flamers Head, a treacherous cliff nearby, was said to be inhabited by the ghost of a pirate sailor who, according to legend, was murdered by his captain and left to guard the buried treasure. This story and tales of a "Black Woman" who walked in the same area had a great effect upon my father and his peers. (Lower Island Cove) Q67-416.

A24. Ghost Animal.

A24.1. A Newfoundland dog was drowned in Elliston, Trinity Bay, in the 1800s in a storm that sank a schooner with all its crew. It is said that the dog's ghost has been seen on

many occasions since that time. The ghost has been used as a frightening figure. I can recall parents warning their children if they did not come home before dark they would see "Welcher's dog". Also any teenager who was afraid at night was kidded about this ghostly figure. I can recall one young fellow who scared another in order to get him away from his girl-friend, and hence to get her himself.

"Welcher's dog" had no head. (I mean the ghost). (Elliston) 68-24.

A25. Ghost ship.

A25.1 One such figure was used in Wesleyville to frighten children and force them to be good was a ghost ship which used to sail up and down the coast looking for bad children. (Wesleyville) 067-961.

FIGURES OF POPULAR BELIEF

The figures presented in the following section, unlike those in Class A already discussed, normally involve no religious belief.[33] They may have some mythological significance, however, and are common in folk narratives. They are distinguished from the figures of religious belief and those adapted or invented for threatening in that they are the subject of a degree of adult folk belief in Newfoundland, and indeed elsewhere. They include fairies, elves and goblins, Jack O'Lantern, witches,

[33] The fairies are exceptional in that they are sometimes given religious significance in popular belief. For example, in some Irish Catholic areas they are said to have been thrown out of heaven with Lucifer, and it is also said that they will inhabit the earth after the Day of Judgement.

hags and wizards.

A26. Fairies ['feɨriz] / ['feərɪz] / ['veəriz] / ['veərɪz].

There appears to have been widespread fear of fairies, also called "the little people" or "the good people", in Newfoundland. My own fieldwork during the years 1962–1966 indicated that this fear still lingers to some extent, especially in communities which have a strong Irish element, though the beliefs are by no means limited to people of Irish extraction. It is still possible to speak to people who will talk seriously about the fairies and of the methods used to avoid them, and the custom of carrying a piece of bread in the pocket as protection against the fairies is widely remembered and was certain practised until very recently.[34]

While recording material in Fortune Harbour in 1964 I was told by a fisherman that he had never seen any fairies in his life. I was about to take this as a denial of their existence when he added that of course he had often heard them talking when he was out alone on the barrens. Fairies do not seem to be found in the house, but only outdoors - in marshes, on the barrens or in the woods. Like many other supernatural figures they are more potent after dark, and the fairies are especially active in the twilight hours.

The euphemism characteristic of the diabolical figures

---

[34] For an interesting account of Newfoundland fairy beliefs, see the opening chapters of M. Duley's novel Cold Pastoral (London, [1939]).

is also found in references to fairies[35] in Newfoundland. "The good people" seems to be a euphemism of a propitiatory nature, and "little people" not only calls attention to their diminutive size but also suggests familiarity and makes them sound less distant, strange and fearsome. Some of the descriptions refer to the fairies as small people, i.e. dwarflike creatures up to around four feet tall. They are usually said to be male and wear tall hats. Other descriptions are obviously influenced by the more literary concept of a feminine and fragile creature with wings and a wand which makes it seem rather less malevolent than in the majority of the reports.

The fairies are diabolical to some extent in that in the Irish Catholic tradition they may be identified with the fallen angels and therefore carry overtones of morality when used in the context of social control. These ideas are reinforced to some extent by the close ties between the fairy world and the world of spirits and the dead. The fairies are normally malevolent. They are said to lead people astray on the barrens or in the woods, they "strike" people, take them away, transform them or change a human child for one of their own. Because of their habitat they are especially used as threatening figures in situations when children are in danger of getting lost on the barrens or in woods or marshes. Like ghosts and the boo/bogey figures they are often associated with darkness and so

---

[35] In the Newfoundland material the fairies are usually referred to in the plural, except in the case of the fairy who rewards children when they pull out a tooth.

are used to get children indoors before dark and to get them to sleep. They are also associated with mushrooms and toadstools, partly (if not solely) for the practical reason that many fungi are poisonous[36] and are therefore to be avoided by children. "Fairy cap" and "red cap" are also the names given to species of poisonous fungi.

The threats suggest that the fairies will take the children, lead them astray or strike them. Cautionary tales reinforce the threats by warning children against going out on the barrens alone, especially when berry-picking, or venturing into woods or marshes. Some of these tales describe how adults as well as children were supposedly led astray or struck by the fairies and returned with some physical injury or mental abnormality. Such vivid and disconcerting tales are possible rationalisations of the fact that people do simply get lost in the trackless woods or may suffer a stroke which deprives them of normal speech and affects their physical appearance.

Fairies also display a duality similar to that of Santa Claus and other supernatural bringers of gifts in that they are said to act benevolently by leaving money in exchange for a child's extracted tooth. Although this appears to be a modern tradition, it has a number of parallels with traditional ways of threatening. The linguistic structure of the request for

---

[36] It has been suggested by some scholars that the poisonous properties of fungi are often greatly exaggerated by the Celtic and Germanic peoples. For a discussion of this idea, see Wasson and Wasson, I, 24.

the reward is similar to a typical pattern of verbal control found in threats.[37] The figure, however, is still mysterious. The fairy, or "tooth fairy" as it is sometimes called, visits at night, unknown, unseen and unheard.[38] The tradition normally uses the figure in a consolatory way, perhaps to help children over the pain and loss of the tooth, but the tooth fairy may also be used to threaten the child to encourage good behaviour.

Fairies are also closely connected with mysterious and unexplained lights which appear in the natural environment. This links them with the Jack O'Lantern figures and also with ghosts in the common purpose of deterring children from wandering away from home in the dark and also from getting lost on the barrens or in the woods, or from going near water or marshes, all of which present a very real danger to children in many parts of the Province.

A26.1. Usually in the evenings when small children are out in the field playing ball, I've heard parents say, "The fairies will soon be out." We were always taught to believe that the fairies played their games in the marshes late in the evening and if any human being was near, the fairies would lead him away. (St. Brendan's) Q67-578.

---

[37] The request differs from the threat, of course, in that it is a positive rather than a negative type of control.

[38] The motif is found in a number of American references. See, for example, Hand, Brown Collection, VI, No. 387.

TIGHT BINDING

A26.2. "Be good or the fairies will find out that you were naughty." (Gander) Q67-1116.

A26.3. "Go to bed before the fairies come." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-839.

A26.4. "If you don't be quiet the fairies'll.... come after yous!" [ɪf jɑ dount? bɪ kwɑət? tθə 'feɨriz l̩ kʌm 'æftə jəʒ] ....somethin' like that. Yeah.... you know, threaten 'em, make 'em afraid, see. Yea. Frighten 'em into fits, you know, to keep 'em [quiet]. Yeah.... They used to tell children, you know, they [i.e. the fairies] were queer old people with big noses and..an' big funny caps on, an' stuff.... Tell 'em they'd carry 'em away in the green trees, you know, an' hide 'em away an'..and that people wouldn't be able to find 'em an' everything, you know....make youngsters afraid, see, to keep 'em out the woods, you know, keep 'em from goin' place[s] they wouldn' want 'em to go. (Glovertown) T C103,64-14.

A26.5. "The fairies will catch you." (Outer Cove) Q67-520.

A26.6. "Stop that or the fairies will come and get you." (Ship Cove, GNP:W) 66-7.

A26.7. "The fairies'll get ya." (St. John's) Q67-1063.

A26.8. If children stayed out late parents would say, "The fairies will get you." (St. John's) Q67-341.

A26.9. "The fairies will get you if you don't come in and go to bed." (St. John's) Q67-1229.

A26.10. "Don't go in the woods - the fairies will get you and lead you away." (Twillingate) Q67-1275.

A26.11. "Be good or else the fairies'll get 'ee." [bɪ gɑd ər ɛls ðə 'vɛərɪz l̩ gɛt i:] (Beaumont North) T C289,66-25.

A26.12. "Johnny! Don't go away by yourself. The fairies will get you if you do." (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

A26.13. "Don't go in the woods after dark or the fairies will get you." (Bell Island) Q67-502.

A26.14. "The fairies are going to have you." (Harbour Grace South) Q67-930.

A26.15. "Fairies will have you!" (Perry's Cove) Q63B.

A26.16. "If you don't go to sleep the fairies will have you." (Port Elizabeth) Q67-893.

TIGHT BINDING

A26.17. "Fairies will have you if you're bad." (Bell Island) Q67-422.

A26.18. "....don't go too far into the woods or the fairies will have you." (St. Joseph's, PB) Q67-192.

A26.19. "Don't stay out too late or the fairies will have you...." (Burin) Q67-936.

A26.20. "The fairies will come and take you away." (St. John's) Q67-684.

A26.21. "The fairies will take you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1127.

A26.22. "If you're not in before dark, the fairies will take you with them." (St. John's) Q67-1151.

A26.23. ....if a child wanders away from home the parents may try to threaten [it] with, "If you don't stay home the fairies will take you away." (Marystown) Q67-147.

A26.24. "If you don't be quiet, the fairies will come and take you away." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

A26.25. "If you don't go to bed the fairies will come and take you away." (Calvert) Q67-221.

A26.26. "The fairies will come and take you away if you are not good." (Topsail) Q67-600.

A26.27. The children were threatened if they misbehaved, or, "Get in before dark or the fairies....will take you." (Holyrood) Q64A.

A26.28. "The fairies will carry you away." (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

A26.29. To get children in early parents usually said, "If you stay out late the fairies will carry you away and keep you forever." (Chapel Arm) Q67-962.

A26.30. "Don't go outside the gate or the fairies will carry you off." (North West Brook) Q67-989.

A26.31. The parents would threaten, "Stay away from the woods, Johnny, or one of these days the fairies will carry you away into fairyland." (Little Harbour East, PB) Q67-1226.

A26.32. "The fairies will lead you astray." (St. John's) Q67-797.

A26.33. "Don't go in the woods or the fairies will lead you away." (Newmans Cove) Q67-1308.

TIGHT BINDING

A26.34. "If you aren't out of the woods by dark, the fairies will steal all your berries." (Grates Cove) Q67-475.

A26.35. "If you go there, the fairies will tow you away." (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

A26.36. [To] prevent them interfering with animals ...., "The bad fairy will change you into a horse." (Gander) Q67-441.

A26.37. Rhyme to scare children:

"Fat boys taste good in pies,
Fat girls go good with tea,
If you're not good, I'll make you fat
And give you to the fairies."

(St. Lawrence) Q67-438.

Indirect

A26.38. The fairies were to keep children from straying away from home, especially straying into the woods or on bogs and marshes. (Buchans) Q67-412.

A26.39. There were many scary figures used to scare us when we were young. Not far from our house was a large marshland that was a very dangerous place for a child after heavy rain. To keep us away from this marsh we were told that the fairies lived under the mounds of bog that covered the marshland. I was so scared of this area that I would not go near the place at any time. (Bell Island) Q63B.

A26.40. The idea of threatening children with such things was much more prevalent in my mother's day. In their time you could not pass the Stand (the little level place in Brigus where the church stands) or the Forge (the building where my great-uncle used to shoe horses) or the Pinch (the high point on the road just before you come down into Brigus) after dark because these were the places the fairies lived. Since to go anywhere in Brigus you have to pass either the "Stand" or the "Forge" and to get out of Brigus you had to pass the "Pinch" parents were reasonably sure that their children would not stray too far from home.[39] If the occasion should arise when it was necessary

[39]This is a graphic example of the strict limitations which can be placed on a child's movements by means of threats associated with certain specific locations.

TIGHT BINDING

for some member of the family to go out after dark my Grandmother gave them a crust of bread (the belief was that if you had some bread in your pocket the fairies would take that and not you) to put in their pockets and sent them on their way. If a person was so bold as to call this nonsense, he was seated and told about poor little so-and-so who had been missing for days and [was] finally found in the middle of the swampy woods in a completely dazed state, or about the poor man who was foolish enough to laugh at the ideas of fairies and got a hump put on his back for his insolence. Grandmother, as did all other grandmothers, told stories to their children which are truly frightening. The result of it all was that few people dared disobey or disrespect their parents or their parents' wishes about their conduct. (Brigus) Q67-383.

A26.41. Fairies were used to scare children from going away or from going swimming. (Western Bay) Q67-605.

A26.42. The only other threat I remember was that of the fairies, which was once used to induce us to eat some bread which we did not want. (Stephenville) Q67-110.

A26.43. The fairies were always threatened to come if children ventured out after dark. (Admiral's Beach) Q67-267.

A26.44. Another imaginary figure used to scare children is "the fairy". He would visit children who were bad when the weather was good and neither the Sand-man nor the Boogie-man would be effective.... (Corner Brook) Q67-858.

A26.45. To prevent the adventurous child from wandering near rivers, highways etc. there was always the fear of the fairies catching them. (St. John's) Q67-743.

A26.46. If the children went into the woods when they shouldn't the fairies would get them. (Grand Falls) Q67-339.

A26.47. If you went into the woods alone the fairies would get you. (St. John's) Q67-946.

A26.48. If the children were supposed to be in before dark they were told that fairies would get them. (St. John's) Q67-327.

TIGHT BINDING

A26.49. The fairies were also a constant threat to the children at night. If a child was lost it was said that the fairies had him or if a child went into the woods at night the fairies would surely get him. (Bell Island) Q67-602.

A26.50. ....her grandmother used to tell her not to play near toadstools or the fairies would get her. (Pouch Cove) 67-18.

A26.51. Older children who wander over the hills are told that the fairies will have them. (Champney's East) Q67-215.

A26.52. If we'd do something bad we should not do, fairies ['veəriz] would have us! (Merritts Harbour) T C180,65-17.

A26.53. Her mother always told her that if she put on her clothes inside out or put her shoes on the wrong feet then the fairies would have her. [She] seems to remember this being told her when she was learning to put on her own shoes and clothes and her mother using this as a sort of warning for her to put them on the right way. (Freshwater, CB) 66-7.

A26.54. ....she was told that the fairies would come and take her away. (Twillingate) Q63B.

A26.55. My great-grandmother used to tell her children that the fairies would come and take them away in the night. (St. John's) Q67-859.

A26.56. Parents often say that if you cry when put to bed the fairies will hear you and will surely come and take you away. (St. Lawrence) Q67-353.

A26.57. Parents tell their children that if they go in the woods alone the fairies will come and take them. (Bryants Cove) Q67-912.

A26.58. The fairies would come out on the meadows and take children if they were not good. (Fox Cove) Q64A.

A26.59. ....the fairies will come and take them away into the hills if they do not come in before dark. (Western Bay) Q67-561.

A26.60. The fairies are little people who don't sleep at night. These fairies go around at night and take children who are up late or who won't sleep when put to bed. (Marystown) Q67-223.

TIGHT BINDING

A26.61. They were told that if they went around or stayed out after dark the fairies or little men would take them. The fairies are supposed to be little men who live in dark places in the forest or marshes. Some people have reported seeing those little creatures and all reports give the same description. They were all very short and stocky. They wore high black hats, jackets, trousers, shoes with buckles. If the fairies took anyone the person would usually be found many miles away and not knowing how he got there. The procedure to keep the fairies from taking you is to carry a piece of bread with you when you go in the woods. But this doesn't always work. (Cape Broyle) Q67-870.

A26.62. If children cannot be kept indoors during the nights they are sometimes told that the fairies will take them. The fairies are small people who fly around and take people who are out late at night and who wander away by themselves. (Blue Cove) Q67-177.

A26.63. The fairies were another threat which pare used to get children in before dark. They tell the children that the fairies will take any children who are out after dark. Even some old people used to believe this and my parents have told me about one time when I was a baby. They had taken me and had gone to visit my grandmother and when they were leaving to go home in the night my grandmother put a piece of bread in my carriage so that the fairies wouldn't take me on the way home. Some old people would say that if you were walking in the forest if you picked a certain kind of fern the fairies wouldn't take you. (Bell Island) Q67-157.

A26.64. My grandmother and mother threaten that the fairies will take any children who go out in the dark. Supposedly anyone carrying bread in his pocket is safe from capture by the fairies. (St. John's) Q67-745.

A26.65. ....if the parents didn't want their children to go to a certain place they would tell them that if they would go there....the fairies would take them. (Bay Roberts) Q67-1131.

A26.66. When I was younger I was told that if I went up across the railway track after dark, the fairies would take me. (Bay Roberts) Q67-106.

TIGHT BINDING

A26.67. Fairies were used a lot by the older people of the community for the same purpose [i.e. to threaten them when they were naughty]. It was told to someone that the fairies would take them away if they weren't in after dark or if they weren't good. When children were picking berries in the summer, they had to carry a piece of bread with them to keep the fairies away. (Placentia) Q67-1277.

A26.68. The fairies: they were described to me as being midget men who were totally dressed in green and had wings. There were no female fairies; they were all men, and would take you if you went into the woods when your parents didn't want you to go there. They were supposed to be invisible except during the night and when there was fog. If they took you, they wouldn't kill you but they would do something to deform you in some way. Mostly this way was to take away your gift of speech. (Curling) Q67-698.

A26.69. ....the fairies would take you if the truth was stretched. (Foxtrap) Q67-929.

A26.70. ....the bad fairies would take you away during the night if you didn't say your prayers.[40] (St. John's) Q67-1232.

A26.71. ....in Port-de-Grave the fairies were used to keep children from wandering to unknown or dangerous places and to get them in before dark. In Port-de-Grave the fairies were sometimes called "little people". They were believed to be very small and the children were not physically scared. But the little people were supposed to have the power to "take you away" i.e. drive them out of their minds or make you foolish so that you would go away or lose the path. For example, once a child was missing from home for over two weeks and it was believed that she had been taken away. However, when she was found alive the older people said the fairies had

---

40 There is some suggestion here of the dual characteristics of the fairies in that some are "bad" and others "good". This is also evident in accounts of the fairies who are said to first take children and then to care for them after they have taken them, as related in A26.71 below.

TIGHT BINDING

cared for her after leading her astray. When my father used to go berry-picking as a child he was told (as were the other children) to turn his coat inside out "so the fairies won't get you" and even if only going berry-picking for a few hours he was given food supposedly to bribe the fairies with, in case they came to take them. (Port de Grave) Q67-277.

A26.72. ....sometimes when parents didn't want their children to go into the woods near the house they would tell them that there were little fairies in the trees that captured little children and took them away, never to return. (Bell Island) Q67-385.

A26.73. Fairies. They carried children off and fed them on fairy food. They were usually found under "fairy caps" (i.e. mushrooms). A plant found in marshy places (red on top and green underneath) was also called a "fairy cap". You had to take off your coat and turn it inside out to prevent the fairies from carrying you off. (Seldom Come By)-Q63B.

A26.74. My father recalls how the parents of Fox Harbour used the tragic disappearance of two youths to instill fear into their venturesome children. It seems that they disappeared and were never found again. The parents quickly accredited this to the evil fairies who had carried them away and would do likewise to any unfortunate child who happened to wander into the woods. (Fox Harbour) Q67-265.

A26.75. "Fairies" were used to try to prevent children from picking poisonous toadstools. They were told, if they were to touch these menacing plants, they would be carried off by fairies who would come and take them in the middle of the night. (Grand Falls) Q67-404.

A26.76. In order to get their children home before dark, parents threatened them by telling them about the fairies. The fairies were supposed to make their appearance just between day and night, usually referred to as "dusk" in the evening. Children who were not home at this hour were supposed to be enchanted and carried away by the fairies. (St. John's) Q67-448.

A26.77. As a child I was warned by my grandmother about fairies. They were supposed to be horrible

TIGHT BINDING

creatures. When berry-picking we were to throw a piece of bread over our left shoulder to ward off the fairies. A relative of my grandmother's was once carried off by fairies and when found in the woods she was mentally affected. (St. Joseph's, PB) Q63B.

A26.78. When children went into the woods alone their parents would tell them that the fairies would take them and lead them away. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1047.

A26.79. Fairies: these were fairly common [i.e., as threatening figures] in the daytime. They were used as a gentle threat to keep children from wandering too far away, particularly when going berry picking or cutting hay. They were supposed to be able to lead you astray and adopt you as one of themselves. As parents didn't really want the fairies to take their children away permanently, they usually gave them the antidote for this evil, namely to turn some article of clothing inside out and wear it. When they did this they were perfectly safe. Some children believed this so strongly that they actually performed this rite. (Ireland's Eye) Q63B.

A26.80. Fairies. They would lead people astray. Here it was believed that if you accidentally put some clothes on inside out the fairies would take you or something unpleasant would happen to you. (Exploits) Q63B.

A26.81. The fairies was a warning to children to keep away from wooded areas. If they went in the woods the fairies would lead them away. (St. John's) Q67-706.

A26.82. When I went berry-picking with my grandmother, she always told me not to go far away from her, or the fairies would keep on leading me away, and no matter how hard I tried I could not turn around. (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-1095.

A26.83. The fairies: little men dressed in red who if they see you can lure you to their special fairy land and once there they will make you eat their food and as soon as you eat it you will also turn into a fairy. (North West Brook) Q67-989.

A26.84. Children were threatened by fairies because they were supposed to steal children after dark. (St. John's) Q67-179.

TIGHT BINDING

A26.85. The fairies were sometimes called "the good people" and if a man was lost in the woods it was said "the fairies got him." The fairies too were used to frighten children. If a child let his feet remain uncovered while he was in bed, the fairies would bite off his toes.[41] This threat however was generally playful but it worked. (Grand Falls) Q67-1205.

A26.86. Oh they [i.e. the fairies] 'd come..they'd come and they'd shave their [i.e. children's] heads, they'd do everything with 'em. They cut their hair off and carry it away, [plane?] 'em right down, see, those fairy people. They was only little small people, they used to say, used to tell we. Well that was a thing they used to.. threaten we to when we was youngsters, that the fairies were comin' after us, you know. (Quinton's Cove, Long Island, NDB) T 0297,66-25.

A26.87. Children were threatened....to do something useful [or be] struck sick by the fairies. (Holyrood) Q67-662.

A26.88. The fairies are hardly ever threatened on children but the stories told about the fairies are enough to get the children home before dark, before the sun goes down. (North River) Q67-571.

A26.89. I'll never forget hearing about the children from Fox Harbour whom the fairies bore away quicker than the wind and who had to come back for bread which their father had to place on the window-sill. (Fox Harbour) Q67-960.

A26.90. This story concerned a middle aged man who apparently had been paralysed while berry-picking alone, when he had envisioned fairies in the woods. These fairy stories, I must say, seem to be the most frightening since there seemed to be evidence supporting their reality. (Cook's Harbour) Q67-322.

A26.91. [As I was] one of nine children, my parents had quite a problem with discipline. There was one way, however, that my parents could make us children do exactly as they wished. My mother's brother had an arm like that of a man of eighty although he had it when very young. The story was that when a young boy he had been naughty one day and ran off into

---

[41] See also A51.3 below.

TIGHT BINDING

the woods. When he returned his arm was wrinkled and aged like that of an old man. This story was used many times to [encourage] good behaviour [in] all of us. (Bell Island) Q63B.

A26.92. I remember the dread I had for fairies. The stories that abounded about those "Good People", as they were called, were enough to frighten even the most daring. My parents were steadfast in their belief to the extent that no matter where we were sent after dark, or even sent for wood in the daytime, we were given a small crust of bread to ward off the fairies. Even with the bread I would not venture to touch a "fairy cap" (i.e. mushroom) for fear of disturbing these creatures. This custom of carrying a crust of bread to keep the fairies away was well practised among most of the people of the Island. (Bell Island) Q63B.

A27. The Little People.

A27.1. My great uncle whose father had come from Ireland in the late 1700s often told me how his father would threaten him with stories of the fairies which he called the "little people" or leprechauns. He was told each morning before Mass that if he so much as smiled in church the little people would tickle him for the rest of his days and he would grow up like a moron, always giggling. (Avondale) Q67-313.

A28. The Good People [ðə 'gʊd ˌpi:pl̩].

A28.1. They say, "Come in now, my son!" [kʊm ɪn nəʊ mɑi sʌn] And some would say, "The Good People is goin' to have you!" [ðə 'gʊd ˌpi:pl̩ ɛz 'gʊɪnə hæv jə] ....But I'm goin' to tell you....if the children was goin' to be in for the night, they be in before the Good People....come an' get 'em! (Long Cove, Burin) T C151,65-16. (rec. H. Halpert).

TIGHT BINDING

A29. Bog Fairies.

A29.1. ....the "Bog-fairies"....were used to frighten the children to prevent [them] from going out in the dark or to get them to sleep. (Grand Falls) Q67-1076.

A29.2. Whenever I was told to go to bed or come in off the road and I would not do either I was then told that the....bog-fairies would get me. Though these figures were only playfully intended by the adults, the children took them as very serious threats and usually did what they were told. (Windsor) Q67-1072.

A30. Tooth fairies.[42]

A30.1. My mother sometimes used the tooth fairy as a mild kind of threat. If we lost a tooth, we had to give it to Mom, who told us that she would give it to the tooth fairy - the tooth fairy usually paid her ten cents for a small tooth - more for a big tooth. My mother told us we had to be good or the tooth fairy wouldn't come - usually we had to be in bed early. (Corner Brook) 68-22.

A30.2. The fairies are used to induce the children to go to sleep. The parents warn them that if they aren't in bed and asleep soon, the fairies won't put any money under your pillow when your teeth fall out. (Heart's Delight) Q67-493.

A31. Elves.[43]

A31.1. The children are told the elves....will come and take them away. (St. John's) Q67-546.

---

[42]These figures, like elves and goblins, are not the subject of belief by adults, but their close parallels with the fairies warrant their inclusion here rather than with the figures invented or adapted specifically for threatening.

[43]Elves and goblin figures are rare in Newfoundland as compared with the strong European tradition where they appear as both frightening and threatening figures.

TIGHT BINDING

A32. Goblins.

A32.1. Goblins were also used - "The Goblins will get you if you don't watch out." (St. John's) Q67-1020.

A32.2. "Don't go down on the wharf or the Goblins will get you." (Burin) Q67-936.

Indirect

A32.3. I was absolutely terrified of Goblins; they used to live in dark places, especially the cellar. The Goblins would come and attack children at night if they weren't good. They weren't human and didn't have any particular body form; they seemed to be a sort of black cloud that would snap you up unaware.

My grandmother would always be telling us stories of little boys and girls whom the Goblin had taken because they weren't good; this was her way of gently hinting that the same would happen to us if we weren't good. (Aguathuna) Q63B.

A32.4. ....somehow you could get away from the Devil, he wasn't so scary, but the Goblin could snatch you up any time. (Aguathuna) Q63B.

A32.5. The only verse she can think of which pertains to frightening children is the following:

Once there was a little boy
Who wouldn't say his prayers
And when he went to bed at night way upstairs
His mother heard him holler
And his daddy heard him bawl
And when they turned the covers down
He wasn't there at all.
And the goblins'll get you if you don't watch out.[44]

She can remember pulling the bedclothes over her head when her grandmother read it to her. (St. John's) Q67-481.

---

[44]See p. 57, f/n 29 above. This is a version of the second verse of J.W. Riley's poem "Little Orphant Annie", remembered with some omissions and alterations. It is significant that this particular verse is one of two in the original which refer specifically to a naughty child being taken by the goblins.

TIGHT BINDING

A33. Hobgoblins.

A33.1. "If you don't be good, the hob-goblin will get you and throw you down the pity-hole." (Bishop's Cove) Q67-1124.

Indirect

A33.2. "....the hob-goblin was a threat to get them in before dark. (Bishop's Cove) Q67-1124.

A34. Jack O'Lantern [dʒæk ə 'læntərn].

Jack o'Lantern, together with several variations on the name, such as Jack the Lantern, Jacky the Lantern and Jacky Lantern, is frequently reported as a threatening figure. He is usually associated with specific threats to keep children away from marshes, ice or water, but is also used to get them in before dark and for general misbehaviour. The Jack o'Lantern figures have much in common with the fairies. They are typically nocturnal, they lead people astray and their habitats are very similar to those of the fairies, except that the Jack o'Lantern is also associated with salt water and salt water ice. Like the fairies, he is a strongly malevolent figure in Newfoundland folk belief.

Jack o'Lantern is also presented in the threats as a very dangerous figure. Like the fairies, he is not only said to lead children (and adults) astray, but he may also chase children, come for, get or hurt them, or carry them away. Sometimes he is said to look more like a ghost in that he is

TIGHT BINDING

seen with his head off, and there also seems to be some confusion between Jack the Lantern and Jack the Ripper, which is perhaps a further indication of the malevolence which the Jack o'Lantern figures are thought to display. Jack o'Lantern is also sometimes identified with the Halloween pumpkin lantern, and some of the reports of this illustrate how easily the concept of the lantern can be transformed into something fearsome in the imagination of the child.

Jack o'Lantern is sometimes explained as a "weather light" or other natural phenomenon such as St. Elmo's fire, marsh gas, decaying animal or vegetable matter, or the phosphorescence of fish or insects. Such logical explanations, however, do not account for all phenomena involving lights, and in Newfoundland there is some real fear of them, based partly on their association with ghosts, phantom ships, wrecks, murders and the like. Jack o'Lantern is therefore often linked with ghosts and spirits, especially as these apparitions are thought to manifest themselves as lights or in conjunction with lights. The figure is also linked with the Man in the Moon in that both are said to have been doomed because of some transgression - usually profaning the sabbath - so that the one was put in the moon and the other condemned to haunt the marshes and hills, because each is said to be too good for hell and not good enough for heaven.[45]

A34.1. "Jack O'Lantern is out tonight!" (Mount Pearl) Q 67-352.

---

[45] There is also a parallel here with the fairies, who are sometimes said to be souls in purgatory.

A34.2. Jack-O'-Lantern. A mysterious man with a light. In Elliston, Trinity Bay, he confined himself to marshes, especially the huge marsh between Elliston and Bonavista: As a threatening figure he was used to (1) keep kids off the Bonavista highway after dark, (2) to keep teenagers from going to Bonavista for girls, (3) for any bad things that real young kids might do.

The way the threat was used.
"You be in this house tonight before dark. Do you want to be killed by a truck? Besides, Jack-O'-Lantern comes out after dark. Your father saw him last night, but he don't chase men: he knows children should be in before dark."[46]

Kids would be really afraid of him. This fear continued in the early teens. (Elliston) 68-24.

A34.3. We used to be afraid of him....when we were small, 'fraid of Jack o'Lantern.... We wouldn't go out, 'fraid we would see one.... If our mothers didn't want us to go out o' doors night-time, you see, like youngsters do.... And my mother'd say, "Well, you goes out tonight, I've seen the Jack o'Lantern this evening!" [wɛl jɐu gouz æut? tə'nɐit | ɐiv si:n ðə dʒæk ə 'læntərn ðɪs 'i:vnɪn] An' I wouldn't go out then. (Dunfield) T C563,69-3. (rec. V. du Prée).

A34.4. To stop children from going on unsafe ice the parent might say, "If you go on that ice, you'll see Jack O'Lantern." (Bloomfield) Q67-716.

A34.5. "The Jack-O-Lantern is looking for bad boys/girls." (Lawn) Q67-352.

A34.6. When father was a boy his mother used to warn him of Jack o'Lantern. Jack o'Lantern was supposed to live on top of the American Man (the name given to the cairn on top of Big Island in Bay Roberts). The island was not visible from the house as the view was blocked by Big Head.... Jack o'Lantern was of course

---

[46] This is an interesting example not only of the frequent personification of Jack o'Lantern as a sentient being, but also of the contrast between the world of children and the world of adults which is an important feature of the threatening process.

marsh gas and was really visible. I have seen him. Father was scared and believed in the tale attached to what he saw. However he did not always obey when threatened. Grandmother would say, "There's a light on Big Head; it's after you." Jack o'Lantern just appeared on Big Head. He then progressed down the harbour, being very noticeable over the bogs at Running Brook. He then went to the bogs in French's Cove and from there crossed to his home on top of the American Man on Big Island. (Bay Roberts) Q67-774.

A34.7. "Pick up your toys 'cause Jack o'Lantern is comin' 'cross the bay." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

A34.8. Jack O' Lantern was just a fun bit. If I just looked through the window, my father would probably tell me to look at Jack O'Lantern and say, "Now if you do not be good, Jack O'Lantern will come for you tonight." (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-1095.

A34.9. The term "Jack O'Lantern will get you" was used to frighten the children but many adults also were afraid of Jack O'Lantern because they thought it was a real object or person. (Conception Harbour) Q67-878.

A34.10. To get children home in the evening or to get them to go to sleep the parents would say, "The Jack O'Lantern from Sibley's Marsh will get you." (Harbour Breton area ?)[47] Q67-899.

A34.11. The Jack O'Lantern is a light either from Dildo Cove or from the Lighthouse, and when it shines it has a peculiar shape to it. At different times it's different shapes - sometimes you look at it and it looks like a man just standing there, and then it changes and changes, to animals and everything, depending on how you look at it. It shines in the night time, usually in summer, but sometimes in winter - though not very often. It's real scary. Fishermen use it as a threat to the kids out there catching caplin, if it's bedtime and they

---

[47] The collector locates Sibley's Marsh on the south west coast, but most of the informant's other references are to Harbour Breton.

don't go home. - "The Jack O'Lantern is out in the harbour and if you don't go home it will blow up." This was so frightening that you'd run home half scared to death. Even now, to see it changing shapes scares her [i.e. the informant]. (Long Cove, TB) Q67-662.

Indirect

A34.12. ....the Jack O'Lantern is a very prominent and frightful creature which has been seen by men late at night (only men have seen it) and has been explained. This creature has been seen across the harbour from Bay Roberts. It is a steady illuminating light which starts in the middle [of the harbour] or thereabout and follows down the harbour hills and out the bay. Although only grown men have seen this it is a proven fact that the light does exist. It has been explained as a gaseous formation which is luminous when struck by a certain ray of light. But try and tell that to the men who have seen it! (Bay Roberts) Q67-780.

A34.13. Jack O'Lantern was supposed to have been a ball of fire seen out in the bay [and] which approached the shore. Children were threatened with this to get them in before dark. (Trinity East) Q67-685.

A34.14. ....Jack o'Lantern was used at times but - [illegible] to keep children from going on ice at night. (Milltown) Q67-1172.

A34.15. Jack o'Lantern who was supposed to have lived in bogs (marshes) and who came out on foggy nights was a favourite figure used to threaten children. The threat was very useful to get children home early especially if it were foggy. It was also used to stop children from going to dangerous places. (Elliston) Q67-537.

A34.16. Many parents around Heart's Content threatened their children with the Jack-O'-Lantern, now known to be the firefly. This was supposed to live in the woods and to emerge at dark. (Heart's Content) Q67-1134.

A34.17. To get them in before dark: the Jack O'Lantern would shine his lantern on anyone out after dark. (St. John's) Q67-165.

A34.18. At Torbay the men used to be coming home from fishing and they would be carrying a lighted

TIGHT BINDING

lantern, and adults used to tell the children the Jack O'Lantern was coming and the children would even see him coming. (Torbay) Q67-650.

A34.19. Jack O'Lantern was used to get children to go to sleep, saying that good old Jack would be around to check. (St. John's) Q67-108.

A34.20. While talking to my grandmother I learned of a Jack O'Lantern. It is supposed to be a light seen out on a marsh that will come after a child if he is disobedient. One night my grandmother was out after dark and she came home saying she saw a light out on the marsh. Her mother told her that it was the Jack O' Lantern coming after her because she was a bad girl. For some time after that she was afraid to go out after dark. (Bay Roberts) Q67-1107.

A34.21. If you see a light out on the water just at dark, you would tell your children that Jack O'Lantern would come after them if they didn't go to bed. (Burin) Q67-1067.

A34.22. ....the children were told that Jack O'Lantern would chase them if they were not home before dark. (St. John's) Q67-949.

A34.23. If one has his pockets turned inside out, Jack O'Lantern will chase after him.[48] (Badger's Quay) Q67-765.

A34.24. If I were bad on Halloween night it was Jack O'Lantern who was coming to get me.[49] (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-1095.

A34.25. He was also familiar with the Jack O'Lantern. He used to come out of the bog and "get you". (St. John's) Q67-1020.

A34.26. One frightening figure in Musgravetown is the Jack-O-Lantern. Parents who wanted their children to stay off the bay ice during the winter threatened them by saying the Jack-O-Lantern would get them. They said that he

---

[48] This rather curious reversal of the custom of turning clothes or pockets inside out as a means of counteracting the influence of fairies and other figures of folk belief has parallels in the practical application of threats to the dressing and general tidiness of children. See also A26.53 above and A34.37 and A37.11 below.

[49] As with the identification of Jack o'Lantern with the Halloween pumpkin it is clear that he was also associated with Halloween, at least in the urban tradition. See also A34.34 below.

lived on an island in the bay called Shag Island, and could be seen walking from it over the ice. (Musgravetown) Q67-270.

A34.27. They were told there was a man with a lantern on the other side of the harbour, and people were known to have seen him walking up and down on the beach, swinging his lantern. Now they used to like to go out on the harbour ice in the winter time and my grandmother always warned them not to. She said that the Jack O'Lantern would get them. Of course, this was only to scare them. (Manuels) Q67-75.

A34.28. If the children were naughty or if they came home late Jack O'Lantern was going to get them. (Western Bay) Q67-605.

A34.29. Children were told that the Jack O'Lanterns would get them if they didn't get in before dark. Jack O'Lanterns are lights on the water which follow you wherever you go - at night. These lights were thought to be the spirits of the dead. (St. John's) Q67-38.

A34.30. The Jack o'Lantern was a light that was seen on the water. If you were bad he would come and take you out to sea. He was also said to be the spirit of someone who had drowned at sea. The light was mostly seen at the changing of the weather. (Long Island, PB) Q67-62.

A34.31. Jack O'Lantern was a man who came out only after dark. He was dressed up in an overcoat, a hat [and] boots, and [carried] a lighted lantern. If he spotted anyone with his lantern in the dark, he would take them away and they were never seen again. (St. John's) Q67-165.

A34.32. Off the shore of Coley's Point and Port-de-Grave, Conception [Bay], on a calm night can be seen a man walking on the water and carrying a lantern in his hand. This light is called "Jack-O'-Lantern" and if he sees you walking along the road he will capture you and take you with him. (Coley's Point and Port-de-Grave) Q68-331.

A34.33. Parents would tell their children that.... Jack O'Lantern will come and carry them away if they wouldn't behave themselves, that is to keep quiet or to go to bed and so on. There once was a light on the railroad track home and from our window you could see the

railway, and my Great Aunt would tell us to look out the window and then we'd see it, and she would say that Jack O'Lantern is up on the track and that he would come and carry us away if we weren't good and [did not] go to bed at the right time. (Bonavista) Q67-1185.

A34.34. When Hallowe'en came around, Dad and Mom used to tell us that Jack O'Lantern came around with his lantern in his hand looking for children, and if he found any out after midnight, he would carry them off. We were told that he was up on Blackhead, up on the hill. (St. John's) Q67-506.

A34.35. Jack O'Lantern was simply visualised as some evil spirit in the form of a ball of fire which would kidnap the naughty child. (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

A34.36. Jack O'Lantern could be seen on foggy days during a north-east wind. He consisted mainly of a bright light and was said to live in marshy areas. If anyone attempted to approach this light then he would get lost. (Lower Island Cove) Q67-710.

A34.37. Jack O'Lantern would get children who go out after dark. He was said to lead you overboard. To get rid of him one would have to turn his pockets inside out. (Glovertown) Q67-374.

A34.38. The only one that really frightened me was Jack O'Lantern. Many of my small friends told me that they had seen him. He was supposed to be a ball of fire that lived in the sea, and he would hurt children who did not obey their parents. The usual "hurts" consisted of nose-bleed, earache and toothache. Jack O'Lantern's home was supposed to be the water under Shag Island. (Lethbridge ? - Contributor from Grand Falls) Q67-1201.

A34.39. To get children in before dark, parents would tell them that Jack O'Lantern was around the corner. Jack O'Lantern was supposed to be a man who carried a light and would hurt children if they were out in the dark. (Curling) Q77-526.

A34.40. Jack O'Lantern is a big, orange, head-shaped object which has triangles for eyes. It has a flat head and a triangular nose. Its mouth extends from one ear to another, is black and

consists of widely scattered teeth. The threat used in this case: Children have been told that if they didn't go to bed the Jack O'Lantern with his big mouth and teeth would eat them. (Middle Brook) Q67-427.

A35. Jack the Lantern.

A35.1. "Jack the Lantern lives (is) there." (St. John's) Q67-674.

A35.2. My aunt lived in Torbay during her childhood, where she was born. There was a river that flowed a little ways past the back door. At certain times of the year there were fluorescent lights bobbing up and down the river. In reality this was just a gathering of phosphorus in the atmosphere which became illuminated in the night. However, my grandmother used to threaten her children with: "Get inside; there goes Jack the Lantern again!" The threats were playful from the parents' view but were taken seriously by the children as most children believe what they hear. (Torbay) Q67-967.

A35.3. At Sound Island the term Jack the Lantern was used to threaten children who misbehaved. (Sound Island, PB) Q67-109.

A35.4. ....Jack the Lantern comes only when it's dark and is therefore used to get children indoors before dark. (Williamsport) Q67-978.

A35.5. They'd threaten 'em with.... He was comin'! This Jack the Lantern.... He was a ghost, in a way, you know, only he'd show above a light.... You've heard talk of seein' this ghost light.... Well, there is such a thing, they tells me; although I've a-seen the light, but whether 'twas a ghost light or no I don't know. (Quinton's Cove, Long Island, NDB) T C295,66-25.

A35.6. Jack the Lantern - supposed to be a man who went around after dark carrying a lantern. He would get small children if they did not go to bed early. (St. John's) Q67-601.

A35.7. We would also threaten that....Jack the Lantern would be in the woods, and come out to take them with the light from his lantern. You would keep on repeating these until they believed it, and then they would know you were serious. (St. John's) Q67-47.

A36. Jacky the Lantern.

A36.1. There were many names of frightening figures in Trinity....but the most common was "Jackie the Lantern". This was supposed to be a light that was seen before storms, mostly on the arm ice in winter time. It was used as a threat against naughty children to prevent them from going to dangerous places. (Trinity, TB) Q67-55.

A36.2. And their mothers would tell them there's a Jacky the Lantern. This was for to make 'em afeard.... They wouldn't go out. (Dunfield) T C563,69-3. (rec. V. du Prée).

A36.3. ....the children were told that the light caused by the escape of gas over Bareneed Hill was a man with a torch, called Jacky the Lantern. Most children lived in mortal peril of this light. (Bay Roberts) Q67-1295.

A36.4. If you're not in by a certain time you'll see Jackie the Lantern down by the gate with his head off. My informant's father used this threat to make sure that she and her brother and sisters were in on time. She says it used to scare her so much that she would usually run up the lane to her house if she happened to be a little late. (Western Bay) 67-6.

A37. Jacky Lantern.

A37.1. Jack Lantern. When my mother puts my daughter Jill to bed she'll say, "Come on, it's time for you to go to bed. Jacky Lantern will be around." When she says this Jill goes on to talk about Wee Willie Winkie and says the rhyme:

"Wee Willie Winkie
Runs through the town." etc.[50]

Jill seems to identify Jack Lantern with Wee Willie Winkie or thinks there is some sort of connection between them. She just flies to bed when my mother says that Jacky Lantern will be around.

She wanted to go down town one day and I said, "We'll go next week after tea when the stores are lit up and all the lights are on." And she said, "Oh I can't go then because Jacky

---

[50] See A65 below.

Lantern will see me." So she felt he'd be around after dark and wasn't so fussy about going then. (St. John's) 67-22.

A37.2. "If you're out late Hallowe'en, Jacky Lantern will get you." (St. John's) Q67-393.

A37.3. Children were threatened with the Jacky Lantern if the parents wanted to keep them in after-dark, especially in winter time when the water was frozen. A typical threat would be, "You can't go out tonight on the ice; the Jacky Lantern will get you." (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

A37.4. "Don't go down on the bank after dark or Jacky Lantern will have you." (Heart's Delight) Q67-255.

Indirect

A37.5. The Jacky Lantern was the light in the bog. You were threatened with it so that you would not wander away after dark. (Placentia) Q67-460.

A37.6. Jacky Lantern was a light which could be seen on one hilltop and seconds later it would be seen on the top of another hill some distance away. This strange light was noted to have followed people as they travelled alone at night. Parents frightened their children by telling them about Jacky Lantern when they wanted to get them in before dark and to bed. (Carbonear) Q67-153.

A37.7. The Jacky Lantern was used to get them in after dark. (Corner Brook) Q67-1017.

A37.8. Jacky Lantern is mostly referred to during Hallowe'en. In the olden days people were superstitious and believed that Jacky Lantern really existed. The Jacky Lantern is often used to frighten children to stay indoors at night or to make them behave. (Gull Island, CB) Q67-882.

A37.9. Jacky Lantern was a ball of fire which would alight on the window pane if the children were not good. (Campbellton) Q67-1266.

A37.10. The Jacky-lantern was quite common to my mother who lived at Indian Islands. On mild nights a ball of fire might be seen rising over the barren marshes. To the children on the islands it was Jacky-lantern who chased those who dared

disobey their parents and went outside after nightfall. Jacky-lantern was quite often known to chase grown-ups, too. (Indian Islands, Fogo District) Q67-608.

A37.11. Late in the evening and at night there is a great light in the sky which moves back and forth over Shoals Cove Point and this was what we were threatened of as Jacky Lantern. Even to this day when I am home and see this light I get scared. I have even heard adults say if that light (Jacky Lantern) should pass in front of you, you would be led astray, and if you took off some article of clothing and turned it inside out it [i.e. the light] would go away from you. (St. Brendan's) Q67-578.

A37.12. Jacky Lantern is thought of as a person carrying a lantern into which he puts all bad children and burns them. Disobedient children are told that he is coming to take them if they disobey. (Blue Cove) Q67-177.

A38. Baker's Light.

A38.1. In Twillingate the Jack O'Lantern was often commonly called the Baker's Light. It was said that some man named Baker had drowned there and that this light was his ghost. The Baker's Light was used as a threat to children to keep them in after dark. They were told that the Baker's Light would roll off the bight and over the marshes to chase them. Children walking home after dark were known to be absolutely terrified of seeing the Baker's Light. It was also said that if someone went out in a bad blizzard the Baker's Light would dance in front of him and tow him over the marsh to perish. (Twillingate) Q67-945.

A39. Witches.

Witches are fairly common as threatening figures in Newfoundland. They are almost always female[51] and are of two

---

[51] The possibility of a witch being male is alluded to in A39.36 below.

kinds: (a) those regarded as supernatural or fictitious, which are dealt with here, and (b) those identified with actual living people, also usually regarded as malevolent, which are discussed under B 72 below. There is considerable evidence of them as frightening figures in Newfoundland and both types are still the subject of some degree of belief. Those which are supernatural or fictitious have much in common with other threatening figures such as the boogie man in that they are thought of as rather vague, monstrous creatures who have the power to "get" children, often at night. They inhabit attics, dark cupboards, old buildings, rock walls, wells and woods. Some are referred to as hags, and some are named, e.g. Mother Witch, Granny Wicks, Mother Raw, Martha [Mother?] Rim and Sally Cushion.

The extreme ugliness of the witch is one of her most prominent features in the reports, even though the descriptions may be conventionalised, as in this example from Burnt Woods, Conne River:

> Witches are thought of as evil old ladies with long sharp crackling [sic] laughter, a green whiskery face, bony hands with six inch finger nails, a long crooked sharp nose with a whisker at the tip, long straight black hair, a tall, sharp black hat, a long black gown with big heeled shoes. Q67-213.

The manifestation of such ugliness, among other things, leads to the naming of some local person as a witch.

Although the witch may be described in the conventional terms appropriate to the traditional witch figures of folk narrative, when she is used as a threatening figure her more frightening aspects are of course brought to the fore. To the

LIGHT BINDING

child, even the stylised witch figures of Halloween mummering tradition may be frightening and may therefore be utilised in threats. Thus, although the witch, like the ghost, can take on rather comic characteristics, when used in threats those aspects which are closest to the traditional qualities of threatening figures, e.g. ugliness, power to get, have, take away, transform or devour the child and so on, are strongly emphasised. In addition, witches are often said to live in a particular place from which children are warned away because it is dangerous or undesirable in some way.

A39.1. "The old witch flies across the moon on Hallowe'en night." This used to be a popular belief among children of Grand Bank about eight to ten years ago. Often it was said that she would fly across on her broom at midnight only, but other times any late hour was mentioned. This seems to have been a way to get the younger children in at an early hour by telling them that if they stayed out late they would see the wicked old witch. But among the older children this ruse sometimes backfired; they might still believe it but they would stay out late on purpose to see if the witch really flew across the moon late on Hallowe'en night, and also what she looked like. I knew several of the younger children who really believed this story. It is not very popular now. Grand Bank) 66-13.

A39.2. In order to prevent them from going to dangerous places they are threatened by "The witches live in there." (St. John's) Q67-684.

A39.3. My Aunt threatens her son when he wants to go up into the attic. "The witch lives up there and if you ever see her you'll never forget it." (Gander) Q67-548.

A39.4. To get them in before dark, "The....witch comes out when it gets dark." (St. John's) Q67-303.

A39.5. "You can't go outside in the dark now 'cause the witches....are out of the woods." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

A39.6. "Stay away from there or the witch'll come after ya." (St. John's) Q67-1111.

A39.7. "Get in before dark or the witches'll get you." (Gander) Q67-441.

A39.8. "If you don't come in the witches....will get you." (Milltown) Q67-1172.

A39.9. "If you go to [some dangerous place] the witch will get you." (Port Elizabeth) Q67-893.

A39.10. To stop children from mocking other people a parent might say, "If you make fun at other people the witches will get you." (Bloomfield) Q67-716.

A39.11. The witches were those who would do evil to you if you went to a certain place. "If you go there the witches will get you." (St. John's) Q67-684.

A39.12. ....I've heard people saying, "Go to bed else the witches will certainly get you...." (St. Joseph's, PB) Q67-192.

A39.13. "Come in before the witches get ya!" (Mount Pearl) Q67-380.

A39.14. "If you don't come in before dark, the witches ....will have you." (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

A39.15. "Don't stay out too late or the witches will have you." (Burin) Q67-936.

A39.16. "I'll tell the witches to take you." (North West Brook) Q67-989.

A39.17. "Witches will come and take you." (Avondale) Q67-295.

A39.18. "Don't go outdoors tonight or the witches will take you." (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

A39.19. "The witches are going to change you into gingerbread."[52] (Lawn) Q67-352.

A39.20. "A witch will turn you into a frog etc." (St. John's) Q67-931.

---

[52] Presumably this threat would only be addressed to very young children.

TIGHT BINDING

A39.21. To prevent them from going to dangerous places - "The old witch will bake you in her oven." (St. John's) Q67-931.

Indirect

A39.22. ...."witches" were used to frighten them into being good. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-1191.

A39.23. The witches are also used to frighten children and also to make them behave. The stories told to children often contain witches and other strange characters. (Gull Island, CB) Q67-882.

A39.24. The witches were used to get the children in before dark. (Terra Nova) Q67-466.

A39.25. Around Halloween time we were sometimes threatened with seeing witches if we weren't in by dark. (Freshwater, CB) Q67-850.

A39.26. "The Witches" was used if a child refused to come in during the night. (Dunville) Q67-549.

A39.27. The old witch is usually used as a threat to keep children out of dangerous places, such as woods and ponds. When [the witch is] used as a threat the story of Hansel and Gretel is usually brought to the attention of the child.[53] (Stephenville) Q67-273.

A39.28. Older children threatened the informant with....witches if he tagged along with them. (St. Vincent's) Q64A.

A39.29. Children were usually threatened to prevent them from going to dangerous places and to get them in before dark. Parents told their children that certain [places] were inhabited by witches. In this way children [be]came afraid to go to these so-called haunted areas. These usually included old deserted houses, and forests. (Torbay) Q67-448.

A39.30. If there was a certain place parents did not want their children to visit, they were told the witches....lived there. (Campbellton) Q67-1266.

---

[53]This folktale, of course, has the central motif of the child-eating witch.

TIGHT BINDING

A39.31. The witch was supposed to live in a cave waiting for unsuspecting children who wandered into the woods. (Terra Nova) Q67-466.

A39.32. Around Halloween time we were sometimes threatened with seeing witches if we weren't in by dark. (Freshwater, CB) Q67-850.

A39.33. Witches: "Witches" are watching you on Hallowe'en night if you play a trick on an old woman. (Heart's Delight) Q67-76.

A39.34. Witches - They would cast a spell on you if you weren't good. (St. John's) Q67-601.

A39.35. The witches are used when the children are naughty. Parents warn them that they will give the children to the witches if they aren't good. (Heart's Delight) Q67-493.

A39.36. Witches are usually thought of as old men and women who can bring a true wish upon you. If children are bad they are sometimes told that the witches will come and something will happen to them. Sometimes people tell them they are going to tell the witches to do something to them. (Blue Cove) Q67-177.

A39.37. If you stayed out late the witches would get you. (St. John's) Q67-946.

A39.38. ....if a child wouldn't eat his supper he was....told that the old, bad witch would get him. (Bloomfield) Q67-37.

A39.39. I have often heard parents threaten their children when they were disobedient by saying that....the witches would come and take them away if they did not behave. Parents should use other methods to make their children obey because I believe children are frightened by these threats. Sometimes these threats are only playful but far too often I have seen parents threaten their children in a serious manner. (St. John's) Q67-1053.

A39.40. Witches: Grotesque old ladies with long stringy white hair, warts on their faces, no teeth, and long crooked noses, who wear high pointed hats, black dresses, and went around on brooms with black cats on them. These witches were supposed to be waiting to catch naughty children and turn them into animals. (North West Brook) Q67-989.

TIGHT BINDING

A39.41. Another reason children are threatened is to prevent them from going to dangerous places. When I was growing up in Carbonear I remember there used to be an old well in a big empty field; this well had no cover over it and it was very deep. Now, my friends and I found this empty field and began to play in it. When our mothers found out they used to tell us that a wicked old witch lived down in the well and would catch us and drag us down into the well. From that day neither my friends nor I would be caught dead in that field. All the children - they wouldn't dare go into the field. It [i.e. the threat] was really effective that way. (Carbonear) Q67-1093.

A39.42. These threats succeeded in the majority of cases because the children were really terrified at the mention of these frightening creatures. They would hurry off to bed even though they would shiver under the clothes as they pictured the witches and fairies that would carry them off for being naughty or disobeying. (Topsail) Q67-600.

A39.43. If a child was tormenting in the house the parents would sometimes warn them to be quiet or they would put him in the dark closet under the stairs with the witch.... (Western Bay) Q67-605.

A39.44. When I was about nine I went to visit my grandparents in St. Lawrence and in the hill behind the town there was a pond. It wasn't really dangerous but it could be messy because it was surrounded by mud. I was told there was a big rock near the pond and a witch lived there. The rock was sharp and jagged but it looked to our eager imaginations like a little house. We used to look at it and notice tiny holes filled with water in which, we were told, she did her washing. There was a split in the middle which extended one quarter of the rock, then down the central and side sections. We were told and believed devoutly that if you went near the pond the witch came out of her house and dragged you into her house through the crack, which she could enlarge as we open a door, and then you were trapped forever. (Stephenville) Q67-1150.

A39.45. ....I would never go near any deep wells, for I had often been told that a evil witch dwelled

there just waiting for little girls to come along so she could boil them in her pot. (Blaketown) Q67-889.

A39.46. Witches - Witches I think were the most horrible of all these people as frightening figures. They were said to live in all the old, deserted, run-down houses around the community. Children were told that if they went near these places they might be caught by a witch and stewed. (St. John's) Q67-1111.

A39.47. When children were naughty their parents would tell them that....the witches would come and eat them if they weren't good. (Curling) Q67-526.

NAMED WITCH FIGURES

A40. Martha-Rim.

This figure appears in only one report and the collector has been able to obtain no further details. The name may be a local invention or adaptation, or perhaps a variant of a postulated figure "Mother Rim" which would have even closer affinity with the Mother Witch recorded in a list of figures from St. John's (Q67-222) and with Mother Raw in A42 below.

A40.1. ....and Martha-Rim, when the wind blew she would come through the chimney and take bad children.[54] (Cupids) Q64A.

A41. Granny Wicks.[55]

A41.1. One frightening figure used at Harbour Deep is "Granny Wicks". She is pictured as an old witch with very unpleasant features who collects "bad" children in a bag and takes them to her hut as either servants or food. (Harbour Deep) Q67-979.

---

[54] For figures who come through the chimney see also, for example, A77.49 below.

[55] This name may simply be a variant pronunciation of Granny Witch, but this is the sole example and no further details are given.

TIGHT BINDING

A42. Sally Cushion.

A42.1. Some parents in Bonavista sometimes used the word[s],"'Sally Cushion' will get you" in order to get their children to bed or to keep them quiet. "Sally Cushion" was supposed to be a witch who lived under a wall of rocks in one section of Bonavista.. (Bonavista) Q67-496.

A43. Hags.

The hag is reported as a threatening figure from Lewin's Cove (Q67-399), but no details are given.

NAMED HAGS

A44. Mother Raw.[56]

A44.1. Another frightening figure used in Conception (one particular area of Conception where there is a very dangerous mountain) is, "Mother Raw will get you and keep you as a slave if you go up on the mountain." Mother Raw was supposed to be a very wicked old hag who lived in the mountain. This threat was used by parents in order to keep the children off the mountain. (Conception Harbour) Q67-878.

A45. Wizards.

A single report from St. John's (Q67-222) lists the Wizard among several other supernatural and invented threatening figures. As with the witch, the wizard may also sometimes be presented as a living person from the community.[57]

---

[56] The second element of this name suggests a possible link with the Rawhead group of figures listed under A108 below.

[57] See B 73 below.

TIGHT BINDING

FIGURES OF POTENTIAL BELIEF

In contrast with the figures so far discussed, which are distinguished by the fact that some degree of adult belief in them still exists in Newfoundland, there are a number of figures which have been believed in and are the subject of occasional or potential belief today. There is very little evidence of adult belief in them in the Newfoundland Archive reports concerning threatening figures, but such figures as mermaids, giants and Jack the Ripper are still believed in occasionally in the Province and it is probable that a greater proportion of belief in them exists elsewhere in other cultures. There is certainly belief in monsters, sea-serpents and flying saucers, for example, in other realms of popular tradition, and serving other functions, in various cultures. The figures presented here are adapted from these other areas of tradition for the specific purpose of verbal social control. In this function they draw heavily on their close association with the supernatural and the world of popular belief. Belief in them is subject to considerable variation, and they are presented alphabetically here as it is difficult if not impossible to discern any hierarchy in the degree of belief accorded to each figure within the group.

A46. <u>The Cat and Nine Tails.</u>[58]

A46.1. Children in my community are threatened by....the Cat and Nine Tails.... The Cat

---

[58] This figure is clearly an imaginative elaboration and adaptation of the instrument of physical punishment known as the cat-o'-nine-tails.

and Nine Tails was a huge cat with nine tails. This was used when children swore. The Cat and Nine Tails would chase any child who swore. (Centreville) Q67-4.

A47. Davy Jones.

A47.1. There were several places around the community which were out of bounds to children because they were dangerous or because of the damage children might cause. Most of these places had various characters associated with them. The cliffs behind the school had two such figures living in the caves and among the rocks. One was the Boogie-man and the other Davy Jones. (Port Rexton) Q67-996.

A48. The Flying Saucer.

This appears only in a list of eighteen figures reported from Forrest's Point on the north west coast (Q67-158). It indicates how recent scientific fact and fiction may be utilised in social control. The widespread belief in unidentified flying objects, together with their supernatural aura, makes them eminently suitable for this kind of adaptation.

A49. Giants.

Giants are extremely rare in the reports of threatening figures in Newfoundland. The idea of a gigantic man, often a cannibal or devourer, however, is common as a frightening figure in folk narrative in Newfoundland, as elsewhere. The Black Man and the boogie man are referred to as giants in some of the reports, and human beings of extraordinary size are also used in threats. The only example of a superhuman figure of

TIGHT BINDING

this kind is "the Roaring Giant" mentioned in the list of figures from Forrest's Point (Q67-158).

A50. Gollywog.

Although the gollywog is usually identified with a fuzzy-haired black doll, the word "gollywog" can also be applied to a person who is dirty or untidy, especially if his hair is untidy.[59] Extension of the idea of blackness and untidiness may account for the development of this figure into something sufficiently frightening to be used in threats. As a doll it is innocuous and yet the reports show that, at least in the child's mind, it can be built up into an imaginary figure with terrifying characteristics typical of other supernatural creatures. The doll itself, however, has certain latent frightening qualities already in that it is black, ragged, woolly and usually not sharply defined in shape - less anthropomorphic than other dolls. The word "gollywog" is of fairly recent origin. It is defined as: "A name invented for a black (male) doll, fantastically dressed, with staring eyes and a shock of fuzzy black hair."[60] and as a "Grotesque usually black doll; bugbear."[61]

---

[59] The term "Bully-boo" is also used in Newfoundland to describe such a person.

[60] OED Supplement. The word is not listed in OED, and the Supplement gives the earliest printed citation as 1895.

[61] H.W. Fowler, and F.G. Fowler, eds., The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (Oxford, 1966), cited hereafter as COD. It is interesting to note that the COD definition includes the idea of a "bugbear". This corroborates the reports cited here, even though neither the COD nor OED Supplement includes any references to the use of the word as a threatening figure.

TIGHT BINDING

The COD states that the etymology is unknown, but the Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology[62] notes that it was 'perhaps suggested by golly, Negro perversion of God, and polliwog (dial. and U.S.) tadpole." This latter word is of special interest in that one of the Newfoundland reports (A50.3) identifies the figure with a frog.

A50.1. I have heard children threatened by gollywogs etc., because they were naughty and to prevent them from going to dangerous places. I didn't know then that it was a doll.... I didn't know what it was, you know, a doll, a little black doll, you know....Yes, it's a little black doll. They use it to frighten children more or less. They also use it in a way when you're bad: ...."Well, if you don't be quiet the gollywog will get you!" It's something like a devil or boo man, something ugly - black. It's used in the same way as they use "boo-man". (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-121.

Indirect

A50.2. When parents wish children to behave.... The "Golly-Wog" was also used. (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-552.

A50.3. Golly Wog. I heard this often when I was little. I thought of it as being a big slimy frog, with big bulging eyes. I don't remember if I was ever told this but I always associated it with a frog.... The Golly Wog was used to keep me away from the swamp behind our country house. (St. John's) 68-6.

A51. Jack Frost.

From the earliest times man had conceptualised and personified the elements of his natural environment. Gods

---

[62] C.T. Onions, et al., The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology (Oxford, 1966), cited hereafter as ODEE.

FLAT BINDING

and spirits of water, wood and field, of wind, frost and snow, among others, abound in mythology and folk tradition. Remnants of these concepts may be said to linger in such personifications of the elements as Jack Frost. In a natural environment such as that of Newfoundland, where winter cold can be severe, there is an obvious practical reason for warning children against exposing themselves to the dangers of frostbite. The Newfoundland references to Jack Frost clearly centre on this practical necessity, but they also show how the usage is extended to keep children in bed or indoors, to prevent them from going to dangerous places and even in a more general way to encourage obedience.

Jack Frost is usually threatened in a rather playful manner and is less frightening than many other threatening figures. Even so, the idea of frostbite is strongly emphasised in that he is often said to bite children, especially their noses, toes and fingers. There is a parallel here with the Germanic Fingerbiter, the French croquemitaine and other figures whose primary characteristic is that of devouring. On a less frightening level of social control, which extends into the realm of games which adults play with young children, there are also links with threats of "snickersneezing". This is defined in some parts of England as a game in which an adult playfully pretends to pinch off a child's nose between the fingers, putting the thumb between them to represent the nose after its pretended removal.

A51.1. "Jack Frost is out tonight!" (Mount Pearl) 967-380.

GRADUATE STUDIES

TIGHT BINDING

A51.2. "Jack Frost is just around the corner." (Bell Island) Q67-502.

A51.3. ....if it was winter, "You'd better come in early or Jack Frost will get you and bite off your toes and nose." (Chapel Arm) Q67-962.

A51.4. Sometimes when it's cold the parents usually say, "Jack Frost will have you." (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-900.

A51.5. Another word used....is Jack Frost. It is frequently heard when a parent tells his child to do something and the child hesitates in doing it. The parent would probably say, "You'd better do as I say or Jack Frost will come and take you away." (St. John's) Q67-869.

A51.6. Usually if children want to go out when it is cold parents say, "Jack Frost will bite you." This scares the gullible child and he stays in. (Buchans) Q67-1288.

Indirect

A51.7. Jack Frost was a little man who would tap at windows at night. This was used when children wanted to go outside on a stormy afternoon during the winter. (Centreville) Q67-4.

A51.8. "Jack Frost" is a saying used to frighten children.... "Jack Frost" is used to prevent them from going to dangerous places, or from doing dangerous things. (Dover) Q67-903.

A51.9. Jack Frost was considered to be the frost [that] covered windows. If children didn't put enough clothes on while going to bed or outside, Jack Frost was sure to grab them. (Bell Island) Q67-224.

A51.10. To keep children from going out in very cold weather, they were told that Jack Frost would catch them, or Jack Frost would get their noses. (St. John's) Q67-829.

A51.11. ....if they didn't cover up and go to sleep Jack Frost would get them. (Lewisporte) Q67-411.

A51.12. Two favourite characters who worked wonders at winter time were "Jack Frost" and "Betty Snow". If the children were naughty at night time, grandmother would take them to the window and show them that Jack Frost was coming to get

them and take them off to Betty Snow who was outside waiting. They would sit silently for hours in awe watching Jack Frost form on the window and Betty Snow waiting outside for them. This probably frightened them more than the other names because the frost used to form ugly faces and designs on the windows which the children could see and imagine real. Because the snow was so cold they believed that Betty Snow was a little white snow woman who would take them away and freeze them to death. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-191.

A51.13. If the children got up early in the morning and it was cold the parents would threaten them that Jack Frost would have them if they didn't get back into bed. (Campbellton) Q67-531.

A51.14. To keep them from going outside in the cold parents would say that Jack Frost is out there to bite them. (Winterton) Q67-948.

A51.15. If it was very cold outside and parents didn't want their children to go outside, they would tell the children Jack Frost would bite them if they went out. (Winterton) Q67-455.

A51.16. My mother also used threats like,...."Don't go out in the cold without your cap" or Jack Frost would bite me. (Lewisporte) Q67-411.

A51.17. If the children didn't dress up warmly when they went out in cold weather, the parents would say that Jack-Frost would come and take away your nose. (St. John's) Q67-884.

A51.18. Jack Frost - he was the ice man who would carry you up to the north pole where it was very cold and leave you there forever. (Botwood) Q67-1223.

A52. Jack the Ripper.

Jack the Ripper is the "popular name for a murderer of women in London (1888-91) who mutilated the bodies of his victims."[63] This frightening character is known widely in the English-speaking world as the personification of brutal

---

[63] OED Supplement.

and savage murder, as implied in the use of the word "Ripper". In Newfoundland he lurks in the darkness, in woods, lonely places and also within the community itself, waiting to attack his victims. The attacks often involve ripping or cutting the victim in some way. One report from Hawkes Bay on the north west coast reveals that Jack the Ripper was said to exist "up the coast somewheres", and there is clear evidence that he is regarded by some people as historical fact, in a similar way to the Boston Strangler and other murderers who were never identified or brought to justice. During a field-trip to Parson's Pond on the north west coast in 1966, an elderly woman spoke to Professor Halpert and myself about Jack the Ripper and asked us, "Didn't he live upalong, on the Labrador?" This confirmed a report of the same lady's beliefs contributed to the Archive in 1964 in which she was "sure he lived down on the coast although she never saw him". (Q64A).

Most of the reports indicate, however, that he is an imaginary figure, probably based on exaggerated descriptions of such notorious murderers as the one who committed the crimes in London. His characteristics are very similar to those of other supernaturals in that he operates at night, he has the power to get or take children and to inflict bodily harm of a specific and horrifying kind. He is used to get children in before dark, to keep them from dangerous places and also for general misbehaviour.

A52.1. ....to get them in before dark - "Jack the Ripper's out there." (Appleton) Q67-1082.

A52.2. "Jack the Ripper'll get you." (St. John's) Q67-832.

A52.3. ....her father used to say, "If you're not home by ten p.m. you'd better watch out because Jack the Ripper will get you." He used to tell her this....when she was fourteen and went outdoors at night. (St. John's) Q67-1110.

Indirect

A52.4. Jack-the-ripper was a figure that was more realistic to me because I saw the movie [about him] when I was younger. Whenever the name was mentioned I became frightened, especially when left alone, or outside of the house after dark. (Grand Falls) Q67-116.

A52.5. Also Jack the Ripper is used, who is supposed to be in any place a parent doesn't want a child to go. (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1049.

A52.6. Jack the Ripper - [to] induce them to sleep. (St. John's) Q67-303.

A52.7. When he wanted them to come in before dark he would say that Jack the Ripper would get them. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-1191.

A52.8. Children were also told that Jack the Ripper was near ponds and marshy areas and if they went near these dangerous places Jack the Ripper would get them. (St. John's) Q67-949.[64]

A52.9. Old Jack the Ripper, they used to say that he was comin' sometimes, you know.... Jack the Ripper, he's up the coast somewheres on his way down, now, Jack the Ripper is! They'll have to be good or else Jack the Ripper was goin' to take 'em! ....I used to think he was some kind of a....ugly-shaped person, you know, or something like that, a real old, ugly person.... Well, I thought he might take you and carry you away. They used to tell us he'd take us and carry us away, you know! (Hawkes Bay) T C276,66-24.

---

[64] This citation illustrates the confusion between Jack the Ripper and Jack the Lantern evident in some reports, as noted in the commentary on A34 above.

A52.10. Before the war [i.e. World War II] children were often frightened with threats of Jack the Ripper, who went around tearing women's and children's coats. (St. John's) Q67-1063.

A52.11. ....Jack the Ripper, well they....what they used to call Jack the Ripper, well he was comin'....the old people [said]; he'd rip you open, see; rip you open, Jack the Ripper would. (St. Paul's) T C285,66-24.

A52.12. Jack the Ripper: A man with a knife who cut people to pieces. (North West Brook) Q67-989.

A52.13. Jack the Ripper - Would come into your house with a knife and probably kill you if you weren't good. (St. John's) Q67-601.

A52.14. Jack the Ripper was a common threat on children. Parents would tell them that if they were bad that during the night Jack the Ripper would come and cut off their heads. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1047.

A53. The Man in the Moon.

Dites and cautionary tales about the Man in the Moon make his name familiar to children, often in a frightening context, as in those tales which explain that he was put in the moon for cutting or gathering wood or performing some other work on the sabbath. The threats concerning him are usually to warn children against doing certain things which are unacceptable on a Sunday, although he may sometimes be used for discouraging other types of behaviour too.

A53.1. "Don't go out or the man in the moon'll get ya." This was used by parents in Catalina to make their children obey. It is reported to have been quite effective and actually did instill great fear in young children. The man in the moon threat was used to deter children from doing other things as well as going out. (Catalina) 67-6.

Indirect.....

TIGHT BINDING

A53.2. When children want to do such things as skating on Sunday, the grown-ups tell the children that the man in the moon will take them. They explain to the children that the man in the moon was doing something wrong - chopping wood - on Sunday and that is how he got there. (Botwood) Q67-1267.

A53.3. The man in the moon is a man who at one time chopped wood on Sunday and as punishment God placed him up in the moon. This was used by old people as an example to children (especially) who were tempted to do things on Sunday that [were] thought to be unholy. (St. John's) Q67-1068.

A54. Mermaids.

In a maritime environment it is natural that young children will be warned away from going to beaches, onto wharves or into boats alone and also that they will be warned against going into certain stretches of water before they had learned to swim, against swimming when the water is very cold, swimming too far out in the salt water, or playing such games as jumping from one pan of sea ice to another - a favourite game of Newfoundland boys in winter time. In Newfoundland, mermaids are used specifically in threats concerned with salt water and its attendant dangers.

A54.1. ...."Don't go down on that ice today, recess time, mind now! If you are not careful a mermaid will get you and carry you out to sea." (Elliston) 68-24.

A54.2. "Don't let me catch you in that water! Do you know it is only July month? The mermaids will get you if you are not careful." (Elliston) 68-24.

A54.3. The mermaids will carry you away if you go down there." To prevent children from going down to the beach by themselves. (Musgrave Harbour) Q67-504.

TIGHT BINDING

A54.4. "Don't go down landwash [i.e. seashore] - or the mermaids will get you." I remember this being used by my mother as a threat when I was a youngster (approximate age - six to ten).... She never described the mermaids to me or what they would do to me. I used to imagine them as beautiful girls with a large very scaly tail. I imagined they would come and take me and carry me to some underwater place, cut my legs off and put a tail on me. Accompanying this threat there was usually a story about how sad the family would be should this happen. I usually didn't want them to be sad and so usually it had a considerable effect. (François) 68-3.

Indirect

A54.5. To prevent them from going to dangerous places they were threatened with the mermaids.... (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

A54.6. Mermaids were used for the following reasons: (1) To keep children from swimming in the salt water before August month when the water would be warm. (Before this it would be too cold and swimmers may get chills or cramps. Mermaids would not be seen in August.) (2) To keep children from playing "steppy cock". ("Steppy cock" is the jumping from pan to pan on sea ice that hung around the shores and coves in the spring of the year.) (Elliston) 68-24.

A54.7. If children went near the water when they were told not to, a mermaid would come out of the water and grab them. The informant said that as a child he believed this. (Wesleyville) 67-18.

A54.8. Children were threatened to keep them from doing something that the parent did not want them to do. For example, my Grandmother was continually trying to keep my mother away from the sea and boats. She used to tell her, "You can't get in that water until you learn how to swim first." In order to get a response she would tell her that a mermaid used to live in the water near a rock in the bay. Here she had a house that was [crammed] full of people, especially children, that she had grabbed from boats while they were playing. So, she told her that unless she wanted to be pulled under the water and to be made [to] live with the mermaid in her house, she had to keep away from boats. (Greenspond) Q67-390.

A54.9. As a child I remember hearing stories of how mermaids came out of the sea and sat upon rocks, some distance from the water's edge. When the tide "fell" the mermaid was unable to get back into the sea and so waited for someone to come and help her. If a person saw a mermaid in this position he is obliged to help her or else he will have bad luck. Usually this bad luck is to fall overboard or drown by slipping off rocks.... It was probably a story told by parents to keep children away from [the] beach because to me the possibility of having to push such a creature (half woman, half fish) back into the sea was very frighte (Gillams) 68-17.

A55. Monsters.

By their very nature monsters are obvious choices as threatening figures. Such definitions as the following illustrate the many qualities typical of such figures which monsters are thought to possess:

> "Mis-shapen animal or plant, abortion; imaginary animal compounded of incongruous elements, e.g. centaur, sphinx, griffin; inhumanly wicked person, inhuman example of (cruelty etc.); animal, thing of huge size."[65]

Reports of monsters as threatening figures in Newfoundland indicate that they are used for specific purposes, primarily to warn children away from dangerous places or things. The characteristics of the monsters, and their names, are subject to infinite variation.

A55.1. ....a threat used on me personally was, "Don't go near the landwash or the big hairy monster will get you."[66] (Burin) Q67-427.

---

[65] OED.

[66] Many threatening figures are said to be hairy, e.g. the boogie man and the bully boo. See also A99 below.

Indirect

A55.2. ....in Bryants Cove, C.B. my cousins were told not to go near a certain very dangerous cliff because there was supposed to be a "nine-headed monster" in the ocean there, which had "eaten Uncle Jim's cow as she was eating grass on top of this cliff". This kept the very young children away from there until they were old enough not to believe such stories. (Bryants Cove) Q64A.

A55.3. Fairies always recline on a "fairy's stool" or toadstool and rumour has it that if anyone touches this stool a huge monster comes from it.[67] (Middle Brook) Q67-427.

A55.4. Marsh Monsters was a term used to describe some frightful creatures which lived in a marsh just across from where I lived. (The marsh was just behind the Old Colony Club on Portugal Cove Road. It's gone now and in its place is a whole subdivision of new houses.) In order to get to the store I would have to go past this marsh and with no street lights I used to be pretty scared. (St. J

A56. Night Riders.

Mysterious figures which ride by night, such as the Wild Hunt, are found in a number of European and North American references. Some of these are based on human beings who actually terrorised others, as with the gangs which, according to the OED, "inflicted great damage on [American] tobacco plantations under cover of night". The night rider has been defined as: "one that rides at night; esp. a member of a secret band who ride masked at night doing acts of violence

---

[67] This is apparently an extension of the beliefs which link fairies with supposedly poisonous fungi.

TIGHT BINDING

for the purpose of punishing or terrorizing",[68] and as "a pixy who rides a horse at night."[69] The single instance from Newfoundland suggests supernatural figures developed on this model.

A56.1. As children, living in St. John's, we were warned of the Night Riders - a band of white robed men on horses who galloped through a huge empty lot across the street, and whipped and punished naughty children they found there after nine o'clock at night. This lot was until a few years ago known as Thompson's field. It is now a new housing development. (St. John's) Q67-730.

A57. Sea Horse.

A57.1. When mother was young, the "Sea Horse" was always under the stagehead and it kept u away from the water. (Portuga

A58. Sea Serpent.

Like the Sea Horse, the Sea Serpent is used specifically to protect children from the dangers connected with the sea, and in this case children are warned against swimming alone or without their parents' permission.

A58.1. "The Sea-Serpent will carry you away if you go swimming by yourself." (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

---

[68] See the relevant entry in P.G. Gove, et al., eds., Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language (Springfield, 1961), cited hereafter as Webster.

[69] EDD.

TIGHT BINDING

Indirect

A58.2. Sea-Serpent would carry away children who went swimming against their parents' wishes. (Terrenoeville) Q67-727.

A59. Something.

It is often the case that frightening figures are unspecific, and indeed this is one of their prominent characteristics. It is therefore not surprising that at times they lack specification altogether and may be referred to simply as "something" or "someone" with all the attendant mystery of not knowing precisely what is meant to materialise. The single report of this use of "something" in the Newfoundland data is interesting in that it describes how children frighten each other with such figures and also warn each other against tempting fate by inviting the figures to come.

A59.1. I remember on several occasions when my sisters and I were home at night the door came open - probably pushed by a sudden gust of wind - and I said, "Come in." My younger sister, who was about fourteen at the time, would get very scared and warn me, "You shouldn't say things like that. What if something did come in?" I would torment her for a while by saying, "You go and close it; I'm afraid to." By this time she'd really be afraid and I'd close the door. When Mom came in my sister would usually complain that she wasn't staying at home with me any more because "some of those nights when she says, 'Come in' something is going to come in". She didn't know [what] - possibly a ghost. Of course my mother didn't fail to warn me about "this foolishness". I don't know if she (my mother) believed that someone or something would come in or not. (Gillams) 68-17.

A60. Springheeled Jackson.

Although Spring-heel Jack is known in the Province, and is mentioned in a tape recorded at St. Paul's on the north west coast in 1966 (T C285,66-24), the only report of this type of figure refers to him as "Springheeled Jackson". Spring-heeled Jack is "a name given to a person who from his great activity in running or jumping, esp. in order to rob or frighten people, was supposed to have springs in the heels of his boots; dial. a highwayman."[70]

A60.1. Springheeled Jackson - in St. John's. Nobody could catch him, although they could see him. He was supposed to have springs on his shoes and was often seen to jump over fences quite easily. (St. John's) Q63B.

FIGURES ADAPTED FROM LITERARY FICTION AND ADVERTISING

A small group of figures in the Newfoundland material are apparently drawn from literature, including children's fiction and nursery rhymes, and also from advertising. Some of these are intrinsically frightening whereas others are made so by having their unusual features exaggerated in some way. The influence of fiction is also illustrated in a number of examples already quoted. Some of the descriptions of witches in A39 above, for example, show evidence of literary influence.

---

[70] OED.

A61. Blue Beard.

A61.1. Blue Beard, a character who cut off his wives' heads and put them in the cupboard, would chase children if they were bad. (St. John's) Q67-1152.

A62. Petticoat Luc(e).[71]

A62.1. Petticoat Luc hit her mother and was banished to the Red Sea to make rope out of sand, but she could never succeed. If a child was naughty to her mother, Petticoat Luc would come and carry her [i.e. the child] off to the Red Sea with her. (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

A63. Reddy Kilowatt ['rɛdɪ 'kɪləwɑt].

This figure is the advertising symbol of the Newfoundland Light and Power Company and is used by other electricity companies elsewhere in Canada. The figure is a caricature of a man, with a friendly face and with angular limbs suggestive of lightning or electric current. He appears in only one report in the Newfoundland data but illustrates how a friendly figure taken from advertising may be used in a threat concerned specifically with the turning on and off of electric lights.

A63.1. ....well her father was from Harbour Grace, but when she was about four....her frightening figure was Reddy Kilowatt. An' this is just when this [advertising programme] had begun an' Reddy Kilowatt was being, you know, pushed on..on the ads an' everything. So her mother

[71] Since some of the motifs quoted in this citation are also found in legends, it may be that the details about Petticoat Luc(e) are derived from folk narrative.

would always say, "Reddy Kilowatt's goin' to come if you don't watch yourself!" ['redɪ kɪlowats 'gonə kʌm ɪf jʊ dount? watʃ jər'self] And she was terrified.... I guess she'd seen the symbol, but I think it was associated with turning off the lights, which she was terrified of, you see. She thought that Reddy Kilowatt would come an' turn off the lights, or lock her in the closet, too; this was another [threat] .... It was the darkness, I'm sure, and she might have basically associated with darkness ....if you just told [her] that..that Reddy Kilowatt was coming, and..and made any movement to close the door of a room or anything, she screamed - she really screamed an' hollered. She was terrified. She was, you know..I've never seen anybody so terrified! (Harbour Grace) T C370,67-31.

A64. Tom Frainey.

A64.1. Tom Frainey (a character in a nursery rhyme) was used to frighten naughty children. (St. John's) Q67-1152.

A65. Wee Willie Winkle.

A65.1. I have a vague remembrance of being told by my kindergarten teacher about "Wee Willie Winkle". There was a rhyme about him.

"Wee Willie Winkle runs through the town
Upstairs, downstairs, in his night gown;
Looking through the windows, peeping
through the lock,
Are all the children in their beds,
For it's now eight o'clock."

I presume the teacher was encouraging the children to go to bed early but I do feel her method was rather cruel, although she may not have meant this in a frightening way. However I was frightened at the very thought of going near a window or door lock. I'm sure many of my classmates at this time were equally scared. (St. John's) Q67-112.

A66. Whiskery Bill.

A66.1. ....the one used in our family [was] "Whiskery Bill". Whiskery Bill was a comic figure in

The Family Herald, a very hairy, weird-looking creature. To prevent us from going on the wharf, our parents told us that Whiskery Bill lived in the wharf. (St. Mary's) Q67-366.

INVENTED FIGURES

A large number of figures appear to have been invented specifically for use in threats and other types of verbal social control. The essential difference between them and the figures already discussed is that they are constructs which have certain sociological functions but they are not believed in by those who employ them for this purpose. Some revealing comments are made about such figures in one of the Archive reports about the boo man. These comments could be extended to most, if not all, of the invented figures:

> "The parent used this figure merely as a means of having the child obey. He knew there was no Boo-man; yet he was serious when threatening the child. Usually the very young children, or some of them, were frightened...."[72]

These figures, therefore, are pedagogical fikts in the fullest sense. Many of them have no definitive etymology and their origins and development are often obscure or unknown. Fascinating though it is, their complicated patterning in the Indo-European languages has never been analysed in detail. They include the complex boo/bogey group and numerous other figures, bounded only by the range of the imagination, which embody various frightening characteristics. These characteristics are typical of those displayed both by the supernatural figures and by those

---

[72] Q67-446. See A81.45 below.

from folk belief, fiction and other sources presented earlier in this section. Indeed, the invented figures are deliberate embodiments of such frightening characteristics, which are freely drawn upon in their creation and development. These constructs are usually composite in form and function and incorporate many of the frightening characteristics which such figures are expected to possess.

THE BOO/BOGEY GROUP

In the present study it is possible only to skim the surface of the vast and complex series of linguistic and semantic clusters which constitute the boo/bogey group in the Indo-European languages. This is numerically the largest group of threatening figures in the Newfoundland reports, and the most frequently used in the social control of children. The members of the group have many characteristics in common. They all begin with bilabials, usually the voiced bilabial plosive [b] followed by [o], [ʌ] or [u:], and form part of an extensive cluster of terms in the Indo-European languages which are related semantically if not etymologically. The initial element, typically [bo], [bʌ], [bu:], [po], [pʌ], [pu:], is the feature which binds them together and most distinguishes them from other threatening figures in their genesis and development.[73] The frequency of occurrence and the variety of names of figures in this group support the hypothesis that

---

[73] See pp. 52-56 above.

the cluster may have evolved from an original bilabial sound or sound group, which either stood alone, or in initial position in a larger linguistic form. This sound or sound group, it is suggested, may then have become associated with certain unpleasant or frightening concepts, thus generating the cluster as we know it in the Indo-European languages today. The variant forms within the cluster reflect the linguistic variation typical of the semi-taboo usage of words which have religious, diabolical or scatalogical connotations. The large number of variants is due not to euphemism,[74] which apparently characterises only those figures in which some belief still exists, but to adaptation and regional or local pronunciation of the terms, following the usual patterns of linguistic change and development in the various languages and dialects. For example, while the pronunciation ['bougɪ mɛn] (bogey man) is the norm in standard British usage, ['bogɪ mɛn] (boogie man) is the predominant Newfoundland pronunciation for what appears to be the same figure. The pronunciation ['bogɪ mɛn], with some regional variation, also appears to be usual in many northern areas of North America, and spellings such as <u>boogie man</u> reflect this. In the southern United States the form <u>boogerman</u> is common, indicating yet another variation which again differs from English <u>bogey man</u>. Also the /bu/ element in North American usage in these words has remained as [bo], [bʌ] or [bu:], and is therefore closer to the frightening exclamation <u>boo</u> or <u>boh</u> than the contemporary British equivalent

---

[74] Forms such as <u>boo man</u> and <u>boogie man</u> are in a sense already euphemisms in that they may be used instead of <u>Devil</u> or <u>Black Man</u>.

[bou-], which forms the first syllable of bogey man.

The word boo or bo(h) has a long though somewhat obscure history. In spite of the many, and often fanciful, etymologies which have been put forward for the word, its origins appear to be irrevocably lost in antiquity and it would be futile to attempt a definitive etymology. Even so, some important stages in the development of the word and its apparent cognates are less obscure. According to Firth, the fiat lux of the ancient Hindu religious world is the Sanskrit word bhū:

> "In the Ancient Hindu writings, speech is personified as a goddess, Vāk or Vagdevi, or is regarded as a manifestation of Frahma or God. The Sacred Vāk has neither beginning nor end, but is co-eval with God and Man. It is the creative power of Brahma....To the Ancient Hindus the world was created by 'verbal being' with 'the world building power' of Vāk.... The earliest divine words once uttered worked miracles. God created the earth by saying bhū. And through the instrumentality of Vāk, the Supreme Lord created everything. So that Vāk, though second to God, was first in the order of Creation."[75]

The word bhū, meaning be, and presumably itself an imperative, already had sacred connotations from the beginning of time, as far as the ancient Hindus were concerned. As it was a word of power its usage presumably inspired due awe and respect from the outset and therefore automatically entered the realm of linguistic taboo.[76] If we are to search no further back into the hazardous areas of hypothetical Indo-European word-forms, it might be possible to make a beginning here with this Sanskrit

---

[75] J.R. Firth, The Tongues of Men and Speech, ed. P. Strevens, (London, 1964), p. 5.

[76] One aspect of the word, it might be conjectured, developed a talismanic, mystical and frightening connotation irrespective of the original meaning.

word, regarding it as cognate, if not identical, with a postulated Indo-European original. Although it is not possible to trace the development of the word bhū in detail from its Sanskrit meaning into the forms and meanings under discussion in the present study, it is not wholly improbable that a similar or identical morpheme has persisted into modern Indo-European languages as boo or bo(h). It is clear that boo/bo(h) exists as a morpheme with frightening connotations in at least the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family and the modern languages descended from that branch. If we accept that boo/bo(h) is semantically related to the words in the boo/bogey group, it follows that the ur-term *bhū has been passed down through the languages of the Indo-European family and has come to represent, or be associated with, certain well-defined semantic areas in a number of related modern languages. The relationship is seen, for example, in the numerous cognates in the Germanic languages, including English, which have a rich variety of such terms. The relationship between these terms may of course be obscured by the processes of linguistic change, and also by other important influences such as adaptation, analogy and simple confusion and/or misinterpretation. There seems no doubt, for instance, that the linguistic form of the names in the

boo/bogey group is closely related to those in the puck[77] group, and perhaps also to such frightening exclamations as Fee,Fi,Fo,Fum.[78] The many interrelated figures of the boo/bogey group, the puck group and others may thus perhaps be viewed as variations played on the same fundamental linguistic and semantic theme.

A number of scholars have documented some of the relationships between the members of the boo/bogey and puck groups, among others, and also discussed the relationships between these groups and other clusters of similar terms. Grimm, for example, established clear links between many frightening figures in their form and function, and his work in this respect deserves greater recognition than is currently fashionable.[79] Allen draws together a fascinating body of evidence linking devils with insects in her discussion of such words as fly and bug.[80] The most important scholarly

---

[77] Puck occurs in a number of variant forms, including OE púca, ON púki, Welsh pwca,pwci and Irish púca. The OED definition states that Puck is "An evil, malicious, or mischievous spirit or demon of popular superstition" and adds that the figure was "Treated as a unique being, and in middle Eng. (the pouke) commonly identified with the biblical devil; from the 16th c. (with capital P) the name of a fancied mischievous or tricksy goblin or sprite, called also Robin Goodfellow and Hobgoblin." As with other words under discussion here, the etymology is uncertain: "The ulterior history of the name and the question of whether it was originally Teutonic or Celtic, is unsettled".

[78] OED defines Fee-faw-fum as "An exclamation indicating a murderous intention", and also as "nonsense, fitted only to terrify children".

[79] Grimm, Teutonic Mythology.

[80] Allen, (1935) 1039-1046.

discussion of the boo/bogey group, which he calls "the goblin group", is that by Henry who demonstrates the close relationship within the group and also the great variety of forms, including many used in frightening and threatening children.[81] The Wassons, who approach this subject from the entirely different viewpoint of their microphobe/microphile thesis, have gone a long way towards establishing the semantic correlation between several clusters of words, including the boo/bogey group and the puck group, in a number of languages. They demonstrate the existence of such relationships, although probably because this is not the prime concern of their work, their reasoning is not always convincing.[82]

The addition of the element man to many of the figures in the boo/bogey group in Newfoundland, e.g. boo man, boogie man, Sandman, crust man etc., suggests that they have characteristics which at least resemble human beings in some way, however distorted or grotesque they may be. Such figures are often described as a "horrible man", rather than as a creature or an animal, so they are thought of as vaguely anthropomorphic. Many of the names of figures also have a diminutive suffix such as -ie or -y which serves to moderate the frightening effect somewhat and also emphasises the fact that these names are made to sound familiar to children in the same way as nicknames and pet-names which end with similar diminutive suffixes.

---

[81] Henry, 404-416.

[82] Wasson and Wasson, I, esp. pp. 80-206.

In the Newfoundland material, terms such as boo, boo man, boogie man, boo bagger, bully boo and the like may be identified not only with a threatening figure but also with dirty, unpleasant, distasteful or disliked people or things. There appears to be the same semantic correlation between these figures and the distasteful or unmentionable which has also been observed by Grimm, Allen, Henry and the Wassons, among others. Figures such as the boo man and the boogie man may have diabolical characteristics and may be identified with the Devil or other supernaturals. These links preserve some of the moralistic overtones of the threats which are used to control behaviour which goes against accepted moral or ethical codes.

The boo/bogey figures, as they are apparently invented specifically to control all kinds of unacceptable behaviour, are normally used in a general way to discourage the child from misbehaving. In Newfoundland, however, these figures may also supplant those figures of folk belief which in other areas or cultures are used to protect crops, to keep children away from dangerous places and so on. Thus, although they are usually omnipresent, especially in the darkness, the boo/bogey figures may also have certain specific locations in which their function is to control particular kinds of dangerous or unacceptable behaviour.

A67. Bo.

This figure occurs in only one report in the Newfoundland material, and is unusual in that it is used by children in

threats concerned specifically with their own play within the house. Henry points out that Scottish and Northern English Bo, pronounced [bo:], [bu:] means "hobgoblin, sprite". He adds:

> "The Lanark Bo is described as a female spirit who comes to warn a family when a member of it is about to die. A 19th century Westmoreland account tells of 'the dread sound of the terrible Bo'. In Lincoln bo is recorded (1671) as a term for frightening children, i.e. a bugbear."[83]

A67.1. Bo: this was a man who lived underneath the house. Older brother and sister could talk to him and could attract his attention by tapping on the floor. He was used as a threat by the older children and to appease him the young child had to give something to the older brother or sister. The children had a treasure box and Bo could change things for them. Young children gave things to be exchanged to older children who in turn completed the transaction with Bo. Sometimes, if the young child was not behaving properly, Bo kept her gift but did not give anything in return. The young child was very fearful of Bo. (St. John's) Q63B.

I was later able to speak to the informant about this figure and she told me that Bo [bou] was purely a family figure, invented by the children, as far as she knew. The younger children involved were aged four to seven years, the older ones around nine to twelve. Bo was not used as a threat beyond the age of seven.

A68. Boo.

A68.1. To wean a baby from the breast, mother used to put oakum down her bosom. Each time the baby cried for the breast he was shown the

---

[83] Henry, 409-410.

TIGHT BINDING

> oakum, accompanied by mother's saying, "There's boos down there, see?" The child stopped crying and accepted milk from a glass. This was the custom of most women in the area at that time (1944-50). But it dates much farther back than this. This is only as far back as I can recall.
>
> Nowadays they all feed them from the bottle from the day they're born. They wean them from the bottle by simply tossing the bottle away. (Sop's Arm) 68-10.

The use of the term boos in this example from Sop's Arm is a vivid instance of the fact that the word can mean "a fuzzy or furry substance or object" - itself apparently rather frightening to many young children. Even more fascinating is the device of personifying the distasteful substance and endowing it with supernatural qualities for the express purpose of weaning the child. An almost exact parallel to this is to be found in Raum's vivid account of child-rearing customs among the Chaga:

> "Objects to be avoided by children are called koko by adults. When Siairuka showed a desire to trample about in the cow-dung, the frequent and threatening utterance of this term held him back. When he was being weaned, his mother refused him the breast by calling it koko. Foibe at that age was unruly on being put to sleep. She was frightened by her parents: 'The koko is coming!' This personification of koko quieted her down."[84]

A68.2. "The Boos are out tonight." To get children in before dark. (Musgrave Harbour) Q67-504.

A68.3. A small child will not go into a dark room once someone has said...., "There are boos in there." (Random Island) Q67-1104.

A68.4. To prevent their being naughty: "Don't do that - the boos will come." (Port Saunders) Q67-682.

---

[84] Raum, pp. 212-213.

Indirect

A68.5. Boos: Big black things with sharp teeth. Used to scare me when I did something bad or when I wanted to go somewhere my parents didn't want me to go. (Summerford) Q63B.

A68.6. They are threatened with the Boo to keep them from going to dangerous places.... (Badger's Quay) Q67-337.

A68.7. Children are often told if they don't get in before dark the Boo will be after them. (Green Island Brook) Q67-564.

A68.8. "Over on the Southern Shore
Go to bed after supper
See the great big ugly boo
Come chasing Charlie Tucker."
(Port de Grave) Q67-955.

A69. Big Boo.

A69.1. When a parent (usually the mother) said to the child who was tormenting her or who was engaged in some other mischief, "I'm going to tell the Big Boo to come and carry you away if you don't stop that" the kid, since he knew that he was doing something he shouldn't do, thought of him as some great monster that would probably kill him or hurt him in some way. (Dover) Q67-776.

Indirect

A69.2. I remember Big Boo very distinctly. I'm not sure if I was ever told he would chase me if I was a bad girl, but somehow he became a very real part of my existence. How to describe him? Well, he was big; infinitely big, all black and with sharp teeth. And of course he ate little girls, curls and all. I heard my friends talking about the Boogey man but I wasn't at all afraid of him. In fact, I think he kind of amused me. But Big Boo, whatever he was, he terrified me! Even the thought of him sent shivers down my spine. (Wesleyville) Q63B.

A70. Bully Boo ['bɔlɪ bu:].

This term, which is also used to refer to a dirty or untidy person, a person with dirty or untidy hair, a fuzzy object such as a ball of fluff or hair, and also to lice, nasal mucus and other unpleasant concepts, is reported from a number of places on the East Coast and also from Central Newfoundland and Labrador.

A70.1. "I'll give you to the....Bully-boo." (Red Bay; Lab.) Q67-808.

A70.2. "Bully-boo is comin'!"....that was the Devil. (Beaumont South) T C301,66-25.

A70.3. "Here's the Bully-boo" or....whatever they might call him now. Sometimes you'd say Bully-boo and more times you'd say the Black Man. (Beaumont South) T C301,66-25.

A70.4. ....if the Bully Boo was mentioned....kids would start to bawl, more or less, an' this was pretty well guaranteed....if the Boo Man didn't stop kids from bein' unruly, you know, or something, well the Bully Boo was bound to accomplish [it]. The Bully Boo'll be here after the Boo Man, if you're not in bed then. If you're not in bed then you would just..it's just too late, you know....now well gosh you just had to be in bed by the time the Bully Boo [came]. You know, "If the Bully Boo came round an' found you....not in bed! Hah!" [if ðə 'bɔlɪ bʉu kɛim ræund ən fæund jə 'nat? n bɛd | ha:] [spoken in an urgent undertone, the Hah! being said in whispered ingressive tones] .... Terrible thing! Nobody ever said what the terrible thing would be! But you just didn't wait to find out anyway. You went to bed! (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

A70.5. "If you don't come in before dark, the bully boos will get you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-189.

A70.6. "If you go in there the bully-boo will eat you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

Indirect

A70.7. The Bully-boo and the Black man were both used to threaten children who had done wrong. They were used for younger children but for older ones the "devil" was used. (St. John's) Q67-1009.

A70.8. In my hometown, children are often threatened with such things as the Boo-man and, more commonly, the Bully-boo(s). (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-194.

A70.9. The term that is most commonly used to frighten or threaten children is "Bully-boo". Some children are really frightened when threatened by this. (Port de Grave) Q67-61.

A70.10. Tiny children were warned of a "Bully Boo" to get them home before dark.... (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1241.

A70.11. When the children wouldn't behave properly the parents would tell the children that the boo-man or the bully-boo was coming to get them. (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1074.

A70.12. ....the Bully Boo was a fearsome guy....an' he wouldn't..probably wouldn't bother to knock; just walk right on in! So you have to be in bed before he comes! (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

A71. Janney-Boos ['dʒænɪ bu:z].[85]

A71.1. Well I always used to tell her, you know, when she was real small, "Now if you don't be good the Janney-Boos'll have you!" [næu ɪf jə dount? bɪ gəd də 'dʒænɪ bu:z l æv jə] .... She was always frightened of the Janney-Boos .... Oh well sometimes she'd say, "Where do the Janney-Boos come from?".... I'd say, "Harbour le Cou!" Harbour le Cou: that's where all Janneys used to always come from when they come in, you know. (Cow Head) T C265,66-24.

---

[85] In the single report of this figure it is clearly related to the Christmas mummers who are known as Janneys. See B7 below.

A72. Kick a boos.

A72.1. If the children did anything naughty against parents' wishes then they would say, "I'll send you to the kick a boos...." (St. John's) Q67-341.

A73. Kolly-boo(s).

A73.1. The Kolly-boo and Bully-boo were supposed [to be] some queer creatures who lived in the dark usually. The typical threat would be, "You had better come in before the Kolly-boos get you." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-606.

A74. Mully-boo.

A single report of this figure comes from Bay Bulls (Q67-1297). It appears to be a variant of bully-boo, and if a small child is untidy "he is told he looks like a mully-boo".

A75. Tiny boo ['tainɪ bu:].

A75.1. ....I used to be afraid when..my older sister used to tell me about the Tiny Boo, whatever he was! Up in Uncle Joe (N) 's shop, up there on the hill. An'..an' I had to be pretty quiet if that Tiny Boo didn't come! ....whatever kind of a fit-out he was, I don't know. I never seen un yet! ....Well that's what they used to threaten....all the children on, that feller, whatever he was! (Triton) T C332,66-25.

A76. Ugly-boo.

This figure is found in a single reference from Port de Grave (Q66-51).

A77. Boo-bagger/Boo-beggar ['bu: ˌbægər] / ['bu: ˌbɛgər] / ['bəu ˌbɛgər].

This compound is evidently derived from bull-begger, which itself is of obscure origin:

> "As the obvious combination bull + beggar does not appear to yield a suitable sense, it is generally assumed that there must have been some alteration under the influence of 'popular etymology', e.g. that it is a (further) alteration of bull-bear; or that the second element has been altered from boggard, buggart 'bogle'. But evidence is entirely wanting. The word was sometimes used with a punning allusion to the Papal BULL, and to BEGGAR."[86]

The OED, which cites the first appearance of the word in literature in Scot's Discoverie of Witchcraft in 1584, refers the reader to the word bull-bear for the definition of bull-beggar. Bull-bear is defined as: "A spectre, bogey; a scare-crow; a bugbear, or object of groundless terror." The complex problems of the boo/bogey group and its etymologies, however, are again illustrated by the fact that bull-bear also is of uncertain derivation, like its cognate bugbear.

The development of the figure is further confused by the fact that the predominant pronunciation in Newfoundland is ['bu: ˌbægər] which suggests that the second element of the compound may have been confused with the root bag,[87] although the /ɛ/ and /æ/ phonemes in Newfoundland sometimes appear liable to confusion as bag may be pronounced [bæg], [bɛ:g] or [bɛig].[88]

---

[86] OED.

[87] Some of the Newfoundland reports suggest that the figure is thought of as putting children in a bag and taking them away. See A77.20, A77.31 and A77.58 below. The motif is also found in folk narratives. See, for example, Motif G 441, "Ogre carries victim in bag (basket)", in Thompson, Motif-Index, III, 354.

[88] Professor Kirwin draws my attention to the general lowering of /ɛ/ to /æ/ in English West Country dialects which probably accounts for these variant pronunciations in Newfoundland usage.

It is probable that the first element of bull-beggar came to be pronounced in some areas with final dark /l/. This dark /l/ then became assimilated before the following bilabial, perhaps also influenced by analogy with the many other words of the boo/bogey group with similar pronunciations and meanings.

In Newfoundland the term can also mean a person with untidy hair, or it can refer to a fuzzy object such as a bundle of hair or feathers, and also to lice or nasal mucus, in much the same way as boos and bully-boo.

A77.1. The only figures that I have heard of as being frightening figures are the "Boogie-man", and the "Boo-bagger". The association that I have come to connect with these two names is that the Boogie-man will take you away with him if you were not good, but the Boo-baggers would only come to frighten you if you were not good. The threats of the Boogie-man and the Boo-baggers are serious in that they are usually only employed when it is necessary to give the children some disciplinary action. The children are really frightened, because at the age when this means of discipline is employed, the child's imagination is at its peak, and nothing seems impossible, especially if grown-ups say it's true. When I was just little, my sister [who] was about ten years older than me, used to frighten me just about silly....maybe we'd go upstairs together in the dark. She'd say in a scary way, a low mysterious tone: "The Boo-bagger might be around...." She made me feel afraid he would hear me if I was there. You had to be quiet. She'd make a weird little scraping noise or some other unusual sound, and maybe she'd suddenly say, "Boo!" loudly, and this would really scare me, but this was just a game.[89] (Twillingate) Q67-207.

---

[89] Although there is little evidence in this example of controlling behaviour, it illustrates how closely the children's scary games parallel the threats used by adults. Here an older child is using the same verbal devices, and the young child is being encouraged to believe in the figure, and even to keep quiet, although the situational context is different from that normally found in the adult threats.

A77.2. [With] regard to the boo-bagger and the devil, they are both thought of as being exceptionally wicked and detrimental. The boo-bagger is similar to the bear - hairy, same height and size, but without claws. It is entirely black with a blunt face rather than a sharp one like a bear. Its tail is like that of the bear's.... "Don't open that door 'cause the boo-bagger is out there." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

A77.3. Parents also threaten children by saying.... when it is dark, "The boo-bagger is out there." (St. John's) Q67-36.

A77.4. "Don't go in there; the boo-bagger is there." (Lord's Cove) Q67-719.

A77.5. Boo-baggers were also threatened on me, but the effect of this threat was less strong than the threat of the Boogie-man. The Boogie-man was a single figure who was almost like a god. Boo-baggers were presumed to be more plentiful, and they were threatened on me singly, one at a time. If for example someone wanted to deter me from getting into the coal bin, he would say, "Don't get in there. There's a Boo-bagger in there." A Boo-bagger was not a man, but a spirit, and because they were so plentiful (there was one in every closet, under every bed, and everywhere else my folks did not want me to go) they were not as powerful nor as frightening as the Boogie-man. The Boogie-man could take you away, but Boo-baggers could only scare you off. My impression of a Boo-bagger is that it was about a cubic foot in volume, and was nothing but an irregularly-shaped black mass of "scare". They were supposedly known to hang out in cardboard boxes which could fit anywhere, or in dark corners. (Buchans) Q67-1005.

A77.6. To frighten children in the dark a parent might say, "Watch out! The Boo-Baggers are in there." The threats are rarely serious. Children are really frightened when threatened because they believe that everything their parents say or do is right. (Bloomfield) Q67-716.

A77.7. "I'm goin' to send for the boo-baggers." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A77.8. Instead of frightening, the term Boo-bagger had, for us, pleasant connotations. I still have clear memories of an aunt singing as a lullaby:

"Go to sleep, Charlie Bennett, 'fore the Boo-bagger comes!"[90] (Grand Bank) Q67-358.

A77.9. "If you don't stop crying the boo-baggers will come." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A77.10. Oh they say, "You be good or the Boo-bagger'll come!" [ju bɪ gʊd ɔər ðə 'bʉu ˌbægər l̩ kʊm] .... He was always in the dark. (Cow Head) T C255,66-24.

A77.11. ....this is used a lot with very small children, say, two..two or three years an' over....when, you see, they're crying, or something, and the mother wants to stop them from crying, she might say, "Stop crying or the Boo-baggers'll come!" [stɒp 'kræiɪŋ ɔər ðə 'bʉu ˌbægərz̩ l̩ kʌm]. (Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

A77.12. "The boo-baggars are comin'." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A77.13. Boo-baggers - used with small children. Usually no particular description given. "Come here and (do this or get this) because the Boo-baggers are coming!" Threats were usually serious and at least partly effective with most children. (Burin Bay Arm) Q67-538.

A77.14. The Boo-bagger was as tall as a bear, very hairy, black, [with] claws. His face was more like a monkey's - a flat face. Someone older than us would tell us about him - "And here he comes!" (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

A77.15. In our house I remember we had a..a small cupboard; it was dark - you need a dark place, I'd say, so...., "Boo-baggers are in the cupboard! If you don't be good they'll come an' get you!" ['bʉu ˌbægərz ər ɪn̩ nə kʌbərd | ɪf jʊ dount? bɪ gʊd ðɛil kʌm ən gɛt jʉ].... Well it just..was a clothes[-cupboard], just an ordinary clothes-cupboard where you kept clothes. It might be any size or sort of cupboard. Well if..if you had a..a room, a small room off on the house somewhere - for instance, they had the..what they used to call..when they used to have cows on Brunette Island, the milk-houses; well they used to keep old stuff that they didn't use in those places. Well they might just use this place as the..for the home of the Boo-Baggers. (Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

---

[90] In spite of the fact that the figure has pleasant connotations here, the verbal control is clearly stated in the lullaby. The use of threatening figures in lullabies is discussed in Daiken, pp. 25-27, with examples from several European countries. Threats, promises and bribes are common themes in lullabies; see, for example, T.C. Brakely, "Lullaby", in Leach, II, 653-654. See also A81.54 and A81.61 below.

TIGHT BINDING

A77.16. Parents have many ways of getting children to behave. [They are] threatened sometimes but never seriously. If a child wanted to go out in the dark but his parents wouldn't let him they would say, "The boo-baggers will get you...." (Newmans Cove) Q67-32.

A77.17. The threats were usually serious and the children were frightened of them. They were used to keep us indoors and to get us in early .... "If you don't behave yourself, the boo-beggar will get you." (Burin) Q67-326.

A77.18. Children are sometimes threatened with the Boo-bagger. A typical threat is, "If you do that the boo-bagger will get you...." (Lord's Cove) Q67-719.

A77.19. "If you don't go to bed the Boo-baggers will get you." (Milltown) Q67-1172.

A77.20. If children were naughty the parents usually said, "You'd better be good or the boo-baggers will get you." Boo-baggers were supposed to live in the woods and carry off bad children in bags on their backs. (Chapel Arm) Q67-962.

A77.21. "You better go to bed or the boo-begger will get you." (St. John's) Q67-899.

A77.22. "Go to sleep or the Boo-baggers will get you." (Newmans Cove) Q67-1308.

A77.23. "The Boo-Baggers will have you." (Lewisporte) Q67-1272.

A77.24. "If you are bad the Boo-baggers will have you." (Creston) Q67-1118.

A77.25. "If you stay out in the dark the Boo-bagger will have you." (Port Elizabeth) Q67-893.

A77.26. Another common saying is, "The Boo-baggers are going to have you if you don't go to bed" or if the child wanted to go outside in the dark. (Twillingate) Q67-355.

A77.27. ....it could be anywhere, you know....perhaps ..there'd be a..an old record-player or something under the bed, so in..in order to prevent me from going in an' getting all my clothes full of dust, they'd say to me, "Oh! Don't go in there! The Boo-begger'll have you!" [ou dount? gou ɪn ðɛər | ðə 'bu: ˌbɛgər ˌl hæv jə] (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

A77.28. ....my mother would often say, "If you don't be good now, the Boo-beggar's goin' to come

an' take you!" [ɪf jʉu dount? bɪ god næu ðə 'bu: ˌbɛgərz 'gounə kʌm ən tɛik jʉu] (Burin) T C354,67-31.

A77.29. ....if she wanted to insure that you stayed in bed she probably said, "The big boo-bagger is outside the door; if you get out of bed he will take you down into his big black hole." (St. Lawrence) Q67-353.

A77.30. "The Boo-bagger will carry you away." (Lamaline) Q67-752.

A77.31. Boo-Bagger: This was used by my parents on me to keep me in the house after dark. It originates from English Harbour West, Fortune Bay, i.e. as far as I can recall. Everyone in that area used it. This is how it was actually used on me at the age of six years. As I took my coat after supper to go out of doors, my mother said, "Where are you going, Junior?" I replied, "I just going out with John." She then said, "You'd better not, because if you do the Boo-Baggers will carry you away." I said, "They won't then, because there's no Boo-Baggers." She then said, "Oh, yes there is, and you'll see too when these men come down over the mountain (a mountain on the north east side of English Harbour West) and put you in the bags on their back and carry you away." I hesitated a little but then went out of doors. However, within ten minutes I was back into the house again. As I entered, my mother asked, "What did you come back for?" I replied, "I believe the Boo-Baggers are just coming down the mountain." (English Harbour West) 67-5.

Indirect

A77.32. Boo Beggar: This was a common expression, used as a very mild form of fear, but more often used as a means of explaining to a small child any mysterious sounds they might hear in the woods. They were also used to explain shadows cast by objects in the evening sun. Boo Beggars also inhabited any places where the woods were fairly thick. They were similar to Boo men and fairies. (Ireland's Eye) Q63B.

A77.33. Boobaggers: people with a lot of hair. Used to frighten me when I was bad. (Summerford) Q63B.

A77.34. Boo bagger - an old man after bad boys and

girls.[91] (Moreton's Harbour) Q63B.

A77.35. Boo-baggers and the Devil are also used when children are bad or mischievous. These threats are only playful but children really get frightened because they think there is something such as boo-baggers and boo-man. (Point au Gaul) Q67-530.

A77.36. The Boo-baggers and the Boogie-man were usually used to keep children from poking their noses into places where they were [not] wanted, such as cupboards, drawers, or some rooms. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-606.

A77.37. We were threatened with the boo-baggers to get us in before dark so that we could get our school homework done before bedtime. (Ramea) Q67-379.

A77.38. "Boo-baggers" frightened children who stayed up too late or who stayed outdoors after dark after being called to come in. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1312.

A77.39. To induce them to sleep, they were threatened with the Boo-beggars. (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

A77.40. The Boo-bagger was threatened when parents did not want their small children to go near a well or brook. This was also a serious threat. (Port Anson) Q67-402.

A77.41. If there was a certain place parents did not want their children to visit, they were told the....Boo-baggers lived there. (Campbellton) Q67-1266.

A77.42. He is also told not to go to a certain place or area because there are "boo-baggers there". Most children take it seriously and listen, and most children up to eight years have a strong fear of them, especially in the dark. (Milltown) Q67-362.

A77.43. Boo-beggers - Funny looking little creatures who come around begging for alms. Bad children were threatened that they would be given to the boo-beggers. (St. John's) Q67-378.

---

[91] This report, together with A77.32 includes insufficient detail for positive identification. The figures here could equally well be human beings and might therefore also be placed in Class B.

A77.44. The Boo-baggers were supposed to live in dark rooms or other dark places. If children disobeyed they would be put in the room with the Boo-baggers. (St. John's) Q67-706.

A77.45. "Boo-bagger" - the man who would "bring sleep" to children [who] did not want to go to bed at [the] appointed time. (St. John's) Q67-1068.

A77.46. If the children would not come in before it got dark, parents would usually threaten that they would see the....boo-baggers. They would usually be hidden in some dark corner which the children would have to pass. To get the children to sleep it would be the Boo-baggers. They would be hidden behind the door or under the bed. Children would be frightened stiff to hear of this. (Joe Batt's Arm) Q67-519.

A77.47. Boo bagger - something hid away in a dark corner ready to grab bad boys and girls. (Summerford) Q63B.

A77.48. Boo baggers: All kinds of ugly things coming after you (associated with darkness). Used to frighten us when we were about to do bad things. (Twillingate) Q63B.

A77.49. In the home where I was born was a large flue, used in the days of no stoves, open fireplace; the fire would be made under this flue on the hearth, and the smoke going up the flue would cause strings of soot and cobweb. In amongst this would be the Bu Baggars. We were told, if not good, [if we] run away from school, or [are] late for school, or disobey, the Bu Baggars would come in the night and pinch your ears, and we were really afraid. (Bonavista) Q63B.

A77.50. The common thing to do was to rap on the wall when the child wasn't looking and say it was the Boo-Bagger coming to get little children who don't go to sleep.[92] They had no special place for this figure to live or to come from, but when he was needed he was there. (Pass Island) Q67-644.

A77.51. If a child disobeyed, he might be told that the Boo-Baggars would get him if he did not behave. (Beaumont) Q63B.

---

[92] See pp. 51-2 above.

TIGHT BINDING

A77.52. Parents often tell their children the.... "Boo-baggers" will get them if they aren't good.... (Gander) Q67-585.

A77.53. Some names I have heard told to children are Boo-baggers. This is a very common one in Milltown. It is usually said that if a child does not do something which his parents want him to do, the "Boo-baggers" will get him. (Milltown) Q67-362.

A77.54. If children were naughty or wanted to do something or go somewhere against their parents' approval, they were usually threatened by the adults. They were told that the....Boo-Bagger would get them. This terrified the children so that they often imagined these weird creatures looming in the dark and thus became petrified when alone in the dark. (Lewisporte) Q67-750.

A77.55. To make children to behave themselves they are sometimes threatened that the....Boobaggers are going to have them. (Woody Island) Q67-46.

A77.56. ....Boo-baggers: men used to frighten children by telling them to be good or else the boo-baggers will have them. (Summerford) Q63B.

A77.57. A threat very often used was that if you didn't behave the Boo-baggers....would come and take you away. Threats such as these were often used when children failed to behave themselves, or would not want to come in the house after dark, or they wouldn't go to sleep etc. (Rock Harbour) Q67-539.

A77.58. Boo-bagger - a man who takes bad children and carries them away in a bag. (Tizzard's Harbour) Q63B.

A77.59. The most widely used, however, was the boo-bagger. He was pictured as a huge black man who carried away children. This was used seriously to make children come in from out of doors. We, as children, were afraid of this threat because we thought for sure that we would be carried away by the boo-bagger if we did not obey. (English Harbour and Ramea) Q67-379.

A78. Bessy-boo-bagger.

A78.1. "You'd better come home before dark, or Bessy-boo-bagger will get you." (Lord's Cove) Q67-388.

A79. Boosey Baggers.

A79.1. "Boosey Baggers don't you come for little Johnny (name of child) tonight. If you do you'll be disappointed, Boosey Baggers tonight." (St. John's) Q67-130.

A80. Boo-darbies.

The second element in this compound is possibly derived from the word darby which signifies a Christmas mummer[93] - especially, if not exclusively, along the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula.[94] Parallels for such a compound exist in the term Janney-boos and also in the fact that boo-bagger is used to refer specifically to Christmas mummers. One of the contributors to the Newfoundland Archive, however, states that the word darby was used around Branch in St. Mary's Bay to mean a "scoundrel, or sly and cunning fellow". The evidence is at present too slender for a definitive etymology to be made.

A80.1. My five year old brother was taught and expected to obey at all times but like most kids he occasionally disobeyed, when mother would step in and say, "Now Tommy, you do like you're told or under the steps[95] you go where the Boo-Darby is ready for bad little boys." At this remark Tommy would become more attentive and say, "Mom! What's he like? Will he eat me? Have he got horns?" Mother

---

[93] See B8 below.

[94] See E.R. Seary, G.M. Story and W.J. Kirwin, The Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland (Ottawa, 1968), p. 112, and J.D.A. Widdowson, "Mummering and Janneying" in Halpert and Story, Appendix II, p. 221.

[95] "Under the steps" usually refers to the cupboard or area under the stairs inside the house.

would say, "He's a great big man and nobody knows what he'll do to you." While Tommy is thinking about it mother will say, so as not to frighten him too much, "He won't hurt you if you're good, so you better do as you're told next time.[96] I have heard this used many times in situations where kids are told to go to bed, get washed, run a simple errand, or just to get out of doors till supper time. Very effective within my home and the homes of neighbours. (Ramea) 67-10.

A80.2. "Don't go down there - the boo-darbies are down there." (probably referring to an old cellar, which could be very dangerous for the child).[97] (Avondale) Q67-521.

A80.3. Threats were often used to frighten little children but I doubt whether this is very common today. The most common one that I have heard of being used is the "boo-darbies". Common threats included, "I'm going to give you to the boo-darbies." "I'm going to get the boo-darbies to chase you." (Avondale) Q67-521.

A80.4. Boo-Darbies - associated with the dark and supposed to come out of the dark. Expressions involving boo-darbies such as, "The boo-darbies are going to get you" are especially used to get children into the house when it is time for them to come in. (Conception Harbour) Q67-878.

A80.5. About four, when I was most scared of the Boo-darbies.... "Be good or the Boo-darbies will get you!" Sometimes when they said "Boo-darbies", I used to think of some kind of large insect. A "boo" is a louse. I knew a small boo couldn't hurt me, so I thought it must be a big boo. (Ramea) Q67-631.

A80.6. Boo-Darby: This saying was used by my mother on my younger brother, my sisters, and on myself. She used this when we wanted to go out of doors after dark. I can recall her saying to us, "If you go out tonight the Boo-

---

[96] This is a good example of positive reinforcement of the child's behaviour following a negative threat. It also illustrates how parents modify the severity of threats so as not to frighten the child unduly.

[97] The cellar would most probably be a root cellar, dug to a considerable depth below ground and therefore dangerous for a young child.

Darby will carry you away." She said that he was a black man with horns. This proved to be very effective, because up to the age of nine or ten, I always shuddered when she mentioned the Boo-Darby. Since that time I have also heard the same statement used just as effectively by my sister, who now lives in St. John's, on her children. (English Harbour West) 67-5.

Indirect

A80.7. The Boo-Darby method is used also to stop kids from wanting to stay out late at night. (Age group five to seven). When school begins kids fail to realize that staying out late must stop. [The child] keeps going out by night and staying the usual time. Mother tries many techniques to stop it but finds the Boo-Darby method most effective. She warns Tommy that if he stays after dark the Boo-Darby will jump at him or possibly chase him home. Some kids doubt this but most of these are afraid to take the chance so they make it a point to be in before dark. (Ramea) 67-10.

A80.8. When kids are experts in crawling or just beginning to walk (one to one and a half years) they trouble mothers continuously by opening cupboard doors or hauling off the table cloths and covers on the chesterfield. The mother threatens the child that the Boo-Darby will have him and for the moment he may stop but when mother is gone he is in the full swing of things again. Not so effective because of lack of realization in children of that age group. (Ramea) 67-10.

A81. Boo Man ['bu: mæn]/['bʉu mæn].

This figure is second only to the boogie man in frequency as a threatening figure in the Newfoundland material. He is reported from almost two hundred communities in many different parts of the island, though it seems he is either not known or not so popular as a threatening figure in some communities where

the boogie man is very well known. In many places, however, the two figures exist side by side, apparently with very similar powers, characteristics and functions. The compound boo man seems to be a variant of bo(h)-man, a term known in Scotland, Ireland and northern England.[98] Boh-man is defined as "a name used to frighten children; a kidnapper, black man; a fairy, a hobgoblin, the devil, a ghost".[99] The breadth of these connotations is typical of the invented threatening figures in that they frequently embody the frightening characteristics of several supernatural beings. Several similar compounds, e.g. boh-chap, boh-creature, boh-fellow, are listed in EDD and many of them are cited in a clearly threatening context. The pronunciation of the first element as [bu:] is known in Scotland and northern England and with the scanty evidence at present available it is not possible to assert positively that the form boo-man was introduced into Newfoundland by the Irish (or perhaps the Scots) settlers, although this would seem to be a distinct possibility. On the other hand, parallels such as the German Bumann also exist in the Germanic languages. Bo(h)-man, however, appears to be very rare in current British Isles usage, and the form boo-man as such is not found in the available British and North American

---

[98] For a discussion of the relationship between the various compounds beginning with bo(h)-/boo-, see Henry, 410.

[99] EDD.

printed sources to which I have had access.

A81.1. ....they'd persuade children that there was such [a] thing as the Boo-man.... Well they'd say, "Now look, you be in before six o'clock, because after six o'clock the Boo-man starts to get around!" [næu lɔk | jɑu bi ɪn bi'fɔər sɪks ə'klɑk | bi'kɑz'æftər sɪks ə'klɑk də 'bɑu mən stærts tə gɛt ə'ræund]. (St. Shotts) T C527,68-43 (rec. H. Halpert).

A81.2. ...."The Boo Man comes around after nine o'clock".... The Boo Man has a definite connotation with darkness. He is reputedly equipped with magic bag into which all his victims are "popped".

It is apparent that, in the right (or wrong?) circumstances, the Boo Man can be a frightening figure indeed. In my own case, however, he never really "got off the ground". My parents were very "anti-Boo Man" and my own brief introduction to him was thanks to an outport maid who, no doubt, had her problems with my brother and me. Her activities in this field were quickly curtailed, and, perhaps because of the paucity of details regarding possible consequences of being "got", the Boo Man never really rated as a threat. It must be admitted, however, that, for a while, a lingering doubt existed, giving rise to discussions as to whether or not one believed in the Boo Man. (Whale's Gulch) 67-17.

A81.3. To stop children from going to unsafe places a parent might say, "Watch out - the Boo-Man is there." (Bloomfield) 067-716.

A81.4. Oh, I know my brothers and sisters..sometimes they'd be out ' doors....after dark. Perhaps they'd be ridin'..., Mother would go out o' doors and say, "Now boys, now girls, 'tis time for you to be in! The Boo-man is up there!" [næu bɔiz | nau gə:rlz | ʈɪz taim fə jə ʈə bi i:n ‖ ðə 'bɑu mæn ɪz ʌp ðɛər] "Alright! we're comin' now!" 'Twouldn't be long 'fore you'd be in the house, because they didn't know what time the Boo-man was goin' to rear out the woods! (Robert's Arm) T 0331,66-25.

A81.5. And up on the back of such a feller's woodpile ....or into such a feller's barn - "Mind, there's a..there's a Boo-man." [maind dəz ə | ðəz ə 'bɑu mën] And he'll always take you! (St. Shotts) T C527,68-43 (rec. H. Halpert).

A81.6. "Come in now, 'cause the Boo-man's out there!" [kəm ɪ'n næu | kəz zə 'buu mænz æut dɛər] (Long Cove, Burin) T C151,65-16 (rec. H. Halpert).

A81.7. ....an' there's some [children] alongside o' me..my son's boys here - you wouldn't frighten 'em with a Boo-man. First thing you would hear was...., "There's a Boo-man up there!" [ðɛərz ə 'buu mæn ʌp ðɛər] "Oh, let un come" He wasn't feared of un! (Robert's Arm) T C331,66-25.

A81.8. The Boo Man is a supernatural figure of dread, used to enforce obedience on small children. Fear of the Boo Man is used primarily to keep small children out of undesirable places or to get them indoors in the evenings. "Don't go down into the basement! The Boo Man is down there...." (Whale's Gulch) 67-17.

A81.9. Well now in my time they always used to tell me there was a Boo-man.... We'd be frightened to death o' the Boo-man! .... "Now don't go in there! The Boo-man's in there!" [næu dount? gou ɪn ðɛər | ðə 'buu mænz ɪn ðɛər] ....well I'd go back! Frightened away! 'Fraid o' the Boo-man.... They used to always tell me the Boo-man was there; I'd never go! .... anywhere I'd go they'd..oh, they'd say, "Now the Boo-man is there, in there!" [næu ðə 'buu mæn ɪz ðɛər ɪn ðɛər] - or something like that. I'd scrabble back! ....[if] ever I'd go where they didn't want [me] to go..in the dark or anything like that....round dark places, "Don't go in there..don't go out there! The Boo-man is out there! [dount? gou ɪn ðɛər | dount? gou æut? ðɛər | ðə 'buu mæn ɪz æut ðɛər] ....I says it to [the children]...., "Don't go outdoors now because the Boo-man's out there! [dount? gou æut? 'dɔərz næu bɪ'kɔz ðə 'buu mænz æut? ðɛər] - something like that, so they won't go out. (Cow Head) T C253,66-24.

A81.10. A Boo-man would be in the woods. [Parents] didn't want the children to go around the woods, see..well, frightened they'd get lost, you know, or something, these children....they wouldn't go, you know. They make 'em kind o' scared, see; they wouldn't..wouldn't ramble around places.... "Don't go out there, 'cause there's a Boo-man in there, look!" [dount? gou æut? dɛər kʌs ɐz ə 'buu mæn ɪn dɛər lɔk] (Hawkes Bay) T C276,66-24.

A81.11. [The Boo-man is found] pretty well in general outside, but..if there was..a particular place outside, like a..a small house which was dark at night or a..a lane comin' down, a lot o' trees, he could be [there]..., "Oh, he must be down..Boo-man is down there among the trees! [ou ɪ mʌst bɪ dæun | 'bɯu mæn ɪz dæun ðɛər ə'mɔn ðə trɪːz] Things like this. (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

A81.12. "....be good, or else the Boo-man'll come!" [bɪ gʊ·d ər ɛls ðə 'buː mæn ɭ kɔm] (Cow Head) T C249,66-24.

A81.13. ....if we were down in the basement, he would say, "Be good, or the boo man will come." (Fortune Harbour) Q63B.

A81.14. A common term used to frighten children was the boo-man. It was sometimes used to persuade children to go to sleep, stay away from wharves or other dangerous places, to keep them from pulling the cat's tail or chasing the hens in the yard, and to try and get them off city streets before dark. Example: "Go to sleep or the boo-man will come." (St. John's) Q67-14.

A81.15. "The Boo-man is comin'!" [ðə 'bɯu mæn ɪz 'kʌmɪn] (Robert's Arm) T C331,66-25.

A81.16. "The Boo-man is coming!" [də 'bɯu mæn ɪz 'kʌmɪŋ].... We used to be scared stiff, little children! (St. Shotts) T C530,68-43 (rec. H. Halpert).

A81.17. The Boo-man is [a] term widely used [at] home for getting kids to go to bed early. If they don't go to sleep, we say, "The Boo-man is coming." Then children respond in the positive way and go to sleep. (New Chelsea) Q67-972.

A81.18. The boo-man is the most common frightening figure.... The boo-man is used to make children behave properly. A mother might say to her child, "Stop crying now - the boo-man is coming; if he hears you crying...." [100] (St. Mary's) Q67-366.

A81.19. "Here comes the Boo-Man." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-925.

---

[100] This is an example of the many threats in which the CONSEQUENCE is not specified and is left to the child's own imagination.

TIGHT BINDING

A81.20. They used to tell 'em about the Boo-man, you know, when they'd be small, see....to try to get 'em to sleep, [if] they was hard to go sleep, see. Their nerves was stronger than what they is now. There's no trouble to get 'em [to] sleep now. You want somethin' now to wake 'em up! .... Oh they say, "The Boo-man is comin' after you!" [ðə 'bʉu mæn ɨz 'kʌmɨn 'æftə jə] (Pilley's Island) T C325,66-25.

A81.21. The same happened to me when I went to bed. I would get out of bed and play with my toys. Mother would come out and shout, "Get to sleep or the Boo-man will come after you." (Cavendish) Q67-477.

A81.22. "Don't go in that room, or the Boo-man will be after you." (St. John's) Q67-1151.

A81.23. "The Boo-man'll be after you if you do things like that!" [ðə 'bʉu mæn l bɪ 'æftə jʉu ɨf jə dʉu θɪŋz laik ðæt] (Springdale) T C324,66-25.

A81.24. ...an' we could point out any light, point outside to a black shadow: "Oh! [whispered ingressive tones] Must be the Boo-man outside!" [ɔ: [mɔ'st bɪ ðə 'bʉu mæn æut?'said] ....this was effective in..in most places. This was used..it's still used today, but if..if the Boo-man was threatened, well okay, I'll stop, like that! But you didn't want to admit, sort of, that you were scared of the Boo-man: "Oh, I was just goin' to stop anyway!".... Well, he's [a] pretty fictitious character. He can adapt himself to pretty well anything. If you look outside, if a knock comes on the door, it could be the Boo-man, you know, or your mother might go in an' knock on the table: "There's the Boo-man!" [ðɛərz ðə 'bʉu mæn] you know, "Oh! Knockin' on the wall outside!" ['nɑk?n ɑn ðə wɔəl æut'said]. I can remember this bein' used. If you see a.. a light goin' across the lane or something: "Oh! It's the Boo-man goin' across there! He's goin' across to the other house now! He'll be down here next!" [ɔ: ‖ ɨts ˆsə 'bʉu mæn 'gouɨn ə'krɔəs ðeər ‖ ɪz gɔn'ə'krɑ's tə ðɪ 'ʌðər hæus næu | hiəl bɪ dʉun hiər nɛkst] [urgent, muted tone, with less full-voiced quality than normal speech]. Things like this.... The Boo-man....was used to get people to bed or..if you were sort o' being unruly or stubborn, people used to frighten you like..like that. If you..people wanted

TIGHT BINDING

kids to stay away from dangerous places, they would say the Boo-man was there, but this was seldom said. (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

A81.25. ....gosh, if your parents were pretty well scared of the Boo-man it sort o' carried over, you know! If..if Mom was scared o' the Boo-man well you were scared too.[101] .... The important things are, I guess, the..the change o' the voices,[102] an' havin' something sort o' tangible. Well, if you can't see it, if your mother can see it now you just got to take care of her word for it there! You do. ....I think it..a good deal it depends upon the age o' the child; when the child learns to talk an' starts to get unruly. Things like this.... The Boo-man was pretty well everywhere....between him an' God, I think, they had a monopoly on it! ....I know I..would feel that if I heard a knock on..the attic, up in the attic somewhere, I would be afraid to go to sleep then, because if he was in the house, oh my Lord! The parent would just never get the child clear of her! ....when he was outside: "You better get to bed before he gets in, you know!" [jʉ 'bɛtər gɛt tə bɛd bɪ'fɔər hɪ gɛts ɪn jə nou] Or, "He's goin' across the lane to the next house! [If you get] to sleep before he comes here, I'll tell him you're in bed." [hɪz 'gouɪn ə'krɑ·s ðə lɛin tə ðə nɛkst haus | [unrecorded] tə sli:p bɪ'fɔər hɪ kɔ·mz hiər ɑ‡l tɛl 'ɪm jər ɪn bed]. Things like this. (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

A81.26. To frighten children into behaving the parents usually say, "The boo-man will catch you." (Outer Cove) Q67-520.

A81.27. "Don't go into the dining room or I'll close the door and the boo-man will catch you." (Calvert) Q67-221.

A81.28. One threat I have heard quite often was, "If you go upstairs the Boo-man will grab you." This often keeps children from falling over the stairs and also from meddling in trunks etc., and from tripping in the dark. (Avondale) Q67-313.

---

[101] The rest of the taperecorded discussion reveals that the parent merely pretends to be frightened of the boo man so that the child is more likely to believe the figure exists. In other words the parent takes pains to make this invented figure the subject of belief on the part of the child.

[102] I.e. adopting a special voice to impersonate the boo man.

A81.29. Oh, they'd say, "...the Boo-man'll come an' get you!" [də 'bʉu mæn ˌ kʌm ən gɛt jʉu]. Yeah. "The Boo-man'll come an' get you!" [ðə 'bʉu mæn ˌ kʌm n gɛt jʉ]. Yes. And that [of] course made 'em afraid for the rest o' their lives, usually! .... Well, I fancy a..a Boo-man would be something like a bear, or something [that] was all fuzzy and with big long arms that could reach out and take you wherever you were! .... If they didn't want you to go [to] a certain place, the Boo-man really lived there! He was there and he'd take you if you went there, so you stayed away from it really. (Sop's Arm/Sop's Island) T C26,64-10.

A81.30. Boo-man. This is a typical word used by parents when warning their children to be good. For example, a parent might say to his child, "You'd better go to bed early or the boo-man will come and get you." (St. John's) Q67-869.

A81.31. "The Booman's goin' a come and get you" or "take you." [Said] if a kid's not behavin' right or just won't come in from outdoors. (Trout River) 66-21 (rec. H. Halpert).

A81.32. The most common way to get children to behave themselves in Salmon Cove is to say, "The Boo-man is going to get you." This frightful figure comes from no particular place. His name is mentioned most when children are naughty or won't go to bed. Children are really frightened when their parents threaten them with the Boo-man, but of course the parents give only playful threats. (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-908.

A81.33. ....yes, I suppose, in..very small children, sort of a childish thing, you know, like, two-year-olds, you know. "The Boo-man'll get you!" [ðə 'bʉu mæn ˌ gɪt jə].... You know, in a sort of playful sense more so than a..a serious threat. (Burin Bay Arm) T C360,67-31.

A81.34. To make me come in from play at a late hour after dark my mother would say, "The Boo-man is going to get you." Then she would return to the house and I would feel uneasy and go indoors. (St. John's) Q67-78.

A81.35. Oh I can remember havin' the Boo-man used on me! ....I remember [when] we were maybe seven

TIGHT BINDING

or eight, you'd be rolling a ball along the floor an' you'd set up a little goal between two chairs, you know, an' if you were sort of strong an' stubborn, an' insisted that you play - "Oh! The Boo-man'll get you...." [ou | ðə 'buu mæn ɫ gɛt jə]. (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

A81.36. ...the "Boo Man" was a threat my mother used to use on me. "The Boo Man will get you" was the threat mom used when we were naughty or when we wanted to go to dangerous places. I think children are frightened when threatened because they are afraid of the unknown. (Gander) Q67-640.

A81.37. "If you don't be good the Boo-man will get you." (Clarenville) Q67-984.

A81.38. "If you go on the cliff (ice, in the woods etc.), the boo-man will get you." (South River) Q67-1236.

A81.39. [The] Boo-man usually lived in any room where some secrets were kept from children. [The] threat used was, "If you go in there the Boo-man will get you." He also lived in places of danger, e.g. the well house. The threats were serious. The children were really frightened when the threats were used. The children were frightened because they pictured the Boo-man as an ugly old man. (St. John's) Q67-706.

A81.40. The Boo-man was a constant threat to Nanny [i.e. Grandmother]. When she or her brothers and sisters wouldn't go to bed, their mother said, "The Boo-man will get you if you don't go to bed and go to sleep." Nanny actually was afraid of the Boo-man who, supposedly, was outside lurking in the dark. (Manuels) Q67-74.

A81.41. "The Boo-man will get you if you don't go to sleep." The Boo-man was never described in words but the inference was that he was horrible, probably all black, and sneaking around unexpectedly; he could materialize if you were bad. He was used just as often as it was necessary to get the child to do something, particularly at night time. At the mention of the Boo-man the child would cover up its head in the blankets and pretend to be asleep. (St. John's) Q63B.

TIGHT BINDING

A81.42. Boo Man: Used at Ireland's Eye. This figure seemed to have its greatest potency at twilight, or at night. Represented as a shadowy figure that could jump at you or move very softly, it was used to help round up the children for bed or to get them into the house when darkness came. Sometimes used when a child was sent into a dark cupboard or room, to encourage them to hurry or to scare them. It was also used jokingly to adults when they were visiting and had to travel a dark road on their way home. The usual expression seemed to be, "Mind the Boo man don't get you." (Ireland's Eye) Q63B.

A81.43. To prevent children from stepping on a mop when cleaning - "Don't step on that; he's the boo-man - he'll getcha."[103] (St. John's) Q67-652.

A81.44. Lots of times I have heard people saying, "Be quiet or the Boo-man will certainly get you...." (St. Joseph's, PB) Q67-192.

A81.45. A parent might say to a child, "Don't go out there tonight, or the Boo-man will get you." The parent used this figure merely as a means of having the child obey. He knew there was no Boo-man; yet he was serious when threatening the child. Usually the very young children, or some of them, were frightened and when threatened thus were afraid to enter the darkness. I suppose the Boo-man was intended to be some sort of an old man who would come and take little boys and girls who refused to obey their parents. As children became older, they naturally refused to believe there was any such people. Actually, many children are not frightened, particularly children today, by such threats, because they know this is only a means of adults getting proper behaviour [from them]. (Whitbourne) Q67-446.

A81.46. Some threats concerning frightening figures were referred to when I was a small boy, such as, "Go to bed or the Boo-man will get you." (Burin) Q67-936.

---

[103] This example might perhaps equally well be listed under Class C. In this case, however, the mop is actually referred to as the boo man and the child is asked to think of it as such. It is interesting to note that a mop is a rather shapeless, untidy and dirty-looking object, so that the connotations of untidiness, dirtiness and the like so often associated with the boo/bogey figures are very much in evidence here.

A81.47. "Go to sleep or [the] boo-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-1294.

A81.48. My grandmother used to be scared by the boo-man, and she used this figure to get her own children to behave, saying, "The boo-man will have you." (Harbour Grace) Q67-1234.

A81.49. ....they would say, "The Boo-man'll have you if you don't be good!" [də 'buu mæn l æv jə ɪf jə dount? bɪ god] (Happy Adventure) T C33,64-10.

A81.50. ....!tis used now..I think people used it without any thought of what results it could bring, because my mother used to use it. I'm sure she didn't use it to hurt anybody! But 'twas just common usage. Probably she'd call out an' say..if, probably my brother an' I were sleeping together, an'..we were makin' noise, or throwing pillows or something around, [she'd] call out an' say, "If you don't go to sleep the Boo-man will have you!" (Greenspond) T C361,67-31.

A81.51. When I was a child I always used to stay out of doors when it started to get dark... Mother would come and tell me to come in. If this didn't work she would say, "The Boo-man will have you if you don't come in before dark." (Cavendish) Q67-477.

A81.52. "The Boo-man will have you if you say that any more." (Norris Arm North) Q67-771.

A81.53. When they didn't obey - "Mind! The Boo-man'll have you!" [maind ‖ də 'buu mæ'n l æv jə] (Robert's Arm) T C331,66-25.

A81.54. Rhyme: "Go off to sleep my little pick-a-nenny [sic] for the big boo-man will have you if you don't."[104] (St. John's) Q67-890.

A81.55. ....they..usually said, "You be good or the Boo-man'll have yous!" [juu bɪ gʊd ər də 'buu mæn l av jəs] (Port Saunders) T C271,66-24.

A81.56. The Boo-man. I have heard this used quite often, especially if a youngster should pick up some words which are not nice or if he

---

[104] No further details are given of this rhyme, but this fragment of what appears to be a lullaby with frightening undertones is included here as an illustration of the few examples of such lullabies reported in the questionnaires. See also A8161 below.

TIGHT BINDING

should learn to swear. The parent might say to him, "Don't say that any more or the Boo-man will have you...." (Norris Arm North) Q67-771.

A81.57. ....probably some Sunday morning you didn't get up to go to church.... "You better get up an' get..get off to church, or the Boo-man will have you!" [jo 'bɛʈər gɛʈ ɔ·p ən gɛʈ̂ | gɛʈ ɑf tʉ tʃə:rtʃ ɔər də 'bʉu mæn wɨl hæv jʉu] That was when we were really, really small, or something like that. But of course if we didn't get up then she would come an' take us out of bed! (Greenspond) T C361,67-31.

A81.58. "He's comin'! He's comin' to take you now, then! The Boo-man's comin'! He['s] come to take you!" [hi·z 'kʌmɨn | i·z 'kʌmɨn ʈə tɛik jə næu ðən || ðə 'bʉu mænz 'kʌmɨn | ɪ kʌm ʈə tɛik jə] (Baine Harbour) T C39,64-11.

A81.59. ....there was always a Boo-man, yes. Well.. that would be the Devil, see, in a way, the Boo-man or the Devil.... Yeah, that's the women used to call it a Boo-man, see. They wouldn't say "Devil" - nicer word, see, Boo-man.... They say, "The Boo-man'll take you!" [ðə 'bʉu mæn ɭ tɛik jə] (Port Saunders) T C272,66-24.

A81.60. Oh, that's all they say...., "The Boo-man'll take you!" [də 'bʉu mæn ɭ tɛik jə] or something like that, I suppose, if they want to get 'em to sleep or go to bed or anything. (Port au Choix) T C270,66-24.

A81.61. "Hush oh little baby
Lie down and be good
Before the old boo man
Comes out of the woods.
When he comes out
He'll have nothing to say,
He'll wrap up the baby and take it away."
(St. John's) Q67-1034.

A81.62. I have often heard of the Boo-man, described as being a man with a bag on his back, who takes children who are bad. "If you are not in the house before dark the Boo-man will take you." (Tors Cove) Q67-837.

A81.63. They just tell them that.... "You be good or the Boo-man'll take you!" [jʉu bɪ gɔd ə ðə 'bʉu mæn ɭ tɛik jʉu] (Cow Head) T C257,66-24.

A81.64. Especially when going to bed a widely used one is, "Go to sleep or the Boo-man will take you." The Boo-man is supposed to be a fellow always in the dark ready to take you if you did anything naughty such as not going to sleep when you went to bed. (Conception Harbour) 267-268.

A81.65. ....I always thought he [the Boo-man] was somethin'..probably like a ghost, sort of, that..something [that] was covered..his face an' body dark; he would just grab you! An' ....if you went outside in the dark or somethin' like that..I just thought [of] something black all over him, an' he would just grab you! Carry you off, or something! ....I think he was everywhere, but more particularly after dark. He was always out after dark....' "The Boo-man'll carry you off!" [ðə 'bəu mæn l 'kæri jəu ɒ:f] (St. Lawrence) T C355,67-31.

Indirect

A81.66. Oh yes, the Boo-man. Now well that would be the Devil, I suppose, you know....they'd tell 'em..they used to tell people that he had cloven hoofs, you know, an' [a] cow's tail an' a big spear; horns stickin' out of his head.... Oh yeah. You could picture un, you know. You could almost picture un the way they'd tell you about un, see. (Glovertown) T C102,64-14.

A81.67. The only scary figure that was used to frighten was the Boo Man. In my neighbourhood there was an old shed that was bolted against intruders. It of course attracted children because of its appearance and the lock on the door. To prevent our getting into trouble we were told by our parents and neighbours that this old shed was the habitat of the notorious Boo Man. The Boo Man was described vividly to us as being an enormous, black, hairy figure. It was terrifying at times, especially when passing the shed alone, even in daylight. All my friends were scared of this figure, and all of us spent endless hours conjuring up different pictures of what we each thought the Boo Man must be like. (Avondale) Q63B.

A81.68. The "boo-man" was anybody or anything whose acts were inexplicable. An example of this is here given: at one time three men were reported to have gotten lost near the local

TIGHT BINDING

graveyard, and for some time after lights and women were said to have been seen in that area. Thus the "boo-man" lived or roamed near the graveyard where these inexplicable phenomena took place. (St. John's) Q67-228.

A81.69. The Boo man was used frequently when I was young. The Boo man became for me a hideous figure who was hiding behind every corner waiting for me to do some wrong, so that he could drag me away to be punished. (Bell Island) Q63B.

A81.70. The Boo-man was used to frighten children for just about anything they did wrong. (St. Mary's) T C12,64-6.

A81.71. I did not use scary terms ordinarily but if the children insisted on going somewhere that I felt would be unsafe, or for some other good reason, I would use the fear of the Booman to insure obedience. (Avondale) Q63B.

A81.72. The "Boo-man" was used on me also but it was mostly to scare me away from places. (Carmanville) Q67-218.

A81.73. The Boo-man was supposed to be a man all in black. Children would be threatened by the Boo-man if they stayed out late in the evening or cried to go out after dark. (Bell Island) Q67-224.

A81.74. The Boo-man was a common threat of parents and older members of the family to induce children to behave well and be quiet after being put to bed.... The Boo-man was supposed to live in the woods. (Admiral's Beach) Q67-267.

A81.75. Many times the Boo Man was used to scare us into going asleep. Although we realised that this was an imaginary being, I still could picture a hairy figure ready to grab me if I got out of bed. (Bell Island) Q63B.

A81.76. The Boo-man was threatened on me if I did not go to sleep, or if I went into the clothes closet looking for something. (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-1095.

A81.77. The Boo-Man was usually to be in any dark room where children weren't allowed to go. So parents would threaten the Boo-Man on them and then they were afraid to go. (Winterton) Q67-455.

TIGHT BINDING

A81.78. If the mother doesn't want her child out roaming around at night she may threaten him by telling him that the boo-man is out there.... (Flower's Cove) Q67-683.

A81.79. ....when they are somewhere [where they are] not wanted, such as another room, a stove etc., they are told the "Boo-man" is there. (Champney's East) Q67-215.

A81.80. The children were threatened because they were naughty. The children were running around the house and breaking their toys so their parents had to put a stop to it. They threatened their children with the Boo-man and so they stayed quiet. Children are often threatened because they go to dangerous places. A mother may tell a child that the....Boo-man is in the well or in a stream. A child remembers his mother's or father's warning and keeps away from the danger. She may also use threats or figures to stop them from going near the stove or some other dangerous object. (Gull Island, CB) Q67-882.

A81.81. Boo Man - Man who parents told would be after their children if they didn't behave. He was described as completely black with a black cape or gown on. (St. John's) Q67-459.

A81.82. The Boo-Man - This was an old man that came after bad children, usually at night.[105] (Little Catalina) Q67-1156.

A81.83. The Boo-man looks like a huge monster. He has a large head, and sharp ears that look like flying saucers. He is dark brown in colour and has thick red lips. His teeth are spaced two inches apart.

The threat used in this case: Parents have told their young children to stop crying, because, if they didn't the Boo-man would come after them. (Middle Brook) Q67-427.

A81.84. ....yes, lots of times, when they wouldn't.. wouldn't listen to 'em or something, well they'd tell 'em the Boo-man wa comin'..or something, and..something like that, see. (St. Paul's) T C285,66-24.

---

[105] This example might perhaps be listed under Class B. See also A84.13 and A84.27 below.

TIGHT BINDING

A81.85. The Boo-man is a common threat used here to frighten children. If children are bad, sometimes we tell them that the Boo-man is coming for them and they are quite afraid for a certain length of time. (Point au Gaul) Q67-530.

A81.86. There was one old feller, his mother said..he said his mother used to tell him to be a good boy, he said, or if he didn't, he'd see the Boo-man, see. "Well," he said, "I was a good boy, I was a bad boy; I never seed the Boo-man yet!" (Hawkes Bay) T C276,66-24.

A81.87. When children were naughty the parents would say that they would give the child to the "Boo-man" if they didn't behave.... Usually the Boo-man lived in the cellar, attic or some other dark place. (St. Brendan's) Q67-73.

A81.88. My mother used to tell me not to go in the cellar because the boo-man would grab me. (Lewisporte) Q67-437.

A81.89. If they would not come in before dark, they would be told that the Boo-man was coming to get them. (St. Phillips) Q67-1147.

A81.90. When I was a small boy (1945-48 approximately) my mother....used to threaten me with "the boo-man" if I wasn't good. I remember that I always imagined the boo-man as ugly and dressed in black, but my mother never described him to me.

In October 1967 I was talking about this and she told my girlfriend and me that she got the biggest fright in her life with the boo-man. Around 1938, when my brother....was about five years old, he used to be right mischievous and full of badness. One night he was in bed, and wouldn't go to sleep, so Mom told him if he didn't go to sleep the boo-man would come down the stove pipe hole and get him. Now the hole in the ceiling of the bedroom for the stove pipe was stuffed up with an old pair of pants, until such time as the stove and stove pipes were put in. (There was another stove in the house).

Mom was out of the bedroom and hardly down-stairs when she heard [my brother] - he was hysterical. She and grandmother ran up to him, but couldn't calm him at all, he was almost out of his mind, screeching and crying etc. The two of them managed to calm him down, but it took about half an hour, and they were both

TIGHT BINDING

afraid that he had gone completely mad.
What had happened was that when Mom went downstairs, one leg of the pants fell down through the stove pipe hole, an' [he] thought for sure it was the boo-man coming. Mom said she got such a fright that she never mentioned [the] boo-man to him again. (Shoal Brook) 68-1.

A81.91. Children were threatened that the Boo-man would get them when they were naughty. (Cavendish) Q67-477.

A81.92. In a friend's home nearby a man used to make moonshine in his basement. The man had three young boys. He told them that if they went into the basement without him the boo-man would get them.... Most threats were serious because parents wished to keep their children good and out of dangerous places. Children are usually frightened when threatened because they believe that the boo-man and other things exist. (St. John's) Q67-946.

A81.93. Threats that the Boo-man will get you if you were not a good boy or girl were often used. For other reasons you were often threatened, such as because we were naughty, to prevent us from going to dangerous places or playing with scissors or matches, or to get us in before dark. (St. Lawrence) Q67-439.

A81.94. The Boo-man is only a jest for very young children. He was the one who would get a bad child if the same child would not go to sleep when put to bed. (Renews) Q67-42.

A81.95. The Boo-man was a rowdy looking man who punished bad boys and girls. He would have long dirty hair, face [and] hands, and wear big boots.... The Boo-man would get you if you didn't do your homework. (St. John's) Q67-1273.

A81.96. When I was a little girl, if I did something wrong my parents and grandparents often told me that the Boo-man was going to have me. (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-1095.

A81.97. ....threaten 'em [if] they do anything bad or they [i.e. the parents] couldn't straighten 'em out or....well the Boo-man would have you! We've been often told the Boo-man would have us, so. (Rocky Harbour Cove) T C287,66-24.

A81.98. When a child does something that is not very nice the parents tell the child not to do it again because if they do the boo-man will have them. (Makinsons) Q67-1193.

TIGHT BINDING

A81.99. When my mother was a child she informs me that when she or others of her brothers or sisters were naughty, they were told the Boo-man would come and take them. If they were not allowed to go in certain places, they were told there was a Boo-man there. The Boo-man was also used to get children to go to sleep. (St. John's) Q67-327.

A81.100. In Petty Harbour, if the word "Boo Man" was mentioned, children were immediately petrified with fear. The Boo Man was said to live out in the night, ready to take any child who went out alone. (Petty Harbour) Q67-1295.

A81.101. The Boo-man was used to threaten children to get them in before dark. If they were out after dark, the Boo-man would catch them, at a certain place, and take them away. It was usually effective. (Clarke's Beach) Q67-815.

A81.102. If I attempted to disobey, or to go somewhere that was forbidden to me, I was told the Boo Man would surely take me. This Boo Man was a frightening image, and I could never turn a corner but I felt that a big hand was going to reach out and grab me. (Bell Island) Q63B.

A81.103. Well they'd say, if you wouldn't be good, he [i.e. the Boo man]'d take you....and put you in the chimley. (Daniel's Harbour) T C277,66-24.

A81.104. Boo-man. A person who came in the night to carry away those who wouldn't go to bed on time. (Windsor) Q67-41.

A81.105. If a parent didn't want one of their children to go to a cupboard, perhaps they would be told that the boo-man was there and would drag them into the cupboard. Children were usually threatened to induce them to go to sleep. The boo-man is said to hide in dark places. (St. John's) Q67-39.

A82. Boo-boo Man.

This figure is recorded only once, in a report from North River which also includes fairies and witches. The reduplicating first element has a parallel in Bo-boh, meaning "a fearful

TIGHT BINDING

object, a hobgoblin",[106] recorded from North Yorkshire.

A83. Bogey.

The term bogey as a threatening figure is extremely rare in the reports and is confined to a few responses to the first questionnaire, distributed in 1963, which mentioned bogey man but did not list boogie man or other variants of the boo/bogey group. It is therefore likely that the few examples of bogey in the reports were elicited in response to the use of bogey man in the question concerned. They are probably pronounced ['bogɪ] and are found usually in the compound boogie man. Even so, the word bogey/bogie is known in Newfoundland, and means "nasal mucus" or "louse", so again we have the unpleasant connotations typical of the boo/bogey group.[107]

A83.1. Bogey: A man who frightens children and carries them away in a bag. (Twillingate) Q63B.

A84. Bogey Man ['bougɪ mæn], (more usually ['bogɪ mæn]).

The form bogey man, and its spelling variants bogie man, bogyman etc., appears in reports from some forty communities. It seems very likely, however, that most of these represent a "correct" spelling of boogie man which is the usual pronunciation in Newfoundland for the figure normally pronounced ['bougɪ mæn]

---

[106] EDD.

[107] The word bogie is also used to mean "a small stove" but this sense is apparently quite distinct from those connected with unpleasantness or frightening.

TIGHT BINDING

in England. This view is supported by the fact that most of the Newfoundland reports of bogey man are in response to the first questionnaire of 1963, which, as noted above, mentioned bogey man but no other variants. The pronunciation ['bougɪ mæn], however, does occur in a tape-recorded interview which I made with a young informant from St. John's. She noted that an acquaintance of hers in the city, who had answered a questionhaire for her on threatening figures, pronounced the name as ['bougɪ mæn].[108] On the very rare occasions when such a pronunciation occurs in Newfoundland it would seem to be an "educated" literary or urban usage, probably influenced by Standard English spelling and pronunciation. Almost all the examples listed under A84 may therefore be regarded as spelling variants of boogie man.

A84.1. ....to prevent them from going to dangerous places - "The Bogie man is there." (St. John's) Q67-340.

A84.2. Saying when parent is angry: "You be good or I'll call the Bogyman." The child usually replied, "No" with the assurance [from the parent], "O.K. But be good." I first heard this ominous threat home in Grand Bank, F.B. No one could tell me what form the Bogyman was but I had "him" pictured as passing through walls etc. There was no getting away. (Grand Bank) 66-18.

A84.3. The Bogey man....was often used when putting children to sleep - "Go to sleep before the Bogey man comes." (St. John's) Q64A.

---

[108] For this informant's reports of the form ['bougɪ mæn] / ['bougɪmæn] see A84.5. and A84.6. below.

TIGHT BINDING

A84.4. The only one I heard of was the Bogie-man. If a child was naughty, you would say, "The Bogie-man is going to get you" and the child would be good. (St. John's) Q67-469.

A84.5. ....if you were going somewhere where they [i.e. children] might not be allowed to go themselves, I think they would repeat their parents' warnings that, "The Bogey Man'll get you!" [ðə 'bougɪ mæn ļ gɛt jə] (St. John's) T C370,67-31.

A84.6. To [him] the Bogeyman was the main frightening figure:- "If you don't behave yourself, the Bogeyman ['bougɪmæn] will get you." (St. John's) Q67-1020.

A84.7. "If you are bad, the bogey man will get you." The bogey man is usually more active at night than during the day. (Seldom Come By) Q63B.

A84.8. As a young boy I remember being threatened by the Bogie-man.... An example of such a threat was, "You'd better be good or the Bogie-man will get you!" The threats were used by parents in order to get children to behave in a manner that was acceptable to the adults. (St. John's) Q67-1000.

A84.9. "Go to sleep or the bogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-620.

A84.10. Bogie Man. This was used to scare children. It was intended to try to keep small children from wandering too far from home or from going into the woods nearby. "Don't go up on the hills or the bogie man will get you.". (St. Phillips) Q63B.

A84.11. ...."Be good or the....bogeyman will have you." (Flatrock, Carbonear) Q64A.

A84.12. When parents wanted children to be quiet, they would say, "The Bogie-man....is going to come and take you away." This frightened the children so much that they kept quiet. (Coley's Point) Q67-467.

Indirect -

A84.13. He said that the bogey man was often used to scare him. He thought the bogey man was a wicked old man who would hurt him. (St. Joseph's SMB) Q63B.

A84.14. Bogey Man [was] used to frighten the kids and to get them in early at night. (Spaniard's Bay) Q63B.

TIGHT BINDING

A84.15. The bogie-man was threatened if they were out after their usual time in the night. (Creston) Q67-541.

A84.16. Bogeyman was used to frighten the children and to keep them in the house at night. (Tilt Cove) Q63B.

A84.17. Bogey Man: Used to scare children and make them afraid of the dark. It was used at Champney's East and was quite effective when trying to get children to go to sleep after they were put to bed for the night, also to encourage them to go to bed. (Champney's East) Q63B.

A84.18. ....when naughty they were threatened often to keep them away from dangerous places, to get them in before dark, and also the Bogey man was cited at bed-time. (St. John's) Q64A.

A84.19. Bogey man, who was found in dark, strange places such as unoccupied buildings and in the woods that surrounded the village - I guess this was a means of keeping us near home. (Old Perlican) Q64A.

A84.20. Bogey man: Used at Ireland's Eye and usually associated with any strange or mysterious sound that was questioned by a child. These sounds occurred most often in or near the woods and the implication seemed to be that the "bogey man" was a creature not to be disturbed by making a noise or by approaching to disturb him in any way. He was more to be avoided than to be feared. (Ireland's Eye) Q63B.

A84.21. Children have often been threatened by parents and teachers. My own experience as a small child was being told that the "bogie man" was always in the neighbourhood after dark. Many of my friends had the same experience and we were always scared to look out a window [sic] after dark. (St. John's) Q67-112.

A84.22. Usually one was scared to death when threatened that the bogey man was coming after you. (Carbonear) Q64A.

A84.23. Only one frightening figure has been used in our family and that was the bogie-man. We were told nothing about him, just that he would get us if we were bad. (Bishop's Falls) Q67-676.

A84.24. When I was young it was, nearly always the bogey man one was frightened into doing things [by],

or threatened that he would get you if you did not go to bed, or if we did anything wrong, and if we did it again the bogey man would get us. He was supposed to come at beck and call, and he was always in some dark corner ready to come out after you when he was called. (Carbonear) Q64A.

A84.25. I remember my parents telling my sisters and I, when we were quite young, that the Bogie-man would get us, if we didn't come in before dark. This was usually said in a serious manner and as very young children, between the ages of five and eight, we were a little scared or "worried" about this Bogie-man. I don't think we ever clearly imagined what he looked like. When I think of him now, I think of a man with a very ugly, dark face, who only dared come out after dark to chase little children. Why I imagined him as black in colour, I think was because I always associated him with the black colour of night. I think small children are frightened in a small way in that they imagine things that might happen to them if they stay out after dark. They probably doubt that there is a real Bogie-man, yet they see the very real and scary possibility of being chased by a frightful person, namely the "Bogie-man".[109] (Stephenville) Q67-627.

A84.26. When on occasion I wouldn't go to bed I was always warned the bogey-man would come and take me away. (Gander) Q67-129.

A84.27. I was often told that if I went out into the dark of night the Bogey Man would get me and take me away. I visualized the Bogey Man as a half-human beast. (Kilbride) Q63B.

A84.28. Bogey man was used to frighten her. She was told that if she didn't behave the bogey man would take her away. She would not give the bogey man any particular characteristics, but just an old man. (St. Mary's) Q63B.

A84.29. Bogey man and Boo man. These names were used synonymously. They were supposed to represent a person, without any distinction of shape or size, who would come after you and carry you away if you were bad. (Seldom Come By) Q63B.

---

[109] This contributor then goes on to refer to a frightening individual who represented the bogey man to local children.

TIGHT BINDING

A84.30. Both to young and old the Bogie man denoted some fearsome creature who grabbed and punished naughty children after dark. (St. John's) Q67-730.

A84.31. In my pre-school years my parents would very often threaten me so that I would obey them immediately. They said that they would lock me in the attic of our home which was very old. We lived....here in St. John's in a three storey house. I knew that the attic was very dark and my older sister used to tell me that the bogey man lived up there. She said that the bogey man feasted only on bad boys at mealtimes. Thus every mealtime I was as good as gold, doing all sorts of helpful jobs for my mother.

Of course my parents were not serious about putting me in the attic but all the same I took them very seriously because at night I was able to hear noises above my bedroom. These noises, as I found out later, were only the running of mice in the attic. Although this threat of my parents' was not used with extreme frequency, it had tremendous results as my future behaviour showed.

The main reasons for these threats were to get me to do what I was told, especially to eat my dinner. Another reason was to make me go to bed at eight o'clock sharp. (St. John's) Q64A.

A85. Boogie Man ['bogɪ mæn] / ['bu:gɪ mæn] / ['baugɪ mæn].

The boogie man[110] is by far the most frequently used threatening figure in the Newfoundland material. The name is usually pronounced ['bogɪ mæn] and less commonly as ['bu:gɪ mæn] or ['baugɪ mæn]. Spelling variants such as buggy man (occasionally boggy man)[111] and bugey man suggest that the

---

[110] The spelling adopted here is that of the majority of reports in the Newfoundland material.

[111] It appears that this spelling form has no connection with bog (meaning "marsh") in the reports, although the references to bog-fairies (see A29 above) makes it difficult to dismiss this possibility entirely. The doubled medial consonant of boggy in the form boggy man is apparently an attempt to indicate orthographically that the preceding vowel is short - very probably pronounced [ɔ]. The form boggy man has also been recorded in Indiana, and the problems posed by this and other "troublesome variants" are discussed in V.E. Gibbens, "Progress Report on a Word Geography of Indiana", Midwest Folklore, XI (1961), 152-153. (ref.: Halpert Collection).

TIGHT BINDING

first syllable is pronounced either with the short vowel [ɑ], or the long vowel [u:] or diphthong [ɑu]. My own fieldwork, supported by taperecordings, demonstrates conclusively that these are the three pronunciations typically used in the Province. Although the form bogey man ['bougɪ mɛn] is occasionally found, it is apparently confined to "educated" urban usage.[112] The form boogie man/boogeyman is apparently the norm elsewhere in Canada[113] and in the northern United States.[114] Webster lists bogeyman as a variant of the more usual boogeyman. Boogeyman itself, with its variants boogieman and boogerman is defined in Webster as: "an evil spirit: GOBLIN; esp: one described in threatening children be good or the ~ will get you".

Neither boogie man/boogey man, nor, more surprisingly, bogey man is listed in OED or EDD, although the latter appears in the OED Supplement under bogey in "a story which reproduces the current account of the origin of the term" bogey in golf.

---

[112] See the discussion of this in the commentary to A84 above.

[113] The Archive includes examples of this form from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and British Columbia.

[114] The forms boogy man, boogey man, boogie man, buggie man, have been recorded in Indiana (see Gibbens, 152) and similar forms are known in a number of other states. The form booger man and its variants is also well known in the U.S., especially in the southern states.

TIGHT BINDING

The form boogie[115] is recorded in the EDD as a Shropshire variant of bogie, meaning "An object of terror, any supernatural appearance". This leads back inevitably to the OED definitions of bogy, bogey:

> "1. As a quasi-proper name: The evil one, the devil.
> 2. A bogle, or goblin, a person much dreaded.
> 3. fig. An object of terror or dread; a bugbear."

The complex etymological problems of the boo/bogey group are illustrated in the preamble to these definitions:

> "[Found in literature only recently; old people vouch for its use in the nursery as early as 1825, but only as proper name (sense 1). Possibly a southern nursery form of bogle, boggle, and boggard, or going back like them to a simpler form which, as mentioned under BOG and BOGLE, may be a variant of bugge, BUG 'terror, bugbear, scarecrow'. But in the absence of evidence, positive statements concerning its relation to these words cannot be made. (That they are connected with the Slavonic bog 'god', is a mere fancy from the similarity of form, without any evidence.)]"

Here again the OED scrupulously refrains from making any definitive pronouncements on the origins and etymological interrelationships of words within this group. Nevertheless, its definitions of the individual words concerned, and its comments upon them, repeatedly refer to other words within the group. In a sense the reader is therefore caught up in a kind of circular argument which reaches no conclusions.

---

[115] The EDD source for this word is given as G.F. Jackson, Shropshire Word-Book (London, 1879). In the 1879 edition, however, the word is in fact spelled boogie, although the reference to it in C.S. Burne, ed., Shropshire Folk-Lore (London, 1883), p. 45,f/n. 2 has the spelling boogy. Chapter VI of Miss Burne's work also includes several important notes on various figures in the boo/bogey group and the puck group.

Furthermore, there is a strong tendency on the part of the editors to dismiss as "mere fancy" the possibility that any of the related forms in the cluster may have descended from some earlier form, such as an Indo-European original for example. While definitive evidence is still lacking, the semantic interrelationships among the many words in the cluster suggest that the editors may have been unduly cautious.

It seems necessary to include the word bug in any attempt to trace the origins and interrelationships of words in the cluster. The subject is too complex and uncertain to deal with here, and indeed merits an independent study. Some of the more important relationships, however, are summarised in the concise entry on bug in the ODEE:[116]

> "bug bʌg object of dread. XIV. The earliest of several words, mostly evidenced from XVI, of similar form and meaning ('goblin', 'spectre', 'bugbear', 'bogey'), the connexions of which are obscure; viz. bog, boggard, (dial.) bogle (Dunbar), bogle-bo, BUGABOO, BUGBEAR, and the more recent BOGEY. Comparison with W. bwg, bwgan, ghost, hobgoblin, bwgwl fear, threat, is inevitable, but it is uncertain how these forms are related."

In Newfoundland, the boogie man, like the boo man, is used as a threat against disobedience and general misbehaviour, but also in a wide range of more specific functions. He assumes the role taken in other cultures by guardian spirits of water, woods, caves and the like and his habitat and function are infinitely variable according to circumstances. He is

---

[116] See also the entries under bug, bugabo(o), bugan, bugbear, buggard, buggart, buggin etc. in OED and EDD.

TIGHT BINDING

especially seen as a figure who will "get" or "take" children, and there are also a number of reports which show him as a devourer of naughty children. As the boogie man is the most frequent figure in the Archive references, the following examples indicate something of the considerable range of linguistic forms used in the threats, together with descriptions of the figure itself and observations on its social function.

A85.1. To get children to come indoors at night I have heard parents say, "The Boogie-man will soon be out." (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

A85.2. ....to get them in before dark, "The boogie-man....comes out when it gets dark." (St. John's) Q67-303.

A85.3. "Boogie-man is out tonight" - to make children come in before dark or to obey parents. (Bay Bulls) Q67-258.

A85.4. We used to have a well out back an' I had.. curiosity - I was goin' to poke my head down the well. Mom always used to say, "The boogie man.." - that's the place he used to live, come to think of it: he used to live in the well. And I was never allowed to go near the well because the boogie-man would come up an' get me.... "Watch out for the boogie-man!" [wɑtʃ aut fə ðə 'bʊgɪ mæn].... I believed it, yeah. But she'd always sort of..now that I think about it, she always said...."Better watch out for the boogie-man! You'll be sorry!" ['bɛtər wɑtʃ aut fɔər ðə 'bʊgɪ ˌmæn ‖ jɑul bɪ 'sɔərɪ] ....[in] a wise, all..all-knowing tone of voice, as if she'd been best friends with him or something! (St. John's) T C22,67-31.

A85.5. ....when parents didn't want the young children to go out in the dark they would say, "Don't go there. The Boogie man is out there." (St. John's) Q67-174.

A85.6. An' one night when I was small, me an'.. Vincent an' I were small, we wouldn't..we came in about nine o'clock. An' my mother told us "You better get in an' go to bed!" We said, "No!" An' she said, "There's a

boogie-man out by the door!" [ðəz ə 'bu'gɪ mæn aut? bɑi ðə dɔə] And so we went out an.. Vincent an' I went down. We put up our fistes [an'] look for the boogie-man. ....we wasn't afraid. (St. John's) T C376,67-33.

A85.7. Parents have many ways to make children behave properly. I remember one of the things we were told would happen to us if we were bad was that the Boogy Man would get us. This was used especially for places we were not supposed to go, such as up in the attic, in the cellar or out in the dark. Sometimes just before Christmas, presents were hidden in the attic and Mother might say, "Don't go up there. The Boogy Man is up there, you know.... There didn't seem to be any conception of the physical features of the Boogy Man. We just thought of him as something associated with the dark. (Used when children six to ten years old). (Glovertown South) 68-23.

A85.8. "The Boogie-man is in that closet." (St. John's) Q67-1038.

A85.9. "The Boogie-man is in that forest." (St. John's) Q67-1038.

A85.10. "The Boogie-man is....down by that river." (St. John's) Q67-1038.

A85.11. I think it was just more or less around the house, places where I wasn't supposed to go like down in the basement or something like this, you know. Or in a..or if I was pickin' around at something that I wasn't supposed to be doing, well Mom would always say, "The boogie-man's in there!" [ðə 'bu'gɪ mænz ɪn ðɛər] Something like this. (St. John's) T C362,67-31.

A85.12. I think darkness and boogie-man are sort of deeply tied together.... Darkness an' dark rooms.

....Attics, cellars, an' that kind o' stuff. I had a friend actually who lives across the street an' they have a three-storey house, an' at the top is the attic. And they used to have their housekeeper's room up there, and to keep the..the fellers [i.e. young children] out of the housekeeper's room - "The boogie-man's there!" [ðə 'bogɪ mæ'nz ðɛər] (St. John's) T C356,67-31.

A85.13. "Watch it, the Boogie-man's in there." I don't think my parents meant to really startle or scare me with this statement; it was used as

TIGHT BINDING

a means to let me know that I was doing something wrong or something that they didn't want me to do. (St. John's) Q67-1237.

A85.14. I don't think I ever believed in the Boogie-man as a person, but when I was told...., "Don't go in there; that's where the Boogie-man stays" I would get scared and think that there really was something there when I was not supposed to look. I was too frightened to look, for fear that an amorphous, dark and dusty black "Boogie-man" would appear. If there was a "Boogie-man" I was convinced that this would be the way he looked - an amorphous thing, black and dusty, with no arms; probably in the shape of "Casper" (ghost in the comics) but larger. (St. John's) Q67-1237.

A85.15. "Don't go near that old house because that's where the boogie-man lives." (Bell Island) Q67-157.

A85.16. To induce them to sleep; They were threatened by being told, "The Boogie-man is watching you from outside your window, so go to sleep." (Curling) Q67-698.

A85.17. "I'll tell the Boogie-man on you." (Gander) Q67-1116.

A85.18. ....when I was small she['d] say like, "Do the dishes!" An' it's..I'd say, you know, I'd keep in the corner an' say, "No!" An' then she['d] say, "I'll tell the Boogie Man!" [ail tɛl ðə 'bu·gɪ mæn] (St. John's) T C376,67-33.

A85.19. The most common threat to get children to behave themselves is the Boogie-man. This is usually stated like, "If you don't stop that I'll tell the Boogie-man." (St. John's) Q67-1015.

A85.20. The Boogie-man was the most common threat of our family. Boogie-man was shapeless and formless and as a result all the more frightening. Most times the threats were playful - "Go on up and get your pajamas on or I'll tell the Boogie-man on you." (St. John's) Q67-764.

A85.21. ....the boo-man an' the..an' the boogie-man I think were pretty well close to the same. They could even be brothers! They would be close to the same family. Just..one was pretty well associated with the other. ....Oh well, just that the..well, "The boogie-man's goin' to be here [at] eight o'clock." [ðə 'bogɪ mænz 'gonə bɪ hiər ɛit ə'klɑk] you

TIGHT BINDING

know, an' you got to be in bed by then. An' the....boogie-man particularly didn't go around so much. ....if you had to draw a line you could say that he lived in a particular place. He....really came down to that. The boogie-man maybe lived over on the hill, you know, an'...., "[I'll] call the boogie-man if you're not in bed, you know!" [kɑ:l ðə 'bogɪ mæn ɨf jə nɑʔn bɛd jə nɔu] ....you could call him .... (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

A85.22. Sometimes the parents would say to the children, "If you're not good, I'll get the Boogie-man after you." (St. John's) Q67-472.

A85.23. The only frightening figure which comes to my mind is the boogie-man. It is usually used as [a] threat. "If you don't be good, I will send the boogie-man after you!" (St. John's) Q67-71.

A85.24. Children also try to scare each other and there is a verse which they sing when they get mad at one another or want to tease someone:

"Johnny Johnny is no good
Chop him up for fire wood
Put him in a rusty can
Send him to the Boogie-man."

(St. John's) Q67-187.

A85.25. "If you don't do what you're told, I'll put you in the dark corner of the basement with the boogie-man." (Corner Brook) Q67-1231.

A85.26. "I'll give you to the boogie man!" [ail gɪv jə tə ðə 'bogɪ mæən] This is the way I remember this. ...."I'll give you to the boogie man!" [ail gɪv jə tə ðə 'bogi mæn] (North River) T C417,67-31.

A85.27. Some parents and other adults try to get their children to behave by threatening them with the Boogie-man. One example of what they might say would be, "You'd better watch out or the Boogie-man will be after you." Sometimes the threat would be said jokingly but at other times the speaker would be genuinely trying to frighten the children to behave properly. The older children usually shrug their shoulders at such a saying but the younger ones who believe in witches and ghosts etc. take it seriously as they really believe in the existence of a Boogie-man. (St. John's) Q67-66.

A85.28. Sometimes parents and adults have various ways of getting children to behave themselves. At such times children are told to behave themselves

TIGHT BINDING

by their saying such things as: "Be good or the Boogie-man will come." (Clarenville) Q67-1263.

A85.29. Children would be threatened....to get them in before dark and to induce them to sleep. E.g. "You had better go to sleep or the Boogie-man will come." (Grand Falls) Q67-290.

A85.30. As a child I was threatened with the Boogie man (not as long an "o" as in "boo"). It was usually when I refused to come indoors after supper or when I refused to go to bed. It was not a really frightening threat, most often said in a joking way like, "See how fast you can run upstairs before the Boogie man comes - quickly now - hurry and jump in bed." It was usually my mother who threatened this and it was usually effective in getting us to bed - but it was said amidst laughter - we didn't take it at all seriously for we could tell by the tone of Mom's voice that it was all a joke. Sometimes I wondered if there was a Boogie man but had no thoughts about his appearance. (Corner Brook) 68-22.

A85.31. "The Boogie-man is coming tonight." Usually the threats were playful but the children were frightened because no-one knew what a Boogie-man was and none dared to ask. (Bell Island) Q67-422.

A85.32. Various things are said to children to make them behave, for example: "The....Boogie Man is coming." When this is said the children think of some big, ugly, bearded man dressed in old clothes who would come and take them to a dark place. (Port aux Basques) Q67-182.

A85.33. Parents sometimes use threats to frighten their children to get them [to] behave. The way they say such things as, "The boogie-man is coming" it would frighten the children. (Grand Bank) Q67-1129.

A85.34. When children are sometimes reluctant to go to bed, I have heard them threatened with, "The Boogie-man....is coming." (Fortune) Q67-529.

A85.35. "The boogie-man is coming, so hurry!" (Mount Pearl) Q67-380.

A85.36. ....to get them in before dark - "The Boogie-man will catch you." (St. John's) Q67-931.

A85.37. Boogie-man - "If you don't come in before dark the boogie-man will catch you." (Calvert) Q67-221.

A85.38. Some children are threatened by their parents by such things as, "You can't go out when it's dark 'cause the Boogie-man will catch you." It is used by parents to keep their children in the house after supper. The threats were just a joke by the parents but sometimes made a baby of the child. (Buchans) Q67-567.

A85.39. "The boogie man's goin' to get you!" [ðə 'bogɪ mænz 'gönə gɛt jɐu] (St. John's) T C369,67-31.

A85.40. Parents and other adults, when they wish their children to behave themselves, they often threaten them by saying such things as, "The Boogie-man is going to get you." The children are mostly threatened playfully and their parents have no intention of scaring them. At first the children are usually frightened when threatened but as they get older they realize that these frightful figures are only imaginary. (Jerseyside) Q67-65.

A85.41. Boogie-Men lived in dark rooms and dark places outside the house. The Boogie-Man lived upstairs sometimes. To frighten a younger child or to get him to come down from upstairs an older brother or sister would say, "The Boogie-Man is up there and he's going to get you." On hearing this the child would get "goose pimples" and scramble down as fast as she could, or wouldn't go up at all. (Port Union) Q67-812.

A85.42. The boogie-man was a threat used to frighten children when they wouldn't go asleep or when they wouldn't stay still. For example, if a child wanted to go outdoors after dark, the children would be told, "The boogie-man's gonna get you." .... The threats were only playful but often taken serious[ly] by the children. (Coley's Point) Q67-909.

A85.43. ....I don't think Mom ever told me what it [i.e. the boogie man] was like, but I always had the impression of this huge, big man an'.. an' all kinds o' hair an' beard an' old stuff wrapped around him; an' [I thought] it awful. I was really scared to death of him, yeah! I was positive he was goin' to get me and take me away! .... Oh, I'd say once I got to school I realised there was no such thing as a boogie man. But it was..still always in the back o' my mind, you know, till I was..I'd say till nine or ten years old. ....if I was up in the night myself - I was sort o' hard to get

to bed - an' Mom would always say the boogie man was goin' to get me if I didn't go to bed. Or if I want to go out at night, you know, she'd make me stay in. She said, "You go out there, the boogie man's goin' to get you!" [jə gou aut ðɛər ðə 'bogɪ mænz 'gonə gɛt? jʉ] ....he [was] always there wherever darkness was, you know. Like I used to always be afraid to go in the back porch or down the basement without the light on. I was afraid he'd be down there. ....I'm still scared o' the dark! (St. John's) T C367,67-31.

A85.44. Children who misbehaved or refused to go to bed when told would often be threatened with such expressions as, "The Boogie-man will come and get you...." (Topsail) Q67-600.

A85.45. To the best of my knowledge, the only one my mother or father used was the devil or boogie-man. The common threat went something like this: "If you don't (or do) such and such the boogie-man will come and get you." This was used both in fun and earnest. (St. John's) Q67-1198.

A85.46. ....when I was on the street after dark, "If you stay out when it's dark the boogie-man will come and get you." (Goose Bay, Lab.) Q67-840.

A85.47. The frightening figure that I have heard of is the Boogie-man. He is supposed to be some sort of horrible-looking creature who went around taking children. The kind of threat used was: "If you don't go to bed the Boogie-man will come and get you." However the child who was threatened was not frightened because she knows that there is no such person. Because of this it is not used very much in our house. (Chamberlains) Q67-81.

A85.48. In order to make children behave parents often use the expression, "The boogie-man will get you." (Stephenville) Q67-574.

A85.49. It's just...., "The boogie-man'll get you!" [ðə 'bogɪ mɛn l gɛt jə].... Yes. Just if you were bad. (St. Lawrence) T C355,67-31.

A85.50. And especially to get them in before dark they hear, "The Boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-684.

A85.51. I used to live on Old Topsail Road in St. John's - 1947-1953. A number of families used the boogie man to frighten their children

into doing their bidding. They would call out to the kids that if they didn't come in before dark - "The boogie man will get you!" He lived in dark places, and was black and hairy. Usually children under ten years would run home, sometimes crying. If they were older than ten, then it wouldn't bother them and the parents would say the policeman will get them. (St. John's) Q67-1232.

A85.52. Children are often threatened playfully but the result is often serious. Telling children, "The Boogie-man will get you in the dark" will most likely make them very afraid of the dark. (Rodgers Cove) Q67-712.

A85.53. The term, "The Boogie Man will get you" is a threat to children when they attempt to proceed outdoors after dark. This threat is serious to the child concerned for he becomes afraid. The adult means for him to take it seriously. (St. John's) Q67-381.

A85.54. Probably if you....didn't go to bed, I think this is the most common thing. .... "The boogie man'll get you!" [ðə 'bu·gɪ mɛn l gɛt jə] maybe, or something like that. .... Or if you went into the basement or something like that. (St. John's) T C368,67-31.

A85.55. Boogie-man: This was supposed to be a ghostly-looking man that lived in dark places and came out at midnight wandering through the shadows to scare people and, if possible, to take children away with him. Children were usually threatened with, "The Boogie-man will get you" to get them in the house at dusk and to keep them away from cellars or any other places their parents wanted them to stay clear of. (St. John's) Q67-1098.

A85.56. The "Boogie-man" was a figure children were threatened with to prevent them from going to dangerous places. The phrase used was, "The Boogie-man will get you." (Corner Brook) Q67-462.

A85.57. Also to keep children away from old buildings or to get them in before dark, the old favorite was, "The Boogie-man will get you." If a child was fairly intelligent and ask[ed] what a Boogie-man was they would say he was big, black and horrible; this proved very effective. (Cormack) Q67-1012.

A85.58. Songs or rhymes which contain references to these figures are: "Your nose is gonna grow and the boogie-man'll get you"....[117] (Gander) Q67-441.

A85.59. The most common threat that I have heard is that, "The Boogie-man will get you." Parents use it frequently with small children and as their children get older and unbelieving, the threat is no more used. (Cupids) Q67-286.

A85.60. The only one I have heard was the Boogie-man. An example of the threat used was, "The Boogie-man'll get you." The threats were serious. The children are frightened when threatened. They see a fearful face on the adults when they say the names. Thus, in seeing that the adults are "frightened", the children form fearful images of the Boogie-man and others. They are therefore frightened. (New Harbour, TB) Q67-246.

A85.61. The frightening words that, "The Boogie-man will get you" still makes me shudder. When I was a boy, older people would use this to make sure you were good in their absence, and it worked - because I was pretty wild, but.... the thought of being taken by the Boogie-man was too much for even me. Now that I think of it, my fear stemmed from not knowing what the Boogie-man was. (Dunville) Q67-196.

A85.62. Children are sometimes threatened (by their parents) that the Boogie-man will get them but it is not serious and is not widespread. "The Boogie-man will get you!".... Probably if they're misbehaving or if they want them to go to bed. This is from hearing other parents. My parents didn't think it was very good psychology. (Princeton) Q67-974.

A85.63. Parents often use such sayings as, "The Boogie-man will get you" to frighten their children, not seriously though, because they were naughty, mostly during the night. Children, sometimes, are really frightened by the saying because they believe their parents are telling the truth, and in most cases they listen and do what their parents tell them. (Lourdes) Q67-1092.

---

[117] Cp. A85.82 below.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.64. I have heard people use the threat that, "The boogie-man will get you." This I have never heard used seriously. The "boogie-man" is a vague character, not at all frightening and generally used in jest. (St. John's) Q67-242.

A85.65. Children are sometimes told by their parents to do something or not to do something. This admonishment is usually followed by a threat such as, "If you don't behave yourself the boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-187.

A85.66. The common threat given to children on Bell Island is, "If you're not good the boogie-man will get you." The threat is not made seriously but the children take it seriously. (Bell Island) Q67-69.

A85.67. The most common ways parents have in getting their children to behave [include], "If you don't behave right the boogie-man will get you...." (Bonavista) Q67-1051.

A85.68. Though the Boogie man was never used by mother to frighten us, she recalls that her mother used it to frighten her. The threat was serious. For example: "If you are not good the Boogie man will get you." He was a sort of big, black shadow that would jump out at you. (Barachoix Brook) Q67-146.

A85.69. If a child is misbehaving an adult might say: "If you don't be good the boogey man [pronounced boogey-man] will get you." No-one seems to know what the "boogey-man" is like exactly, except he is a terrible person. (St. John's, Laurenceton and St. Lawrence) 66-11.

A85.70. Oh the boogie man was something that was either goin' to come from underneath the bed or..or out of the clothes closet where it was dark, or some such place like that. And it was alright as long as your parents were in the house. But I can remember one evening - I was about, I suppose, five years old - about as far back as I can remember; and my mother had gone to the store and it was gettin' dark and there was.. I was left with the two other children to take care of until she returned. And I can remember going into the bedroom. There was no electricity at the time - it was a kerosene lamp, an' I hadn't lit it because mother used to warn me not to touch the fire while she was away. An' I can almost see this boogie man comin' from under the bed! An' I got such a fright that I

took the two children an' I went out - 'twas in the winter time - I went out into the snow to meet her comin' back from the store! So I was pretty scared of [the] boogie man. ....you'd usually be frolickin' around, jumpin' probably, in bed..in bed in the night time, and she'd want you to go to sleep an' she'd say, "If you don't be good I'll close the door an' the boogie man'll get you!" [ɪf jə dount? bɪ gʊd ail klouz ðə dɔər ən ðə 'bʊgɪ mæn l gɛt jə] and....[you] probably didn't mind the first remark, but eventually she probably would come over, if things got a little bit out of hand, and close the door! Well you'd get very quiet and not make any noise. And after a time - there was two of us sleeping in the one bed, two brothers - and by an' by one would venture and say, "Didn't you hear that?" And the other fellow would say, "No. What's that?" And he'd say, "I heard something under the bed!" Then somebody would sing out to have the door opened. And they'd open the door [and] everything would be Al again! (Brigus) T C429,65-16 (rec. H. Halpert).

A85.71. For being naughty - "If you do that again the boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-536.

A85.72. ....when she was little her mother would say, "If you don't come home before six o'clock for your supper, the boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-1110.

A85.73. Boogie-man - to get children in before dark, "If you don't come in, the Boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-1034.

A85.74. "If you're out when it's dark the boogie man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-18.

A85.75. The only frightening figure with which I am familiar is the Boogie-man. He was used as a threat to get me to go to bed: "If you don't go right up and go to sleep, the Boogie-man will get you." Luckily, he never did. I was always very good at sleeping. It was usually Grandmother....who used this term to frighten us, and mother would ask her not to because she thought it unwise to frighten children in this manner. We always agreed with mother. (St. John's) Q67-309.

A85.76. Parents threaten children to get them to behave themselves by saying such things [as]: "If you don't go asleep right away, the Boogie Man will get you." (Embree) Q67-654.

A85.77. It seems to have been a very common practice in Newfoundland to threaten children to get them to do certain things. They are usually threatened only playfully but sometimes, in desperation, a parent will mean every word he says. E.g. a parent might say, "If you don't go to sleep the Boogie-man will get you...." (Deer Lake) Q67-1041.

A85.78. "The boogie man is under the bed and he'll get you if you try to get out of bed." I was scared to put my hand out down under the bed - afraid he would grab me. (Harbour Main) 67-22.

A85.79. "If you wake up at night, the boogie man will get you." The boogie man is under the bed and he'll get you if you try to get out. If I woke up at night I used to hide my face under the bedclothes so he wouldn't see me. (Windsor) 67-22.

A85.80. Sometimes, in order to get children to behave themselves, they are threatened, both playfully and seriously. But these threats frighten children for they take them seriously. Some things said to children [include]: "If you don't be quiet the boogie-man will get you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

A85.81. Song which scares children:
"Remember if you cry
The Boogie Man will get you
And your nose is gonna grow...."
(Middle Brook) Q67-427.

A85.82. "If you tell a lie
The Boogey Man will get you
Your nose is gonna' grow
And everyone will know."
(St. John's) Q63B.

A85.83. The only frightening figure I know of is the Boogey-man. The Boogey-man was used to get children to do things or keep them away from dangerous places. (e.g. "If you don't brush your teeth, the Boogey-man will get you."). (Gander) Q67-77.

A85.84. These threats such as - "If you go there the boogie-man will get you" are generally playful and used to get children not to do things which they shouldn't do. But young children really believe that these things exist, and are afraid of them. (St. John's) Q67-1164.

A85.85. I have heard the Boogie-man used when a child wants to go, say, down to the basement and he has been forbidden to do so. Then the parent

says, "If you go down there the Boogie-man will get you." I think they are used playfully by the person who says them, but with the intent of frightening the child into obeying. I think the children are frightened by this threat. They are taught that the Boogie-man will harm them if they're not good. They are frightened because they think of him as a person who will harm them. (St. John's) Q67-587.

A85.86. Boogie-man: "If you go out in that old house once more, I'll tell the 'Boogie-man' to go and get you." (Heart's Delight) Q67-76.

A85.87. "If you go into the woods by yourself the boogie-man will get you." (Corner Brook) Q67-1231.

A85.88. "....if you go too far in the woods the boogie-man will getcha." (Southeast Placentia) Q67-677.

A85.89. The "Boogie Man" was always described to many in this area as being an old man with a bag on his back, coming around to pick up all the bad boys he could find. Example of threat: "The Boogie Man will get you if you don't behave yourself." The threats were mostly playful. When a child is at an early age, he is usually quite terrified but as this child develops he is not so easily frightened by such things. (Harbour Grace) Q67-986.

A85.90. The Boogy-man - children were told, "The Boogy-man will get you if you're not good."
We used to play a game of Boogy-man; one kid would be the Boogy-man and would chase the others until he caught one. The point was to catch the kid in such a way that would scare him half to death - like to jump on him from behind with a piercing scream when it was dark. (Little Bay Islands) Q64A.

A85.91. I have heard the threats of, "[The] Boogie-man ....will get you if you're not good." The threats were playful and were used to get the children to behave themselves. Most children are not actually frightened by these threats as it doesn't take much time for a child to realize there is no such thing. The reasons the children were threatened were because they were naughty, to prevent them from going to dangerous places etc. They would be told that the Boogie-man lived in an old condemned house to prevent them from entering this dangerous place. It was also used to prevent them interfering with animals, crops, tools etc., to get them in before dark and to induce them to sleep etc. (Grand Falls) Q67-335.

A85.92. From my mother, I have information of several threatening figures used by adults to induce or prevent certain behaviour in children. For the most part, these threats were made seriously and the children took them seriously. My mother remembers these frightening figures. The boogie-man: This was the most common, used to keep children from being naughty, to keep them from going to dangerous places, and to induce them to go to sleep. He was supposed to live in hills and caves, and in dark places, so this proved effective in getting children in before dark. .... The form of the threat was usually something like: "The Boogie-man will get you if you do such-and-such." (St. John's) Q67-1070.

A85.93. Some parents warn their children by telling them, "The Boogie-man'll get ye if ye don't watch out." (Portugal Cove) Q67-960.

A85.94. ....children used to sing:
"The boógie-mán will gét you
If you dón't wátch oút!"[118]
[ðə 'baugɪ mæn wɨl gɛt jɔ
ɪf jɔ dount? watʃ æut] [chanted rhythmically]
....he used to live under the bed and any place where it was dark, I guess. After dark he lived everywhere - just an all-seeing presence! (Sop's Island) T C26,64-10.

A85.95. Children were usually threatened for being naughty, to prevent them from going to dangerous places, and to get them to sleep. Such things as: "The Boogie-man [will] get you if you go in that room." (St. John's) Q67-279.

A85.96. They used to say: "The boogie-man will get you if you go down by the wharf." The boogie-man was supposed to have lived in the sea. (Lewisporte) Q67-334.

A85.97. "Now watch out! The boogie man's goin' to get you!" [nau watʃ æut? ‖ ðə 'bogɪ mænz 'gönə gɛt jɪu] (St. John's) T C369,67-31.

A85.98. The only threats that I have heard is the threat of the Boogie-man. Around here it is common for a parent to say to the child, "Oh, don't go there; the Boogie-man will get you." This threat is often playful, but it is also meant to be serious many times. The threat could be said to prevent children from wandering around the house in the dark or to make them come home for supper in the short winter afternoons. I don't think children are actually frightened

---

[118] Cp. A82.5 above.

when threatened but they often heed the warning just the same. (Cupids) Q67-285.

A85.99. "Behave yourself or the Boogie-man....will get you." (St. John's) Q67-967.

A85.100. When parents want their children to behave they usually say to them, "Be good, or the Boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-136.

A85.101. Some parents say, "You had better be good or the Boogie Man will get you." The threats were not meant seriously by the parents but usually the children took them to be so. Children are frightened when they are threatened because the things and people they are threatened with are real to them. They have never seen any of them but they exist in their imagination. (Botwood) Q67-349.

A85.102. What is usually said is, "Better be good or the boogie-man will get you." Whether the children are frightened depends upon the age of the child. The younger children, usually of about seven or eight years of age and younger, are frightened more than children older than this. (Harbour Grace) Q67-98.

A85.103. I have often heard the term, "Be good or the boogie man will get you." The threat was usually in half earnest. Usually the children were frightened but when they got a little older they seemed to become more uncertain than frightened. (St. John's) Q67-308.

A85.104. Sometimes children are made to behave themselves by threats such as, "Be good or the Boogie-man will get you." These threats were usually playful and the children were not really frightened. (Bishop's Cove) Q67-6.

A85.105. "Watch it, or the boogie man'll get you!" [wɑtʃ ɪt | oər ðə 'bʉugɪ mæn ǀ gɛt jʉu] (St. John's) T C362, 67-31.

A85.106. "The Boogie-man" is a frightening figure that I have heard of. As a small child, my mother or father would say to me when I was misbehaving, or doing something I should not be doing, "Watch it or the Boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-1237.

A85.107. When children hesitated to do what they were told they were threatened, "You better do it or the Boogie man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-174.

A85.108. My mother used the expression "Boogie-man". She used to say, "Stop or the Boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-545.

A85.109. "Don't go there, or the Boogie-man will get you." (Bell Island) Q67-502.

A85.110. "Don't go there today or the Boogie-man will get you." (Bell Island) Q67-1143.

A85.111. In my community the frightening figure is the Boogie-man, and he is used to frighten children and make them stay away from various places, such as the woodshed which contains certain tools harmful to young children. To keep them away the father would warn them very seriously, "Don't go in there or the Boogie-man will get you." (Deer Lake) Q67-1169.

A85.112. Children are sometimes threatened with the Boogie-man. .... e.g. "Don't go into the basement or the Boogie-man will get you." The threats were really playful but were sometimes said in a serious tone, so that the child would believe the threatener. Children don't seem for the most part really frightened by these threats - I suppose because they haven't seen any drastic results after someone has disobeyed the threats. However, sometimes children are frightened in the dark - afraid that the Boogie-man will get them. (St. John's) Q67-384.

A85.113. The most common figure used in our family is the Boogie-man. When it was used to frighten me, the image of a strange, black, cloudy figure of human resemblance would "pop" into my head. I would think that he was waiting for me behind every corner and that when I got near, he would jump out in front of me - nothing else. ....Sometimes my father would say to me, "Put down that saw (or any other tool) or the Boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-160.

A85.114. "You had better come in before the Boogie-man gets you." (Grand Falls) Q67-290.

A85.115. "You better listen - or - the boogey man will get you." .... I remember mother often used this when I was a youngster. She used to use this mostly to keep me in the house after it was dark.

I could never imagine what he would actually look like, but I always imagined him as being somewhere out there in the dark and would grab you if you went out and carry you off to some unknown place. (Francois) 68-3.

A85.116. There are threats such as, "Don't go out there or the Boogie-man will get you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-839.

A85.117. As children between the ages of six to ten we used to be afraid of the "Boogy Man". My parents would tell me not to go outside the door after dark or the "Boogy Man" would get me. They used this term to discourage me from wanting to go outside after dark. I have heard other people in the St. John's area mention the "Boogy Man". As a child I visualized the "Boogy Man" as some sort of cruel or frightening person who would come after me from some dark corner and catch hold of me. He wasn't associated with the devil and I don't remember the threat including where the "Boogy Man" was supposed to take me if he ever caught me. It was usually said in a tone of voice that would in itself arouse some feelings of fear. The last part of the threat would usually be emphasized by lowering the voice to a soft tone. "Don't go outside or the 'Boogy Man' will get you." The underlined part will be [the] part said with a different tone of voice.
Besides associating the "Boogy Man" with the darkness outside, I would also imagine him being upstairs hiding in a closet at night. (St. John's) 68-5.

A85.118. Children were often threatened with such sayings as, "You'd better go to bed or the boogie man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-424.

A85.119. Boogy man: An expression used to frighten small children when they are doing something bad or when the fail to obey. A parent may say with a threatening tone, "You had better get in bed or the Boogy man will get you." No particular description of the Boogy man but an air of mystery surrounds the thoughts of him. (Glovertown) 68-12.

A85.120. "Go to sleep or the Boogie-man will come and get you." (St. John's) Q67-967.

A85.121. "Go to sleep or [the] Boogie man will get you." Threats were playful, and children aren't really frightened, because they know it is only a game. (St. John's) Q67-1294.

A85.122. ....the boogie man was supposed to be some form of a creature who lived in a far away place where he kept all the bad boys and girls. His

job was to come around when called upon [in threats] such as, "Be quiet or the boogie man will get ya." ....this was enough to frighten any boy or girl [in]to being a little saint for a short while. (Grand Falls) Q67-607.

A85.123. The only frightening figure I have ever heard about is the Boo-man or Boogie-man. This was used to get me quiet when I was little and making noise when I went to bed. My mother used to say, "Be quiet or the Boogie-man will get you." (St. John's) Q67-671.

A85.124. In order to make children behave themselves, imaginary figures such as the Boogie-man or the Sand-man are often employed. A familiar use of the "Boogie-man" is, "You'd better hurry up and eat or the Boogie-man will get you." This figure was called upon to induce children to obey their parents, not to go into dark places, and to eat. The Boogie-man was said to live in the attic or the basement, and children could not detect him because he made himself invisible. (Corner Brook) Q67-858.

A85.125. I have often heard a mother say, "Hurry up and eat your dinner now, Johnny, or the Boogie man will get you." I would say that the threats certainly were serious and the poor little darlings ate up every bit of food and howled with pains [in] their stomach for hours after, and gave such remarks as, "Mommy, the Boogie man is in my bed and I want you to sleep with me." (Ochre Pit Cove) Q67-202.

A85.126. My father had a few documents in his room, in drawers an' that, and they..they were documents that shouldn't be revealed to..to everybody, you know..... An' o' course I wasn't supposed to get at this, you know. He..he used to have it put away. So I had [a] pretty good memory that the boogie man was always threatened on me if..if I'd go an' look in these drawers. "The boogie man'll....have you!" [ðə 'bogɪ mɛn l hæv jɐu] (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

A85.127. "The Boogie-man will have you." (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-921.

A85.128. Parents often threaten children by saying, "The Boogie-man....will have you." (....Most of these threats are usually playful. The children are not very frightened by them because they can sense that the parents are not really serious. The parents have said it many times before and nothing has happened when the children disobeyed). (Botwood) Q67-588.

A85.129. To get children to behave themselves parents would usually say, "The Boogie-man will have you...." The threats were serious and children were frightened when threatened, because in small places they hear a lot of these things and believe them to be true. (Lewisporte) Q67-63.

A85.130. "If you don't go asleep the boogie-man will have you." The threats were just playful. I don't think children are really frightened, but just scared. They think such things are true. (St. Anthony) Q67-115.

A85.131. To get me to behave, my older brothers and sisters rather than my parents used to threaten me with frightening creatures, the most popular figure being the Boogie-man. The purpose of threatening me with the Boogie-man was mainly to get me to go to sleep. Also it was used to keep me from getting into my sisters' rooms and messing them up. The impression I was always given was that the Boogie-man always stayed in the clothes closet, and that if I ever went near the closet when I was not supposed to, the Boogie-man would "have" me. The words always used were, "Don't do that or the Boogie-man will have you." The word "have" was more effective than for example the word "get", for "have" implied a feeling of permanency.[119] My impression of the Boogie-man himself was very vague. What I seem to remember most, however, is seeing in the clothes closet my father's and mother's long coats, and the narrow closet gave me the feeling that the Boogie-man must be very tall and thin, with an ugly face, black skin, long, skinny hands, and wearing big, black robes under which he could hide any bad children whom he caught. (Buchans) Q67-1005.

A85.132. [One] of the frightening figures of the area where I grew up [was] the usual Boogie-man who was suppose[d] to be half man and half animal, with big, long teeth and long claws. .... Children heard such things as, "Be in before dark or the Boogie-man will have you." (St. John's) Q67-126.

A85.133. ....I remember only the Boogie-man and the Crust-man. These names were often used to frighten children to do something they wouldn't otherwise do. Some parents used these names as real threats; others used them only in jest. Unfortunately it isn't exactly funny when, as a

[119] This is one of several Archive reports which comment on the relative menace implied in the verbs "get", "have" and "take" when used in threats. These comments were helpful in suggesting the sequential order of listing the examples concerned.

small child, you are warned, "Go to bed or the Boogie-man will surely have you." Your instinctive reaction is fear, e.g. "What if he's under my bed?" The Boogie-man was quite a useful instrument in the hands of authority as he could be invoked to back up any threat. As a child, however, I remember being threatened by him only when I stood on the bedpost and tried to fly (at midnight). (Campbells Creek) Q67-162.

A85.134. "The Boogie-man will come and take you away." (Gander) Q67-781.

A85.135. I have heard parents tell their children, "If you don't be a good boy I['ll] tell the Boogie-man and he'll come and take you away. (Bryants Cove) Q67-912.

A85.136. The term "boogie-man" was used to get children home before dark or to get them asleep at an early hour. Example: "If you are not home before dark....the boogie-man will come and take you away." (St. John's) Q67-159.

A85.137. Parents get their children to do what they want them to do. For example, when a child won't go to bed his mother might say, "If you don't go to bed when you're told the Boogie-man will come and take you." (Marystown) Q67-147.

A85.138. "....if you are not asleep before nine o'clock the boogie-man will come and take you away." (St. John's) Q67-159.

A85.139. The only threat I can remember is one which my mother gave me whenever I did something wrong or whenever I didn't want to go asleep just then. That was the old familiar, "The boogie-man will come and take you away, if you don't be good." (Blaketown) Q67-889.

A85.140. To get them in before dark - "Get in here, before the boogie-man comes and takes you away in his bag." (St. John's) Q67-536.

A85.141. Yes, Mom used to say to us when we were kids when she wanted us to go to bed early, "Go to bed before dark or the Boogie-man will come and take you away." It usually worked because we went to bed. (St. John's) Q67-506.

A85.142. At times when parents and other adults wish to get children to behave themselves they usually use such expressions or threats as: "Go to sleep Johnny, or the boogy-man is coming to take you away." (St. John's) Q67-391.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.143. "Go to sleep or the Boogie-man will come and take you away." (Northern Bay) Q67-726.

A85.144. I have heard the phrase "Boogie Man" being used as [a] playful threat to get children to behave. The "Boogie Man" was supposedly an old man who searched the night looking for children who were naughty. He carried with him a large brin bag into which he put the children that he caught. After catching a number of children he brought them to his old house and then locked them in his big, cold, dark cellar where he kept all those he had captured. These children were never heard of again. Examples: 1) The phrase was used to tease children. If a child was asked to go outside (at or just before dark) to do an errand he would be encouraged to do so by being told that the only reason he didn't go out was because he was afraid of the "Boogie Man". This would make him do it just to show the others that he had no fear of the "Boogie Man". 2) If a child was naughty someone would say, "The 'Boogie Man' is coming to take you." One incident I recall is as follows. My parents had gone out for the night and my brother and I were under the care of our older sister. She put us to bed and went to her room to study. We soon got up, went to the living room and played with our toys, making a lot of noise. Hearing the noise, she came down to us and ordered us to bed again. We did not go. She said, "The 'Boogie Man' is coming after you" but that did not scare us. Later on we heard a knocking on the back door. My sister then looked at us and said, "That's the 'Boogie Man' coming for you." And before she could finish the sentence we were off and under the covers, hiding from him. (St. John's) Q67-700.

A85.145. ....[my sister], she's..in the way or somethin', like, when I'm diggin' worms, I say, "....I'll call the boogie man up an' he'll take you away! An' you won't see your mother no more!" [aɨl kɑːl ðə 'bɔgɪ mæən ʌp æn ɪl tɛik jʉu ə'wɛi ‖ ən jɔ wount sɨi jə 'mʌðər nou mɔər] (St. John's) T C376,67-33.

A85.146. Children were usually threatened by....the "Boogie Man" to get them in before dark and to induce them to sleep. E.g. some parents wanted to go out one night and they couldn't get their little girl to go to bed. She would keep crying all the time they were getting ready. When the babysitter came she started to screech. With this burst of temper the father finally got

TIGHT BINDING

mad, shook the little girl and said, "If you don't go to bed and go to sleep the Boogie Man will take you away and you won't see Mommy and Daddy anymore." The little girl stopped crying and went to bed. Since then, when anyone mentions the Boogie Man, fear comes into her eyes. (Channel) Q67-1031.

A85.147. "Be good or the boogie man will take you away." (Corner Brook) 67-22.

A85.148. I have heard of adults who frighten children so they will behave properly, especially in company. The most popular is the Boogie-man: "Do what you are told or the Boogie-man will take you." (St. John's) Q67-954.

A85.149. The Boogie-man is supposed to be a big, bad man who is only seen at night. He is used to prevent children from going out after dark. Example: "Jane, don't go out on the step, for the boogie-man may take you away." (Stephenville) Q67-273.

A85.150. "If you suck your thumb the Boogey Man will hack it off." (St. John's) 66-14.

A85.151. Well, "The boogie man'll come an' eat you up!" [ðə 'bogɪ mæn l kʌm ən i:t juu ʌp]. That kind o' stuff. (St. John's) T C356,67-31.

A85.152. "[The] Boogie-man will come and gobble you up." (St. John's) Q67-1038.

A85.153. To get children away from dangerous places parents usually said, "Don't go in there; the boogie-man will get you and eat you...." (Chapel Arm) Q67-962.

A85.154. They were threatened for being naughty, to keep them from a dangerous place, to make sure the child was in by dark or to get the child to fall asleep. Example: "Be good, children, or the Boogie-man will come after you and eat you up." (St. John's) Q67-471.

A85.155. "You'd better be good or the boogie man will get you and eat you up." (Harbour Grace) Q67-932.

Indirect

A85.156. Yes, such threats were used, the usual one being the Boogie man. The threats were sometimes playful but most often were serious. A lot of children were really frightened when threatened, especially the very young ones. (St. John's) Q67-386.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.157. I have heard children being threatened by the Boogie-man in a half serious manner which usually brings the desired reaction from the child. He is usually frightened mainly I think because he infers from his parents that in some vague way the Boogie-man is scary. (Buchans) Q67-495.

A85.158. Yes, children are sometimes threatened with such things as the Boogie-man. The threats are usually playful but sometimes are serious, and the children are usually frightened if they believe that their parents are serious and there is a Boogie-man. (Ferryland) Q67-1184.

A85.159. Boogie-man - this was supposed to be a very terrifying person. The Boogie-man only frightened children; he wasn't supposed to do them any real harm. The threats were usually serious. At least the children took it to be so. Children were very frightened by these threats because they actually believed them [i.e. the threatening figures] to be real people who would harm them. They sometimes associated these with local people. (Botwood) Q67-1223.

A85.160. I have heard threats, and have been threatened with the Boogie-man. I haven't heard any others and the ones I have heard have been both playful and serious. I would say that children are frightened by someone older than they are, and are inclined to believe what they are told. (Grand Falls) Q67-290.

A85.161. Modern children still hear of the Boogie-man but are never frightened. Probably due to Dr. Spock.[120] Parents never use any of these figures to deliberately frighten a child unless, of course, they detest their children. (Corner Brook) Q67-933.

A85.162. In my community, Lower Island Cove, the Boogie-man is perhaps the most popular frightening figure there to get children to obey their parents. Mothers and fathers use this gimmick to keep their children out of unfavourable areas. This Boogie-man was supposed to reside in every dark and dangerous place. (Lower Island Cove) Q67-710.

---

[120] See B. Spock, Baby and Child Care (New York, 1946), esp. pp. 323-335.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.163. The Boogy man was used to impress good behaviour on children. (Pinchards Island) Q63B.

A85.164. The Boogie-man was an old man with only one arm. He was supposed to have a big cellar somewhere on Fair Island. My Grandparents told me if children misbehaved in any way they might be threatened by the Boogie-man. Parents usually say these jokingly but children under seven years old usually believe it. After that age, though, children tend to laugh at the Boogie-man and the other characters. (Centreville) Q67-4.

A85.165. Children are threatened with the Boogie-man (sometimes called the Boo-man) when they misbehave or when they want to go somewhere, like down on a wharf, where it is not safe for them. (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-1246.

A85.166. I have heard of the Boogie-man being used as a threat to get children to behave or to prevent them from doing something which might hurt them, but this fashion has gone out of style and is no longer used, the chief reason being that children are not really frightened by the threats. (Bay Roberts) Q67-773.

A85.167. They were threatened usually because they were naughty or to keep them from being naughty or to induce them to sleep. In fact the saying "Boogie-man" was used for almost anything. (Corner Brook) Q67-1166.

A85.168. The "Boogie-man" was used when:-
I was naughty.
To prevent me from going to dangerous places.
To prevent me from going in places which were not of my concern (where I should not have gone).
To make me behave....just before the company came.
If I was misbehaving, or getting my own way.
(St. John's) Q67-1237.

A85.169. Children were threatened with the Boogyman when they were bad, but he didn't scare me, although he did scare other kids. This was quite a common threat to keep the kids in line. (Bishop's Falls) Q64A.

A85.170. I was always threatened with the "Boogie-man" if I did not do as I was told. I never took this one seriously because it was used so often it became a household item. (Grand Falls) Q67-1201.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.171. The boogie-man was used to make children stop from what they shouldn't be doing.... (Happy Valley, Lab.) Q67-690.

A85.172. I can remember being threatened by the "boogie-man" if I was doing something which I was not supposed to do such as not coming in from play when told to and wandering away from my mother while she was doing her shopping or tending to other business. (St. John's) Q67-1238.

A85.173. [The] Boogie-man [was] generally used to keep children from doing things or wanting to go places they weren't allowed. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-522.

A85.174. The only one which I have heard of is the Boogie-man. This was used by our parents and other elders usually to keep us out of mischief or to keep us away from places where we shouldn't be. Sometimes we considered these threats far from playful but it could never be serious enough to get the better of our curiosity. Four times out of five we disregarded these and usually ended up in mischief and trouble.

One thing that we would never do, however, was to go near a graveyard in the night, especially when there was a full moon. It was a common belief among us that the Boogie-man used to lurk behind the headstones, waiting for the unaware few. Although this belief was strong in our mind it was very rare that any of us, especially alone, had the nerve to try and discredit it. (St. John's) Q67-733.

A85.175. Children in our neighbourhood were threatened with a Boogie-man. The threats were issued to prevent the children from going to dangerous places and to get them in before dark. The threats were usually serious (although sometimes were rather tongue-in-cheek, it seemed). Threatening people with the Boogie-man never really frightened the children seriously because he was not referred to regularly enough to become established in the children's minds. (St. John's) Q67-744.

A85.176. The "Boogie-man" was sometimes down in the basement, behind the door, under someone's bed, up in the attic, or in the garage. Usually, in dark places, or places I should not go. (St. John's) Q67-1237.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.177. I always pictured the Boogie-man as a ghost who scared people when they went into a room or building in which they were not permitted. (Belleoram) Q67-1058.

A85.178. The boogie-man was supposed to have lived in the dark, both outside (when it was time to come in) and in certain parts of the house (when it was off limits to us). (St. John's) Q67-1134.

A85.179. As a child my mother was threatened with the Boogie-man. They were threatened with this to get them to come in before dark. The threats were playful as far as the parents were concerned, and the children did not really believe in such things, but they obeyed just to be on the safe side. The Boogie-man was supposed to have lived in the woods. (St. John's) Q67-1221.

A85.180. The chief frightening figure I have heard used to threaten children is the "Boogie-man". The term is used more playfully than anything else, mainly to get children in the house before dark, and to keep them away from dangerous places, but the younger children generally seem to respect the threat, whether through fear or not I don't know. (Corner Brook) Q67-1158.

A85.181. Children are seriously [threatened] with such things as the Boogie-man. Sometimes the threats were playful but mostly they are serious. ....they are not frightened when threatened. Something which they can't see does not impress or frighten them. [They are threatened] to get them in before dark. (Stephenville) Q67-785.

A85.182. The Boogie-man was supposed to be some sort of a large, hairy man. Both the Boogie-man and witches were used to get children in before dark. Yes, children are really frightened by such threats because they believe they [i.e. the figures] exist, and kids don't know any better than what their parents tell them. (Stephenville) Q67-715.

A85.183. ....the one used by my parents on me and my brother was the Boogie-man. Usually these threats were used to get us off the street at night. The Boogie-man was supposed to exist in the darkness of the night - that time when man cannot see his foe. Even though I never believed these threats I usually had fear after the threat was made. Thus to me the threats

TIGHT BINDING

were serious, but I believe that to my parents they were playful. Children are usually frightened when threatened, not as much of the outcome of the threat, but rather of the loss of confidence of the parents in them. When a child is young things are supposed to revolve around him; he has his own little world with his parents acting as small moons revolving around him, shedding their light and wishfulness on him. When he is threatened, he feels alone, and a human being (no matter what age) feels fear when he is really alone. As the child grows into maturity he learns to take the whole world into scope. (St. John's) Q67-573.

A85.184. The "boogie-man" was used to stop me from staying out late and from going to dangerous places, such as caves. (St. John's) Q67-18.

A85.185. The boogie-man is [an] old threat to keep younger children from staying out late in the night. It is effective as children are frightened into coming home running, at the sight of an unknown person walking down the street. (Gander) Q67-778.

A85.186. In my own experience, my mother usually used the term "Boogie-man" to frighten me as a child. She would usually use this to keep me indoors at night or try to make me behave. It was also used to keep me away from places such as wells, [and], for that matter, from any dangerous place. (St. John's) Q67-111.

A85.187. Mostly: Boogie-man; this was used only when you weren't allowed to go out in the dark. (Corner Brook) Q67-1106.

A85.188. There is not much use of frightening names in our community. There is one that is mentioned, however, sometimes, and that is the Boogie-man. This name is often used by parents to keep the younger children from going out after dark. It is being used less and less now as it seems that children no longer are afraid of the dark. (Dunville) Q67-1301.

A85.189. Boogie-man - to keep them in. (Windsor) Q67-746.

A85.190. The only frightening figure I have heard mentioned in my home is the Boogie-man. This "person" is not a resident of my home town; he is just an imaginary figure. His name is used, not to scare the children, but to induce them to go to

TIGHT BINDING

bed, and to prevent them from being naughty. I never was afraid or terrified of the Boogie-man; I hesitate to believe that any parent uses it to actually frighten the children. I think the threat of the Boogie-man is used as a symbol, the mention of which doesn't frighten, but, in a sense, makes the child feel that he really should go to bed or be good. (Corner Brook) Q67-51.

A85.191. The only [expression] which my parents threatened me with was the "Boogie-man". These threats seem very serious to children and frighten them because they really think there is such a person as a Boogie-man. Some reasons for which I have been threatened [were] either to get me to go to bed or if I did something wrong. (St. John's) Q67-877.

A85.192. My girlfriend tells me that although she never had the Boogie Man threatened on her, she often heard women say it to their children. She said they said it in an ordinary (not too fast, or too slow) but serious and threatening voice. Such a threat was made usually to get children to go to bed or to sleep, or to keep them from misbehaving.. This usually worked too. It kept the children quiet and often made them cry. My girlfriend also says she once asked a child what the Boogie Man looked like and the child said he was big and white. (Port Kirwan) 68-11.

A85.193. A common threat used with children was the Boogie-man. It was used usually to induce them to go to sleep, and sometimes also to get them in before dark. He was never described, but he was supposed to be always present in any dark place. I don't think children were really frightened because they never believed that he existed. (Stephenville) Q67-110.

A85.194. The terms "Boogie Man" and "the Black Man" are used in this community. Speaking from experience, the "boogie man" lived up in our attic. Mom used the idea of the Boogie Man to get us to sleep. (Upper Gullies) Q67-1011.

A85.195. My father when he was a boy would sometimes be threatened by the Boogie-man to get him to eat his meals [and] to induce him to sleep. (St. John's) Q67-68.

A85.196. Many youngsters I know in Gander wouldn't question you about the Boogey man for they believe there is such a person. I was often persuaded to go to bed or behave correctly or else look out for the Boogey man. (Gander) Q67-548.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.197. To keep children away from places where they were not supposed to go, especially in the house, like under the stairs which was usually dark, the children would be told there was a Boogie-man in there. (Dunville) Q67-389.

A85.198. I have often heard of children [being] threatened by the Boogie-man. Parents often [told] children that the Boogie-man is down in the basement or in some closet that they want the children to keep away from. This is often told to children to make them obey. (Port au Port) Q67-123.

A85.199. Children were threatened because they were naughty or to prevent them from going to dangerous places. When I was a young boy I was told the Boogie-man lived in a wooded area near my home; this is an example of the threat to keep me from getting lost in the woods. (Corner Brook) -- Q67-333.

A85.200. ....I know that in our house there..there's eaves, like, where we store,.store old things, and we weren't allowed to go in there. If we went in there the boogie-man was supposed to be in there! (Gander) T C352, 67-31.

A85.201. The threat of sending for the "Boogie-man" is very common at this community of St. Lawrence .... (St. Lawrence) Q67-352.

A85.202. Sometimes the threats are made in fun. For example, when someone is playing with a child he may pretend, to the amusement of the child, that he is talking to the Boogie-Man. Then he may repeat to the child something the Boogie-Man is supposed to have said in return. When the threats are serious it is usually to get children to bed, to get them to come in before it gets dark, to make them behave, and to keep them from doing something they've been forbidden to do. (Windsor) Q67-629.

A85.203. When the children were small and wouldn't obey their parents, the parents wanted them to be quiet so they frightened them into being quiet. Sometimes during a storm the wind made ugly sounds whistling through seams so the parents said this was the boogie-man looking for the bad little ones. Sometimes it was serious, but mostly playful. Children are mostly frightened because they believe their parents. (St. Thomas) Q67-681.

A85.204. Well, the Boogie-man would be after you if you don't go to bed [at] such an hour.... (Cupids) T C218,65-14. (rec. Mrs. C. Brown and D. Brown).

A85.205. I spend a lot of time at Brigus and have heard my aunts and uncles saying [quite] seriously to children that....if they are not good the boogie-man will come after them. Nobody ever says what a boogie-man is so the child thinks of its own private horrors to represent the mysterious boogie-man. My little cousin.... thinks the boogie-man is a huge beast with many arms that can catch you and squeeze you to death. (Brigus) Q67-383.

A85.206. I have observed many different times when the parents have told their children that the boogey man was coming. In fact I have been subject to this type of treatment myself. I can remember when I was about six years old, and I wanted to go out with my father one night around eight o'clock. My mother told me that I could not go because this boogey man was out around the corner of the house to grab me. She said that I could not go, but this man would not hurt my father because he was big enough to take care of himself, but he [i.e. the boogey man] always took little boys, picked [them] up with his fork and put them in a big fire. This frightened me so much that I wouldn't go if I wanted to go ever so bad. This was said in a low, squeaky voice with a low tone which almost made me believe that he was right at the corner ready to grab me.

I was so frightened that every time the door came open....I could actually see him coming in through the door. I imagined he was a tall, big, black man with a fork on his back.

That night I would not sleep with my brother, but with mom and dad. The next morning I went the opposite way from what I intended to go, because he could still be there as far as I was concerned. This was a terrifying experience that I will never forget.

This is still being practised by the parents of my community and the kids from five to ten years old still believe this, and those older than this as well. (Seal Cove, FB) 68-13.

A85.207. Children are sometimes threatened with such things as the Boogie-man. .... Whenever the child misbehaved himself the mother would tell him that the Boogie-man....was coming. The threats were given by the parents in a half-serious and half-joking manner, but the child took them seriously. (Lewisporte) Q67-449.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.208. I don't think my parents used anything to frighten me with when I was a child, but my brother (who was four years older than me) and my playmates would scare me by telling me, if I was out after dark, that the Boogy-man was coming. The Boogy-man would be in the cellar when I went down, in the farthest corners of the garden after dark, and even in my own bedroom when I went up after dark and the light wasn't on; in just about any dark place. (St. John's) Q63B.

A85.209. Parents sometimes threaten their children when they put them in bed that if they don't behave themselves the boogie-man will come. In most cases children are threatened seriously by this remark from their parents. Very often children become frightened by those threats and others like them, and they may grow up to pre-adolescence believing that such things are true. These threats should be used playfully if they are to be used at all. (Bay Roberts) Q67-1131.

A85.210. The Boogie-man was a person who walked around at night to scare all those who didn't go to sleep at a certain time, or if you went in dark spots, such as a haunted house or a basement, alone. He was supposed to be dressed up in a white cloak. .... To prevent them from going to dangerous places, the boogie-man would grab all who came to any dangerous places. (St. John's) Q67-165.

A85.211. When I was young, the only threatening figures mentioned to me were the Boogie-man and the fairies. I don't remember whether they were serious or not but I became very frightened regardless. If my parents didn't want me to go to a certain dangerous place, they would say the Boogie man would grab me there. .... The Boogie-man was supposed to hide in dangerous places, e.g. old houses, near the water etc. (St. John's) Q67-1125.

A85.212. Children who stayed out after dark were led to believe that the Boogie-man, who was roaming around, would catch them. (St. John's) Q67-743.

A85.213. When I was a child and didn't behave I was told the boogie man would catch me, and it was left to my imagination what he would do with me. This was only a playful threat.... (St. John's) Q67-301.

TIGHT BINDING

A85.214. The Boogie-man would catch you in a brin bag.[121] (St. John's) Q67-1152.

A85.215. The only name I can recall is "boogie-man" and he was the one who caught children if they were outdoors after dark.. (St. John's) Q67-1167.

A85.216. When I was younger my grandmother used to threaten me with the "Boogie-man". If I had been particularly naughty the "Boogie-man would be out to get me", until I behaved. These threats I accepted very seriously and caused me no end of sorrow for my sins. It was not until I was nine or ten that I realized there was no Boogie-man. (Mount Pearl) Q67-980.

A85.217. I remember, when I was small, my older brother kidding me about the boogie-man that was going to come and get me. When I got in bed that night I could imagine this big man and his helpers coming to take me. I think that this threatening could be very bad and [do] harm to a child. (Gander) Q67-689.

A85.218. My parents often threatened me by saying that the Boogie-man would come and get me. The threats were serious to me but not to my parents. Yes, I was frightened when I was threatened because I believed that if I wasn't good the Boogie-man would come and get me. (Gander) Q67-252.

A85.219. [The boogie-man].- ....I don't think they were very definite about what it was. It was just a bad man that will come an' get you; I suppose take you away. ....Well probably if you didn't do what your mother told you to do. If you stepped in puddles, and got your clothes dirty on the way home, or if you didn't come home, or if you refused to go to bed, or, you know, the general things that children refuse to do or do. ...,I can remember, you know, being a little bit..worried about it myself and going home an' asking my mother. She said there was nothing to it, you know. .... It was a lot of foolishness.... (St. John's) T C370,67-31.

A85.220. The only frightening figure of which I have heard is the Bodgie-man which was used to

---

[121] A brin bag is a burlap or hessian sack. See also A85.144 above.

TIGHT BINDING

induce me to sleep. The usual threat was if you don't go to sleep the Boogie-man would come and get you. The threats were only playful, while it depends on the child whether he is frightened or not. Therefore it would not be wise to use this threat on all children. The exact description I have no idea of but I know for a fact that he was not a handsome creature by any means. (St. John's) Q67-975.

A85.221. Parents threatened their children by saying that the Boogie-man would get them. The threats were mostly playful. Yes, children were frightened when threatened. (St. John's) Q67-731.

A85.222. When I was younger my mother and father usually got my brothers and sisters to behave themselves by telling them the "boogie-man" would get them. They were usually threatened because my parents wanted them to be good, or otherwise they tried to prevent them from going to dangerous places. When my brothers and sisters were threatened, I don't think they were very frightened; they probably behaved themselves to avoid a spanking. (St. John's) Q67-621.

A85.223. The Boogie-Man - often when small youngsters are naughty or don't come in when it's getting dark, their mother will say that the Boogie-Man will get them. If mother doesn't want them to go to a certain place she will say that the Boogie-Man is in this certain place. Often the child would listen, especially if he were between the ages of three and five. He is afraid he [i.e. the Boogie-Man] might be there. The mother has a stern look on her face. (Port Union) Q67-812.

A85.224. When I did bad things, I was told the boogie-man or blackman would get me. When I really did something bad my mother would tell me a little story and it would go like this:

One time there was a little boy who was always saucy to his mother. (He even used to swear and say naughty words.) Well one day when he disobeyed his mother he went out of doors. He was never seen again. His shoe was found at the bottom of Devil's Mountain (the hangout of the local boogie-man).

Anyway you could deduce from the story what happened to him and that made you a good boy for the next few weeks anyway (until your memory started to get slack again). (Lewisporte) Q67-1299.

A85.225. To get children to behave parents and other adults have various ways of making threats. To get children to come home early the parents often threaten the child by telling him the "boogie-man" will get him after dark. (Jerseyside) Q67-483.

A85.226. Whenever I was told to go to bed or come in off the road and I would not do either, I was then told that the boogie-man....would get me. (Windsor) Q67-1072.

A85.227. The Boogie-man wasn't described but it was said in such a way that we thought of it as something awful. If the children won't do what they are told to do then the Boogie-man would get them. When the children are threatened, they are not really frightened but they are not sure if anything will happen or not. The children were threatened with the idea of the Boogie-man because they were naughty; to prevent them from going to dangerous places; to get them in before dark; and to induce them to sleep. (Bay Roberts) Q67-106.

A85.228. The boo-man and the boogie-man mean much the same thing. If a child is bad a parent will tell [him] that if he isn't good the boogie-man will come and get him. (Heart's Delight) Q67-493.

A85.229. I have heard the Boogie man used as a threat. In most instances I have heard the adults say to the kids that if they're not good the Boogie man would get them. I think they [i.e. the threats] were used playfully by the person who said them, but with the intent of scaring the child into obeying. Children are frightened by the threat. I think that they are taught that the Boogie man is someone who will harm them if they're not obedient, so they try hard to please just so the Boogie man doesn't try to get [them]. (Grand Falls) Q67-586.

A85.230. Sometimes in my community I have heard adults threaten children by employing the use of frightening figures. This was usually done to scold children who were naughty or to prevent them from going to dangerous places. For instance, if a child was naughty the parent would say that the boogie-man would get him. (Green's Harbour) Q67-1123.

A85.231. Sometimes parents and other adults may threaten children either playfully or seriously to get them to behave. In my childhood the Boo-man or Boogie-man was most common to me. If I was naughty or refused to go to bed I might be told

the Boogie-man or Boo-man, whom I believed to be quite real, might get me. As a child I did not think as to what he would do with me but it would be surely something very harmful. My parents did not wish to frighten me but used the terms more as a warning. (Botwood) Q67-608.

A85.232. Parents sometimes threaten their children by telling them if they did a certain thing the "Boogie-man" would get them. (Whitbourne) Q67-446.

A85.233. Sometimes children are threatened by such things as the Boogie-man. ....The Boogie-man was supposed to live in a dark place and if a child wasn't in before dark then the Boogie-man would get him. (St. John's) Q67-684.

A85.234. The boogie-man is a threat which parents used to keep children away from some place or to get them in before dark. I don't know what the boogie-man is supposed to be but sometimes if parents don't want children to go near a certain place they tell them if they go there the boogie-man will get them. (Bell Island) Q67-157.

A85.235. Boogie-man - Many times was I threatened that if I went into the woods after dark the Boogie-man would get me. ....I would say that the threats were serious not in the sense that my parents believed in the boogie-man, but that they were serious-minded about....my staying out of the woods after dark. I would say that I was frightened only....when I was caught by darkness in the woods. (Grand Falls) Q67-543.

A85.236. Usually when a member of our family was bad or wouldn't go to bed my parents would tell us that if we didn't go to bed the Boogie-man would get us. (Corner Brook) Q67-436.

A85.237. Children were warned if they didn't go to bed early the Boogie-man would get them. The threats were playful and the children weren't really frightened by them. (St. John's) Q67-233.

A85.238. Parents would say to children that the Boogie-man would come and get them if they were bad. (St. John's) Q67-459.

A85.239. The Boogie man or fairies are used as threats to children. In most cases I think the parents used them as a last resort to get the children to obey them. They were, and still are, taken very seriously by young children, who discuss "the Boogie man", for instance, among friends, and who conjure up a horrible image of what he

is really like. When they are very young, they trust their parents to the utmost; therefore if parents say the Boogie man will get them if they don't obey, they believe them, although their parents only meant it in jest. (St. John's) Q67-1268.

A85.240. The most frequent [way] of getting children to behave or to do certain things was to tell them the Boogie-man would get them if they disobeyed. The Boogie-man was supposed to live in all dark corners and dark closets. This threat was often used to get children home before dark because it was then that the Boogie-man was supposed to be at large. (Twillingate) Q67-950.

A85.241. Sometimes the parents might want their children to do something and if the child didn't want to do it, the parents would say the Boogie-man would get you if you don't do what you're told. I think they were serious about this threat, or at least they appeared to be. The children took it serious[ly] even if the parents didn't. Different figures are associated with different situations. (Bloomfield) Q67-37.

A85.242. I have heard parents threaten naughty children that the Boogie-man would get them if they didn't behave. The threats were usually given in a serious tone and most young children were frightened. (Corner Brook) Q67-1157.

A85.243. When children are bad adults attempt to make them behave by telling them that the boogie-man will get them if they don't. Children are frightened by the thought of this fictitious character who lives in the dark. (St. John's) Q67-1071.

A85.244. I was told the boogyman would get me if I wasn't good. This expression was used quite often, mostly in the night-time; it wasn't too potent though; my parents weren't too serious about it - they told me it in a more or less joking mood. (St. John's) Q63B.

A85.245. Children are really frightened. On one occasion, a friend of mine told his little cousin that the boogie-man would get him if he wasn't good. When a man was seen in the distance one night, my friend told his cousin it was the boogie-man. The little cousin went into hysterics right there. (Lower Island Cove) Q67-1138.

A85.246. In the first case the parents might tell the child that the Boogie-man will get him if he is not good, and in the second place they tell

the child the Boogie-man will get him if he is out after dark. (Ferryland) Q67-1184.

A85.247. I was told that the Boogie-man would get me, if I stayed out too long, or if I was out after dark. When I asked where the Boogie-man lived, I was simply told he lived way, way off in the dark, where it was very, very cold. (Grand Falls) Q67-116.

A85.248. I have often been threatened, in a very playful manner, that the Boogie-man will get me when I went out in the dark alone. I have often pictured the Boogie-man as a big, black ghost who was always lurk[ing] behind me. (St. John's) Q67-964.

A85.249. Children were frightened by their parents for various reasons. For example, a parent may say that the boogie-man would get the child if he didn't go to bed.... (St. John's) Q67-104.

A85.250. The children are told to be good or the Boogie-man will get them. They are seriously threatened. ....They were just vague figures. The children were told they existed but no description of them [was] given. The child's own imagination provided this. The children were actually terrified to even go to bed when such threats were used. These threats were sometimes made to keep [children in]. The boogie-man was outside (or up on the hill or down by the seashore) therefore the child must not go out. These threats were very effective until the child reached an age where he no longer believed them. (Dunville) Q67-826.

A85.251. Children were often threatened to go to bed by telling them that the boogie-man would have them or some other frightful figure would have them. (Carbonear) Q67-845.

A85.252. Children were threatened in many ways. They were told if they went out in the dark the Boogie-man would have them. This usually resulted in their bedroom being lit up before they went to bed. As children grew older they outgrew the threats.... (Grand Bank) Q67-1206.

A85.253. If a child doesn't go to bed when the parents want him to, the parents tell the child if he doesn't go to bed the Boogie-man will have him. (Botwood) Q67-588.

A85.254. If they didn't go to sleep the Boogie-man would have them.... (Lewisporte) Q67-411.

A85.255. :...the boogie-man....was ugly and had protruding horns. He was supposed to capture the children and take them away. (St. John's) Q67-990.

A85.256. Children were usually threatened with the "boogie-man" or the "Boo-man". The threats were serious. The children were really frightened. They thought they had really done wrong and the boogie-man came to take all bad children. They were afraid of his horns and [of] going to burn in a big fire forever. (Sibleys Cove) Q67-1146.

A85.257. In order to make children behave, they were told that the Boogie-man would come and take them. The Boogie-man was supposed to be a fierce monster but no description of him was given. Parents threatened to send their children to the Boogie-man if they misbehaved. These threats were serious. The children were petrified of this Boogie-man because they believed he really existed. They usually behaved for a few minutes and then forgot the Boogie-man. (Upper Gullies) Q67-497.

A85.258. The parents would get their children to behave telling them the boogie man would come and take them.... (South River) Q67-1197.

A85.259. When children misbehave parents often threaten them by telling them that the boogie-man.... would come and take them away. (Labrador City, Lab.) Q67-490.

A85.260. Children are usually threatened seriously and the children believe them and take these threats seriously. [The] Boogie-man is usually found in a dark room and is something evil. If a child is not good he is threatened by his parents who say the Boogie-man will come and take him away. (St. John's) Q67-874.

A85.261. The only threat that I have heard of is the boogie-man. I remember being told that if I wasn't good the boogie-man was going to come and take me away. The threats were only playful although some children really get frightened when threatened. (Gander) Q67-689.

A85.262. I have heard people tell their children that if they didn't go to sleep when they got in bed....they would shut the door and then they would be alone in the dark and the boogie-man would come to take them. (Bell Island) Q67-385.

A85.263. The Boogy man and Devil were both used to frighten children. It could be used many

HIGH BINDING

times per day, according to the child's behaviour. It is difficult to say just what these terms meant to the child, but "he" was a very unkind person who lived in some dark, obscure place, who could come and take them [i.e. children] away if they were bad. (Bay Roberts) Q63B.

A85.264. Threats and imaginary frightening figures were once frequently used to get children to abide by the wishes of their parents. One very common threatening figure is the Boogie-man. This terrifying, horrible man will come and take children away to some supposedly awful place if they are bad. He will also get them if they venture out in the dark. (Gander) Q67-945.

A85.265. The only figure I can remember is the Boogie-man. He was supposed to be some sort of old man who would come and take you away from your home, if you did anything bad. He would be threatened on you if you should be in bed, if you hadn't done your daily chores, etc. (Pilley's Island) Q67-917.

A85.266. When children become naughty and misbehave many parents will tell them to be good or the "Boogie-man" will come and take them away. ....The Boogie-man is supposed to be a scary sort of man, like something out of a monster film. He is a big fellow who wears all black and has a horrid mask which frightens children who misbehave. The others [i.e. the Black Man and The Old Feller] have much the same description. Mostly when threatening children parents tell them that these frightening men will come and take them away, and sometimes children are threatened to be eaten. These threats are sometimes serious and sometimes playful. Younger children are sometimes frightened but the older ones - four, five or six years old - seldom or never are frightened. However if these children ever ran into some frightening man, especially at night, the first thing they do is go crying to mother saying that the "Boogie-man" is after them. Most children are hardly ever scared because these threats have been used on them so often with no results. (Corner Brook) Q67-1208.

A85.267. Around Clarke's Beach young children are sometimes told that the Boogie-man is going to take them. Some of them are frightened, some don't

believe in the Boogie-man and the rest would probably throw rocks at him if he really did exist. (Clarke's Beach) Q67-977.

A85.268. [One] of the ways of getting children to behave themselves in Bay Bulls [is] to threaten to put the children out and let the Boogie-man take them. (Bay Bulls) Q67-816.

A85.269. One of the common frightening figures is the boogie-man. It is said that he travels around in the dark and takes little children that are bad or don't go to bed when they should. The fear of the small children of being taken by the boogie-man is a very effective one in their young years and it keeps them from doing wrong or staying out playing after dark. (Creston) Q67-1283.

A85.270. My mother told me when they [i.e. she and her brothers and sisters] were small and they were naughty, my grandfather and grandmother always mentioned the Boogie-man would take them away. They were always afraid of the Boogie-man.... (Manuels) Q67-75.

A85.271. To frighten children into being good, doing something for their parents, turn off the television or go to bed, they were told the boogie-man....would take them. (Holyrood) Q67-682.

A85.272. If I was naughty the "Boogie-man would surely take me away, for he loves bad boys and girls". Dangerous places were always the home of the Boogie-man. The Boogie-man always appeared at night. (Mount Pearl) Q67-980.

A85.273. Boogie-Man - if children would not come in before it got dark, the parents would say the Boogie-Man would come and take them. (St. John's) Q67-884.

A85.274. If he wanted to go to a dangerous place or into the woods alone, he was told that the boogie-man....would take him. (Bay of Islands) Q67-896.

A85.275. The only familiar frightening figure to me was "The Boogie-Man". This was used as a threat to get small children to do something they didn't want to do - for example, to get them to go to bed. This "Boogie-Man" was supposed to be some kind of character who took children if they did not obey their parents. Apparently he was supposed to live in some dark area of town and would come in the night to see that all children were in bed. (Bell Island) Q67-53.

A85.276. The usual threat was the Boogie-man who would take a child away if he was bad. Threats were usually playful. Children are frightened when threatened because they believe what they are being told. (Aguathuna) Q67-325.

A85.277. Yes, I was often told to be careful the Boogie-man didn't take me. These threats were made to make children behave properly. Yes, children are really frightened. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1280.

A85.278. I have heard mothers tell their children to be quiet or the Boogie-man will take them away. The threats were only playful but it was a means of discipline. (Deer Lake) Q67-119.

A85.279. Only one frightening figure was heard of by me and that was the boogie-man. My parents often told me I was going to [be] taken by him and brought to his home out in the forest. [Although] these threats were only playful, they were very effective. The children were threatened for many reasons; the main one my mother says was to get them in before dark. (Corner Brook) Q67-97.

A85.280. Children were threatened with the Boogie Man when naughty. He was described as a devil with a wooden pick and shovel who came and took you up on his prong if you weren't good. (Heart's Delight) Q67-693.

A85.281. Parents threatened children with the boogie-man .... The parents were not serious when they made these threats. If a child was naughty he was told that the boogie-man....would come and carry him away. (Bay of Islands) Q67-896.

A85.282. Only one name - Boogie-man - is familiar to me. He was usually a big man who was going to come and carry you away if you didn't obey your parents. I think that children would more or less playfully [be] threatened by the Boogie-man. (St. John's) Q67-864.

A85.283. The children were not "threatened", in the correct sense of the word, but instead were merely "warned". For example: the most popular of all frightening figures was the "boogie-man". He was some imaginary evil character who was supposed to carry off children who were bad. The children didn't really believe this, but they did realize that their parents were being stern with them and they would gradually learn their lesson about being bad. (Grand Falls) Q67-404.

A85.284. The parents tell their children that if they don't do what is right the boogie-man will carry them away and they will never come back again. This works when the children are only small but it has no effect as they get older. (Creston) Q67-1283.

A85.285. Boogie man. This was a name used to scare children. It was used for both day and night. If you did something wrong "the Boogie man would carry you away". (Corner Brook) Q63B.

A85.286. [The] Boogie-man was supposed to be a giant,[122] who captured little children who stayed out after dark. (Mount Pearl) Q67-143.

A85.287. ....stories are told of the Boogie man who is supposed to capture children who aren't in bed. (Port de Grave) Q68-331.

A85.288. If I wasn't good my parents would say that the boogyman would come and bar me up under the steps or in a dark room. (St. John's) Q64A.

A85.289. [We were] afraid of the boogyman. Our parents would tell us when we were bad that the boogyman would come and lock us up under the steps. (St. John's) Q64A.

A85.290. Boogie Man - [lived] in the woods where he only appeared after dark when he would steal and eat little boys. (Grand Falls) Q67-543.

A85.291. The boogie-man has been described as an old man whose body is twisted and dirty and who eats little children. The threats are playful but the children, especially those about two years of age, are often frightened. However, as the children get older the threats do not frighten them because they realize that the adults tell them these tales to get them to behave. (Labrador City, Lab.) Q67-490.

A85.292. The children were often threatened with punishment or frightening figures such as the Boogie-man. We never got a description of the Boogie-man but he was supposed to be an awful creature, mainly eating naughty children who didn't do what their mother told them. The threats were serious in the sense that they were meant to discipline the children. The children used to be frightened of the Boogie-man, but not any more. (Corner Brook) Q67-90.

---

[122] See A49 above.

A85.293. I was threatened most of the time when mom either wanted me to go to bed or to help her with something. She used threats like the Boogie-man, which was some hairy creature that ate disobedient children.... (St. John's) Q67-739.

A85.294. Parents on Bell Island would induce their children not to go near the old mining caves for fear of their floundering [i.e. falling in?], by telling them he would eat them. (Bell Island) Q67-310.

A85.295. I have been threatened with the Boogie-man. He was supposed to have been an ugly old man, who lived in the dark. His dress included old, dirty boots, ragged pants, tattered coat, cut-up face and long hair. If you were bad he could come to eat you. (St. John's) Q67-58.

A85.296. Children do not always behave themselves and in order to get them to do so, sometimes parents or other people would threaten them with the Boogie-man, at least this is the only expression which I have heard used. I can remember that when my brother was young and just learning to walk he would go to the back porch and try the steps which led to the basement. This was dangerous, and my sister would often tell him that that was where the Boogie-man lived and [that] he would eat him if he went into the basement again. It works when children are young but as they grow older they grow wiser. The Boogie-man I think lived mostly in dark places. (St. John's) Q67-817.

A86. Bully Man.

The name Bully Man, like Bully Boo, is probably derived from, or cognate with, other terms in this group which have boo as their first element. Lip-rounding before a following bilabial consonant tends to cause final [l] to become dark and eventually to be assimilated (e.g. bull beggar > boo beggar), so that words in this cluster beginning with the elements boo or bull are probably interrelated, or have influenced each other by analogy. Parallels are to be found in German in forms such as Bullerkerl,

Bolleman, Böllemann, Bulemann, Bolekerl and others, which exist alongisde forms such as Bumann.[123] During fieldwork in Newfoundland I have noticed that there sometimes seems to be some confusion between the terms boo and bull. One speaker from Change Islands, when speaking of a bull (i.e. the animal) consistently used the pronunciation [buu]. I have heard this from a number of other speakers, in addition to the tendency to pronounce final laterals as "dark" even when not followed by a bilabial. It is interesting to note that the bull (i.e. the animal) is recorded as a threatening figure in the Province, and an elaborate animal disguise known as "the bull" is used in mumming at Christmas and is also thought of as very frightening. It is therefore not impossible that there may have been some confusion or merging of these figures at the semantic as well as at the phonological level. On the other hand, the element bull has a long history in the names of such frightening figures as the bull-beggar which date from the sixteenth century in English literary sources.

The addition of the element man to names in the boo/bogey group in Newfoundland,[124] and also its use in the names of a number of other invented figures,[125] suggests that these figures

---

[123] For a full discussion of these terms see Ranke, cols. 1367-1369.

[124] E.g. boo man, bogey man and boogie-man.

[125] E.g. bucksaw man, cat man, crust man, dark man, gun man, hairy man, Sandman, silk man, sleepy man, spring man, ugly man and whisker man.

have characteristics which at least resemble those of human beings, however distorted and grotesque they may be. They are often described as "an old man", "a horrible man" and so on, rather than simply as a creature or animal, and although animal characteristics are certainly used in conceptualising the figures they are also thought of as at least vaguely anthropomorphic.

In Newfoundland the Bully Man, also spelled Bullie-man, booly man etc., is used for general misbehaviour, but, like other figures in the group, he is also associated with darkness, and is sometimes thought of as being the Devil.

A86.1. Things said to children to make them behave [included]: ...."I'll give you to the Bully-man...." (Red Bay, Lab.) Q67-808.

A86.2. Bully man was used instead of Bogey man. This phrase was used quite often to frighten the children and to keep them in the house at night. E.g. "The Bully man will grab you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q63B.

A86.3. The children are threatened to prevent them from going to dangerous places, to get them in before dark [and] to induce them to sleep. The threat generally is, "The Bullie-man will have you." (Bishop's Cove) Q67-43.

A86.4. When children are naughty or are "showing off" in front of strangers, as children do, parents resort to referring to such frightening figures as the Bully Man. Parents may go so far as to say, "If you don't be good we'll put you in the dark and the Bully Man will come and take you." Children generally quiet down after this. (Red Head Cove) Q67-501.

A86.5. The term that was used to get me to behave was, "The 'Bully Man' will take you away." No matter what I had to do the Bully Man would always get me if I didn't do it. He never had a home, it seemed to me; at that time he just lived to get me if I didn't do what was right. (Upper Island Cove) Q67-1316.

A86.6. When my girlfriend was growing up in Ship Cove.... her mother would sometimes say the following to her when she was bad: "The bullie man takes bad little girls and boys so you'd better be good." (Ship Cove, GNP:W?)[126] 66-7.

Indirect

A86.7. Another common one is the "Bully-man". He is a figure who roams about at night in search of children who are out after dark. (Harbour Deep) Q67-979.

A86.8. On dark nights when I wanted to go outdoors, and also if I were doing something bad inside the house, my mother would tell me if I weren't good the Booly Man would get me. This is all she would say on the subject, but it frightened me terribly; things got so bad I was afraid to go out of our kitchen if there were no light in the other rooms. I had a vision of the Booly Man conjured up: he was stooped terribly and completely covered with long, black hair - a more grotesque figure than I saw in any horror movie. (Upper Island Cove) 67-1.

A86.9. The only thing I have heard used at Bishop's Cove to frighten children is the Bullie-man. Parents usually threaten their children by telling them that the Bullie-man will have them. The threats are given in a serious tone. Young children are really frightened when threatened but when they reach the age of about ten they realize that the Bullie-man is just fictional. (Bishop's Cove) Q67-43.

A87. Bully-bagger.

Presumably a variant of boo-bagger/boo-beggar, from earlier bull beggar, this figure appears in only one report.

A87.1. To get children to be quiet and to go to sleep when put to bed parents would sometimes say, "Lie down before....the bully-bagger come[s]." (Western Bay) Q67-605.

---

[126] Archive reference has "Notre Dame Bay".

MISCELLANEOUS INVENTED FIGURES

A number of figures in addition to the boo/bogey group appear to have been invented for use in verbal social control. There is insufficient evidence in the Newfoundland material to state categorically that they are all pure inventions. Some may well be adaptations from other spheres of folk belief and popular culture. Most of them, however, seem to be invented and developed on the same general principles as the figures already discussed in this chapter. They reflect or embody one or more of the typical characteristics which threatening figures are thought or expected to possess. Some, such as the Rawhead and Bloody Bones figures, have a long history in English tradition, whereas others, such as the bucksaw man, are of recent coinage. Some, like the Sandman, are known in other cultures, while others, such as Henry Gouldwoody, are evidently and distinctively local. Some are apparently confined to certain geographical areas and others are inventions used within a particular family. Many of the figures are used to control general misbehaviour, but some of them have more specific functions. They are presented here in alphabetical order for ease of reference.[127]

A88. Balthazars.

A single example of these figures is reported from Stag Harbour, no further details being given.

---

[127] Because of their close relationship, several figures are grouped together with Rawhead and Bloody Bones.

A88.1. "....the Balthazars are coming." (Stag Harbour) Q67-203.

A89. Black Raiders.[128]

This name occurs in only one report, the figures being associated with darkness.

A89.1. 'I have been threatened with the Black Raiders in order to get me in before dark.... (Grand Falls) Q67-673.

A90. Betty Snow.

Betty Snow is described as "a little white snow woman" who takes children away and freezes them to death. She is closely associated with Jack Frost, who brings children to her, and she is probably an extension of the personification to include snow along with frost as a threat to naughty children. See the example under Jack Frost (A51.12) above.

A91. Bucksaw Man.

The Bucksaw Man is included in a list of figures from Forrest's Point on the north west coast (Q67-158). It is an interesting example of how the frightening implications of a sharp and dangerous implement may be used in characterising a threatening figure.

A92. Cat-Man.

Although not clearly defined as a threatening figure, the

---

[128] Cp. Night Riders, A56 above.

"Cat-Man" is reported together with some specific threats concerning nocturnal figures and the context suggests that he may well be used in verbal controls. He is also one of several figures which are said to have springs attached to their feet or legs.[129]

A92.1. There was also a story told about a person called the "Cat-Man". It was a person dressed in black, with springs on his feet, and he bounced on the roof-tops of the houses during the night. (Bell Island) Q67-502.

A93. Crust Man.

It is clear that this figure was invented for the express purpose of getting children to eat crusts of bread which they tended to leave or waste. There are various sayings used to prevent waste of this kind, including the suggestion that the eating of crusts will make the child's hair curl and his teeth and gums strong:

"It's just that my parents always used to frown on it [i.e. on the not eating of crusts] an' they'd say, 'This is ridiculous, wasting....good food like this. You should eat it. It's....good for your teeth. It'll build up..give you good strong gums' an' this, you know, but there was never anything threatened." (Buchans) T C367,67-31.

Children are also reminded of those less fortunate than themselves,[130] or an appropriate proverb is quoted. An informant whose early childhood was spent on Brunette Island told me during a taperecorded interview that his mother always used to

---

[129] See, for example, A60 above.

[130] For an example of this, see A93.5 below.

say the proverb "Woeful waste brings woeful want" (T C353,67-31) when he was reluctant to eat crusts as a young child. The crusts themselves may be endowed with supernatural powers and be said to crawl after the person who does not eat them.[131] Carrying this idea a little further, the crust is personified into a threatening figure with many of the characteristics of other creatures such as the boogie man. It is perhaps the case that children's literature has also played a part in the creation and dissemination of this figure. A contributor to the Archive who comes from Bishop's Cove quotes some lines about a remarkably similar figure called "the Ghost of the bread-crust man":

> "Oh I'm the Ghost of the bread-crust man
> I scare young children whenever I can
> I scare them all from one to another
> Who do not eat breadcrusts and listen to mother." Q67-1124.

The crust man is reported from twenty four communities in many different parts of the Province, and is said to come and get children, often after they go to bed, and even to put them in a bag, take them away and eat them. While used mainly to get children to eat crusts, he is also used to encourage them to eat other food. Occasionally he is given a specific location in the settlement and may therefore perhaps be used to discourage children from going to that area.

A93.1. "If you don't eat your crust, the crust man will come." (Twillingate ?) Q67-1275.

A93.2. Crust Man - (this one is rare around Burin). "Eat your crusts; the Crust Man is coming!" (Burin Bay Arm) Q67-538.

---

[131] See C40.1 below.

A93.3. "If you don't eat the crust on your bread the crust man will come and get you." (Cape Lahune) Q64A.

A93.4. "Eat all your crust or the Crust Man will get you" for as the saying goes: "Last night, I didn't eat all my crust; I poked it under the plate; I thought no-one would find it there. But when it got late and dark, I went to bed, I cuddled up tight. I covered all but just my head. And as it got late, I saw that same old crust. It did come walking up over my bed. He had big, long legs and arms and two big eyes; he smiled and said to me, 'You must never, never do that again.' 'All right,' I said, 'if you'll please get down off my bed.' He jumped down and disappeared. He comes no more and never again will I poke my crust under my plate."[132] (Lord's Cove) Q67-388.

A93.5. As most kids, I liked the soft part of bread best and left the crust under my plate or sometimes threw it to the dog if no-one was around. But of course mother was usually around, especially during breakfast, and when I said I was full she would point to the crust, look at me and say, "Eat it!" I wouldn't give in that easy so she'd try more avenues like, "It'll help make little boys big and strong; it'll give you good teeth and strong bones," and sentimentally tell us about the little boys in China with not even that much to eat, and here we were throwing it away. To this I'd tell mother I would eat it [at] dinner time, but no, she wasn't that easy either. The convincing method was, of course, the Crustman. She would say, "The Crustman will have you if you don't eat your crust of bread." He was supposed to be a big and ugly man who went around to make sure everyone ate what they were given, especially crust. If it were late at night, she'd go to the door to call him in but we'd always have our crust eaten before he arrived. This worked the same as the Boo-man. (Ramea) 67-10.

A93.6. "You eat your crust - or the crustman will put you in his bag." I remember my mother using this with me when I was a youngster (about seven

---

[132] This "saying" sounds rather like a retelling of a nursery tale or cautionary tale and may perhaps be further evidence of a possible literary origin.

years of age). Since that I have heard her use the same thing with my brother's children. This was used to get me to eat the crust of the bread as well as the soft central part. Usually this was said in much the same tone as was the one referring to "old scratch".[133] The first words went fast and loud...., each successive word being lower and more drawn out. I always imagined the "crustman" as being a fairly large man with a large sack on his back. I used to think he lived up on the hills and would carry you up there and put you in some cave if you didn't eat your crust. Mother used to refer to his being up on the hills but she didn't tell us what he looked like. (Francois) 68-3.

Indirect

A93.7. The Crust man was used as a threat when a child would not eat bread crust. (Salvage) Q67-512.

A93.8. The Crust Man was threatened if children left crust of bread on [the] plate and would not eat it. (Creston) Q67-541.

A93.9. ....it's something about....a Crust Man coming down the brook if you don't eat your crusts.... and the reason the brook was..was there, she said, was because there was a little brook out by the door. In other words if the little brook wasn't out..out by the house....he might have been coming down over the hill, because there's quite a big hill there too! (Epworth) T C360,67-31.

A93.10. My grandmother would tell us that if we didn't eat our crusts during meals the Crust-Man would come after us in the night. This Crust-Man was made from crusts and he would take little boys and girls who didn't eat their crust. This Crust-Man was supposed to be living under a large store near the ocean, so we were always afraid to go near this particular place. (Lumsden South) Q67-425.

A93.11. Then there was the Crust Man who came to you if you left the crust on your bread when [you] finished a meal. (Little Catalina) Q67-1156.

A93.12. The Crust Man came to you if you didn't eat the crust of bread. (St. John's) Q67-623.

---

[133] See A17.1 above.

A93.13. The Crust Man was also used as a threat to children if they didn't eat the crust of their bread. If they didn't eat the crust the parent told the child the Crust Man would come to him and all his teeth would fall out.[134] (Marystown) Q67-1307.

A93.14. A "bogey" figure used to induce children to eat a certain food was the "crust-man". Children were told that if they did not eat the crust on a piece of bread, the "crust-man" would come and get them after they went to bed. My informant, her family and friends...., as children, believed this and would be afraid to go to bed unless they had eaten the bread crusts. (Cappahayden) 67-15.

A93.15. When I was eating bread and left the crust on the table, my mother used to tell me to eat it or the Crust Man would come and get me. (Deer Lake) Q67-956.

A93.16. Another figure which my mother remembers well is the Crust Man. This threat had the specific purpose of inducing children to eat the crust of the bread. If they did not, the threat was that the Crust Man would come and get them after they went to bed. My mother says that she and the other children took this quite seriously. She remembers that when the children saw a picture of an old, ugly man, with a sharp nose, in a magazine, they were told by their parents that this was the Crust Man, and this was how the children afterwards pictured him. (Cappahayden) Q67-1070.

A93.17. If you didn't eat the crust of your bread the crust man would get you. (St. John's) Q67-946.

A93.18. The Crust-Man was used to get children to eat all their food for they were told if they never [did so] the crust-man will get them. (Deer Lake) Q67-1169.

A93.19. As children grew older they out-grew the threats; for instance they were told that if they didn't eat crusts the Crust Man would get them, but probably an older child would notice old Grandmother (who had no teeth or had sore gums) not eating her crust [and] would start asking why he didn't take her. Most of these threats have

---

[134] The implication here is apparently that the crust-man will cause the child's teeth to fall out. This again links the figure with the straightforward warnings about eating crusts for the good of one's health.

outlived their usefulness. Today children only laugh at the mention of a Boogie-man or Crust Man. (Grand Bank) Q67-1206.

A93.20. My mother was often told that the Crust Man would get her if she didn't eat her crusts. Usually the threats were playful but sensitive children were frightened by them. (Corner Brook) Q67-414.

A93.21. In English Harbour, Trinity Bay, children who did not eat their bread crusts were told that the Crust Man would come and take them away. (English Harbour, TB) Q67-945.

A93.22. ....a crust man was used to entice children to eat. He was undesirable in that he would take them away from home. (Spencers Cove) Q63B.

A93.23. The Crust Man was supposed to come while the child was sleeping at night and carry him away if he had refused to eat the crust of his bread during a meal. (Clarenville) Q67-465.

A93.24. My room-mate told me that she was always threatened with the Crust Man. He was supposed to have lived under (N) (N) 's store near Lumsden (my room-mate's home) and children who didn't eat crusts of bread were spirited away under the store. (Lumsden) Q67-1201.

A93.25. The Crust-man (as the name implies) was the one who ate you if you didn't eat your crusts. Most children circumvented this by giving the crust to the dog or cat under the table. (Campbells Creek) Q67-162.

A94. Dark Man.

The two reports of this figure give no indication of its origin except that in both instances it is clearly associated with darkness, although the possibility of the name being a euphemism for Black Man, or of some other human or supernatural being which is black in colour, cannot be excluded.

A94.1. One particular threat I have heard is: "I'll put you in the closet with the dark man." (St. John's) Q67-1043.

A94.2. A parent would probably say, "If you're not in before dark, the 'dark-man' will get you!" However, I think these expressions were threatened playfully - because, then, if a parent gave an order, it was obeyed, and he or she didn't need a "dark-man", or any other outside help to see that it was obeyed. (Buchans) Q67-795.

A95. Dickee-do-Ding.

This name may be a nonce-formation confined to a particular family, but it is suggestive of other reduplicating or alliterating forms typical of the often nonsensical names used in put-offs.

A95.1. I know of one household where the little boy is kept from going down the basement stairs because the "Dickee-do-Ding" is down there; (now what this thing does I don't know but the mention of it keeps the child off the stairs). However an equally small girl from across the street doesn't seem to mind the threat because she goes upstairs and down without the least concern for the monsters and various assorted gruesomes from the depths of people's imaginations. (Channel) Q67-486.

A96. Green fingers.

A96.1. "Green fingers will get you when you are asleep." (St. Thomas) Q67-681.

A97. Gun-man.

A97.1. Go to sleep; the gun-man's going to get you." When the kids hear [a] gun they run. When baby-sitting one night [the] informant heard someone say this to a child who wouldn't go to bed. The gun-man is regarded as more of a joke than a serious threat. (Long Cove, TB) Q67-663.

TIGHT BINDING

A98. Henry Gouldwoody.

Gouldwoody is one of several variant spellings and pronunciations of gold-withy, the name applied to plants of the kalmia family[135] - a shrub which is commonly found on the barrens in Newfoundland. The name of the figure is presumably a personification of such plants with the specific intention of keeping children from getting lost on the barrens. The use of the name Henry makes the figure sound more familiar and rather less frightening than some other invented figures. Even so, Henry Gouldwoody is said to catch the children in the same way as the boogie man.

A98.1. They were also afraid of Henry Gouldwoody. The mothers warned the children that Henry Gouldwoody would catch them if they went on the barrens. (St. John's) Q67-656.

A99. Hairy man.

This name appears in a list of threatening figures from Forrest's Point on the north west coast (Q67-158). No details are given, but there are obvious parallels with other figures in Class A which are described as hairy,[136] and with bearded and hirsute human beings in Class B.[137]

---

[135] Rouleau lists seven species to which the name is applied, but adds: "Although I believe that this application should be restricted to Kalmia angustifolia L., it is in fact applied to any shrubby species occurring in the 'barrens'." E. Rouleau, "Some Newfoundland Vernacular Plant Names", Studies in the Vascular Flora of the Province of Newfoundland (Canada), II, Contributions de l'Institute Botanique de l'Université de Montréal, LXIX (1956), 31.

[136] E.g. the boo man, see A81.75 above, and the boogie man, see A85.51 above.

[137] See, for example, B70 below.

TIGHT BINDING

A100. Hob gobs and hoop scoops.

These are probably nursery figures based on hobgoblin, the names being given an air of familiarity by their reduplicative form. They are reported only once.

A100.1. Usually the children were threatened in order to get them to sleep. "If you don't go to bed the hob gobs and the hoop scoops will come after you." (St. John's) Q67-382.

A101. Jacko ['dʒækou].

A101.1. Jacko. This figure was invented....for frightening another member of the family, in this case [the inventor's] young sister. ....Jacko was represented as a figure dressed in a fur coat and was simply used within the family. The sister was very frightened of the figure which she regarded as very powerful and frightening. (St. Lawrence) 69-47.

A102. Jack the liver boiler.

A102.1. In Cape Broyle people often referred to "Jack the liver boiler", who was supposed to have lived in a cave. (Cape Broyle) Q67-258.

A103. Jolly juniper.

A103.1. To frighten children into behaving the parents usually say...., "The jolly juniper will eat you." (Outer Cove) Q67-520.

A104. Mog-Daws.

A104.1. To get children to behave parents sometimes tell them of frightening figures which lurked at different places. Behind our house, a great part of the land was bog or marsh. In order to keep me from wandering too near, my mother told me that the Mog-Daws would come

out of the bog and get me. I do not know if the threats were playful or serious but the above mentioned did frighten me and kept me from the marsh. The main reason for a child being threatened was to prevent them from going to dangerous places. (Foxtrap) Q67-1004.

A105. Mooney Man.

As no details are given about this figure it is not possible to be definitive about its origin, but as it is used to get children to sleep it is reasonable to suppose that the name is a nursery variant of The Man in the Moon.

A105.1. The "Mooney Man" is used to induce children to go to sleep. (St. John's) Q67-1039.

A106. Old man.

There are many references to the old man as a threatening figure, though most of the reports include insufficient detail regarding whether these men are supernatural or whether they are living human beings. In the absence of positive evidence to the contrary, these figures have been listed under Class B,[138] although it is likely that many of them are supernatural or have supposed supernatural powers. Two references, however, clearly imply a supernatural figure invented for the purpose of threatening, and they are therefore noted here.

A106.1. ....my mother would often say, "If you don't be good the man up in the attic" or "the old man up in the attic...." or something of that. (Burin) T C354,67-31.

Indirect.....

[138] See, for example, B66d below.

TIGHT BINDING

A106.2. If a child was tormenting in the house the parents would sometimes warn them to be quiet or they would put him in the dark closet under the stairs with....the old man in there who would put him in his big bag and carry him away. (Western Bay) Q67-605.

A107. Ram Cats.[139]

A107.1. An adult I've been told about used an unusual frightening figure to induce sleep in her son. The threat was, "If you don't go to sleep I'll give you to the Ram Cats." (St. John's) Q67-1194.

A108. Rawhead, Bloody Bones and related figures.

A number of figures with a variety of names connected with the idea of raw flesh, bloody meat and bones have been recorded in the English-speaking tradition. Their origin is uncertain but they clearly reflect the horror aroused by the sight of blood, slaughter and physical wounds, open sores and the like. This ghoulish concept lends itself easily enough to personification as a figure used to threaten children and indeed it seems that the figure has been used in threats from the outset. The OED defines Rawhead as "The name of a nursery bugbear, usually coupled with BLOODY BONES." The earliest printed citation of the word in the OED is dated 1550, and the supporting quotations under Rawhead include examples of its use in threats. For Rawhead the EDD has the definition: "a bogie used to frighten children; freq. in phr. raw-head and bloody-bones". The

---

[139] Webster defines ram cat as "a male cat", but the Archive example quoted here seems to refer to supernatural figures rather than to living animals.

TIGHT BINDING

supporting quotations under the entry on Bloody-bones include examples of threats from Lancashire and west Somerset, the latter being of particular significance for Newfoundland because of the strong West Country element in the Province's patterns of settlement. The OED also records a sixteenth-century example of Raw-flesh in the same sense as Raw-head, and the quotation under Raw neck draws attention to a possible origin of these terms in the slaughtering of animals:

> "Boiled rabbits are trussed up to appear as frightful as possible, and made to resemble that terror of our childhood, raw neck and bloody bones."[140]

Professor Halpert suggests to me that the various figures may be associated not only with the sight of raw meat and slaughtered animals - a sight which was much more common, especially in rural areas, when the parent culture was more agrarian than industrialised - but also, in North American tradition, with scalping. In the European tradition, beheading and disembowelling as a common public display could also provide a ready source for the creation of such figures in earlier days. The sight of people with war wounds and various disfiguring diseases is also a possible source.

Professor Halpert has collected a number of examples of (Old) Rawhead and Bloody Bones from oral and printed sources in a number of states in the U.S.A., especially from the south. His collection from the U.S.A. also includes examples of Bloody Bones and several other variant forms of these figures, some of

---

[140] A. Tucker, The Light of Nature Pursued (1834) II, 596, quoted in OED under Raw neck.

which appear in folk narratives.[141] The Rawhead group is also the subject of several notes, those by Halpert,[142] Hand,[143] Simmons[144] and Taylor[145] being of particular importance.[146] In comparison with the figures in the Halpert Collection, those in the Rawhead group in the Newfoundland material have more specific habitats. They are usually said to live on hills, in woods, near rocks and near water, especially in the dark. Rawhead and Bloody Bones is sometimes a composite figure in the reports, but is also occasionally designated as two separate beings. This concept is supported by a number of references, wherever the figures have been found in the English-speaking

---

[141] See, for example, the tale recounted in V. Randolph, Ozark Superstitions (New York, 1947), pp. 235-236.

[142] Halpert, "Raw Head and Bloody Bones", 7-8. See also p. 15, f/n 47 above.

[143] See p. 15, f/n 47 above. Professor Hand's notes to the Brown Collection, VII, 155, draw together many of the printed references to the Rawhead figures.

[144] D.C. Simmons, "A Further Note on Rawhead and Bloody Bones", Journal of American Folklore, LXX (1957), 358-359.

[145] See p. 15, f/n 47 above.

[146] For further references, see, for example, the entry under Head, no. 8, in A. Taylor and B.J. Whiting, A Dictionary of American Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 176; D.K. Wilgus, "'Raw Head' in Butler County", Kentucky Folklore Record, VI (Jan.-March, 1960), 20, and W.W. Newell, Games and Songs of American Children (New York, 1884), p. 221, f/n.

world, which mention either Rawhead or Bloody Bones individually, without reference to each other. These figures are used in Newfoundland, both separately and in conjunction, as pedagogical fikts to control general misbehaviour, and also for more specific prohibitions such as preventing children from going to dangerous places, especially water, discouraging them from being out after dark and also to get them to sleep.

A108a. Rawhead and Bloody Bones ['rɒ:hɛd ɳ 'blʌdɪ bounz].

A108a.1. "Little children, little children,
go to sleep and be good.
Raw head and bloody bones is
coming out of the wood."
This was part of a longer verse that was recited to children about seventy years ago. The old lady who told this to me sometimes sings it to her grandchildren today. It is more of a verse, not a song. It is accompanied by a tune. (Cape Broyle) 68-16.

A108a.2. That's the old stories they used to tell the youngsters, to [get them to] go to bed. [If they] didn't go to bed, it's Rawhead and Bloody Bones. Yeah. Come after 'em, see. ....really ....that would be Christmas time you told 'em that, you know. They used to go hang up their stocking, see. "Now if you don't go to bed, Rawhead and Bloody Bones [is] goin' to come after you! So you'd better get to bed!" [næu ɪf jə dount? gou tu bɛd | 'rɒ:hɛd ɳ 'blʌdɪ bounz 'gounə kʌm 'æftə jə | sou jʊd 'bɛtər get tu bɛd] (Coachman's Cove) T C97,64-14.

A108a.3. She was also threatened with "Rawhead and Bloody Bones"....: "You'd better go to sleep or Rawhead and Bloody Bones will come and get you." (Torbay) Q67-967.

A108a.4. Rawhead and Bloody Bones used to live up there on the Quarry Hill, and they used to warn, frighten the youngsters so they wouldn't go there, "Stay away" or something; "if you go there, Rawhead and Bloody Bones will get you." (Curling East) 68-9.

Indirect

A108a.5. My grandparents report having been threatened with "Rawhead" and "Bloody Bones". Their parents, or other adults, usually used this as a threat when they wanted children to keep away from wharfs and boats. (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-447.

A108a.6. In Bryants Cove there is a certain group of ragged rocks, and as a child my mother was brought up to believe that raw head and bloody bones lived there. This was used to get her to obey her parents and to get her in before dark. (Bryants Cove) Q67-365.

A108a.7. Rawhead and Bloody Bones - I do not know where these terms originated but they were supposedly terrible creatures who lived in a dangerous gulch waiting for the bad children who wandered their way. (St. John's) Q67-195.

A108a.8. When children were naughty their parents would tell them that Rawhead and Bloody Bones (two pirates who were supposed to capture children and turn them into slaves) would come and get them.... (Curling) Q67-526.

A108a.9. Mother was telling me of one incident where pop caught her and her sisters [playing] in the water bucket out in the porch. He frightened them by saying that "rawhead and bloodybones" would get them if they didn't come in and leave the water alone. The threats always worked because they really believed that there was such a thing. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-1191.

A108a.10. "Raw head and Bloody bones" who came down from the hills and [who] take bad children. (Cupids) Q64A.

A108b. Rawhead.

Rawhead as a single figure occurs in only one tape-recorded reference from Hawkes Bay (T C276,66-24), no further details being given.

A108c. Bloody Bones.

There are four reports of this figure, and also a reference

TIGHT BINDING

from Bay Roberts to a frightening story in which a ghost says, "Bloody Bones".

A108c.1. The old people used to say that if you went near the water [presumably the salt water], Bloody Bones would grab you and haul you into the water. (Gull Island, CB) Q67-882.

A108d. Bareneck and Bloody Bones.

A108d.1. Bareneck and Bloody Bones were characters which would come out in the dark and "get you". These were used to get the children in the house before dark. (St. John's) Q67-894.

A108e. Raw Bone.

A108e.1. "Raw Bone will get you." My mom told me this. She said her father used to say this when she was little so she wouldn't go out. He [i.e. Raw Bone] would put you in his sack and carry you away. (St. John's) 68-6.

A108f. Cut Arm.

A108f.1. Other children, he recalls, who used the forearms of their garments for handkerchiefs, were threatened to be given to "Cut Arm" who would mete out suitable punishment. (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1241.

A109. Sandman ['sændmæn].

The Sandman seems to be a purely invented figure, a pedagogical fikt whose principal function is to bring sleep to children. Like the Dustman, which also dates from the mid nineteenth century, he is defined as "in nursery language, a

TIGHT BINDING

personification of sleep or sleepiness"[147] and as "the genie of folklore who makes children sleepy by supposedly sprinkling sand into their eyes".[148] The term Sandman is cognate with the German Sandmann, Sandmännchen, used in similar ways in German folklore. The quotation illustrating the word in the OED is from Wehnert's translation of Andersen's Tales (1861), which suggests that the word may well have come into English from one of the Germanic languages.

Although the more benign characteristics of the Sandman predominate in the Newfoundland accounts, as presumably is also the case in the European tradition, there are many references to him as a more malign figure. Rather than sprinkling sand or "sleepy dust" in children's eyes, he is sometimes said to throw it, presumably with painful effects, into their eyes and faces. As evidence that he has visited them during the night the children are told that the residue in the corners of their eyes is a grain of sand which he has left there. Like the boogie man and other figures, however, he may come and get children who do not go to sleep, and may even take them away, sometimes in a sack, and eat them. He may also be given a familiar name such as Larry the Sandman in a particular locality and sometimes people dress up to impersonate him with the intention of frightening children into good behaviour.[149] In one report he is conceptualised as a little green man, in another as a negro, and

---

[147] OED.

[148] Webster.

[149] See B4 below.

TIGHT BINDING

of course he usually carries a sack of sand into which he can also put those children who do not come in before dark, do not go to bed, or refuse to go to sleep. In one report the threat is extended to include deterring children from going to dangerous places, and another states that the Sandman could be used for general misbehaviour and other reasons.

A109.1. When I was a little girl I was told that if I didn't go to sleep the Sandman would pass me by and wouldn't sprinkle sand into my eyes to make me go to sleep. My mother would put me to bed and say, "Shh! The Sandman's creeping around! The Sandman's creeping around!" And you waited for him to come around the corner, and you fell asleep. He was a pleasant sort of a figure, not a frightening one. (St. John's) 67-22.

A109.2. This figure [i.e. the Sand-man] was supposed to frighten children into going to bed or coming in from the dark. It sometimes was used to keep children out of dangerous places. "Don't go in there; that's where the Sand-man lives." (Corner Brook) Q67-858.

A109.3. ....I can definitely remember her saying, "Go to bed before the Sand-man comes around!" [go' tə bed bi'foər ðə 'sændmæn kʌmz ə'raund] (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

A109.4. To induce them to sleep - "The sand man is coming." (St. John's) Q67-931.

A109.5. When my dad couldn't get me to go to bed and turn off the light and go to sleep after he had read me a story, he would say, "The Sand Man's coming." This would get a quick response from me. He never did say who the Sand Man was, but I thought he came when I should be in bed, and if I was in bed at the time all would be fine, but if not he would take me away - where I don't know, I can't remember what he looked like or if I ever knew. I was about four to six [years old] when my dad would use it. (St. John's) 68-6.

A109.6. The Sandman's function was to put sleepy-dust in your eyes to make you want to sleep and to put you to sleep. To back up this you'd always

TIGHT BINDING

find a bit of sand or dust in your eye in the morning.

We would be worried that the sandman wouldn't come, because if he didn't we'd be awake all night, so my parents would say to get us to go to bed, "If you don't watch out the sandman won't come!" (St. John's) Q63B.

A109.7. To induce me to go to sleep. - For this I was threatened with...., "Go to sleep before the Sand Man comes...." (St. John's) Q67-967.

A109.8. I heard my in-law say to my little girl when we had trouble getting her to go to sleep at night, "Now you'd better go to sleep before the Sand Man comes" (1964). I objected to this, saying that it has damaging effects on a child's emotional development. My in-law's reply was, "Oh, that's trash, or my two would have been dead by now."

I recall hearing my mother say this to my younger siblings about 1950-52. It seems to have worked as a threat up to about age six.

Often mother added that he carries a big bag of sand which he will drop into your eyes if you don't go to sleep when you're told. Emphasis seemed to be upon the order, not upon the need for sleep. (Sop's Arm) 68-10.

A109.9. I heard parents say one time that, "If you don't go to sleep the Sand man will come and put sand in your eyes." (Bay Bulls) Q67-289.

A109.10. "The sandman is coming to throw sand in your eyes if you don't go to sleep." (St. John's) Q67-279.

A109.11. To induce them to sleep, the parents said, "Go to sleep Johnny, or the sandman will come and put sand in your eyes." (Little Harbour East, PB) Q67-1226.

A109.12. "Go to bed an' try to go to sleep now 'fore the Sand-man comes to put sand in your eyes...." [gəu tə bɛd | n trai tu gou tə sɨip nəu foər ðə 'sændmæən kʌmz tə pɔtʔ sænd ɪn jɔ̈ər aiz] ....I was actually scared.... ....it's just that I was anxious to get in bed an' get asleep before he came around, you know! I didn't want him to catch me up fooling around, in other words! (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

A109.13. "You better get to sleep before the sand man comes or he'll throw sand in your face." Years ago children were scared of these threats but not as much today. (St. John's) Q67-340.

TIGHT BINDING

A109.14. The sandman's name was used in order to try [to] get the youngsters to go to sleep, such as saying, "Hurry up and go to sleep because the sandman is coming to put some sand in your eyes." (Grand Falls) Q67-1192.

A109.15. Children were threatened to induce them to sleep by such sayings as...., "Go to sleep or the Sandman will get in your eyes." (Port au Port) Q67-723.

A109.16. "If you don't go to sleep early the sandman will come and get you." While [she] was reciting this, the voice of my six year old brother came in from the background, "Those are all only rubbish." [She] remembers this being told to her sister...., who had a habit of not going to sleep at any civilized hour, by her Mother about four years ago. (St. John's) 66-14.

A109.17. Another familiar threat is, "Go to bed early tonight; if you don't the sand-man will take you." (St. John's) Q67-954.

A109.18. To get children to sleep parents usually said, "Go to sleep before the Sand Man comes and catches you awake and carries you away." (Chapel Arm) Q67-962.

A109.19. "If you don't go to sleep, the sand man will come and carry you off in his sack." When we were small and didn't want to go to bed early in the night, my mother used to say this to us. At first we were afraid of the sand man with his sack on his back, but gradually we grew out of this and the threat didn't work on us. (South River) 66-10.

Indirect

A109.20. To get a child to go to bed he is often threatened with the "sand-man". (Jerseyside) Q67-483.

A109.21. Also they used the word "The Sand-Man" to get me to go to bed. These words used to frighten me at first, but when I got a little older they didn't. (Gander) Q67-614.

A109.22. Sand man was used to frighten children if they didn't go to bed on time. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-522.

A109.23. Many children are difficult to manage when it concerns sleep. The "Sandmen" are often used

TIGHT BINDING

here as a threat to induce them to sleep. (Gull Island, CB) Q67-882.

A109.24. To induce them to sleep they were told The Sand Man would soon be around so they had better go to sleep. (Newmans Cove) Q67-[illegible]1.

A109.25. A mother [tells] her children to go to sleep because the sand man won't like them if they don't. (South River) Q67-1197.

A109.26. To induce them to sleep, the sand-man would come at a certain hour. (St. John's) Q67-165.

A109.27. To get us in before dark she would say that the sand man would get in our eyes and we would fall asleep outdoors. (Carmanville) Q67-218.

A109.28. When children would not go to sleep they were told that the Sand Man would pour sand into their eyes. Children were not frightened since they were threatened playfully. (Grand Falls) Q67-1293.

A109.29. Sand man - comes with a robe on; carries a big bag of sand; sprinkles sand in eyes; to induce sleep. (St. John's) Q67-861.

A109.30. I always pictured the Sand-man as a little man dressed in green who sprinkled sand in my eyes when I didn't go to sleep. (Belleoram) Q67-1058.

A109.31. Children were also told that if they didn't go to sleep the Sand Man would come and put them to sleep. The children were made to believe that in trying to get the children asleep the sandman would throw sand in their eyes. (St. John's) Q67-341.

A109.32. The Sand-Man was used to get children to sleep; if you didn't go to sleep, the Sand-Man would come and put sand in your eyes. Often when a child was getting sleepy and was rubbing his eyes, someone would say that he had sand in his eyes.... (Port Union) Q67-812.

A109.33. An interesting figure used in another community is the Sand-man. This fellow is a big man with a bag of sand on his back. If children do not go to sleep he comes and shakes sand in their eyes. Children are very much afraid of him. (Williamsport area?)[150] Q67-978.

---

[150] Informant from Williamsport.

TIGHT BINDING

A109.34. Another figure I have heard of is the Sand Man. This was used when children would not go to sleep. A man would, as they were told, come along and throw sand in their eyes if they did not go to sleep. (Upper Gullies) Q67-497.

A109.35. Another one comes to mind, that of the "sandman"; he came and threw sand in your eyes if you weren't asleep when you should be, according to parents. (St. John's) Q67-1167.

A109.36. To induce them to sleep - Children were sometimes told to go to sleep because the Sandman was coming to put sand in their eyes to make them sleep. Children would close their eyes and wait for the Sandman, and thus fall asleep. (Outer Cove) Q67-520.

A109.37. ....the Sandman was a mysterious someone who would slowly reach out his fingers and draw a person into his arms. Whether or not the children were threatened seriously or playfully depended on that person [i.e. the adult(s) who uttered the threat] and why they were threatening the child. Some children were really frightened by these creatures because if they heard of a thing often enough, they would really believe there was such a person or thing. (St. John's) Q67-348.

A109.38. When a child did not want to go to bed he might be told that the sandman will come and get him. (Wellmans Cove) Q63B.

A109.39. If children didn't go to sleep when they were put to bed the sandman would get them they were told by parents or babysitters. (St. John's) Q67-946.

A109.40. To induce them to sleep - threatened (playfully) that the Sandman would take them away. (Upper Gullies) Q67-281.

A109.41. Children were induced to do something by threatening them that the sandman would come and take them. They were threatened with this fate for all of the reasons listed [in the questionnaire]. (Harbour Grace) Q67-807.

A109.42. When children would not behave and go to sleep, they were threatened that the sandman was going to come and take them away. (Goulds) Q67-805.

A109.43. Another figure is the sand-man who will carry away sleepy children if they do not go to bed and go to sleep. He is supposed to catch

TIGHT BINDING

sleepy children, put them to sleep and carry ....him or her away in a sack over his... shoulder. (Gander) Q67-778.

A109.44. The "Sand-man" was presented as an elderly man who was very cruel and ugly. He dressed in dark clothing, and always wore a cape. Over his shoulder he carried a sack into which he put bad children. He would take them "home" and eat them. (Corner Brook) Q67-858.

A110. Silk-man.[151]

A110.1. The only threatening figure was the "Silk-man". The "Silk-man" was only referred to in a whisper and was dressed in black. His outfit was topped off with a tall silk hat. He was supposed to have a predisposition for young boys and girls below the age of ten. Anyone who had seen him was somewhat of a hero. (St. John's) Q67-12.

A111. Spring Legs.

A111.1. My parents were also threatened by a figure called Jack the Lantern[152] or Spring Legs. Spring Legs had a pumpkin-shaped body and springs for feet enabling him to jump ten to fifteen feet at a time. Children are really frightened when threatened. (St. John's) Q67-475.

A112. Spring-man.

A112.1. Around every autumn when boys were raiding apple and plum trees at night there was a rumour spread of a "Spring-man". He was supposed to be a man with springs attached to his feet and he leaped several feet into the air. It is also believed that he looked into windows at night. (Elliston) Q67-879.

---

[151] Cp. the citation from Northumberland concerning "a supernatural being, popularly called Silky, from the nature of her robes" under Silky in EDD. See also Hardy, Denham Tracts, pp. 176-181, and W. Henderson, Notes on the Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties of England and the Borders (London, 1879), pp. 268-270.

[152] See A35 above.

TIGHT BINDING

A113. Mr. Teakettle.

A113.1. Sometimes at home we were told not to go into the woods because a Mr. Teakettle lived there and he would gobble us up if we went near the woods. (Corner Brook) Q67-436.

A114. Trubie, ['trʉubi].

The name of this figure appeared in answers to questionnaires submitted in 1967 by members of a family at St. Lawrence. I was later able to ask one of the contributors about the figure and learned that he invented it around 1958 when his younger brother was about eight years old. He had no memory of hearing the name anywhere previously or of adapting it from any particular source and it was used only within his family. The spelling is therefore arbitrary, but he agreed that either Trubie or Truby would be acceptable. He made up the figure to scare his younger brother, especially when they were in bed at night, just for a game. The Trubie was made out to be "a quiet, stealthy figure that comes and peeps through the top corner of the window. He is white in dress but has fairly human characteristics". The contributor added that his brother was terrified by the figure, especially when he built up its frightening power by saying that "the Trubie was going to take his heart out with its fingers". (St. Lawrence) See 69-47.

A115. Ugly man.

This figure is mentioned together with Boo-man, Bully Boo and policeman in a single report from St. Anthony. Several of

TIGHT BINDING

the threatening figures are described as "ugly men", including the Devil, the boogie man, Jack the Ripper, the Crust Man and the Sandman, so it would appear to be a cover term for them all.

A116. Ugly thing ['ʌglɪ θɪŋ].

In the pronunciation of this compound name the stress is strongly on the first syllable of the word ugly. Just as ghosts and other supernaturals are often referred to as "things" so various threatening figures, named or otherwise, are spoken of as ugly things. At times the term is applied to some specific figure, such as a bear, for example, which for one reason or another is difficult to identify as far as the speaker is concerned. This was brought graphically to my attention during a tape-recorded interview I had with an old lady at Lush's Bight who told me about some young people being frightened by something while they were out picking berries:

> "I can remember about some girls and young fellers goin' away for a walk one Sunday, and....when they went in for a walk they went in on a little berry-spot, and picked up a few berries. And there was something come there; and they left a little child behind 'em cryin'. They was too afraid to go back for the child, and went home, and their mother had to go back for the child, or their father, I can't remember that - whether 'twas the mother or the father. That's the first thing ever I heard talk of. They'd seed a ugly thing come out the woods. I don't know what 'twas; bear perhaps.... Weren't they silly, my dear? And left that little child in too. And I'd went back after un! I wouldn't care what! Supposin' it had been the Black Man, I'd went after the child! I thinks I would now! Yes." (Little Harbour, Twillingate) T C305,66-25.

The term usually has an even vaguer connotation and refers to some terrifying creature with no positive identity except that

TIGHT BINDING

it is "ugly" in every sense of the word. As ugliness itself is an important characteristic of the majority of threatening figures, whether they are supernatural, imaginary or real, it is not surprising that it should be personified in this way.

A116.1. "Up and down the Southern shore
Go to bed after supper
See the great big ugly things
Come after Charley Tucker." (Port de Grave) Q67-278.

A116.2. "The ugly things will take you if you stay out too late." (Port de Grave) Q67-278.

A116.3. [They threaten the youngsters with] "Ugly things", whatever that is! "Come on in" or..or "go and do this" or..whatever 'twas. All the same it never happened, you know, in my home....about threatening the Ugly Things on us if we didn't do so and so, but I used to hear it out around, yes. Ugly things; whatever that is! (Beaumont South) T C299,65-25.

Indirect.....

A116.4. ....well, Ugly things or something, you know .... They'd tell 'em they was comin' after 'em. (Beaumont) T C308,66-25.

A117. Whisker man.[153]

A117.1. Some scary figures known about in the community [include].... "The whisker man" to scare children and keep them at home. (Port de Grave) Q66-51.

A118. Wrigglers.

A118.1. "If you're not good the wrigglers will get you." My informant said that this was often said to her, as a child, by her mother, to scare her into behaving properly. Wrigglers were little imaginary creatures, like starfish, which were found everywhere, especially in water. (Wesleyville) 66-12.

---

[153] See A99 above and B70 below.

A119. Yahoos.

A119.1. The Oderin Island children were told the yahoos would get them if they were naughty. The yahoos were said to be short men who wore high beaver hats. (Oderin) Q67-84.

SANTA CLAUS AND RELATED CHRISTMAS FIGURES

The Santa Claus figures differ in several respects from those already discussed and they form a distinct group. On the one hand, Santa Claus, or Father Christmas as he is occasionally known in Newfoundland, is conceived of as the St. Nicholas of Christian belief. On the other hand, he is associated with diabolical figures, the name Nicholas sometimes being confused with Old Nick.[154] He symbolises the spirit of Christmas and is presented to children as a figure in which they are asked to believe as an essential part of certain Christmas customs. It is difficult, however, to differentiate the imaginary personification of Santa Claus from the impersonations common at Christmas. The latter are dealt with under Class B.[155]

The St. Nicholas figures in European and North American tradition have the dual role of punishers and rewarders. Their social function includes the maintenance of certain moral, ethical and behavioural standards to which children are encouraged to adhere. If children satisfy the expectations of good behaviour they are rewarded; if they do not, the reward may be witheld. More important, for some time before Christmas they are threatened

---

[154] See A120.36 below.

[155] See B5 below.

TIGHT BINDING

that either the reward will be withheld or that they will receive some unpleasant substitute instead. In addition, they may be threatened with more severe punishment by the figure concerned. For children in Newfoundland, however, as elsewhere in the western world, Santa Claus is usually a benign figure. Nevertheless, his supposed omniscience and omnipresence, not only during the Christmas season but also extending to other periods of the year, are reminiscent of divine power and are awe-inspiring in themselves. As a dispenser of gifts and a potential punisher he is essentially godlike in his attributes despite the attrition of conventionalisation and commercialisation. What is unique about him, however, as the Newfoundland reports show, is that children are not only threatened that he will not come if they misbehave,[156] but also that he will leave them ashes, rocks, coal, sawdust, sticks, potatoes, onions, peelings and the like in their stockings, or will take them away with him in his bag, just as his counterparts in some parts of western Europe bring gifts in one bag and take naughty children in another. His dual role as both rewarder and punisher distinguishes him from most of the other figures in Class A.[157] In Newfoundland, his role as punisher may also be extended into a personification reminiscent of the German Krampus or the Swiss Schmutzli, for example, in that a wholly malevolent figure, known as Rockyfoot which appears in one Newfoundland report, may come instead of him to put the

---

[156] Cp. the Sandman who may also be thought of as a benign figure who will not come if children stay awake. See A109.6 above.

[157] The tooth fairy also has something of this dual role. See A30 above.

TIGHT BINDING

rock in the stocking of the naughty child. In short, Santa Claus is presented as godlike in his omniscience and omnipresence, diabolical in the potential severity of his punishment,[158] and he also shares with most of the other Class A figures the potentiality of taking children away.

Like the mummers, Santa Claus has a more restricted seasonal usage than such figures as the boogie man, although Newfoundland adults attempt to extend his purview by such devices as threatening children with Santa's elves and birds, and even helicopters, which are said to keep watch on children's behaviour during the year and then inform him which children have been naughty. In the Newfoundland reports he also has affinities with such figures as the Sandman in that both may be benign or malevolent, both may carry a sack and both are threatened to get children to sleep. When impersonated by human beings, Santa Claus is also linked with the various masked figures such as the mummers discussed in Class B. He is typically represented as a fat man in a red cloak who has a jovial fat face with rosy cheeks and long white whiskers and beard. The traditional Santa Claus figure is exaggeratedly large and carries a large sack. These characteristics are adopted by the people who dress up in masks and costumes to act the role of Santa Claus at Christmas, and children may think

---

[158] It is threatened, for example, that Santa Claus might "put the hammer into" a naughty child's head. For this threat, and for valuable comments on Santa Claus and other threatening figures in Newfoundland, see Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", pp. 71-72.

TIGHT BINDING

that the dressed up person is really the supernatural Santa Claus himself. He is thus in a sense a transitional figure between Class A and Class B in that he is a supernatural figure who is frequently impersonated.

A120. Santa Claus, Santie Claus ['sæntə klɑ:z]/['sæntə klɒ:z]/['sæntə klɔəz], ['sæntɪ klɑ:z]

A120.1. "Santa is listening to you." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A120.2. When we were about seven or eight years old (1945-8), Mother used to tell us that if we were bad Santa Claus would not come to us, or would come and leave only ashes or a stick in our stocking.

This threat or warning was used probably a month or so before Christmas, and was usually very effective. On several occasions we questioned mother as to how Santa Claus would know if we were bad or not. She explained to us that he was a very clever man who had many secret ways of finding out. She "thought" that he probably sneaked around unnoticed during the day or night and watched little boys and girls. She would usually say, "He's probably listening to you right now."

The ashes she explained was Santa's way of showing us that we had been bad and had not pleased him. If we were really bad - got full of mud, made too much mess in the basement - he would bring us a stick with which mother could punish us by "pounding" us with it. (Gillams) 68-17.

A120.3. My sister says that she used to be terrified of Santa Claus. Probably this was because Mom used to say when threatening us with Santa, "You be good, because he can see you now." So I guess my sister got the idea he was some sort of invisible figure close at hand.

In saying such things Mom's voice was never threatening, scary or harsh, but still it held a tone of truthfulness that made us believe her. (Renews) 68-11.

A120.4. ....I was threatened....because I was naughty. For this I was threatened with, "I'm telling Santa that you were a bad girl." (St. John's) Q67-967.

TIGHT BINDING

A120.5. My parents always said to me when I was bad, "If you don't be good, Santie Claus will not come to you." (St. John's) Q67-1128.

A120.6. [When I was] at about the age of four to five years my Mom would say from the month of November up to Christmas, "If you aren't good Santa won't come." I don't know if I really believed or I didn't want to take a chance, but my mother tells me it worked for a time anyway - until I gave up believing in Santa. (St. John's) 68-6.

A120.7. ....they'd say he [i.e. Santa Claus] wouldn't come. "If you stay awake he won't come!" [ɪf juu steɪ ə'weɪk hɪ wount kɔ'm] (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-31.

A120.8. When we were small around age five to nine, I can't remember Mom ever using threatening figures except around Christmas time when she would be sure to say to us...., "Now, you do what you're told, or Santa Claus won't come." Since we looked forward to Santa this really helped to discipline us. (Renews) 68-11.

A120.9. "You better be good or Santa Claus won't come to you." I cannot remember this from my own childhood but I can remember my brother's wife using this as a threat to her children. She used this when they were anywhere between ages three and seven. This was said in a relatively high tone with a short space between each word. Each word was given about the same amount of emphasis. She used this in various situations - there seemed to be no one particular behaviour where this was used, but rather [it] was used with any wrong behaviour. (Francois) 68-3.

A120.10. "You go to sleep or Santa Claus won't come." (Renews) 68-11.

A120.11. "Go to sleep or Santa Claus won't come!" [gou tə sliːp ɔr 'sænə klɑəz wount? kʌm] (North River) T C418,67-31.

A120.12. "Go to sleep because Santa is coming." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A120.13. ....I remember quite distinctly my parents..my mother always telling me, "You'd better get to bed and get to sleep early tonight because Santa Claus is coming! An' if you don't, he'll put ashes in your socks or..or you won't get anything for Christmas!" [juud 'bɛtər gɛt? tə bɛd ən gɛt tə sliːp 'əːrlɪ tə'naɪt? bɪ'kəz 'sæntə klɒːz ɨz 'kʌmɪŋ || an ɪf 'jə dount | hiəl pɒt 'æʃəz ɪn jər sɑks ər | ə juu wount gɛt 'ɛnɪθɪŋ fər 'krɪsməs]

TIGHT BINDING

I can remember..tryin' to force myself to go to sleep at night.... ....if I heard a noise I'd probably turn over and cover up my head.... afraid I was goin' to see him filling my stocking or something else, so I guess he did have a.. fearful effect on me. (Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

A120.14. Lots o' children [were] scared of Santa Claus, you know. They'd tell 'em not to..when they'd go to bed, not to get out 'cause Santa Claus was comin', see. "He's comin' down through [the] chimley!" [hi:z 'kʌmɨn dæun ɪ̞ɹɐu 'tʃɪmlɪ] Yes, so they wouldn't get up and watch what was goin' on! (Hawkes Bay) T C276,66-24.

A120.15. "Don't come downstairs because Santa Claus is down here working, an' if..an' if you come down, well you..you just won't get any toys in the morning! Your stocking won't be filled." [dount? kʌm dæun'stɛərz bɪ'kɑ̈z 'sænt̬ə klɑ:z ɨz dæun hiər 'wə:rkɪŋ || æn ɪf | ǣn ɪf jɐu kʌm daun wɛl jɐu || jɐu dʒʌs wount? gɛt? nɪ tɒiz ɪn ðə 'moərnɪŋ || jər 'stɑkɪŋ wont? bɪ fɪld] [In] fact, in the morning, [on] Christmas morning when I came downstairs, I would hesitate about going in the living-room....to open my gifts an' so on because I was afraid that.... Santa Claus might be there! (Burin) T C354,67-31.

A120.16. "Santa Claus won't bring you anything." This was used to make my brothers and myself obey our parents, especially when Christmas was coming close. (St. John's) 68-5.

A120.17. "Santa Claus won't bring you anything for Christmas." (St. John's; Lewisporte; St. Lawrence) 66-11.

A120.18. If a child is misbehaving, a month or two before Christmas a parent might say: "If you don't behave you won't get anything for Christmas." (St. John's; Lewisporte; St. Lawrence) 68-11.

A120.19. Often, when we were young, Santa Claus was used as a threat to us. My mother would say, if we were bad: "If you aren't good, you won't get any presents from Santa Claus." (Corner Brook) 68-22.

A120.20. When I was approximately six years old my parents would remind me that Santa Claus would come to see if I were good or not. If I weren't good, then he would not bring me anything for Christmas. I imagined that Santa Claus came down the chimney and got out through the lid holes on the stove. I imagined that Santa Claus would not get covered

TIGHT BINDING

with smut, even though he came down the chimney, but I could never imagine that he would not bring me any gifts for Christmas. I always thought that Santa came from the North Pole and that he left his reindeers outside the house. My parents said this in a very slow tone: "If - you - don't - be - good - Santa - will - not - bring - you - anything, and he sure comes - to - see - you, - to see - if - you are good. (Grole) 68-7.

A120.21. It was common to hear my parents say, "If you don't hurry and go to bed, Santa Claus won't bring you anything for Christmas." As a child I visualized Santa Claus looking down from some place, probably in the sky, and watching every move I made. I now hear my older brother use the same threats to make his own children obey as my parents used to make him obey. (St. John's) 68-5.

A120.22. Santa Claus has been used as a frightening figure. This is especially true around Christmas. Although Santa Claus was supposed to be a friendly figure, the parents often used and still use him to frighten their children into good behaviour. The actual verbal threats [include]: "Santa won't bring you anything for Christmas if you are not good." (Fortune) Q67-528.

A120.23. We would always expect a reply [to letters to Santa Claus].... As a matter of fact this is how I knew..found out there was no Santa Claus: I recognised my mother's writing! She answered the note and....from now on I was supposed to be a good boy, or something. So I..I went to her [on] Christmas Day an' I said, "Look!" I said...."Santa Claus must write like you! Well look: this is your writing." ....I think I must have been about thirteen, twelve or thirteen. [In her note] she wrote, "Better be a good boy or you won't get so good next year" or something like that. (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-37.

A120.24. ...."You be a good boy or you won't get anything from Santa Claus." [jɐu biː ə gɔd bɔi ɔər jə wountʔ gɛt 'ɛnɪθɪŋ frəm 'sæntə klɑəz] (North River) T C418,67-31.

A120.25. Mother often said to us when we misbehaved, "You better be good, or Santa Claus won't like you and he won't bring you anything for Christmas." If we didn't listen, she'd say, "Do you remember the little boy I was telling you about, who got up Christmas morning and found his stocking full of sawdust, because he was bad?" (Sop's Arm) 68-10.

TIGHT BINDING

A120.26. ...."You better go to bed or..Santa Claus won't bring you presents at Christmas!" [jɐu 'bɛtər gou tə bɛd cər ‖ 'sæntə klɔəz wount? brɪŋ jɪɐ 'prɛzənts ət? 'krɪsməs] (Buchans) T C367,67-31.

A120.27. Often, when we were young, Santa Claus was used as a threat to us. My mother would say, if we were bad, "If you aren't good, you won't get any presents from Santa Claus." I also heard my aunt say: "If you aren't good, Santa Claus will leave coal in your stockings." I remember one incident that is now rather amusing [which happened] to my sister and I when I was about eight years old [and] my sister just five. In Corner Brook, at that time, a horse and cart delivered coal to houses...., and the horses always had bells on. One Christmas Eve we were a little reluctant to go to bed. Then one of the carts went by and we heard the bells. We didn't recognise it as a coal cart. Anyway, my mother said: "Here comes Santa Claus, and you aren't in bed yet; you won't see any gifts under the tree tomorrow." I don't think we ever got in bed and asleep so fast. It was some time after before we found out what the bells really were. (Corner Brook) 68-22.

A120.28. My dad used to say, "If you're not good Santa Claus will bring you a stocking of coal." He never said Santa wouldn't come, just that I wouldn't get any gifts. I was about four I guess or maybe five when he used to tell me this. (St. John's) 68-6.

A120.29. "If you're not good Santa Claus will put a potato in your stocking." (Windsor) 67-22.

A120.30. "If you don't believe in him, Santa Claus will put a lump of coal in your sock on Christmas Eve." (Harbour Main) 67-22.

A120.31. If a child is misbehaving and Christmas is only one or two months away the parent might say, "Be good, David, or you will only get ashes in your stocking" - meaning that if the child is not good, when Santa Claus comes he will put ashes, instead of presents, in their stockings. (St. John's and Lewisporte) 66-11.

A120.32. While downtown tonight I was in a toy department in one of the stores when I heard a little girl tormenting her mother for something or other. Her mother said to her, "You better be good or you'll get nothing only ashes and cinders." (Obviously she was talking of what the child would get from Santa). I never heard this

TIGHT BINDING

before but in Renews I've heard of kids being threatened with getting coal in their stocking if they weren't good. However, I've never known of anyone to actually get coal. I don't know if the threat worked on that kid tonight but it usually works on kids home (if you keep threatening them each time they misbehave). (St. John's and Renews) 68-11.

A120.33. ....if you were naughty you'd always [get] a rotten spud! She'd just say, "You better be good or you'll get a rotten spud!" [jo 'bɛtər bɪ gʊd ɔə joəl gɛt ə 'rɑtʔn spʌd].... He [i.e. Santa Claus] was pleasant, but I was always afraid....to look in the stocking, 'fraid I did have a rotten spud and, you know, she used it enough so that it was....you know, when I was younger then I probably believed it. (Gander) T C352,67-31.

A120.34. "If you're not good, Santy Claus will take you away!" (Glenburnie) 67-22.

Indirect

A120.35. And then o' course the children would go to bed, they [i.e. the parents]'d say, "Now don't make a queak [i.e. squeak, sound], don't one o' yous get out o' bed, or nothing at all o' that when yous goes. Go to sleep!" And they never hear a queak, you know, after they go to bed.... Didn't want to disturb Santy Claus! They want to get the best [that] was comin' they had to be all just so! And they'd do that then, but you wouldn't get 'em to do it today! (Glovertown) T C103,64-14.

A120.36. In most cases the threats were probably more playful than serious. As I recall now, a couple of instances come to mind. One of these involve[s] Old Nick, better known as Santa Claus, for whom I always had a dread on Christmas Eve, when I was always encouraged to go to bed early because of him - at which time I made sure I was safely tucked under the bedclothes. (Cook's Harbour) Q67-322.

A120.37. Her father would also shake pots and pans and make believe Santa Claus was coming and this would frighten her more than anything. (Loon Bay) Q63B.

A120.38. She tells children that Santa Claus will not come to them if they are not good. (Gaskiers) Q63B.

TIGHT BINDING

A120.39. One very original threat is one I have heard my mother use on us. During the summer, when helicopters would occasionally fly over our house to land on the airstrip nearby, she would tell us it was Santa Claus checking to see if we were being good all year, and if he saw us being bad, we would get nothing for Christmas. For a day or so afterwards we would be constantly haunted by the feeling that Santa was watching our every move. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1234.

A120.40. Prior to Christmas Santa Claus was used as a threat. If I did not behave I was told that there would be no toys or fruit in my stocking; only a potato and a lump of coal. This worked very well too. (Belleoram) Q64A.

A120.41. ....I was always afraid if I wasn't good I was goin' to get a stocking full of ashes. ....she used to always say that, you know, from oh November on, October, November on.... This was being built up. If I wasn't good this was goin' to happen: I wasn't goin' to get this an' I wasn't goin' to get that. I was goin' to get a nice stocking full of ashes. (St. John's) T C367,67-31.

A120.42. One threat....was that if I wasn't good Santa Claus would put coal and ashes in my Christmas stocking. This was a threat and I certainly did behave after that. (St. John's) Q67-1024.

A120.43. My mother used to threaten that if we weren't good around Christmas time, Santa would put ashes in our stockings. She told us that her sister, who had refused to believe this and persisted in being naughty, woke up one Christmas Day to find ashes in her stocking. (Harbour Grace) 67-21.

A120.44. When I was a child my parents used to threaten me that if I wasn't good Santa Claus would put ashes in my stocking Christmas time. This never scared me into being good because I didn't really believe that Santa Claus would ever put ashes in a stocking and I more or less treated it as a joke. (St. John's) 67-9.

A120.45. Children are told that if they are not good during Advent they will get potato peels in their stocking on Christmas Eve. I have also heard that nothing but lumps of coal would be left. The children do not believe this once they are of school age, but younger than this [they] do really believe that what they get on Christmas depends on their

TIGHT BINDING

behaviour beforehand. I have heard adults say that so-and-so was really naughty, and that he should really only be given potato peels on Christmas Eve, but by then the Christmas spirit takes over, and I have never heard of a child to actually find either peelings or coal in their stockings. (St. John's; Marystown; Harbour Breton) 67-12.

A120.46. My father used to tell me that if I wasn't good Santa would put a rotten onion in my Christmas stocking. He usually told this around Christmas time. My father used to like to tease me and one Christmas morning I found an onion in my stocking along with the toys. I was only about seven at the time, but I became so angry that I threw everything away and put a few nasty wishes on Santa. Up to this time it was customary for us each year to get Mom to write a letter to Santa for us and Dad would burn the letter in the furnace so Santa would get it. But after the onion incident I never had another letter sent to Santa since I hated him ever since I found the onion. The reason I was so mad about the onion was because I wasn't bad and for the few months before Christmas I was on my best behaviour because of Dad's threats about rotten onions. I found out there was no Santa when I was about ten and I wasn't disappointed to find out he didn't exist. (Stephenville Crossing) 68-8.

A120.47. When I was small and used to hang up my stocking at Christmas, I used to get my sister to write a note to Santa telling him what I wanted for Christmas. Of course nobody was supposed to know what I (my sister) had written. After it was written I used to burn it in the fireplace on Christmas Eve so that Santa would get it.

If I told a lie during the year my stocking would be filled with lumps of coal instead of toys and candy. Since I never got any lumps of coal I guess I was a good boy. I never was allowed to stay up after eleven, so by eleven I was in bed. To make sure I went to bed my parents said there would be lumps of coal in my stocking for disobeying them. (Corner Brook) 68-9.

A120.48. I think my parents were always afraid that one of us children, when we believed in Santa Claus, would come downstairs on Christmas Eve night and discover them playing Santa Claus. Therefore, we were always told that if we saw Santa Claus leaving our presents we would find ashes in them all when we opened them on Christmas morning.

This warning was strengthened by the following story: One Christmas, (N) (N) (who happened

TIGHT BINDING

to be our cousin) hid behind the curtains in their living room and watched Santa Claus put presents under the tree. Then he went off to bed. However, Christmas morning he found nothing but ashes for him under the tree. (St. John's) 68-19.

A120.49. ....if you were good, well you were goin' to get something good; if you were bad, you're liable to get a rock in your stocking or a piece o' coal, or something like this. ....well, if you weren't good....Santa Claus could leave you a lump o' coal, you know, or he might take you off in his sack, you know, when you got in bed. [If] Santa Claus comes an' he finds out you're bad, [he] might take you off in his sack with him, you know.... (Brigus) T C365,67-31.

A121. Santa Claus's birds.

A121.1. When I was a child, thinking about what Santa Claus would bring me was very important, as it is with most children today. A favourite way to keep me from bad behaviour was to tell me that Santa Claus's birds were sitting on top of the chimney and they would report to Santa what my behaviour was like. This was told to me by my parents and my older brothers and sisters. We still use this warning in our family with nieces and nephews. I must add that this warning was usually used during the few months before Christmas. (St. John's) 68-19.

A122. Santa Claus's elves.

A122.1. Another threat I've heard concerns the elves that help Santa Claus. To make children behave, the threat, "Santa Claus's elves are listening to [you] from the chimney" [is used]. These threats were used seriously to make the children behave themselves. (St. John's) Q67-1194.

A123. Father Christmas [ˌfaðə 'krɪsməs].

A123.1. They'd always say,...Father Christmas was comin'. Always tellin' 'em in Christmas

TIGHT BINDING

time; they would tell 'em Father Christmas was comin'. "You'd better be quiet" 'cause Father Christmas was comin'. ....well now, after Christmas Eve, well we'd keep the whole.... twelve days o' Christmas here, one time, see. Well after Christmas Eve, perhaps the youngsters would be up drivin' works [i.e. making a disturbance] or something. Well we'd tell 'em Father Christmas was comin'. (St. Paul's) T C285,66-24.

A124. Rockyfoot.

A124.1. Parents and other adults often threaten children about scary beings and figures in order to get them to behave themselves. They are threatened with such things as Rockyfoot, who was an anti-Santa Claus, [and] came instead of Santa if the children were bad, and put rocks in their stockings. (Terrenceville) Q67-727.

TIGHT BINDING

SECTION B.

Class B: Human Beings as Threatening Figures.

In contradistinction to the Class A figures which are basically superflatural, fictitious or invented, and normally have no bodily substance, those in Class B are typified by living people. They are visible, tangible and corporeal and exist in the everyday world. In their threatening role, however, an exaggerated attention is paid to any abnormal features which they may have and they are often said to have certain supernatural attributes. The figures in Class B are typified by human beings who are in some way abnormal, unusual or strange. These human figures are distinguished principally by their difference from the common man. They differ, or are presented as differing, from the normal in certain characteristics, either singly or in combination. These characteristics include

1. Disguise, masking, uniform or unusual dress.
2. Power or authority of some kind, the extent of which is often unknown to the child.
3. Unfamiliarity, strangeness, rarity of appearance.
4. Physical or mental abnormality.
5. Other eccentric or unusual behaviour or appearance.

The characteristics are not presented here in order of priority. Each may act as the basis for the creation or development of a threatening figure, although it usually happens that more than one characteristic is present in a given figure.

For a large number of these figures, the stranger, as

Firestone has pointed out,[1] is a predominant motif. One might also recognise other recurrent motifs such as the wearing of a "uniform" of some kind, official or otherwise, which marks these figures out as unusual. The idea of a uniform might be extended from the simple connotation of dress to the distinctive appearance of many abnormal types and individuals, which one might regard as a "personality uniform" signalling their difference from "ordinary people". Both individuals and types who appear as threatening figures in Class B differ in some way from the standard concept of a "normal" person. They are not one of us. They are either outside what society regards as normal, or they have power, real or imaginary, which sets them apart from normal people, or, in the case of disguised figures such as the mummers, for example, the custom which they enact gives them licence to act abnormally within society for a limited period of time. All such figures are clearly different from "the man in the street". They are set apart from him by virtue of the characteristics which they possess or with which society invests them.

While one might distinguish certain "types" (e.g. mummer, policeman, stranger, recluse etc.) among these figures, and indeed they are all "types" to some extent; each may have certain characteristics which also mark him out as an individual. Conversely, an individual may share several of the characteristics which identify the various "types". It is therefore sometimes difficult to differentiate one from another. One tentative

---

[1] Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", esp. pp. 68-75.

TIGHT BINDING

method of classification is to present the figures sequentially according to the degree of abnormality which they typically manifest, beginning with those which differ most from the man in the street. More specifically, it is clear that certain of the human figures are seen to present themselves deliberately as abnormal in many different ways, whereas others are unusual only by virtue of some distinctive personal trait. The people who disguise themselves as mummers, for example, often seem to model their behaviour and appearance on that attributed to the supernatural/invented figures of Class-A. They are thus linked with the supernatural by this deliberate transformation. Indeed, such dressed-up figures as those of people representing ghosts, the boogie man, the crust man, Santa Claus and the like illustrate the close ties between the supernatural/invented figures and the human figures. One might argue that by personifying them and by acting out their roles the masked and disguised people are in a sense closest to the supernatural/invented figures. In addition to this, however, those wearing disguise differ from ordinary people in all the other typical features of threatening figures which are listed above. The disguise worn by the mummers casts them in the role of strangers; they have temporary power in their licence to behave more or less as they wish for a certain period of time; they deliberately distort their physical shape and appearance (for example, by padding themselves out, adding humps on their backs; wearing loose, ill-fitting clothes; wearing unusual or grotesque headgear, masks and veils; dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex, and so on). In addition,

TIGHT BINDING

they alter their voices by a variety of means, and they behave oddly in many different ways, for example by shouting, making sudden violent movements and indulging in uninhibited dancing, horseplay and trickery. In these respects their behaviour exhibits maximal deviation from what is normally expected of people in their day-to-day relationships. Moreover, the mummers are guests in the homes they visit, but their behaviour, structured though it is, is the antithesis of the formality normally expected of a visitor. Indeed, everything about the appearance and behaviour of the mummers, and especially their masks and disguises, is actually or potentially frightening.[2]

When people impersonate supernatural/invented figures or disguise themselves as mummers and the like, they act in ways which are socially abnormal, and they are also felt to be different from normal people in some supernatural way.[3] Every single aspect of their impersonation or disguise removes them further from normal human form and characteristics. The characteristics which they adopt deliberately for practical reasons of disguise are those which most mark people out as abnormal or "non-standard" in size, appearance and behaviour. In addition to this they consciously and deliberately behave

---

[2]For details of the frightening nature of the masks and disguise see J.D.A. Widdowson and H. Halpert, "The Disguises of Newfoundland Mummers", in Halpert and Story, pp. 147-164.

[3]The Eskimo Naluyuks are evidently regarded as supernatural in some way because they are disguised and their faces are covered. The masking alone engenders fear and, as it were, transforms the wearer into a supernatural figure. See Ben-Dor, Eskimos and Settlers, pp. 121-122.

TIGHT BINDING

abnormally. To children who have been threatened with supernatural/invented figures, and especially to those children who have never seen mummers before, the disguised figures therefore become much more frightening. Children may think that such figures are now really coming to take them as the parents often said they would. Something terrifying suddenly appears which the child has never seen before and to him this may seem to be the very embodiment of the supernatural/invented figure with which he has been threatened.

Figures of authority such as the policeman or the priest may be distinguished by their uniform and by their general demeanour, just as mummers are recognised by their unusual costumes and strange antics. Both the disguised figures and the authority figures, however, are comparatively predictable in their behaviour. They are expected to fulfil a certain role, just as many of the supernatural/invented figures also behave predictably because society creates or develops them and circumscribes their role. On the other hand, strangers, individuals and parents or other relatives in a family are often less predictable in their behaviour. Relatives within the family group may range from the benign to the sadistic in their attitudes towards children, and strangers may be feared partly because they are unknown quantities. They are less predictable since there has been little or no opportunity for their behaviour to be observed within the community over a period of time.

Parents and other adults extend or exaggerate the powers

and frightening characteristics of the various human figures and make them seem larger than life. Since certain figures in this class, for example the policeman, have actual power - a fact recognised by the adults - there is always the implicit danger that these people who have such power could carry out the threats, and a child quickly realises this. It is certainly the case that the various unusual characteristics which they display are emphasised and exaggerated so that they become grotesque and take on something of the mythological aura of the Class A figures. Like the supernatural/invented figures, the human beings are presented as abnormal and unpredictable. Furthermore, the human figures also serve the same function as those in Class A. They may be threatened for general disobedience and misbehaviour, and also for various more specific reasons, some of which have a bearing on the profession, occupation or other typifying feature of the figure concerned.

PEOPLE IN DISGUISE

IMPERSONATIONS OF SUPERNATURAL OR INVENTED FIGURES.

B1. <u>People impersonating ghosts</u>.

B1.1. To get children to come in on time, parents sometimes [used] to get neighbours to dress up like ghosts and then go where the children were playing. The children, being frightened, would be more anxious to get in before dark. (St. John's) Q67-144.

B2. People impersonating the boogie-man.

B2.1. One summer my family and I spent our holidays at my grandparents' in Bay Roberts. ....my younger sisters, my aunt....who is just a little older than I am, and myself, all stayed in one large room. We had just gotten in bed and had just turned out the lights, when the door opened and someone walked in saying, "I am the Bugie Man - you had better go to sleep right away." Then he walked out. Needless to say we didn't get to sleep right away and we called out for my mother who told us she had no idea who it was, but it would be a good idea to go to sleep. (We were a little noisy after the lights were out.) My aunt is a rather nervous sort and it scared her enough so that she did go to sleep. We never did find out who the man was, but we speculated a lot and we had an idea that it was my father. I can see him now with a hat pulled over his face. In any case, we were never sure if it were the Bugie Man or not and we always thought about it as bedtime if we protested about going. (Bay Roberts) 68-22.

Indirect

B2.2. A story was told me by a [lady] who in about 1890 was frightened by the family maid who threatened that if anyone went into the cellar where the food was kept....a boogie-man would get them. This maid even went to the trouble of dressing up as a boogie-man in order to frighten the children. She was very successful for the children were terrified to go near the cellar. (Grand Falls) Q67-470.

B3. People impersonating the Crust Man.

B3.1. The Crust man was supposed to come while the child was sleeping at night and carry him away if he had refused to eat the crust of his bread during a meal. I know of one instance when a grown up sister actually dressed up as a Crust Man to frighten a little sister who kept refusing to eat her crusts. The child was....scared to death by this action but I do not know whether it had the desired effect or not. (Clarenville) Q67-465.

TIGHT BINDING

B4. People impersonating the Sandman.

B4.1. Larry the Sandman: When my brother was young, his parents would tell him that if he didn't go to bed Larry would come and take him away. Larry was Larry the Sandman, and he always carried a big bag on his back. One night (in 1944), when Bob [my brother] wouldn't go to bed, a woman friend of my parents dressed up in a man's jacket with an old hat on her head and had a bag of wood shavings on her back. For hair, Larry had more shavings stuck under her cap. Bob was told to look out the window. He did, and saw Larry walk towards his toy boat he had left in the yard. Larry picked up the boat; Bob yelled and bawled, but wanted to go out and get the boat. Larry left the boat and Bob went out and brought it in after Larry went away. This was in Nain, Labrador. One night in 1945 Bob and a friend were out after dark and wouldn't come home. Dad decided to scare Bob so he dressed up and put a bag (with something in it to fill it up) on his back. Then he went down on the beach and came up so Bob wouldn't see him coming from home. Then he hid around a building and popped out at Bob and Johnny as they came along. Johnny ran off bawling towards his home, and Bob ran off bawling and dragging his tricycle behind him towards his home. This happened in Lewisporte, Notre Dame Bay. (Nain, Lab., and Lewisporte) 66-15.

B5. People impersonating Santa Claus.

B5.1. The children were threatened in a playful way. At Christmas time, someone would dress up in white sheets and red flannelette, since there were no Santa Claus suits. This someone would go to a few houses and warn children that if they didn't behave and go to bed early, Santa Claus wouldn't come. As a result, the threatened children behaved and went to bed at six o'clock. (St. John's) Q67-499.

B5.2. Little children are apt to be frightened by a person dressed up as Santa Claus, therefore, if they are bad and will not go to bed, their parents say that Santa Claus is going to take them away. (Cow Head) Q67-107.

MUMMERS, JANNEYS[4] AND OTHER DISGUISED PEOPLE.

Mummers, also known as janneys, or darbies, which are still an important part of the Christmas festivities in Newfoundland, are used quite frequently in threats, especially at that time of the year. In the collection of material for the Newfoundland Archive considerable attention was paid to the various mumming figures, especially in the earlier fieldwork and questionnaires. As a result of these enquiries, mummers and janneys are reported as threatening figures from some eighty communities in different parts of the island. By contrast there seem to be very few reports of mummers being used in threats in European folklore, although the frightening potential of disguised figures is clearly seen in many European seasonal figures.

The mummers and janneys in Newfoundland are often frightening to adults, but especially to children. Their dress and masks, rowdy behaviour and strange antics are constantly referred to when people are asked why these figures are frightening. Whereas in many communities the mummers are friendly, there is also a tradition of violence, which is sometimes connected with the settling of grudges. In extreme cases people have been known to run away from the mummers, climb trees or even jump into the harbour to escape them. One report describes mummers coming

---

[4]The term Janney may perhaps be a variant of Johnny. For a discussion of possible etymologies, see Widdowson, "Mummering and Janneying: Some Explanatory Notes", in Halpert and Story, Appendix II, pp. 217-221. Professor Seary draws my attention to the fact that the Genoese were referred to as "Janneys" in the Bristol area. See S.E. Morison, The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages (New York, 1971), pp. 165-166.

TIGHT BINDING

in and chasing the children all over the house, while the parents watch, until they eventually find them. They may pick up small children, make booing noises at them, poke them or tap them with their sticks, try to put them in underneath their often voluminous clothing, pretend to take them away or do other things to frighten them. Many of the activities of the mummers, however, are merely a pretence of violence or punishment. They pretend to attack or beat the children, or act as if they are going to chase or take them, rather than actually doing so. The parents sometimes pretend to be afraid of the mummers and this fear is transmitted to the children who see the parents apparently afraid and unable to help them. There are occasional reports of mummers trying to pull young children away from their parents. On such occasions the parents may protect the child in the same way as they offer to shield him from such figures as the boogie man, on condition that he is co-operative. Mummers sometimes ask parents if they should take a child away, especially if he has not been good.[5]

The mummers are sometimes identified with the Devil, the boogie-man and other supernatural/invented figures, and they personify some of their imagined characteristics. Mummers are also strangers in the sense that they appear for only a short time around Christmas.[6] Like Santa Claus, they are used in threats only at this particular time of the year and to some

---

[5] Cp. the Labrador Eskimo tradition in which the Naluyuks ask the children whether or not they have been good during the year. See Ben-Dor, Eskimos and Settlers, pp. 122-125.

[6] The young children who dress as mummers at Halloween are also occasionally used in threats.

TIGHT BINDING

extent they take over the role from other threatening figures during this period.[7] Indeed, everything about the masked and disguised figures identifies them as strangers. As Firestone observes: "In becoming mummers people temporarily make themselves strangers in their own society."[8] Their weird appearance and noisy behaviour are intensified by their sudden and violent movements which often startle adults and children alike. Their use of elaborate and grotesque costumes such as the hobby horse is repeatedly described as intended to frighten. They frequently employ a reversal of sex role in that it is usual for men to dress as women and for women to dress as men. Even those mummers who perform the mumming plays behave as strangers in that they are usually preceded by "fools" or "the shoo" or other functionaries who have authority to clear the houses where the play is to be acted.

The threats involving mummers and janneys are not especially violent. One report, however, mentions that the janneys were said to eat children and this has parallels with some of the threats concerning supernatural/invented figures. The mummers themselves sometimes threaten the children that they will take them away. They can act in this way without the consent of the parents who may be looking on. Occasionally they actually seize the child and threaten to take him. Here

---

[7]The Santa Claus threats, however, become ineffective after Christmas Day, whereas those involving the mummers may continue at least until Old Christmas Day when mumming usually ceases.

[8]Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", p. 75.

the mummers offer to play the role of the taker with which other adults have invested them, and their actions are intensified by the fact that they have tacit licence to behave with some degree of violence during the period of their activities.

B6. Mummers ['mʌmərz] / ['mɔmərz].

B6.1. Some of the masked figures looked frightening, especially to the children. Adults would say to children who wanted to go out at night, "Mummers out there." The adults themselves, however, were never scared of them. (Terrenceville) Q66-42.

B6.2. "There's mummers in there!" (Mount Pearl) Q67-380.

B6.3. Oh they'd say, "Now you..[if] you don't be good, the mummers'll be comin' in, you know!" [mæu jʉu | ju: dount bɪ gʊd də 'mʌmərz l bɪ 'kʌmən ɪn jʉ nɔu] (Garnish) T C155,65-16. (rec. H. Halpert).

B6.4. They used to say, well, "The mummers is goin' to come in, you know, if you don't be good!" [ðə 'mɔmərz ɨz 'gɔnə kʌm ɪn jɔ nou ɨf jʉ dount bɪ gʊd] (Garnish) T C155,65-16 (rec. H. Halpert).

B6.5. "We['ll] get the mummers in if you don't be good!" [wɪ gɛt ðə 'mɔmərz ɪn ɨf jɔ dount bɪ gʊd] (Garnish) T C155,65-16 (rec. H. Halpert).

B6.6. "I'll give you to the mummers!" [aɨl gɪv jʉ tʉ ðə 'mʌmərz] or something like this. .... an' the idea is just to..to scare the kid for the moment, you know, and prevent him from doing whatever he wanted to do. (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

B6.7. "The mummers is comin'!" [ðə 'mʌmərz ɨz 'kʌmən] (Beaumont South) T C301,66-25.

B6.8. Well, a woman may say to her child, "You go out o' doors, well the next thing you['ll] see the mummers after you!" [jʉ gou æt ə dɔərz | wɛl ðə nɛkst θɪŋ jʉəl si ðə 'mʌmərz 'æftə jə] (Winterton) T C22,64-8.

TIGHT BINDING

B6.9. Some of the mummers wore clothes (made by themselves) to represent the devil or a spirit. Small children were usually afraid of this and when they become bad, parents will often say: "I'll give you to the mummers", and this immediately quietens the child because of his fear for mummers. (Gambo) Q66-29.

B6.10. Mummers often frightened children because they acted rough, talked loudly and waved the splits [i.e. short sticks] about, sometimes hitting children on the fingers with them. A threat which was often used was: "If you're bad we give you to the mummers." (Glovertown) Q67-1137.

B6.11. .....they might say probably, "The mummers will chase you!" [ðə 'mʌmərz wɨl tʃɛis jʉu] or.. or "come and get you!" or somethin' like that. (St. Lawrence) T C355,67-31.

B6.12. "If you don't be good the mummers will get you tonight!" [ɪf jʉu dount bɪ gʊd ðə 'mʌmərz wɪl gɛt jʉu tə'nɛ̈it] or something like that. (St. Shotts) T C530,68-43 (rec. H. Halpert).

B6.13. The mummers were sometimes used as threats at that time of the year [i.e. Christmas]. Children were told - "Be good, or the mummers will get you." (St. John's) Q67-348.

B6.14. Well around Christmas time particularly, if kids are misbehaving in practically any way, their parents would say...., "You be good or the mummers'll have you!" [jʉu bɪ gʊd ər ðə 'mʌmərz l hæv jə] (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

B6.15. ....their parents would tell 'em, well, "The mummers will be here tonight. They're not goin' to hurt you" or something like that. But more fellers, you know, more parents, would try to, well.., "The Mummer is comin' to take you tonight!" [ðə 'mʌmər ɨz !kʌmɨn ˆnt? tɛik jə tə'nɛit] or something. (St. Joseph's, PB) T C21,64-7.

B6.16. "The mummers will carry you away if you don't be good." (Musgrave Harbour) Q67-504.

B6.17. In Bonavista it is not unusual for people to say to their children, "Don't go out in the dark - the mummers will carry you away." (Bonavista) Q67-17.

Indirect .....

B6.18. The mummers were used to threaten small children

TIGHT BINDING

only in order to get them to bed early. They naturally were not used to threaten older children since they knew what the mummers really were. (Valleyfield) Q64A.

B6.19. Children are usually frightened by mummers because of the way they dress, dance around, and speak. Children were even threatened to be given to the mummers if they didn't go to bed when they were told. (Bloomfield) Q67-37.

B6.20. If it was around Christmas time when the mummers were out around and mothers wanted to get their children in they usually said that the mummers will chase them if they didn't come in right away. (Lewisporte) Q67-411.

B6.21. The children are scared by mummers in that the mummers try to catch the children and say they are going to take them with them. They frighten them for fun. (Newmans Cove) Q67-1308.

B6.22. Mummers often frighten children. When parents threaten their children with such things as the witches or the fairies, the children picture in their minds what these look like. When a mummer comes to the door the children think it is one of these and get frightened. Mummers often tell the children they have come to take them away. (Port aux Basques) Q67-737.

B6.23. Sometimes mummers will frighten children by telling them that they take bad boys and girls and carry them away. The teeth of the hobby horse were often snapped to make children afraid. Adults would agree with the mummers but they would know that it was only a joke. (Bay de Verde) Q67-86.

B6.24. During the Christmas season and around Hallowe'en children are often told that the mummers would take them away if they did not behave. The mummers travelled about the community frightening people whenever they could. In some cases they would actually deal out punishment to some people. (St. Mary's) Q63B.

B6.25. When the mummers frightened the children, the children would start crying or maybe the[y] would run to their parents. The children are frightened because the mummers were dressed up in many different and frightening costumes. When the children were threatened by the mummers, the mummers often told the children that they were going to take them or beat them. (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1074.

TIGHT BINDING

B6.26. The children are scared of the mummers because they were so lifelike that they thought they were real. The mummers would threaten to take bad children away into the woods where they would encounter the Jack o'Lantern or the Boogie-man. (St. John's) Q67-990.

B6.27. Small children are scared because the mummers were sometimes rough and because their disguises were frightening. Sometimes parents threatened children by saying the mummers would carry them away if they weren't good. (St. John's) Q67-1305.

B7. Janneys ['dʒɛnɪz] / ['dʒænɪz] / ['dʒæni·z].

B7.1. In Christmas sometimes my mother would say, "If you don't be good I'll give you to the jannies." (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-1095.

B7.2. Mummers or janneys might frighten young children who have a tendency to be frightened by strangers. One threat: "The janneys are going to get you." (Botwood) Q67-608.

B7.3. ...."You be good or the janneys will get you." (Victoria) Q67-209.

B7.4. ...."Go to bed now so the Janneys won't get you!" [go jə bɛd nau sou ðə 'dʒæni·z wount? gɛt jə] (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

B7.5. "The Janneys is comin'! Now git! The Janneys is comin'!" [ðə 'dʒænɪz ɪz 'kʌmən | næu gɪt || ðə 'dʒænɪz ɪz 'kʌmən] (Portland Creek) T C264,66-24.

B7.6. ....if they was cryin' or wouldn't listen to you, you know, you'd say, "Shut up now! Jannies is comin', look! Janneys is comin'!" [ʃʌt ʌp næu || 'dʒænɪz ɨz !kʌmɨn lɔk | 'dʒænɪz ɨz 'kʌmən] (Hawkes Bay) T C276,66-24.

B7.7. ...."The Janneys is comin' after ye!" [ðə 'dʒænɪz ɨz 'kʌmɨn 'æftə ji·] (Port Saunders) T C270,66-24.

B7.8. ...."be good or the Janneys['ll] come from Harbour le Cou for you!"[9] [bɪ gʊd ɔə̆r də 'dʒænɪz ə kʌm frəm 'aərbər lə 'kʉu fɔər jə] (Cow Head) T C247,66-24.

B7.9. The Janneys may come tonight an' get you!" [ðə 'dʒænɪz mɛi kʌm tə'nai?t n gɛt jʉu] (St. John's) T C368,67-31.

---

[9]Harbour le Cou is a small settlement on the south west coast from which the Janneys are often said to come. The Janneys are supposed to come from some distant place, such as "the North Pole" or "Ottawa", and it seems that comparative remoteness may have been one reason why Harbour le Cou was mentioned in this way. See also

B7.10. So they'd want them to go to bed: "Watch! There goes the Janneys! The Janneys'll get you! The Janneys'll get you! [watʃ || ðɛər goz ðə 'dʒɛnɪz || ðə 'dʒɛnɪz ˌ gɛt jə || ðə 'dʒɛnɪz ˌ gɛt jə] [said in urgent half-whispered tones]. (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

B7.11. Children are frightened by janney disguises. Sometimes children are threatened by janneys by such sayings as: "We'll take you with us." (St. John's) Q67-303.

B7.12. ....small kiddies, when you'd go in with such a rig on.....well [they] wouldn't know what was going to happen to them. They didn't know. And perhaps you'd go in, there'd be a little fellow doddling around the floor. Well the first thing you'd open the door and a big man [was] coming in with a nasty-looking face [i.e. false face, mask] on, and perhaps a big whisker down here, or something another, and a big lump on his back, or a big brin bag or some kind of knapsack on his back, then..... Well, perhaps three or four days before that the mother would say to the child, "..... The Janneys is goin' to take you!" [ðə 'dʒænɪz ɪz 'gounə tɛik juu] or something another. Now when you come in and the little one'll see, you know, well, "He['s] going to come for me now!" You see, that's why the children would be so much afraid of the Janneys. Perhaps the parents had threatened the Janney on the child before he'd seen him. Well, when he..he'd come, "He come for me!" That's why they were like that. (Port Blandford) T C1,63-2.

B7.13. "If you don't keep quiet now, the Janneys might take you!" [ɨf jə dount ki:p kwɑ̈it? næu ðə 'dʒænɪz mæit? tɛik jə] (Cow Head) T C265,66-24.

B7.14. "Now they big Janneys is comin' in! They'll take you tonight if yous don't be good! [næu ðɛi bɪg 'dʒænɪz ɨz 'kʌmɨn ɪn || dɛɨl tɛɨk juu tə'nɛit ɪf juuz dount? bi gʊud] We were frightened to death then! (Cow Head) T C255,66-24.

B7.15. "Better be good or the Janneys'll take you." (Cow Head) 67-22.

B7.16. Sometimes very young children were terrified at the sight of janneys. They often cried and ran for mommy or daddy or they ran into another room. When a crowd of janneys came in, the mother might say to her little boy, "Now, Johnny, you'd better

be quiet now or the old janneys will take you away with them. See the stick they've got there; that's for beating bad little boys." (Whitbourne) Q67-446.

B7.17. Young children were told, "If you bite your nails the Jannies will take you and do bad things to you." In this way children were afraid of Jannies. (Corner Brook) Q63B.

B7.18. The Darbies or Janneys were used...., "The Janneys will take you and throw you down in the black hole." (Conception Harbour) Q67-268.

B7.19. Janneys scare children because parents also threaten the children by saying, "The Janney will eat you." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-317.

Indirect

B7.20. When children were naughty, parents would threaten to throw them out to the janneys. (Gander) Q67-789.

B7.21. Yes, many of the masks used were regarded as frightening. The children ran in fear when janneys with ugly masks came in. The parents told the children that the janneys were coming; the children became afraid and hurried off to bed - just what the parents wanted them to do. Some parents were nervous about the masks and sometimes would not let janneys in because the masks frightened them. (Beaumont) Q67-112.

B7.22. The mummers or Janneys frighten children because they are scared of their masks and their actions. Sometimes the threat is used that the janneys will come and get them if they aren't good. (Carbonear) Q67-535.

B7.23. Mummers or Janneys frighten children because they are dressed funny and make funny noises. They speak and act in a way which scare[s] young children. Children are sometimes threatened by being told that the janneys will take them away. (Trout River) Q67-254.

B7.24. The janneys frightened the children by telling them they were going to take them. (Bishop's Falls) Q67-1003.

B7.25. Mummers or janneys were often used to threaten children; their masks and very high[-pitched] or very low-pitched voices frightened children. Mothers often told children that if they weren't

in bed before the janneys came they would be given to the janneys who would take them far away. (Great Burin Island) Q67-1093.

B7.26. Some children were afraid of janneys because of their odd and frightening disguises. Some parents often threatened their children that the janneys would carry them away, if they were not good. (Botwood) Q67-1223.

B7.27. ...oh, they'd tell 'em to be quiet, you know, 'cause the Janneys would carry 'em away. (Beaumont South) T C300,66-25.

B7.28. Yes, they [i.e. the janneys] were used by many parents to scare the children into behaving themselves. This was done by saying that if they didn't be good the janneys would carry them away or even eat them. (Cormack) Q66-37.

B8. Darbies.

The Christmas mummers sometimes called darbies, are reported twice as threatening figures in the Newfoundland material. See, for example, B7.18 above.

B9. The hobby horse and related figures.

Although mummers and janneys are often used in threats, the hobby-horse figures are rarely reported in this role. This is surprising in that these animal figures are particularly frightening and are deliberately used for scaring people. The hobby-horse figures, also called horsechops, horsey chops, horsechopper, hoppy cow, hobby-cow, lopchops, bull or jackass, are animal disguises, especially a representation of the animal's head, carried or worn as a disguise by the mummers. A group of mummers would sometimes include one such disguise when they went house-visiting. The activities connected with the hobby-horse are usually very rough and boisterous. The mummer who

TIGHT BINDING

carries or wears the figure causes it to clap its jaws with a frightening sound, and the suggestion that the horse will bite or eat people is reinforced by the fact that the "clopping" or "snocking" jaws are studded with sharp nails and the carrier uses the head to chase people, especially women and children. However humorous it may be to those taking part in the mumming, it can certainly be very frightening to young children and also to some women. The teeth are so constructed that they can tear garments and there seems to be at least some intention to strip the clothes off people, including other mummers. Sometimes the hobby horses chase each other or chase other mummers and sometimes they come indoors to chase the children.

B9.1. Everyone was to "Beware of the hobby horse". This was someone disguised, going along carrying a stick which had on top the head of a horse carved out of wood. He asked people he met on the road for tobacco, matches and such things. If the person didn't give it he was likely to be hit with a stick or whip that the hobby horse carried. Unfortunately, though janneying was supposed to be in fun, people were badly hurt. (Bell Island) Q67-575.

B9.2. The purpose of the Hobby Horse was to scare people who did not give the mummers a treat. They would say to the people when they answered the door, "Give us a drink of rum or we'll let the Hobby Horse snap on you." Apparently this was used to scare people into giving the mummers a treat.[10] (Whitbourne) Q67-1132.

B9.3. The Hobby-horse used in janneying used to be used as a threat. A friend of my own age used to be told when she was naughty that, "The Hobby-Horse will get you." I doubt very much that this is still used as a threat, since most of the younger parents have never even heard of the Hobby horse. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1234.

B9.4. Grandmother said that people were often a bit afraid of the mummers who carried a hobby

[10] This report suggests that adults were threatened by the hobby horse and that it was not merely used to frighten children. See also B9.5 below.

TIGHT BINDING

horse. Often mothers intimidated their children into good behaviour by telling them that the mummers would get them. Often it took the form of, "The hobby horse will eat you." Often a cow skin or even a real horse hide was stretched over the wooden frame of the horse. Sometimes a skull was used. Indeed, my grandfather said that mummering was much more fun then because it lasted longer into the new year and also because the masks and disguises were more frightening. (Long Pond) Q66-19.

Indirect
.....

B9.5. The horse's head was owned and made by some men down in Twillingate. One man would have it while the others followed him around. They would try to get everyone they met to come along, and if they refused they would threaten the horse on them. (Twillingate) Q67-531.

B9.6. Usually "jannies" are used to scare children; closely associated with these mummers is the hobby-horse. During Christmas time hobby-horses are supposed to be out looking for children who are bad. The hobby-horse is thought of [as] a horse with large teeth which eats up children. (Harbour Grace) Q64A.

B10. Lopchops.

B10.1. [He] could remember something called "lopchops". What it was supposed to be he isn't sure, but it resembled a "gert [i.e. great] cow with horns, and jaws that snapped". His mother often frightened him by painting vivid pictures of this "lopchops" and what he was capable of doing. (Fox Cove) Q63B.

MISCELLANEOUS DISGUISED FIGURES.

In several parts of the island there is a tradition of individuals dressing up at certain times with the intention of frightening others. Such figures are often called "dressups",

and in a sense they preserve the mumming tradition and its attendant threat patterns throughout the year. They differ from the Christmas mummers, however, in many ways, especially in that they act individually and often secretly, apparently motivated mainly by personal whim. Some of them are nevertheless used in threats and may acquire a specific threatening function in a given area. On Bell Island, for example, where the cliffs are steep and potentially dangerous, the Woman in White, who is actually a man dressed in white clothing, is used specifically to warn children not to go out in the dark. Like the Man in Black, the Woman in White is essentially a ghost figure and therefore has links with similar figures discussed in Class A.

B11. Jackie ['dʒækɪ].

B11.1. ....I had a mummer's face [i.e. false face, mask], you know, and his name was..[we] used to call him "Jackie". And when the children, you know, would get obstrepolous, we'll say, "Jackie is comin' now!" ['dʒækɪ ɪz 'kʌmən næu] And I come out with the face, you know, on, and they stop right away, see, then. That....that'll stop 'em.... Yes, Put it on myself, said, "I'm Jackie!" [aim 'dʒækɪ] (Long Cove, Burin) T C151,65-16 (rec. H. Halpert and R. Noseworthy).

B12. Man in Black.

B12.1. ....the Woman in White or the Man in Black. Both of these figures are commonly used. The person will say, "If you don't come right home the....Man in Black will get you." Unlike the Boogie-man, these figures are for real, for a few years ago someone dressed as these figures and went around frightening people. (Bell Island) Q67-69.

B13. Old Sam.

B13.1. Frightful expressions used by parents to chastize naughty children were the "Boogie-man", and especially "Old Sam". He was one of the neighbours dressed up in a worn black derby, a black tuxedo top coat and old black trousers. He also had a black cane and visited bad children, particularly on Christmas eve. If children were naughty "Old Sam" would get them. (St. John's) Q67-830.

B14. Woman in White.

The Woman in White, sometimes called the White Woman, appears to be localised to Bell Island, although there are occasional reports of the figure elsewhere, probably from people who lived on Bell Island or had heard of the figure as used there.

B14.1. They were threatened by being told, "The Woman-in-White was out there last night." (Bell Island) Q67-698.

B14.2. "The woman-in-white is out tonight." (Bell Island) Q67-502.

B14.3. When parents want their children to be in at six o'clock [the mother] usually says, "Now, Paddy, you know the Woman in White is on the prowl, so be home on time." ....The Woman in White - this was a man dressed up in white by covering himself with a white sheet and [who] usually frightened children by other threats, and even sometimes adults, when they came in contact with him. He usually lived in a house in the woods and came out at night and made a habit of stealing purses from ladies who were walking home alone from parties, dances or movies. He was always hidden and was never yet found. He usually....attacked those alone. Some of the threats were used to young folk in advising them not to go [anywhere] alone. Example: suppose a mother wanted her son to go to the store in the night about six o'clock and wanted to get clear of Jimmy for a half hour and Johnny didn't want to take him with him;

then she would say as a [joking] threat, "Take your brother, Johnny, because if the Woman in White sees you alone he will get you." (St. John's) Q67-391.

B14.4. "The Woman-in-White killed another little boy last night." (Bell Island) Q67-698.

Indirect

B14.5. One character who is known only to residents of Bell Island is "The Woman in White" who was really a man dressed in a white sheet, white pants, and carried a white stick. He would terrorize children whom he saw out late at night. He was most feared during the winter time when the snow would conceal him because of his white clothing. Then when a person came near he would jump up, waving his white stick. (Bell Island) Q67-310.

B14.6. For years on Bell Island there were people who dressed up in white to prowl the lonely roads and lanes to frighten and chase any passers-by. This figure, though it was not always the same person, was known as "The White Woman". No-one knows why the term "woman" was used for most people say it was always a man. When I was a child The White Woman was quite active, and was seen every night. Most people would not leave their homes after dark without a companion. There was no need to warn me to be in before dark, for the frightening image of The White Woman was always uppermost in my mind. (Bell Island) Q63B.

B14.7. Another frightening figure around Bell Island is the Woman in White. She was actually a man dressed up as a woman in sparkling white clothes, wearing a white hood over his head. He used to hang out on dark, lonely roads and attack some poor chap who happened along. The Woman in White is not fictional; he is real. Actually, just six years ago in fact, a law-breaking citizen dressed like this; he became a legend. To get their children in early, parents used to threaten them by saying that the Woman in White grabs little children if they are out after dark. The Woman in White has never been captured by the authorities. (Bell Island) Q67-988.

B14.8. They would say that the....woman-in-white would catch them. ....the woman-in-white was supposed to be a woman dressed in white and who made....

visits during the winter times. Children [who] wanted to go places alone were threatened by the woman in white. (Bell Island) Q67-224.

B14.9. The Woman-in-White - this was described to me as being a man with a large white blanket over his body. He was very tall and carried an axe, knife and other tools to kill you and chop off your head. He would take me if I stayed out late at night. Of all the frightening figures this one scared me the most. (Bell Island) Q67-698.

PEOPLE IN AUTHORITY

People who have authority in the community or the family are frequently used as threatening figures in Newfoundland. This is only to be expected in that public officers such as the policeman and the magistrate, for example, are formally appointed by society and are regarded as symbols of authority. It is not unnatural, therefore, that they may be feared to some extent, or at least be held in awe, especially by children. Authority figures such as policemen, magistrates, priests, teachers, doctors, nurses and the like each have specific sociological functions. These include the maintenance of law and order, the upholding of moral and ethical principles, the imparting of knowledge, the preservation of life, health, standards of hygiene and so on. They are accepted as figures of authority and as such they represent society and its principles and standards. They are usually the custodians of order and discipline in their respective spheres of influence, and their decisions are normally accepted. It is therefore not unnatural that adults extend this actual authority, often on a more fictional level, by

threatening to expose children to the power of such figures. The figures, however, have a dual role in that society may emphasise either their benevolent or malevolent aspects according to the situational context.

Authority and fear are often linked in the popular mind, but whereas many of the more nebulous supernatural/invented figures are not believed in by adults, the human authority figures are a potential threat to both adults and children. If adults break the law, for example, the policeman may have to exercise his authority and take them away and lock them in jail. If children understand that this really happens to adults they may then begin to comprehend the idea of authority and take note that retribution may overtake those who disobey the law. Just as the supernatural/invented figures are social in their function, the authority figures also exist to ensure conformity with accepted codes of behaviour. They are appointed by society to act in authority and thus become part of a whole network of threatening figures, real and imaginary. They are the visible signs of authority and may therefore be used as object lessons when those administering the threats are referring to the supposed behaviour of the more nebulous figures.

In some "primitive" societies, a whipper or other punisher, such as the Zuñi katcina,[11] for example, is appointed from outside the family group and is used for disciplining children. In more "sophisticated" societies one may have recourse to the

---

[11] See pp. 113-4, above.

recognised figures of authority in the law, the church, the schools and the medical profession, for example, in threatening the child with punishment. In both these types of society, however, the parent transfers the onus of responsibility for punishment in threats of this kind to some outside authority. Within the family, the parent or other relative may act as an authority figure and invoke himself as punisher and bringer of retribution. The other authority figures typically have to be summoned or invited to punish the child, and the parent normally plays the role of summoner or intermediary.

In Newfoundland the authority figures most frequently employed in threats include the police, the clergy, teachers, doctors, dentists, nurses and adult members of the family, especially the father. Apart from those which come from within the family, many of these figures tend to be outsiders rather than people born and raised in the community itself. In this respect they are strangers, and this characteristic is reinforced by the fact that they do not always live in the community and therefore tend to be seen comparatively rarely. Even those such as the teacher who may well have grown up in the community have been elsewhere to obtain their qualifications and return invested, as it were, with external knowledge and authority which automatically makes them different from the rest of the community.

Ministers of religion and teachers of course exercise a great deal of influence and authority. In Newfoundland they

have been, and to a great extent are still, the leaders and the people with the most extensive knowledge and power in outport communities, especially, of course, in those areas of the religious, educational and social life with which they are particularly concerned. In the past they were often the only people in the community with a formal education beyond what could be obtained at the local schools, and, especially because in a denominational education system both ministers and teachers share responsibility for religious and ethical training, they naturally took, and continue to take, a leading role in community affairs.

Both the doctor and the priest are thought to have certain powers, not necessarily claimed by them, and both have gifts and skills regarded as beyond the normal. It is clear that in "sophisticated" western urban tradition there is strong resistance to any attempt to frighten children by referring to doctors and other medically-trained people. As parents naturally wish their children to obtain the benefits of medical treatment they take great trouble to mollify the child's apprehension or fear of the medical person whom he views as a potential inflictor of pain. Although references to doctors, dentists, nurses and other medically qualified people are rare in the studies to which I have had access, they appear comparatively frequently in the Newfoundland reports. It would be interesting to investigate at what stage children who are threatened with doctors and the like overcome their childhood fears of them. It may well be

TIGHT BINDING

that such threats are only efficacious among very young children. Parents may later rehabilitate the child by giving him a truer and more rational impression of the medical man when the child is better able to understand a frank and full explanation. Again, the child may discover for himself through his own experience that doctors and others are endeavouring to heal him rather than hurt him.[12]

The priest and the doctor, even more than the teacher, derive their authority both from their professional training and from a mystical source of power which is related to their respective vocations. By virtue of this power, marked by the formal ceremonies of their induction, they are automatically set apart from the ordinary man. In addition, whereas the teacher typically wears formal or semi-formal dress in the school and this helps to distinguish him from the ordinary working man, the priest and doctor are even more distinctive in their official garb. All of the authority figures outside the family are also formally recognised in their vocations and professions by other external authorities, and their qualifications are officially certified. Further, most of the authority figures wear a uniform of some kind which identifies them clearly as members of their profession, just as mummers are recognised as such by their unusual dress. The uniform signals the external recognition and reinforcement of the authority they possess and is tangible

---

[12] The doctor, dentist and other medically-trained people, however may of course still arouse our adult apprehension simply because of the nature of their work and our own natural anxiety about our health.

TIGHT BINDING

evidence of it. Society confers authority upon these people with due ceremony and presents them with official documents which testify that their qualifications are valid. Their achievement also often gives them the right and privilege to wear distinctive clothing or display other symbols of their office. If the symbols include the policeman's truncheon or the hypodermic needle used by trained medical staff these alone may be frightening to children and may be used in threats.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.

B15. Police, policeman. [pə'li:s], ['pli:smən] / [pə'li:smən] / ['pli:smən].

The police are clearly the most frequently used of the authority figures, and indeed, if the reports of all types of police, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Newfoundland Rangers are added together, the police closely rival the boo man in frequency of appearance in the Newfoundland material. They are reported from over 170 communities in all parts of the island and in Labrador. The policeman or the Mountie is used as a threatening figure in towns where he is so often seen in the course of his duty, and also in outports where his visits are comparatively rare. In the outport environment he is therefore more of an unknown quantity, especially to children, and takes on some of the attributes of the stranger.

By the very nature of their profession the police may be feared to some degree by adults who in turn communicate this fear

to children as a means of social control. The policeman is the symbol of civic authority, the guardian whom society appoints over its own behaviour. Being part of the whole network of control systems which society has created for itself he is a natural person to turn to for support in upholding the principles of law and order which have been officially laid down. It is therefore not surprising that he is so often called upon as a threatening figure in helping parents to control their children. Ultimately, of course, the children learn that the policeman's task includes the protection of the innocent and the prosecution of those guilty of violating the law. In many cases, however, the reasons for which he is called upon in the threatening of children are quite outside his normal purview. For example, it is not his job to punish a child's simple disobedience of its parents unless, of course, such disobedience is against the law. In using the threats, however, parents introduce the figure of the policeman into the smaller, tighter, more personal "judicial system" of the household or family, and thereby modify and extend his normal role. Because he is symbolic of justice in the wider social context, the policeman is adapted to meet the needs of parents and other adults who control behaviour within the family unit. In this way the parent again shifts responsibility for retribution and punishment onto an external agent who in this case is the embodiment of law enforcement in the wider social context beyond home and family.

The policeman and the Mountie are used in a wide variety of threats. In addition to discouraging disobedience and general

TIGHT BINDING

misbehaviour the reasons for the threats include keeping children from dangerous or forbidden places, playing with dangerous things, interfering with the property of others, throwing stones and fighting. As with other authority figures, the policeman's powers are greatly exaggerated so that he sometimes takes on the aura typical of the supernatural/invented figures, being described in such terrifying ways that he was imagined in one report to be capable of eating children. Parents often threaten that they will call him, telephone him, or send for him and he is typically presented as coming to take the child off to jail. The jail itself is depicted as a particularly fearsome place where the child will be locked up alone in the dark and given only bread and water in his rat-infested cell. Yet in spite of all this deliberate misrepresentation, children are also told to look for a policeman to help them if they are lost, and so the threatening figure himself acts in a benevolent way by directing them or bringing them safely home.

B15.1. "I'll tell the policeman." (Carbonear) Q64A.

B15.2. They'd say, "I'll tell the policeman on you!" [al tɛl ðə 'pl‡ismən ɑ'n jə] or...., "I'll go out an' see the policeman!" [al gou æut? n si‡ ðə 'pl‡ismən] (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-31.

B15.3. "If you're not good I'll tell the policeman on you." (St. John's) Q67-1077.

B15.4. "If you go out there, I'll tell the policeman on you." (Harbour Buffett) Q67-212.

B15.5. Threats are often used with the policeman, e.g., "If you cross that street I'll tell that policeman on you!" (St. John's) Q67-372.

B15.6. A threat that I have heard that deals with discipline is that of calling the attention of

TIGHT BINDING

a policeman. This is often used to discourage children from picking at merchandise in stores and other similar actions. .... If I was in the store and saw something I like, maybe a train or something, and I started pickin' at it, Mom might see someone in the shop that she knew and I didn't and she'd ask him to say to me: "If you're not good I'll call the policeman"[13] or "You see that man over there, he's a ....policeman." I remember one time in particular at Botwood by the mill. We were on the beach and Mom warned me not to go out on rocks in the water. A friend of the family came by and pretended he was a policeman and I didn't go near the water any more. So that threat was really effective. (Twillingate and Botwood) Q67-207.

B15.7. "If you're a bad boy, I'll call the policeman...." (Bay Bulls) Q67-1297.

B15.8. I have heard some mothers say: "If you don't come in now, I'll call the policeman." (St. John's) Q67-1043.

B15.9. "I'm going to call the policeman, if you don't come back in the yard." While one of my little friends was terrified by this, it never bothered me at all. (St. John's) 68-6.

B15.10. Another well-known threat is the policeman. This is usually used when children do something bad or wrong, e.g., "Now you bring that back, or I'll call the policeman." (St. John's) Q67-391.

B15.11. Young children were sometimes frightened by the Police. "I'll phone the Police if you don't be quiet" and pretend to make a phone call [which] would sometimes quiet the children down. (Corner Brook) Q67-1166.

B15.12. "If you are not good, I'll send for the policeman." (Victoria) Q63B.

B15.13. "If you does that once more I'll send for the policeman." (Rodgers Cove) Q67-712.

B15.14. Another form of threat used was, "You'd better be good or I'll send for the policeman!" (St. John's) Q67-1000.

---

[13]Here the mother employs someone who is a stranger to the child to administer the threat, and again transfers the onus of threatening in the second instance cited when the friend actually pretends to be the threatening figure.

B15.15. ....this policeman lived next door and..and often my family would say, "I'll go out an' get the policeman!" [aɨl gou aut? n gɛt? ðə 'plɨismən] And they would go out through the door and, of course, I would change.... (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-31.

B15.16. ....they'd say, "I'll get the policeman on the corner!" (St. John's) 67-22.

B15.17. I remember not wanting to go to school, an' this was the way that I was made to go to school. "Alright, if you don't go, I'll get the policeman!" [ɑəl'rɛit? ɪf ju dount? gou ɑɨl gɛt? ðə pə'lɨismən] (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-31.

B15.18. "I'll get the policeman after you!" [ail gɛt? ðə pə'lɨismən 'æftə juu] (St. John's) T C369,67-31.

B15.19. "If you're bad, I'll get the policeman after you." (St. John's) Q67-1229.

B15.20. Policemen are commonly made to be a fearful figure. When I was small, my mother would threaten me with, "I'll get the policeman after you if you aren't good" so that up until I knew better, I'd turn around and run home or take the long way around a....policeman. (Stephenville) Q67-715.

B15.21. "Stop throwing those stones, or I'll get the policeman after you." (St. John's) Q67-648.

B15.22. "If you don't sit down I'll give you to the next policeman.". (Clarenville) Q67-984.

B15.23. ....policemen were a means of threatening other children who were getting mischievous around our door. The threat would consist of, "Don't go throwing rocks or I'll give you to the policeman" and was used on four- to six-year-olds as a rule. (St. John's) Q67-160.

B15.24. When I used to ride my tricycle in the street my Mom used to say, "The policeman is coming." (St. John's) 68-6.

B15.25. The only one I am familiar with would be that of the policeman, especially when travelling, such as, "Sit still, there's a policeman coming!" (Mount Pearl) Q67-380.

B15.26. "Quit slinging rocks, the policeman's coming." (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

B15.27. Parents have threatened their children with the policeman. A child may be naughty, making a mess, or using vulgar language and the mother

would threaten the child with, ".... Here comes the Policeman now." (Gull Island, CB) Q67-1160.

B15.28. ....the favourite threat was, "The policeman's goin' to come an' get you!" [ðə 'pli:smənz 'gounə kʌm ən gɛt jʉ] (St. John's) T C457, 67-37 (rec. Mrs. L. Ayre).

B15.29. The policeman was also used to keep the children in line. ...."The policeman will come and get you if you are not good." (St. John's) Q67-327.

B15.30. My sister and..her cousin, a boy, when they were just two or three years of age, they....started roaming around. ....they'd find a way to get out o' the garden, and they'd go roaming along the streets, and usually a policeman will find them an' bring them home. But still this little boy's aunt whom he was living with she usually said to him, "....you'd better be good now or the policeman'll come an' get you again!" [jʉud 'bɛtər bɪ gʊd nau ɔər ðə 'plɪismən l kʌm ən gɛt jʊ ə'gɛn] (St. John's) T C368,67-31.

B15.31. "The policeman will get you." (Green's Harbour) Q64A.

B15.32. "If you don't be good the policeman will get you." (Lead Cove) Q67-155.

B15.33. "If you don't go to school the policeman will get you." (Old Perlican) Q64A.

B15.34. "You watch out or the policeman'll get you!" [jʉu wɑtʃ aut ə ðə 'plɪismən l gɛt jʉ] (St. John's) T C369,67-31.

B15.35. "The policeman will have you." (Green's Harbour) Q64A.

B15.36. "The policeman will have you if you don't be good." (Port de Grave) Q67-278.

B15.37. Children are threatened with, "I'll tell the policeman to take you" to correct swearing and disobedience. A thing I find rather odd about that is that children were also told to go to a policeman for help if they ever became lost. (St. John's) Q67-1098.

B15.38. Sometimes if a child does something wrong the parent may say, "If you do that again I'm going to call the police to come and take you away." (Bell Island) Q67-157.

B15.39. "Tommy, if you break that lamp I'll call that big tall policeman and he'll take you." (Stephenville) Q67-273.

B15.40. "If you hit __(N)__, Mommy will call the policeman to take you away." (Corner Brook) Q67-858.

B15.41. "Come in off the street or I'll tell the big policeman to take you away in his big, black car." (Gander) Q67-1021.

B15.42. "The policeman will take you" was used to get children to stay off the roads. (St. John's) Q67-832.

B15.43. "The police take children who aren't good." (St. John's) Q67-112.

B15.44. "If you do that the policeman will come and take you away." (Greenspond) Q67-127.

B15.45. If a child took something that belonged to someone else he was threatened with the policeman. E.g., "If you don't leave things where you find them the policeman will take you." (Botwood) Q67-907.

B15.46. I was only threatened with one professional person - the policeman. The threat was the typical threat used by many: "The policeman will come and take you away if you're not good." (St. John's) Q67-967.

B15.47. "Be good or..or the policeman will come an' take you!" [bɪ gʊd ər | ər ðə 'pli:smən l kʌm ən teɪk juu] or something like that, see. Well we used to be frightened to death of policemen at them times. (Cow Head) T C257,66-24.

B15.48. Well they'd say, if a....mother was walkin' along with the child, if the child....cries or somethin', she says, "You better be quiet 'cause that big policeman'll come an' grab you - take you away!" [juu 'bɛʧər bɪ kwaɪəʔ kəz ðæʔ bɪg 'pli:smən l kʌm ən græb juu || teɪk juu ə'weɪ] (St. John's) T C352,67-31.

B15.49. The threat of the policeman is often used. A person might say, "If you do not be a good boy, the policeman will come and carry you away." (Joe Batt's Arm) Q67-1270.

B15.50. "You'd better be good or the policeman will put you in his bag." (St. John's) Q67-424.

B15.51. "If you are bad the policeman will come and put you in the black Maria." (St. John's) Q63B.

B15.52. The general frightening figure known to the writer was the policeman, who was used for generally good behaviour. Example: "If you fight with your brother the policeman will take you and send you to reform school." (St. John's) Q67-159.

TIGHT BINDING

B15.53. Policeman - "If you don't be good I'll make the policeman lock you up." (Gander) Q67-789.

B15.54. "The policeman is coming to take you away and lock you up." (St. John's) Q67-352.

B15.55. "The policeman will carry you off and lock you up." (Lamaline) Q67-529.

B15.56. "If you misbehave before company again, the policeman will lock you up." (Botwood) Q67-1223.

B15.57. "If you do that I'll call the policeman and ask him to put you in jail." (Lewisporte) Q67-1272.

B15.58. The policeman is usually threatened on a child who misbehaves, the threat usually being something along the lines of, "If you don't stop tormenting me I'll call the policeman to come and get you and take you off to jail." (Buchans) Q67-1005.

B15.59. The policeman might be brought in like this: "You go to bed now or I'll call the policeman and he'll put you in jail." (Buchans) Q67-495.

B15.60. The figure of the policeman is also familiar and I have heard people say to children, "Now you'd better be good or I'll get the policeman to put you in jail." (St. John's) Q67-1209.

B15.61. Some threats involve the policeman, such as, "If you don't be good I'll give you to the police and they'll put you in jail." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

B15.62. A common figure used to threaten children is the policeman. People say to the youngster, "The policeman will come and take you to jail." (Bell Island) Q67-69.

B15.63. "Be good or else the policeman will come and take you to jail." (Clarenville) Q67-1263.

B15.64. "If you're bad the policeman will take you and put you in jail." (St. John's) Q67-303.

B15.65. "If you don't obey the rules a policeman will come and put you in jail...." (St. John's) Q67-66.

B15.66. "The policeman will put you in jail." (Botwood) Q67-1267.

B15.67. Policeman - "He'll put you in jail, my son." (Pass Island) Q67-644.

B15.68. Threats involving the policeman are usually stated: "The policeman will put you in jail if you're not good." (Wabush, Lab.) Q67-724.

BINDING

B15.69. Policeman - when parents wanted their children to obey the law and not tell any lies, they would say, "The policeman will come over and put you in jail if you are a bad boy." (Little Harbour East, PB) Q67-1226.

B15.70. The policeman - "Be good or the policeman will put you in jail." (St. John's) Q67-620.

B15.71. "Stay off the road or the policeman will put you in jail." (Dunville) Q67-389.

B15.72. Often if children misbehaved they were threatened with the policeman, like: "I'll call the policeman and have him come and carry you away in his big car and lock you up in jail where you will have to sleep on the floor." This seemed to be so familiar that after a while the child just got used to hearing it and paid no attention, knowing it would not happen regardless. (Flower's Cove) Q67-683.

B15.73. If children are bad then parents tell them that the policeman will come and throw them in jail.... "Johnny, if you don't be a good boy, the policeman will come and put you in jail, and feed you on hard bread and cold water." (Bishop's Cove) Q67-1124.

B15.74. The policeman - "....he will put you in jail where you'll get hard bread and cold water and the rats'll eat ye." (Cupids) Q64A.

Indirect

B15.75. The policeman's name is mentioned when children are naughty. The parents pick up the receiver of the phone, dial a few numbers, and pretend to speak to the police. This usually brings immediate quiet. (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-908.

B15.76. The policeman was the threat used for children to keep them away from people's premises, crops, etc., and various places of danger. ....the policeman was to have come by boat and eventually by car. (Admiral's Beach) Q67-267.

B15.77. The children were sometimes threatened with the policeman to keep them off the wharf. (Fortune) Q67-709.

B15.78. ....if a child is fighting or throwing a tantrum the policeman is threatened on him. (Windsor) Q67-629.

BINDING

B15.79. An adult might tell a child he was going to "tell the policeman on him" if he went near a pond or river. If a parent did not want a child to go sliding on a certain hill he would threaten him with the policeman. (Whitbourne) Q67-446.

B15.80. ....if a child did something bad, the parent would pretend to call for the policeman in order to teach the child a lesson. (Bell Island) Q67-224.

B15.81. Children usually think of policemen or strangers as someone to carry them off to jail. If children do something bad or are naughty, parents often tell them that the policeman is coming. (Point au Gaul) Q67-530.

B15.82. If a child is naughty, he will be told that the policeman will come for him. (Upper Gullies) Q67-443.

B15.83. I had been threatened that the policeman would come and get me when my parents tried to keep me from playing with water in the sink. I believed these [threats] for the simple reason [that] for once, by chance, a policeman did come when I was doing that. (Bonavista) Q67-172.

B15.84. When a boy or girl fights, people usually tell them that the policeman is coming to get them. (Dover) Q67-903.

B15.85. Often if we were disobedient in some way we were warned that if we did it again the policeman would come and get us. (Bell Island) Q63B.

B15.86. ....if a child misbehaved himself he would be told that the policeman would have him. (Summerford) Q63B.

B15.87. To keep children off the street and from wandering, parents sometimes tell them that there is a policeman down the street who will take them away. (Corner Brook) Q67-1208.

B15.88. Parents would sometimes tell the children that the policeman is coming to take them away. (Lewisporte) Q67-449.

B15.89. A local figure used to scare a child is the law officer. If a child has done something wrong he is usually told that the police are coming to take him away. (St. John's) Q67-71.

B15.90. Mother also threatened us by saying the policeman would take us if [we] weren't good. Our behaviour gradually changed for the better. (St. John's) Q67-621.

TIGHT BINDING

B15.91. She used to say that there was a policeman hidden in her cellar to take us if we were bad. (Freshwater, Carbonear) Q67-904.

B15.92. The policeman was supposed to take naughty children in a bag to far off lands. (St. John's) Q67-426.

B15.93. Sometimes parents tell their children that if they are bad the policeman will carry them away. These people do frighten some children by these threats because children think older people like Mommy or Daddy know it all and wouldn't tell them lies. (Centreville) Q67-1022.

B15.94. A little boy who throws rocks or is naughty is often threatened by being told the policeman will carry him away. (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

B15.95. If you threw rocks or said naughty things the big policeman would come for you and he would carry you somewhere and lock you up. (Little Catalina) Q67-1156.

B15.96. The policeman was known as a big man who went around collecting bad boys and locking them up. (St. Lawrence) Q67-353.

B15.97. ....Mother would often threaten us with policemen. Such a threat would be used if we had been playing in the street, playing with matches or fire crackers, or having little boys' fights with fellows from another part of town. If we did such things, we would be put in jail overnight. (Corner Brook) Q67-934.

B15.98. Another type of threat I have heard involved a policeman. An example of this is: One day I was visiting a friend's house and she had to bring her little sister in. She had a bit of trouble because her sister wanted to stay out and play in the snow. Then she said she was going to phone the policeman and tell him to come and get her and throw her in jail. (Gander) Q67-689.

B15.99. Parents also scare children by telling them that they will get the policeman to put them in jail if they are bad. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1047.

B15.100. They also threaten them by telling them they will give them to the policeman to be put in jail. (Jerseyside) Q67-65.

B15.101. When I was a child it was nearly always the policeman one was scared of. If a person did wrong, or got into trouble with his friends

TIGHT BINDING

or neighbours, or in school, you were told that the policeman would have you, and put you in jail. .(Carbonear) Q64A.

B15.102. When someone is naughty or disobedient, he is threatened that the policeman will come and take him off to jail. (Labrador City, Lab.) Q67-490.

B15.103. When a child does not watch himself when he is near the road he or she is sometimes told the policeman will take him or her to jail. (Clarke's Beach) Q67-977.

B15.104. The children in Port de Grave had never seen a policeman and considered him with awe and fear. It was threatened that if you broke the law he would come from St. John's and carry you off to jail. These threats were taken quite seriously because once in a while there was talk of a man in Bay Roberts or Clarke's Beach etc., who had broken the law, and the police had come and carried him back to jail. (Port de Grave) Q67-277.

B15.105. We were often told that if we did not behave the Police would put us in jail. Children are still told this. (Kilbride) Q63B.

B15.106. A child was warned that if he did anything bad, the policeman would put him in jail. (Brigus) Q67-1142.

B15.107. ....people were used at times to frighten children, particularly the policeman. If the child was mischievous he would be warned that if it occurred again the policeman would take him to jail, and would keep him there until he learnt to behave. (Avondale) Q63B.

B15.108. The policeman would put us in jail if [we] weren't good. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-522.

B15.109. The policeman for the area was used as a threat to small children. He would take them away and put them in jail if they were bad. (Champney's East) Q63B.

B15.110. The policeman and the teacher are very often used to frighten children. When parents are driving past a policeman with their children, they tell them to behave or the policeman will take them to jail. (Port aux Basques) Q67-737.

B15.111. I have been threatened by the policeman. If I was naughty the policeman would come and put me in jail and if I was really bad I would be put in the dungeon. (St. John's) Q67-58.

TIGHT BINDING

B15.112. In connection with the policeman as a frightening figure I have seen many children threatened by a parent saying that if the child didn't eat his dinner, he would be given to the big policeman who would put him in jail and feed him nothing but bread and water. (Grand Falls) Q67-543.

B15.113. If you were bad, you would be told to be good or the policeman would come and take you and put you in jail. All you would get to eat is hard bread and a glass of cold water. (Bay Roberts) Q67-106.

B15.114. I was always kinda frightened of a policeman. I still am, but in a different way. I used to have nightmares about being in jail and eating bread made of chalk and water all the time. They told me that's what policemen did if they caught you. And, oh yes, I'd have to wear a striped suit so everyone would know. (Gambo) Q63B.

B15.115. ....years ago parents made their children afraid of the policeman by telling them [that] if they were bad the policeman would come with his big stick and cat-and-nine-tails and carry them off to jail where they'd live on hard bread and water. (Heart's Delight) Q67-693.

B15.116. Most small children are afraid of policemen. Mothers use this often to make the children behave. They say that the policeman will put them in a dark jail where rats live. (Clarke's Beach) Q67-796.

B15.117. To prevent us from going [to] places we shouldn't visit, we were threatened with the police who would shut us up in the penitentiary. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1163.

B15.118. To keep children off the road, parents told their children that the policeman would come and put them in a big, black hole. (Holyrood) Q67-662.

B15.119. "We didn't have a local doctor, policeman or nurse," the informant told me, "so those things really did frighten us." She told me that she didn't know what a policeman was till she was grown up, and she imagined him to be some kind of monster. She believed when she was very young that policemen ate little children. (Pinchards Island) Q63B.

TIGHT BINDING

B16. Named individual policemen.

B16.1. The policeman was also used to frighten father and the rest. "Send for Constable (N)" or "He'll come and take you away" were common threats. These threats were mostly to prevent the children from going to dangerous places such as Big Head, and to induce them to sleep. (Bay Roberts) Q67-774.

B16.2. ....another thing that we were afraid of in Greenspond was the policeman. We had a policeman there until several years ago.... "If you're not good I'll go down to Constable (N) and get him after you!" [ɪf juər nɑt? gɔd ɑɨl gou dæun tɔ 'kɑnstəbl̩ (N) ənd get hɪm 'æftə juu] or..or some sort of thing like that. (Greenspond) T.C362,67-31.

Indirect

B16.3. Policeman (N), often called "the booman", wore a whisker, was a huge size and had a terrifying voice. (Holyrood) Q64A.

B16.4. The policeman was used because at that time a Sergeant (N) lived next door, and whenever my mother went out she would tell whoever was looking after me to call him if I was bad. (St. John's) Q64A.

B16.5. ....there is one threat my father's and uncle's nanny and midwife used which concerned a local figure. Old Mrs. (N) used to threaten them, in a serious voice, that she would send Sergeant (N) after them if they didn't behave themselves and be good. Sergeant (N) was a kindly old policeman who patrolled [a] nearby....Park. He had a white moustache and awesome billyknocker, and was the man to be feared by all the kids in the neighbourhood at that time. (St. John's) Q67-524.

B17. Mounties ['mæuntɪz] / ['mauntɪz] / ['mɑunti:z], Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

B17.1. In my remembrance children were most effectively threatened when they had been naughty by saying, "I'm going to tell the 'Mounties' on you" or "Wait till I see the 'Mounties' again." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1312.

B17.2. If a child is naughty a parent might say, "I'll tell the mountie about you...." (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

TIGHT BINDING

B17.3. If children are naughty the parents sometimes threaten them by saying, "The next time the Mountie comes I'm telling him that you're bad." Or sometimes when boys bucks (stealing, in a mild sense) someone's carrots or rhubarb, the owner may threaten them, if he finds out who did it, by saying, "I'm telling the mountie on youse (plural of you) when he comes again." (Musgrave Harbour) Q67-504.

B17.4. One example of a threat used to keep children from being naughty: "If you are not good I will call the Mounties." (Barachoix Brook) Q67-146.

B17.5. The common threat used to keep children out of mischief seems to be "The Mounties"; when children have gotten into mischief, especially such things as damaging other people's property, the warning is, "If you do it again, I'll call the Mounties!" These phrases, though, are not as common, to my knowledge, as the blunt, "Get in there, or I'll tan your hide!" of an outraged parent! (Corner Brook) Q67-1158.

B17.6. "If you don't get out of that I'm going to call the mountie." (Lewin's Cove) Q67-399.

B17.7. "Be good or I'll call the Mounties." (Gander) Q67-250.

B17.8. Well, a youngster's throwing some rocks at another one, or something; probably an older child would say, "You better stop it or [I'll] call the Mounties!" [juu 'bɛtər stap ɪt ɔər kɑ·l ðə 'maunti:z] (Dark Cove) T C355,67-31.

B17.9. Well it's used by other people - other than parents - mostly. "Go away from here or I'll call the Mounties!" [gou ə'wɛi frəm hiər ər ail kwəl ðə 'mɐuntizs] which they would usually do anyway. (North River) T C418,67-31.

B17.10. ...., "If you don't eat your dinner (get dressed), I'll phone for the Mounties." (Chamberlains) Q67-81.

B17.11. Children who have done a misdeed may be warned, "If it happens any more I'll send for the mounties." (Burin Bay Arm) Q67-538.

B17.12. Parents often scold their children by using particularly the word "policeman" or, commonly more frequent, "mountie". If a child does something he isn't supposed to do, he is threatened with, "Now, I'm having the mountie on you." Parents are especially "fond", I suppose, of saying this to other children than

their own. This is so when some little Johnny across the street strikes some parent's child. (Wareham) Q67-1261.

B17.13. There are no local police so children are sometimes threatened with the "mounties". "If you do that, I'll get the mounties for you." (Dark Cove) Q67-856.

B17.14. "I'll get the mounties after you." (Gander) Q67-661.

B17.15. Some parents, in order to get their children to behave themselves, say such things as: "If you don't be good I'll get the Mounties after you." (Coley's Point) Q67-806.

B17.16. "If you don't come in off the street, I'll get the mounties after you." (Gander) Q67-781.

B17.17. Mother to son: "If you don't stay off those docks, my son, I'll get the mounties after you." (Harbour Grace) Q67-986.

B17.18. In threatening their children, parents would often use the expression, "I'll get the mounties after you if you don't go to bed." Also this threat was used to make them keep quiet or do what they were told. (Glovertown) Q67-1007.

B17.19. "....the Mountie'll be after you!" [ðə 'mæunʔɪ əl bɪ 'hæftə jɯu] or something or another, you know. (Cow Head) T C250,66-24.

B17.20. "You better be good or the mountie will come after you." (Botwood) Q67-691.

B17.21. "The Mounties will come if you don't behave." (Mount Pearl) Q67-834.

B17.22. "The 'mounties' are coming." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-320.

B17.23. When parents want children to stay away from wharves they say, "The mountie is coming...." (Williamsport) Q67-978.

B17.24. If kids [are] outside and had done something, maybe had broken something....they're goin' to call the Mounties, you know. ....I've actually heard kids [say], "No, Mommy. Don't call the Mounties! I won't do it again!" .... it's really been effective. ....you could actually just point to a car stopped up by [the magistrate's] house - "Mountie's up there! He['ll] be down here in a second after you now! You'd better go to bed!" ['mauntɪz ʌp də·r‖ ɪ bɪ daun hiər ɪn ə 'sɛkənd 'æ·ftə jə nau‖ jad 'bɛtər go tə bed] [said in an urgent, lowered tone]. (Brigus) T C365,67-31.

B17.25. They would say, "The Mounties will come and grab you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q63B.

B17.26. A popular way to get children to behave themselves in our community is, "I'll send for the mounties to come and take you if you don't be good." (Trinity, BB) Q67-103.

B17.27. ...."If I catch you out on that wharf, I'll send for the Mountie and he'll take you away with him to where all the bad boys go." (Cavendish) Q67-591.

B17.28. If the children were out after seven o'clock, the parents would say, "Mounties take little boys and girls if they find them on the road after dark!" (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-189.

B17.29. Parents sometimes say to their children, "If you don't do as I tell you the mountie will take you." They would then do as they were told to do for sure. (Burin) Q67-1067.

B17.30. "If you don't be good the mounties will take you away." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1121.

B17.31. "Better be good or the Mountie'll take you." (Cow Head) 67-22.

B17.32. "Don't go on the street or the Mounties will take you." (Bay of Islands) Q67-896.

B17.33. "You be good - or the mounty - will - carry - you - away." I remember during my childhood this was often used by my mother to get me to behave. There seems to be no particular misbehaviour for this to be used with. I remember she used it with a number of things I did wrong. .... The first words were said rather quickly and in a high tone, each successive word went progressively lower and there was a greater pause between each word. Movement in the form of a threatening (pointing) finger usually accompanied the threat.

This was used with me until I was about twelve years of age. I imagined him carrying me off to jail. I also imagined having to eat hard bread and cold water while I was there. This did not appeal to me very much and so I usually did my best to behave. The facts about where he would carry me or what I would be required to do was not given me. (Francois) 68-3.

B17.34. Mounties were also supposed to be terrible creatures who loved to lock children up. ....[When] I was a bit older, as I remember now, mom was always going to call the mounties

and have them put me in jail - usually [when I was] upstairs in bed - for fighting with my brother. The phone was just under the stairs; she'd take off the receiver but put her fingers on the button. She'd speak loudly: "I'd like to speak to the Mountie, please. Hello, Mountie. I've got two bad boys here; would you come and take them and put them in jail." - It always worked. We were young then - seven, I guess. (Port aux Basques) Q67-631.

B17.35. ....he would be threatened for, you know.. probably a bunch o' kids out vandalising a..an old building or something, breaking all the windows, you know; and....the kid would be told that the Mountie would go after these fellers an' take..put them in jail. An' then, of course, if..if the kid remembers this, you know, over a couple o' days, an' he misbehaves, well then you..you could apply the same threat to him, you see. You know, "If you don't be good the..the Mountie is goin' to come an' take you away to jail!" [ɪf juu dount bɪ gʊd ðɪ | ðə 'maunti ɪz 'gənə kʌm ən teik jə ə'weɪ tə dʒeil] (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

B17.36. "The Mounties will put you in jail" is a familiar threat. (Gander) Q67-640.

B17.37. "If you don't be a good boy the mounties will put you in jail." (South River) Q67-1197.

B17.38. "Don't do that or the mounties will put you in jail." (North West Brook) Q67-989.

B17.39. To get children to behave parents would say, "Be good or the Mounties will get you and take you to the reform school." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1121.

Indirect

B17.40. Around here they threatens the Mountie on 'em if they..they're not good. (Rocky Harbour) T C287,66-24.

B17.41. Well, every now and then I suppose I might, if I was real desperate, tell some little brat that I'd sic [i.e. threaten to get][14] the Mounties on him if he dumped another glass of milk on the floor. But only if I was desperate, I repeat! (Hopedale, Lab.) Q63B.

---

[14] The word sic is used in Newfoundland, as elsewhere in North America, to incite a dog to chase or attack someone, and has the meaning "urge to pursue".

B17.42. ....a parent may say that....[he] would call the mountie if the child did not behave. (St. John's) Q67-104.

B17.43. Since the R.C.M.P. was the predominant police force in Newfoundland, children were once told that their parents would "call the mounties" if they were naughty. (Corner Brook) Q67-151.

B17.44. One threat used especially for boys in the eight to twelve year range, who used sling-shots, B.B. guns [i.e. airguns] and their bare hands and rocks to break windows, drive animals etc., and who played havoc on the apple and plum trees in the fall, was the familiar cry of getting the Mountie (policeman). (Dover) Q67-776.

B17.45. Adults also threatened children by telling them they would take them to the Mounties. The children immediately ceased whatever they were doing upon hearing this threat. Instead of looking upon the Mountie as their friend, the children reacted just the opposite towards them. They looked upon this tall man with the bright yellow stripe on his dark brown trousers as someone to fear. To them he was the same as the Boogie-man or the Black Man. (Lewisporte) Q67-750.

B17.46. ....some would say the Mountie was comin', you know. (Cow Head) T C265,66-24.

B17.47. The parents tell the kids that the mounties are coming after them if they don't behave. When the kids see a mountie car they keep out of the way. (St. John's) Q64A.

B17.48. They would tell them if they weren't good they would phone the mountie to come and get them. (Lewisporte) Q67-411.

B17.49. The only human beings that stick in my mind as being frightening were the "mounties" - R.C.M.P. - when I used to visit my relatives in Clarenville. If I was bad, they would say they would send the mounties up to get me. Even when the car would pass the "mountie's" house I would hide under the seat. (Clarenville) Q67-1125.

B17.50. ....if a child will not do as he is told, then his parents may tell him to "be good or the mounties will come and get him". (Ferryland) Q67-1184.

B17.51. A very common way of getting the children to behave was to tell them that the mounties will come and get them if they persist in being naughty. (St. Anthony) Q67- 205.

B17.52. ....most popular, especially for children who have been naughty, [are] the mounties, of whom children seem to have great fear, possibly because, by listening to their parents' conversations, they associate the mounties with harm coming to someone. Children overhear whisperings about the fate of certain persons who have been taken to law-courts etc., and believe the mounties, who are the only law officers to visit the community, have the power to do them a great deal of harm, or at least bring about the thing most dreaded by small children, [the] reality of a threat from their elders that they may be "taken away". (Heart's Delight) Q67-252.

B17.53. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police: The mounties only came to Newfoundland since Confederation. In the early 1950s there were only local police officers. When a kid was naughty in those days the parents often say that the mounties are going to come and take [him] away. I guess we were afraid of the new uniforms etc. (Grand Falls) Q67-456.

B17.54. An R.C.M.P. Officer is used to frighten the children. I do not [know] why, but perhaps it is because we only receive one visit from a policeman in about every one or two months. The parents take advantage of this to tell the children that he comes this often to see who has been good or bad, and to take the BAD ones. (Red Bay, Lab.) Q67-808.

B17.55. ...if children were out after seven o'clock, the mounties would take little girls and boys. (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-194.

B17.56. If you have been stealing apples, carrots or had been absent from school for no good reason, then the rangers or mounties would take you away. One afternoon the R.C.M.P. had reason to visit our school. Someone had looked through the window and they (R.C.M.P.) were coming up toward the school. Almost immediately - as soon as word got around the school - several boys and girls started [to] cry loudly. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

B17.57. We didn't have a doctor, nurse, or policeman on the island, and we never saw them unless we went up to Springdale or in hospital. Occasionally a mountie would come down from Springdale, perhaps once a year, for something, and then the parents would tell the children that the mountie

would take them with him if they weren't good; this was very effective since the kids were frightened of him anyway, but unfortunately for the parents the mountie came rarely so they could only threaten the kids with him about one day in the year. (Little Bay Islands) Q64A.

B17.58. The parents would often tell the youngsters that the mounties were going to come down and take them away if they were bad. The threats were really meant to frighten the children or get them to obey their parents, sometimes. Some of the younger children were really afraid at first but later they learnt that it wasn't true. (Campbellton) Q67-531.

B17.59. In the outports the mounty is [used] for a lot of threats. If a person does something bad, the child is warned that the mounty will be sent for and he will be put in jail. (Renews) Q67-590.

B17.60. The mountie (policeman) was usually involved in threats by the child being told [that] if he wasn't good the mountie would put him in jail for the night. (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-552.

B17.61. ....if children didn't behave themselves the mounties would take them and put them in jail. (Lewisporte) Q67-63.

B17.62. They tell the kids that the mounties will come and take them to jail in their cars if they're not good. (Bishop's Falls) Q64A.

B18. Ranger ['reindʒər].

There are reports of Rangers as threatening figures from only five communities. This is accounted for mainly by the fact that the Rangers ceased to exist after Confederation in 1949 and were superseded by the R.C.M.P.

B18.1. The policeman has been used to frighten children. However, in most small Newfoundland towns, instead of the policeman, it is either the mounties, or the rangers (the rangers were peace officers in Newfoundland before Confederation). Adults used this against other adults' children, not their own. The threats were as follows:-

"I'm going to call the....rangers." "The ....rangers are comin'." These threats were used for children who were committing such offences as trespassing, stealing apples, carrots, etc., and also for children who were fighting. (Fortune) Q67-528.

B18.2. "The Rangers will get you." (Little Bay East, FB) Q66-83.

B18.3. "If you don't be good, the rangers will have you." (Moreton's Harbour) Q63B.

Indirect

B18.4. ....I mean to say now those times you would threaten the bigger ones, if they don't be good or something, you would tell the Ranger about them or....something like that, but in our time there was only a very scattered [i.e. occasional] time ever you see a..a policeman or anything like that. An' that might be once a year, an' we was frightened to death them days! We wouldn't go out o' doors at all! Sit down in the corner all day, frightened to go out, if the Ranger come into the place! But the children don't mind the Ranger now no more than they do me! (St. Paul's) T C253,66-24.

B18.5. My mother often threatened to....take me to the policeman or "ranger". (Grand Bank) Q67-358.

B19. Cop [kɑp]:

B19.1. "....the cop is coming!" [ðə kɑp ɪz 'kʌmɪŋ] (St. Lawrence) T C356,67-31.

Indirect

B19.2. ....the Cobs (cops) [would come] after you if you didn't stop annoying a neighbour or stranger.... (St. John's) Q67-524.

B20. Knockers.

B20.1. "The knockers (policemen) will get you." (St. John's) 67-22.

RELIGIOUS FIGURES

A number of religious figures, drawn from various denominations, appear quite frequently in threats. They represent the authority of the Christian church and are used primarily in threats to encourage children to obey, to behave properly and to adhere to the teachings of the church. Although the bishop and even the pope may be mentioned in threats, it is the minister in a given locality who is most often used in this way. Among these ministers, the power of the Roman Catholic priest is particularly evident. This is certainly true in the outports, for many different reasons. Speaking of an outport near St. John's, a young man explained some of these reasons to me in a tape-recorded interview:

> ....they're deeply religious out there for a start, and the idea of the priest, well, it has connotations of Satan an' God's punishing you, I guess. An' of course ....in most of the outport communities the priest is the only person with any education....consequently he's a.. he's a temporal and spiritual leader. An' I guess you.. you can threaten a..a "subject" with reprimands from his leader.... T C356,67-31.

The priest is also believed to have the power to transform people:

> Adults as well as children were frightened of the Priest because they believed the Priest could turn anyone into an animal if he tried. (Oderin) Q67-84.

This power sets the priest apart from the other figures in Class B and links him with God, whose intermediary he is, and with other supernatural figures such as the fairies who are also said to have similar powers of transformation. The majority of threats concerning the priest suggest that he will

transform children into animals, especially goats, and it is also said that he will horsewhip children or punish them with the cat o' nine tails. There are also numerous stories which illustrate the priest's power to heal people, which links him with doctors and other curers. In addition, he is said to have the power to curse people as well as to bless them, and he is able to exorcise ghosts and spirits. These attributes enhance his awesome image and emphasise the mystical distance which distinguishes him from the common man.

B21. The pope.

B21.1. Every now and then she'd say, "I'll tell the pope...." (St. John's) Q63B.

B22. The bishop.

B22.1. "You do that and the bishop'll turn you into a goat.". This I was often told by my grandmother when I was a boy of around eight or ten. She used to say it if I was doing or about to do something I knew I shouldn't. At the time I must say it was very effective and whenever I was up to any skullduggery I kept a sharp eye out for the bishop and if he happened to drive by I figured somehow he'd found out and I had had it, especially if he dropped into our house for a visit. Most of the kids (Catholic) around Harbour Grace used to believe that the bishop could turn anyone who was bad or disobedient into a goat. We even knew of people who had had it happen to them but of course they were dead and gone and had no living relatives. The story was always the same though; you'd only be turned into a goat - nothing else. Roman Catholic Bishop. [This is] traditional I think; everybody seems to know it. (Harbour Grace) 66-9.

B23. Clergy,[15] clergyman.

B23.1. "....the clergy will come with his 'cat an' nine tails'." (Little Bay, FB?) Q64A.

B23.2. "The clergy will turn you into a pig....or a goat." (Conche) Q64A.

Indirect

B23.3. I remember there was a..a clergyman.... ....he had a cane an' he walked with a limp. Well he was goin' to come down after you with his cane if you [weren't] in bed, you know. .... You were pretty well scared of a cane because you'd probably..were on the receivin' end maybe once or twice! (Brigus) T C365,67-31.

B24. Minister.

B24.1. ....if you were talking or doing anything you shouldn't be doing, an' the..an' you'd say, "The minister's coming!" [ðə 'mɪnɪstərz 'kʌmɪŋ] (St. John's) T C370,67-31.

B24.2. "....the minister is going to take you away if you're not a good boy." (Cavendish) Q67-591.

Indirect

B24.3. As a child I was threatened....occasionally with....the minister. (Gambo) Q63B.

B24.4. When I was a kid living at Richard's Harbour I can remember the "minister" being used to "frighten" children or to make them obey.
Whenever we played pranks on old people and made them angry, they would always threaten us "that they would tell the minister on us when he came." Because, in spite of the fact that many times they were victims of our prank, old people were respected and we always believed them to a certain extent. I remember once when we "made fun" at this old man and he told us that he would tell the minister on us. Anyway, when the minister came he visited the old man - we thought for sure we had had it, especially

[15] The word clergy is used in the singular to mean "clergyman".

TIGHT BINDING

when during the day the minister visited the school. There were a number of instances when people did take report[s] to the minister. (Richard's Harbour) 68-20.

B24.5. ....if they were bad their parents would tell the minister on them. (St. John's) Q67-62.

B24.6. ....if they were naughty, they were told that ....the minister....would come and get them. (St. John's) Q67-238.

B25. Parson.

The parson appears as a threatening figure in a single report from Cavendish (Q67-591).

B26. Priest [pri:st].

B26.1. "I'll tell the priest." [ail tɛl ðə pri:st] (North River) T C417,67-31.

B26.2. The priest is also a favourite figure to threaten on children. If the child is bad the mother may tell the child she is going to tell the priest on him. The mother may tell the child, "If you throw any more rocks I'm going to tell the priest. When he finishes with you, you'll think twice before you throws another." (North River) Q67-571.

B26.3. "I'll tell the priest on you if you say that again" is often told to naughty children. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1280.

B26.4. When parents cannot get their children to obey them they might [use] such threats as, "If you don't do this the....priest will punish you..." (Marystown) Q67-147.

B26.5. Priest - the Priest of the church was also regarded as someone to be feared - but only in church. If the children were talking or laughing out loud, they would be threatened that the priest would come and get them and bring them where he was ([i.e.] the altar). Threat: "If you're not good, that man up there will come down and take you."[16] (St. John's) Q67-1111.

---

[16] In this example the priest is simply referred to as "that man" and his religious authority is only implied. This kind of threat emphasises the adult status of the person concerned, rather than any other potentially frightening characteristics. See also B66 below.

TIGHT BINDING

B26.6. "The priest will horsewhip you." (St. Thomas) Q67-681.

B26.7. "The priest will horse-whip you if you are a bad boy." (Bay Bulls) Q67-1298.

B26.8. Priest -- "If you don't behave yourself I'll get the Priest to turn you into a goat." (Avondale) Q67-521.

B26.9. "The priest will turn you into a goat." (Burin) Q67-936.

B26.10. "If you don't behave the priest will tell God not to send you to heaven when you are dead."[17] (St. John's) Q67-72.

Indirect

B26.11. The....priest....was also employed in such cases, as getting a child to....go to church. .... (Green's Harbour) Q67-1123.

B26.12. ....children that were naughty were usually told that they would be reported to the priest. This was an entirely different warning [from that concerning the boogie man or the boo man] because the fear was instilled because of the respect one had for a priest. (North River) Q67-570.

B26.13. If you didn't say your prayers or were naughty the priest was going to come. (St. John's) Q67-163.

B26.14. ....he claimed that he often told the children to be good because the priest was coming. He added that they were afraid of the priest then, but it's not the same today. (Fogo) Q63B.

B26.15. Some people threaten their children if they are bad, by telling the children that they would take them to the priest.... (Conception Harbour) Q67-878.

B26.16. The priest....was always thought of as the man who took care of the orphans. If you weren't a good boy you were told that you would be sent to the priest. This meant (to a young boy) being taken away from his parents and living in a crowded building. (St. John's) Q67-229.

---

[17] Threats of this kind emphasise the priest's role as intermediary with God. Cp. A1.11 above.

B26.17. If they don't say their prayers they are given to the priest who would make them kneel and say their prayers. (Marystown) Q67-223.

B26.18. In terms of threats I have known my parents to say, when I did something bad, that they would give me to the priest....if I did it again. The priest would be used as a threat if one said something bad.... (St. John's) Q67-875.

B26.19. Another [threat] was to tell the child that if he was bad they would take him to the priest and the priest would wring his ears for them. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1047.

B26.20. Threats imposed upon children were common then as they [are] now. For instance, if a mother caught her child swearing she would wash his mouth with soap and threaten him by saying that if she caught him swearing again she [would] get the priest to horse-whip him. (St. John's) Q67-1289.

B26.21. ....[the] priest [was] used to frighten children. They were especially afraid of the priest. They thought he would use the cat and nine tails on them if they were bad. (Bay Roberts) Q63B.

B26.22. ....the priest....would transform you into an animal or a spirit. (St. John's) Q67-265.

B26.23. If you didn't do as you were told the Priest said you would turn into a goat. (Corner Brook) Q67-11.

B26.24. A St. John's resident told me that when they were young and a priest was coming to their house the mother would tell the children that if they didn't behave themselves the priest would turn them into a goat. (St. John's) Q67-1132.

B26.25. If a priest was insulted it was said that he could turn you into a goat. (Placentia) Q67-398.

B26.26. The priest would turn us into goats if we said or did bad things. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-522.

B26.27. The priest himself was a powerful threat at one time. People were in such awe that they would kneel when he passed. When I was a child Mom used to tell me that Fr. I (N) would turn me into a goat if I worked on Sunday. He had threatened another with that punishment. (Renews) Q67-42.

B27. Mother Superior.

B27.1. One morning a ten year old boy jumped in front of the car and frightened us very much. When mother spoke to him he cursed most vilely. She said, "I'm going to call the Mother Superior!" The boy started to cry and yell, "No, missus, no missus, Jesus no missus, I'm sorry missus." They attend [a school] run by Roman Catholic nuns. The children have been fairly good since then, especially this boy. This took place in February, 1966. (St. John's) Q67-1232.

B28. Nuns [nʌnz].

B28.1. At home we....sometimes used [the nuns] to frighten little children, get them off the roads at night and so on. (St. Mary's) T C12,64-6.

THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND RELATED FIGURES

The position of the teacher in Newfoundland is such that, like the minister, he is accorded a considerable degree of respect and awe. There are close links between ministers and teachers because of the denominational system of education in the Province, and both are used not only to discourage unacceptable behaviour but also to encourage children to go to school and to do their school work and homework.[18] The recognised authority of both the minister and the teacher implies that their very presence in the community is a restraining influence on children's behaviour, and therefore it is less necessary for people to have recourse to

[18] See, for example, B31.10 below.

them by way of threats. The respect which they enjoy means that they tend not to be threatened lightly, and this is especially true of the priest, who is also used less frequently in threats than the teacher.

The teacher is primarily used in threats concerning school attendance, school work and homework. Parents threaten children with the teacher to encourage them to behave acceptably at school where the teacher is in direct authority, but they also use the teacher as an external figure to discourage certain misdemeanours in the home and also outdoors. As with the other authority figures, the parent normally acts as intermediary by threatening to tell or summon the figure because of a child's misbehaviour. Typical threats suggest that the teacher will slap, strap, or cane the child, keep him in after school or mete out some similar punishment. In one report the child is threatened that the teacher will "kill" him, in the metaphorical sense, if he does not know his spelling. The child is also threatened with the school principal, who of course has greater authority than the individual teacher, and also with other figures connected with education, such as the school inspector and the school attendance officer. In addition, children frequently threaten each other with the teachers who are the custodians of discipline within the school.[19]

B29. School inspector.

The school inspector is reported as a threatening figure

---

[19]See, for example, B31.4, B31.6 and B31.14 below.

TIGHT BINDING

in a questionnaire response from St. John's (Q67-238).

B30. The principal [ðə 'prɪnsəpl].

B30.1. "You be good or I'll tell the principal on you."
The past year I was principal at Ramea. During the year there were a number of occasions when I met a small child (between ages three and eight) on the road and they burst into tears and ran somewhere out of sight.
I remember one particular evening when I was walking along the main road of the community when I met Mrs. (N) . Her "little fellow", David, aged six, had just been down in the "cove" and walked out in the water up to his knees. The water in Ramea harbour contains a great deal of grease and wastes from the fish meal plant. The "little fellow's" clothes then was not a very desirable sight.
When I met her she told me what he had done and concluded with the following remark: "If he goes down there any more I'll tell you and you'll take him out in the office and strap him, won't you?"
David up to this point had seemed to be enjoying the whole thing. This threat was more than he could cope with, however, and he hung his head, started to cry, and ran off home. (Ramea) 68-3.

B30.2. ....he [i.e. the teacher] was supposed to strap you....particularly the Principal. "Don't do this or the Principal will strap you!" [dount? duu ðɪs ɔər ðə 'prɪnsəpl wɨl stræp jə] (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-31.

Indirect

B30.3. In our family the teacher is often used as a threat to make children listen, or obey or do their homework; the principal or miss so-and-so would be told. And for fear of a strapping the child will receive he will often obey, but these threats are not often carried out. (Milltown) Q67-362.

B31. Teacher ['ti:tʃər], schoolmaster.

B31.1. "I'm going to phone your teacher." (St. John's) Q67-1098.

B31.2. Teacher - "Behave yourself, or I'll phone your teacher...." (Gander) Q67-789.

B31.3. ...."just wait until I see your teacher"..... (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

B31.4. "I'm going to tell the teacher on you" was a very common threat made by children to others who hurt them in any way or who took something belonging to them etc. (Dover) Q67-776.

B31.5. Threats could involve a teacher. "I'll tell the teacher on you!" (Victoria) Q67-209.

B31.6. ....the teacher was..was always a very, very.. important person in..in the community - still is, in a Newfoundland outport. An' I....I've been threatened with the teacher several times. ....Well, I think....more than, say, parent to child, you get this among schoolkids, an' I remember..I remember it in Fortune, I remember it in Brunette Island. For instance, if you do something that somebody didn't like: "I'll tell [the] teacher on you!" [aɪ tɛl ə 'ti:tʃər ɔn jʉu]. If you started fighting with somebody: "I'll tell [the] teacher on you!" [aɪ tɛl ə 'ti:tʃər ɔn jʉu] (Fortune and Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

B31.7. ...."I'll tell your teacher how naughty you are at home." (St. John's) Q67-66.

B31.8. The teacher was sometimes used to bring discipline among children around recess time. Example: "If you don't be good I'll tell the teacher." (Terra Nova) Q67-466.

B31.9. "If you don't go to bed I'll tell the teacher on you." (Gander) Q67-781.

B31.10. Children are often threatened with the teacher or the priest in order to get them to do their homework. E.g., "If you don't do your lessons. I'll tell the teacher/priest on you!" (St. John's) Q67-559.

B31.11. "If you don't study your books I will tell the teacher tomorrow." (Gambo) Q67-638.

B31.12. "If you don't do your homework I'll tell your teacher." (Clarenville) Q67-984.

B31.13. Those involving....[the] teacher were: "If you don't be quiet, (pick up your toys, stop banging the door), I'll tell the teacher...," (South River) Q67-1236.

B31.14. The teacher is used to threaten children only by other children. "If you go home now, I'll tell the teacher on you." (Dark Cove) Q67-856.

B31.15. "I'll tell the teacher on you if you're not good." (St. John's) Q67-852.

B31.16. "I'll tell the teacher to keep you in after school." (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-921.

B31.17. "Learn your lesson or I'm telling the teacher to keep you in after school." (King's Point) Q67-186.

B31.18. "I'll tell the teacher to keep you in after school and give you a strapping." (St. Anthony) Q67-914.

B31.19. Teacher -- "If you don't do your work neatly I'll tell your teacher and she'll keep you in after school or strap you." (Buchans) Q67-586.

B31.20. "Get your lesson done (or studied) or I will tell the teacher to put you in the corner or give you the strap," This was a familiar thing to hear. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

B31.21. ....the threatening parent would say in a serious, rapid, frightening tone, "I'll tell the teacher to give you a slap when I see him." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

B31.22. "I'll tell the teacher to strap you." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-320.

B31.23. "If you don't do as I say, I will tell the teacher to give you a strap tomorrow." (Botwood) Q67-1223.

B31.24. Teacher -- "If you don't behave I'll tell your teacher and he will strap you." (South River) Q67-1197.

B31.25. Then there was the old one of, "If you are not good I will tell the teacher to give you the strap." (St. John's) Q67-126.

B31.26. Teachers: "If you don't study or be good, I'll tell your teacher and she'll strap you." (Corner Brook) Q67-1231.

B31.27. "If you don't learn your lesson, I'll tell the teacher and you'll get a good strappin'." (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-1246.

B31.28. Teacher --- "If you don't do your lessons I'll tell the teacher. I'll tell him to strap you if you're bad in school." (Port Union) Q67-812.

B31.29. Teacher - "I'll tell the teacher to strap you if you don't be good." (St. John's) Q67-72.

TIGHT BINDING

B31.30. Teacher - "Do your homework neatly or I'll tell your teacher to strap you." (St. John's) Q67-587.

B31.31. In the home the parents will say, "I will give you to the teacher and take you up to school." This frightens them because they regard the teacher as someone who will hurt them. (Newmans Cove) Q67-32.

B31.32. "The teacher's coming!" [ðə 'ti:tʃərz 'kʌmiŋ] (St. John's) T C370,67-31.

B31.33. "The teacher will keep you in after school." (Bonavista) Q67-1051.

B31.34. Teacher - "If you're bad the teacher will slap you." (First going to school). (St. John's) Q67-303.

B31.35. Children are often afraid of certain people: their parents say, "Obey or the teacher will come and strap you." (Rodgers Cove) Q67-712.

B31.36. "The teacher will give you a strap." (Port aux Basques) Q67-182.

B31.37. ....if he didn't wish to go to school, "The teacher will strap you...." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-606.

B31.38. "If you don't be good the teacher will strap you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1121.

B31.39. "If you are bad in school, the teacher will strap you." (Corner Brook) Q67-763.

B31.40. If you do such-a-such-a-thing [sic], the teacher will strap you." (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

B31.41. If a child didn't do his homework, his parents would say, "If you don't do your lessons, the teacher will strap you tomorrow!" (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-189.

B31.42. "The teacher will strap you if you misbehave." (Carmanville) Q67-218.

B31.43. "Come learn your lesson or the teacher will strap you." (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

B31.44. Teacher: "If you aren't good the teacher will give you a spanking with her big belt." (Hillgrade) Q67-1056.

B31.45. Teacher - I have gone into houses where children have been naughty or crying and the first thing the mother or father would do was make the children aware of the teacher [i.e. myself] by saying, "You better get [to] sleep now, or behave

(or whatever the case was) or else the teacher will pull out his big strap and give you a lacin' (or a licken[20] or a hiden[21])." This was effective a number of times. (Richard's Harbour) Q67-644.

B31.46. "If you go down in the beach the teacher will cane you."[22] (Bishop's Cove) Q67-1124.

B31.47. "The teacher will give you a caning if you don't know your lesson." (Hibbs Cove) 66-10.

B31.48. Threats use[d] involving [the] teacher - "The teacher will kill you if you don't know your spelling." (St. John's) Q67-136.

B31.49. "If you don't go to the Sunday School the teacher will give you to the Devil."[23] (Cavendish) Q67-591.

Indirect

B31.50. The teacher is often used as a threat when children won't do their homework. (Milltown) Q67-892.

B31.51. If a child is misbehaving the parent may threaten to phone the teacher and tell her Johnny is crying or Mary is a big baby because she won't do such and such a thing. (Windsor) Q67-629.

B31.52. At Richard's Harbour the person used most often to scare or make children behave was the teacher. Parents would always tell their children of school age that if they didn't behave they would tell the teacher on them.

I remember many times when people (not our parents) told the teacher that after school we were tormenting some old man in the community, and in many cases told the teacher to give us the strap.

I was afraid of the teacher because of the strap etc. more than anyone else in the community.

---

[20] I.e. a "licking" - spanking.

[21] I.e. a hiding.

[22] This threat, among many others, demonstrates the flexibility of function which is typical of numerous threatening figures.

[23] The teacher referred to here is presumably the Sunday School teacher and this example again emphasises the close links between the schools and the church.

People knew this and of course they used it as a threat nearly all the time.

When parents said they would report you to the teacher it was taken lightly because they never did it; however, if someone else, particularly someone who had no children going to school, said it, we believed it. (Richard's Harbour) 68-20.

B31.53. The teacher is often threatened on children who do not do their homework well. The parent will often say that unless the child works harder, he will tell the teacher that he does not deserve to pass his exams or go on to the next grade. (Buchans) Q67-1005.

B31.54. If you didn't do your homework the teacher was going to come. (St. John's) Q67-163.

B31.55. Often parents threaten disobedient children that they will report them to the teacher and she will punish them when they go to school. The parents, usually the mother, emphasises such threats by pointing with her finger, speaking with determination in her voice, and shaking her head for confirmation of the threat. (St. John's) Q67-135.

B31.56. If a child did not do what he was told, the teacher would be told. (St. John's) Q67-874.

B31.57. The teacher would keep them in school all night if they were bad. (Marystown) Q67-223.

B31.58. [The] teacher might give you a slapping or report you to your parents. (Bay Bulls) Q67-508.

B31.59. The teacher also had a big strap to hit you with when you were bad. (Heart's Delight) Q67-693.

B31.60. If children are not doing well in school their parents tell them that the teacher is going to strap them. (Port aux Basques) Q67-737.

B31.61. Usually after an old skipper was retired from the sea he was asked to become the school master. Parents, to scare the children or make them behave, would tell them that the old school master would come after them and beat them with his cane. (St. John's) Q67-418.

B32. Named individual teacher/schoolmaster.

B32.1. "I'll tell Mr. (N) [ail tɛl 'mɪstər (N)] or the schoolmaster. I'll tell Master (N)!" [ail tɛl 'mɛːstər (N)] He was called "Master" in Avondale and Chapel's Cove [sic], "Master (N)." .... "Behave yourself or

I'll tell Master (N) !" [bɪ'hɛiv jər'sɛlf oər ail tɛl 'mæ:stə (N)] "I'll give you to Master (N) !" [ail gɪv jə tə 'mæ:stər (N)] or "Master (N) 'll take you!" ['mæ:stə (N) əl tɛik juu]. "Master (N) will come over here an' give you a smack!" ['mæ:stə (N) wɛl kɔm 'ouvər hiər ən gɪv juu ə smæk] (Avondale and Chapel Cove) T-C417,67-31.

B33. School attendance officer (named individual).

B33.1. In Upper Gullies one particular woman always succeeds in frightening her numerous children by saying, "I'll go down for Mr. (N) if you don't behave!" Mr. (N) , my father, is a school attendance officer, and the woman involved has a frightening picture built up in her children's minds of him dragging offenders back to school. I don't understand how she achieved this but it apparently works. (Upper Gullies) Q67-281.

B33.2. ...this woman next door or not far up the road, she's got about ten children at least, and she told me that..that every time she wants them to behave she says, "You better be good or I'll send you down to (N) (N) ," you know, "and he'll take you away!" [juu bɛtər bɪ gɔd oər ail sɛnd jə daun tə (N) (N) ænd hi əl tɛik juu ə'wɛi].... I mean, they know that..that he can take people to court, you know, for missing school and things like this.... (Upper Gullies) T-C354,67-31.

MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, AND RELATED FIGURES CONCERNED WITH HEALTH, HYGIENE AND WELFARE

People with medical training, especially doctors and nurses, are frequently used as threatening figures in Newfoundland. The doctor is normally regarded with respect and a degree of awe since he has the power to cure people and to prolong life. While in general he is regarded as the benevolent, helpful, kindly-disposed healer whose Hippocratic oath binds him to promote health and

alleviate suffering, the very nature of his profession also arouses a measure of fear and apprehension. We may perhaps fear his diagnosis or the treatment he prescribes, even though we know it is for our own good. It is his potential power to inflict pain rather than to relieve it, however, which is emphasised when he is used as a threatening figure in controlling children's behaviour. Certain frightening aspects of the doctor's profession are misrepresented or grotesquely exaggerated in the threats. Typical examples suggest that he will hurt the child physically in some way, especially by giving him a "needle" (i.e. an injection) or by sending him to hospital. The nurse is also particularly associated with the hypodermic needle, and with the hospitals which are themselves presented as frightful places of punishment rather than places of healing.

The doctor is frequently a stranger in outport communities, and although he is less of a stranger in towns, his formal dress, professional manner and other outward signs of his official position, such as his bag and stethoscope, mark him out as different from the man in the street. In the same way, the nurse wears an official uniform and has the power to administer medicine and injections, and the dentist, who is often referred to as "doctor" in Newfoundland, also wears formal dress or a white coat and uses a variety of instruments which can cause pain. The welfare officer represents a rather different kind of power from that of doctors, nurses, dentists and other people with medical training. Like the doctor, however, the welfare officer is often a stranger in the outports and is also professionally concerned

with the general well-being of the community. All these people are distinguished from "the man in the street" by several of the principal characteristics which typify the authority figures, in their respective spheres of influence.

B34. Doctor ['dɔktər] / ['daktər].

B34.1. Mother to daughter: "If you don't take this medicine, I'll phone the doctor right away." (Harbour Grace) Q67-986.

B34.2. The threat that I often heard concerning the doctor was: "Go to sleep or I'll phone the doctor to give you a needle." (Baie Verte) Q67-373.

B34.3. If children are bad, the parents usually say, "I'll call the doctor." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-320.

B34.4. ....in Fortune I've heard my mother threaten my smaller sisters. If they happen to be sick and they're crying or something....I've heard her say, "If you don't stop crying, I'll call a doctor!" [ɪf jəu dount? stap 'kræiɪŋ | ɑl kɔ:l ə 'dɔktər] This is not so much to....not so much to really frighten them as to stop them from..from crying, because it..I think just hurt my mother to hear the..the kid crying.... (Fortune) T C353,67-31.

B34.5. "If you go outside without your coat I'll have to call the doctor....for you." (South River) Q67-1236.

B34.6. Doctors....have been used as threats but again in this enlightened age the old effect is missing. "If you don't stay in bed and take your castor oil, I'll have to call the doctor...." (Botwood) Q67-30.

B34.7. An example would be a mother trying to administer home remedies such as sulphur and molasses for a cold. When the child became obstinate the mother would threaten to call the doctor. Example: "If you don't take this medicine, I'll call the Doctor." (St. John's) Q67-14.

B34.8. "If you don't take your cough syrup I will call for the doctor." (Gambo) Q67-638.

B34.9. "You'd better be good or I'll call the doctor." (St. John's) Q67-869.

B34.10. Well, quite often after a kid has had a needle, for example, you know, he's..he's probably cried or something, and he doesn't like the idea of a needle anyway. So he comes home and finally he forgets the needle and his parents..his parents will notice that he's....misbehaving in some way, probably tormenting the younger kid, or something.... "Now you be good or I'm going to call the doctor an' he'll give you another needle!" [næ juu bɪ gʊd ər aim 'gonə kɔəl ðə 'daktər ən iəl gɪv jə ə'nʌðər 'nɪidl] And that sort of thing. Or if kids were..weren't eating their meals properly, misbehaving in this way, the parents would fear for their health, naturally, you know. They want them to eat their meals an' to..to....be healthy, so they'd say, "Look, if you don't eat that..if you don't eat your supper, I'm going to call the doctor an' tell him that you're sick!" [lʊk ɪf jə doun? i:t? ðæt | ɪf juu doun i:t jər 'sʌpər aim 'gonə kɔəl ðə 'daktər ən tɛl ɨm ðət juər sɪk] An o' course, you know, the doctor would come down, an' this would mean givin' them a needle or..or some other such treatment, or take them away to hospital altogether, you see. (Buchans) T C365,67-31.

B34.11. "Hurry and drink your medicine or take your aspirin before I call the doctor." (Port Union) Q67-812.

B34.12. Children who had a cut on their hand or foot and would not put any first aid treatment on it were threatened about the doctor. "If you don't let mommy put this cream on your cut, I will call the doctor to come and give you a needle." (Little Harbour East, PB) Q67-1226.

B34.13. Doctor -- "I'll call the doctor and he'll come and take you to the hospital." (St. Anthony) Q67-914.

B34.14. "If you don't drink your juice I'll call up the doctor and then you'll have to go to the hospital and take funny old medicine." (Gander) Q67-1021.

B34.15. If a child had an upset stomach and wouldn't drink some medicine, the parent might say: "Well all right; throw the medicine down the sink and send for the doctor. The doctor will cut his stomach out altogether." (St. John's) Q67-1273.

B34.16. "If you hurts yourself I'll send for the doctor ....to give you a needle...." (Rodgers Cove) Q67-712.

B34.17. Doctor - "If you are bad I'll send for the doctor to give you a needle." (Lewisporte) Q67-1272.

B34.18. "If you don't be good I'll tell the doctor to come and give you a needle." (North West Brook) Q67-989.

B34.19. And many's the time I've heard one of me daughters say to her kids - "You know Dr. so and so who lives down the street, well....if you don't stop crying I'll tell him to come up here and give you a needle." (Catalina) Q63B.

B34.20. "I'll tell the doctor....to give you a needle and put you in hospital." (Buchans) Q67-1288.

B34.21. Threats involving doctors are sometimes heard in this way, "I'll tell the doctor to put you in his bag if you're not good." (Hillgrade) Q67-1056.

B34.22. Sometimes parents will say, "I'll have to get the doctor to come and give you a needle." (Bonavista) Q67-173.

B34.23. "If you're not good I'll get the doctor to stick a needle in you." (St. John's) Q67-393.

B34.24. Probably Mary or Tom have been crazy with toothache for a long period of time. One of the parents would say, "You'll get that tooth out when the doctor comes around." The child would scream all the louder on hearing this. Then the father or mother would say, "Shut up or I'll get him to give you a needle." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

B34.25. "If you do not behave, I shall have the doctor give you a needle...." (Harbour Grace) Q67-916.

B34.26. "If you're not good I'll have the doctor give you a needle." (St. John's) Q67-1194.

B34.27. The doctor is a frightening figure for many children at Seal Cove. When they are supposed to go to bed and won't go, or if they are told to stay in the house after supper and don't want to, then are they threatened. I have heard some parents say....: "If you don't stay in, I'll have the doctor give you a needle!" This is said in a loud convincing tone, and assures the child that this will happen if he doesn't obey. As a result of this type of warning the child in most instances listens to his parents. The child at the same time when he sees the doctor coming to the house becomes very frightened. I have seen some children cry and hold on to their parents when the doctor

has come into the house. It is almost impossible to convince them afterwards that the doctor is a kind and good man. He is looked to be [sic] a frightening figure for most children. When they have to go to the doctor themselves they ....will ask: "Do I have to get a needle?" (Seal Cove, FB) 68-13.

B34.28. Other common threats were: if he wouldn't take his medicine, "I will get doctor for you...." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-606.

B34.29. "Get in bed or I'll get the doctor for you." (St. John's) Q67-890.

B34.30. The Public Health Nurses also would scare the kids when they arrived at the school since they might only be giving checkups but often gave needles. When the nurses had to struggle with a child to give him a needle they'd say, "If you're not good we'll get the doctor to come and give you the needle." The kids thought that the doctor always gave a worse needle than the nurse. (St. Anthony) Q63B.

B34.31. If a child was sick and the parents wanted him to take some patent medicine against his will, they would probably say, "If you don't take this, we will get the doctor and he will take you to the big hospital." (Port Elizabeth) Q67-893.

B34.32. Threats used which involved the doctor or nurse was that, "If you don't eat your dinner, or if you pick that pimple, you'll have to go to the doctor and get the needle." (Lewisporte) Q67-63.

B34.33. "If you go on the street and get hurt, you'll have to go to the doctor and he'll give you a needle and maybe send you to the hospital." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

B34.34. "Don't touch that or you'll have to go to the doctor." (Gander) Q67-250.

B34.35. Threats using doctors are sometimes like this: "If you don't drink your medicine you'll have to see the B-I-G doctor." (Terra Nova) Q67-466.

B34.36. ...usually if the child is sick or....not feeling well or complaining - not really sick - they say, "....I'll take you to [the] doctor!" [ail teik jo to 'daktər] He's immediately well! (Upper Gullies) T C354,67-31.

B34.37. If they're not behaving properly: "Mommie will take you to the doctor....and he'll give you.... that sharp pointed needle...." (Lamaline) Q67-529.

B34.38. Threats of this sort are often used. For example: a child who is sick wants to get up but his mother thinks he should stay in bed, [and] says, "If you don't stay in bed, I will take you to the doctor." (Point Leamington) Q67-237.

B34.39. "Johnny, take your medicine or I will take you to the doctor." (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

B34.40. In my family the doctor has often been used to threaten children. I have heard my mother say, "You young devil; if you don't be good I'll take you up to the doctor and tell him to give you a needle." She said this, of course, because she knew we were afraid of needles. (Ramea) Q67-379.

B34.41. Sometimes I have heard a doctor threatened on a child to make him behave. A popular threat is, "You behave or I'll take you to the doctor and get him to give you another needle." The threat, therefore, is not solely the doctor, but what is associated with him as well. (Buchans) Q67-1005.

B34.42. "I'll carry you to the doctor and tell him to give you a needle." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

B34.43. Doctor -- "Be good or I'll bring you to the doctor and he'll cut you open." (Buchans) Q67-586.

B34.44. "...if you don't take this to make you well the doctor will come with his little black bag." (Heart's Delight) Q67-942.

B34.45. ...when she was little her mother would threaten her to eat her vegetables by saying, "You better eat those beans, Sharon, or the doctor will come for you." (St. John's) Q67-1110.

B34.46. Probably if you didn't take your medicine or if you didn't eat..eat your meals or somethin' like that, they would threaten you with the doctor or nurse. ..."The doctor is comin'!" [ðə 'daktər ɪz 'kʌmɪn] (St. Lawrence) T C356,67-31.

B34.47. ...."Doctor's goin' to come an' get you, [and] give you a needle!" ['daktərz 'gənə kʌm ən gɪt jə | gɪv jə ə 'ni:dl] ....for misbehaving, you know. (St. John's) T C362,67-31.

B34.48. If the children are misbehaving, the parents will say: "The doctor....will come and give you a needle." (Botwood) Q67-1267.

B34.49. "If you don't be good; the doctor will come and give you a needle." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-323.

B34.50. Another threat used to get children to dress warmly or to put on overboots was, "If you don't the doctor will come and give you a needle." (Port Rexton) Q67-996.

B34.51. "If you don't stay in bed the doctor will come in and give you a needle...." (St. John's) Q67-66.

B34.52. ...."The doctor is going to come and give you a big needle if you don't stop crying." (Cavendish) Q67-591.

B34.53. ....if someone refuses to take some medicine, the parents say, "The doctor will come and give you a needle if you don't take the medicine." (Bloomfield) Q67-37.

B34.54. ...."You had better be good or the doctor will come and stick a needle in you." (Garden Cove) Q67-1149.

B34.55. ...."Go to bed (take an aspirin, be good, etc.) or the doctor will come and give you a needle." (St. John's) Q67-639.

B34.56. "The doctor is coming to give you a needle." (Bell Island) Q67-310.

B34.57. "The doctor is coming to put you in hospital." (Port aux Basques) Q67-182.

B34.58. "The doctor will give you a needle." (Carbonear) Q67-657.

B34.59. "The doctor will give you a needle and put you to sleep." - for child insomniacs. (Bell Island) Q67-725.

B34.60. "If you don't be good, the doctor will give you a needle." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-925.

B34.61. If the mother is going to the hospital sometimes, and a smaller child wants to go, the mother would say...., "If you go over there, the doctor will give you a needle." (St. Anthony) Q67-115.

B34.62. "The doctor will stick a needle in you if you're bad." (Carmanville) Q67-218.

B34.63. "The doctor will give you a needle if you're not good." (St. John's) Q67-852.

B34.64. "Put on that coat or you will get a cold and the doctor will give you a needle." (Bay of Islands area) Q67-896.

B34.65. "The doctor will take you in his bag." (St. John's) Q67-135.

B34.66. Yes, the doctor was used to frighten children. "If you're not good the doctor will take you away...." (Fox Cove) Q64A.

B34.67. "If you are naughty, the doctor will come and take your teeth out." (Burin) Q67-936.

B34.68. "Keep quiet or the doctor'll come and pull your tonsils out." (St. John's) Q67-72.

B34.69. "The doctor is going to cut open your belly if you're not good." (St. John's) Q67-352.

Indirect

B34.70. When parents suspect their children of feigning illness they use threats concerning the doctor and the nurse. (Corner Brook) Q67-1208.

B34.71. When a child is sick and don't want any aspirins or medicine, the parents would always pretend that they are calling for the doctor. This threat always work[s]. (Bell Island) Q67-224.

B34.72. If the children wouldn't take their medicine the mother would tell them that she would call the doctor. The children, afraid that the doctor might hurt them, would immediately take the medicine. (Curling) Q67-526.

B34.73. Parents sometimes tell their children that if they are bad they will call a doctor and he'll give them a very large needle. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1047.

B34.74. When a child wouldn't eat, or was sick and wouldn't take his medicine, the mother usually threatened him by saying that she was going to send for the doctor and that the doctor was going to give the child a needle right where it really hurts, which was probably in the behinder. (Corner Brook) Q67-1231.

B34.75. To many small children the doctor is a frightful figure. Whenever the word "doctor" is mentioned they get visions of needles and distasteful medicine. Parents often threaten their children by telling them that they are going to take them to the doctor. (Jerseyside) Q67-65.

B34.76. When children have sores or cuts and they tend to pick at them with their fingers, the parents try to frighten the children by saying they will take him or her to the doctor. Young children are usually afraid of doctors. (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-900.

B34.77. If you wanted a child to take some sort of medicine and he wouldn't do so, then he was often threatened to be taken to a doctor or nurse and then he will have to take much worse things. (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

B34.78. The doctor came to Richard's Harbour about once or twice a month. Usually he stayed for half a day. While the doctor was in the community it was not uncommon to hear parents telling their children (small children - four to seven) that if they didn't behave they would take them to the doctor and he would give them a needle.

Sometimes this was said in a semi-serious tone to which smaller children responded positively. However, in most cases even a child would know that the parent wouldn't do it [i.e. would not carry out the threat]. Sometimes people did it to tease the children. If you were ever at Richard's Harbour when the doctor came to give polio needles etc., you would know that the threats had some effect. All the smaller children (four to seven) would be crying and hiding away; also some of the older children had to be taken to the doctor by force. (Richard's Harbour) 68-20.

B34.79. Sometimes if children are naughty they are threatened by parents that they will be taken to a doctor or nurse to be given a needle.... (Boyd's Cove) Q67-405.

B34.80. If you did not finish your vegetables you would get sick and mother would have to take you to the doctor, and of course he would put a big long needle in you. Therefore every child was afraid of the doctor. (Little Catalina) Q67-1156.

B34.81. Sometimes if a child refuses to go to school because of a sore throat, the mother immediately falls back on the old threat that if you don't go to school because you're sick, then you must see a doctor for the same reason; or if you're sick enough to stay home, you're sick enough to see the doctor. (St. John's) Q67-1268.

B34.82. ....if children won't let their parent treat a minor wound then the child is threatened with having it get worse and having to go to the doctor. (Channel) Q67-1176.

B34.83. If a child didn't eat his meals the doctor would have to come. (St. John's) Q67-874.

B34.84. If you wouldn't eat your meals or take a certain medicine you would be told the doctor was coming. Just the name was a warning enough. (St. John's) Q67-623.

B34.85. Sometimes when children do certain things such as getting and using scissors or attempting to drink something that will injure them, they are told that the doctor will come and see them. Some children, for one reason or another, fear doctors, and thus they refrain from doing those things which will require a doctor to see them. (Bay Roberts) Q67-1131.

B34.86. If children are bad, parents would tell them that...."the doctor will come to see them if they are not good." (Coley's Point) Q67-806.

B34.87. The doctor is used when they won't eat or sleep. Parents say that they [i.e. the children]'ll get sick and he'll come to give them a needle. (Milltown) Q67-892.

B34.88. The doctor, too, was a person who made children scared. He was the man with the big needles, and if the kids weren't good, the doctor would come and give them a needle. (Corner Brook) Q67-97.

B34.89. ....if they did not eat all their dinner, they [i.e. the children] were told that the doctor would come and give them a needle. (Port Union) Q67-1079.

B34.90. Children were often told to behave or else the doctor or nurse would come and give them a needle. (St. Mary's) Q63B.

B34.91. Whenever we were sick or had a toothache, the first thing we would hear is that the doctor was coming to throw us in the hospital. We were given the impression that a hospital was where you went to be cut up, or that it was like a jail. (Bishop's Falls) Q67-1059.

B34.92. We [were] threatened [that]....the doctor would come and pull out our teeth. (St. John's) Q67-47.

B34.93. ....if they [i.e. the children] didn't eat they would have to go to the hospital with the doctor. (Embree) Q67-654.

B34.94. Often children are threatened that the doctor will give them a needle or inoculation. (South East Placentia) Q67-677.

B34.95. Children who wouldn't eat the right kinds of food (carrots, green peas, meat etc.), who didn't

want to take baths and who ate too much candy were told that unless they ate properly (not too much candy) and kept themselves clean they would get sick and doctors and nurses would have to give them needles to make them better again. (Dover) Q67-776.

B34.96. If a child....was doing something that could hurt him they would say the doctor or nurse would have to give him a needle. Most children were afraid of a needle. (Brigus) Q67-1142.

B34.97. Doctor - if a child cries while the doctor is treating him, he would get a needle. (Belleoram) Q67-1058.

B34.98. Children are also told that....the doctor will give them a needle if they are bad or do something wrong. (Lewisporte) Q67-935.

B34.99. Occasionally children are told to behave or else the doctor will give them a needle.... (Cappahayden) Q63B.

B34.100. If a child went outdoors without his cap or any other garment he was told the doctor would get him. (St. John's) Q67-706.

B34.101. ....children are told to behave or else the Doctor will take them away to hospital. (St. Joseph's, SMB) Q63B.

B34.102. When the doctor was around she would say we had to be good because if we were not he would carry us away in his bag. (Freshwater, Carbonear) Q67-904.

B34.103. Children will sometimes be told that the doctor will carry them away and keep them in the hospital. (Sibleys Cove) Q67-1146.

B34.104. In some cases the parents would tell their children that if they do not obey their parents they would get the doctor to put earwigs in their ears and spiders in their stomach to tickle them to death. (St. Lawrence) Q67-438.

B34.105. Sometimes children are told that the doctor will cut out their tongues. (Carbonear) Q67-433.

B35. Dentist.[24]

In contrast with the doctor, the dentist is used very

---

[24] See also B34.24, B34.67, B34.92 above and B66b below.

rarely as a threatening figure in Newfoundland. This is accounted for mainly by the fact that most of the Province's dental practices are located in St. John's. In addition, however, the threats concerning the dentist are usually restricted to those occasions when children complain of toothache, whereas those concerning the doctor refer to the whole range of medical practice. The dentist is reported as a threatening figure from Gander and Marystown, no further details being given. (Q67-554 and Q67-675)

B36. Nurse [nə:rs].[25]

Like the doctor, the nurse is used mainly in threats connected with the child's health and also sometimes in those directed against general misbehaviour. The threats themselves are similar in form to those which refer to the doctor,[26] and they reflect the fact that doctors and nurses share certain professional skills. They also again emphasise the more painful aspects of medical treatment, especially the giving of injections.

B36.1. A mother who has trouble getting her child take medicine will say, "Take your medicine or I will have to send for the nurse." (Green Island Brook) Q67-564.

B36.2. Nurse -- "I'll have the nurse come, and she will give you a needle." (St. Anthony) Q67-914.

B36.3. ....if a child refused to take medicine the mother would probably say, "I'll have to get the nurse to give you a needle." This seemed to work extremely well because most kids are terrified of needles. (Flower's Cove) Q67-683.

---

[25] See also B34.30 above.

[26] A number of threats refer to both doctor and nurse in the same context. See, for example, B34.46, B34.70, B34.77, B34.79, B34.90, and B34.95 above.

TIGHT BINDING

B36.4. Nurse: Children who may have found getting the needle unpleasant are threatened, "Be a good girl or I'll get the nurse to give you a needle." (Burin Bay Arm) Q67-538.

B36.5. Nurse: "I'll tell the nurse to give you a needle if you don't be good." (Hillgrade) Q67-1056.

B36.6. "If you don't eat all your breakfast, over to the nurse you go, my lad, and you'll be in the hospital for two weeks...." (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-1246.

B36.7. Small kids, usually, would be..very small kids, probably two-, three-year-olds....would..would be..probably after getting at least one needle. An' a two-year-old..a three-year-old probably, or even four-year-old, round here, even until five an' six, would..wouldn't look too kindly, you know, on..on this. So..so the parent would say, "Now okay! You do this or..or I'll take you to the nurse an' get her to give you another needle like she did before!" [næu ou'kɛi || jɐu dɐu ðɪs ɔər | ɔər ɑɨl tɛik jɐ tɔ ðə nə:rs ən gɛt ər tə gɪv jə ə'nʌðər 'ni:dl̩ lɐik ʃɪ dɪd bɪ'foər] (Burin Bay Arm) T C360,67-31.

B36.8. The threats of doctor and nurse is well known to children, especially when they won't take their medicine. E.g. "Alright, Johnny, the nurse is coming to give you a needle." (St. John's) Q67-391.

B36.9. Children were often threatened by such sayings as, "If you aren't a good boy/girl the nurse will come and give you a needle...." (St. John's) Q67-949.

B36.10. ...."Now if you don't be careful [the] nurse'll come an' give you a needle!" [næu ɨf jɔ dountʔ bɪ 'kɛəfɐl nə:rs l̩ kʌm ən gɪv jə ə 'ni:dl̩] (Cow Head) T C265,66-24.

B36.11. Nurse - If a youngster is a little sick but wouldn't take his medicine the parent may say, "Okay, if you don't take your medicine, the nurse will come up and give you a needle." (Musgrave Harbour) Q67-504.

B36.12. "The nurse....will come and give you a needle if you don't take your medicine." This was a typical threat if you were ill at home and didn't do as mother said. (St. John's) Q67-1068.

B36.13. "Come here to me or the nurse is coming with the needle." (King's Point) Q67-186.

B36.14. ....if you didn't take your medicine or if you didn't eat..eat your meals or somethin' like that, they would threaten you with the doctor or nurse. ....."The nurse is comin' for you!" [ðə nə:rs ɨz 'kʌmin foər juu] (St. Lawrence) T C356,67-31.

B36.15. "The nurse will prick the needle in you." (Little Bay, FB?) Q64A.

B36.16. "The nurse....will give you a needle if you are bad." (Norris Arm) Q67-125.

B36.17. "The nurse....will take you away." (Conche) Q64A.

B37. Midwife (named individual).

B37.1. When my younger brother was born (February 1945) the local grannywoman (midwife) visited our house regularly. My older brother and I never did like her very much and were in fact a little scared of her. During one of her visits, we were misbehaving and the servant couldn't do much to keep us quiet. The old woman, who had false teeth - on both top and bottom - took them out, put them on the table, one set on top of the other. She told us that they could bite us if we didn't behave ourselves. This really scared us and for the next two or three years my mother warned us that she would send for Granny (N) if we didn't be good. She really was the type of person who could scare boys our age, and as a result we took mother's warning seriously and obeyed her.

I cannot remember when mother stopped threatening to send for her but I believe she died just a few years after her visits and it was probably after her death that the warnings stopped. (Gillams) 68-17.

B38. Welfare officer ['welfəər ˌɑfisər].

B38.1. A threat I heard in Fogo said to young children - "I'm going to tell the welfare officer." I don't know why they said this. However, more than once it was said to me[27] when I met a parent

[27]The informant herself was then a welfare officer.

and his or her little boy or girl - "Now there's the welfare officer and I'm going to tell her...." The child would be terrified. I don't know if this was just me frightening them or the idea of the welfare officer that did it. I think it was the welfare officer bit because for the first while I was there the children were friendly, but as I started work even the children in the family with whom I boarded were scared. (Fogo) 68-6.

B38.2. ....the threat that they used to use: "Watch it or the welfare officer'll get you!" [watʃ ɪt ər ðə 'welfɛər ˌɑfɪsər l gɛt jʉ] (St. John's) T C362,67-31.

THE FATHER AND OTHER FAMILY FIGURES

The father, as head of the household, represents authority within the family and is therefore frequently invoked in threats, especially those of physical punishment. In Newfoundland, the father is frequently away from home for long periods when he is fishing, or working in the lumber woods or the mines. His children therefore see him comparatively rarely, and he becomes something of a stranger in his threatening role.[28] In most families the father spends much of the day away from home, and in shifting the onus for retribution from herself onto the absent father, the mother exercises control over the children without resorting to physical punishment. On his return, the father is not always told of the child's misbehaviour and so the threatened punishment is avoided altogether.[29]

As Professor Halpert has pointed out,[30] the father is used

---

[28] See B39.4 and B39.15 below.

[29] See, for example, B39.8 and B39.11 below. Cp. however, B39.7 and B39.14 below.

[30] Halpert, "Some Observations on American Frightening Figures", p. 8.

as a threatening figure in many families where threats involving such figures as the Devil and the boogie man are strongly deprecated. This seems also to be true of the use of other senior members of the family in threats, especially grandfathers and older relatives whose very age gives rise to a degree of respect. The close contact between grandparents and grandchildren in Newfoundland, where the whole family, including the grandparents, often lives in the same house or close at hand, makes for a certain conservatism in the transmission of oral tradition. This appears to hold good for the patterns of verbal control which, although perhaps frowned on by parents, may be employed by grandparents and older relatives in their relationships with the children.

339. Father ['fɑːðər].[31]

B39.1. "Wait till your father gets home." (St. John's) Q63B.

B39.2. "Ah! - My son - I'm going - to - tell - your - father - on - you." I remember this being used on a number of occasions when I was a youngster (approximately seven to fourteen years of age). This was used by people outside the family circle in most cases. They used this when we did some mischief with something belonging to them and they caught us. The "Ah!" at the beginning was said in a very loud tone and sounded more like "A - h - h!" than the short "Ah!". The other words were in a lower tone. (Francois) 68-3.

B39.3. If children were unruly, the mother would threaten, "I'll tell your father." (St. John's) Q67-135.

[31] For an interesting variant pronunciation, see B39.4 below.

B39.4. Strangely enough the most frightening figure was the father of the children. In most outports the father is away from home a good deal of the time. As a result, the children often view him with a certain degree of awe, if not fear. In such cases, however, children often never feel very close to their father, but nevertheless they respected him highly. The threats varied: i) "I'm goin' de [sic, to] send for ya faler [sic, father]." ii) "I'm goin' de tell ya faler on you when he comes." (Fortune) Q67-528.

B39.5. ...."Your father's going to know about this!" [jər 'fɑ:ðərz 'gouin tu nou ə'bæut? ðɪs] (North River) T C418,67-31.

B39.6. A threat very often used when children are naughty is, "Wait till your father gets home." This is really a playful threat for by the time the father gets home the mother no longer feels the need to punish the children. (St. John's) Q67-185.

B39.7. In an attempt to discipline her children, a mother usually threatens them with, "Wait until your father come[s] home!" The father, on the other hand, sometimes uses much stronger persuasiveness. He either threatens them by promising to take away privileges or allowances, or he spanks them. (St. John's) Q67-262.

B39.8. The biggest threat anyone used to use was, "Just wait till your father gets home: you'll catch it." This always worked quite effectively. I would watch out of the window and when I saw his car turn in the driveway [I would] go and hide. I don't know why this scared me because Mom never did tell him usually, and if she did he would just laugh at it - and I never did "catch it". (St. John's) 68-6.

B39.9. "You'll catch it when your father comes home." When my father used to go out of doors, my brother and I used to start playing up, and my mother used this expression to try and keep us quiet. I heard [this] about ten years ago. (Hibbs Cove) 66-10.

B39.10. I have often been present in houses of my friends when the father is presented to the children as a "Boogie-man". Mothers threatened bad children with such words as, "Daddy'll give it to you when he gets home!". This really frightens the children and I've often seen them run and hide when they hear their father....coming. (Carbonear) Q67-1093.

B39.11. "You're going to get it when your father gets home." This was [a] saying quite common around our home when we would get into mischief. We very rarely "got it" but the threat was usually sufficient to keep us in our places. (Bay Roberts) 66-5.

B39.12. "You'll be skinned alive, when your father comes home." Used to small children (ten and under) when they are annoying. Not used if you are really angry, and usually said in the hearing of another adult, partly for their benefit. ....Used currently among parents [aged] twenty five to thirty five in St. John's. (St. John's) 67-12.

B39.13. "Go to bed now, Jeanie; Daddy's home!" Said to her daugher, aged about thirteen or fourteen, by Mrs. (N) (N) during a brief visit I made to the house. The girl's father....had just come in, and the statement....was made more as a firm directive than as a threat. It was said in a kindly way without any threatening overtones of voice or manner. The child was upstairs at the time and the mother simply called up to her. The directive was not effective as the girl appeared downstairs shortly afterwards! (St. John's) 67-22.

Indirect

B39.14. The most frightening story mom could tell me was that she would inform dad of my naughty actions. This meant that dad would tell me a little story across his knee. Dad's approach always had a more "striking" effect. (Lewisporte) Q67-1299.

B39.15. In many cases, however, the father was used as a means of inducing the desired state. In these days many fathers were away from home for months at a time and when he did return he was looked upon with awe; and thus when Ma said she was going to call "your Pa" you really had to do what she said or else face the prospect of "Pa taking his slipper to ya", or a good tanning. (Deer Lake) Q67-1041.

B39.16. When I was about five to fourteen years old, my mother used to tell me to be good or she would tell Dad on me. A few days ago I heard her telling my wife that this was a great way to get us to do what she wanted. ....I was more scared of Father than I was of the Black Man. (Harbour Buffett) 68-26.

C. Grandfather ['grænfɑ:ðər]

B40.1. ....[at] Christmas when I was home I was visiting my girlfriend who is married and had two little girls. Well one o' the little girls got into her....grandfather's toolbox, an' her father said, "You'd better get..get out o' that or your grandfather'll be after you!" [jʊd bɛtər gɛt | gɛt aut ɔ ðæt ɔər jər 'grænfɑ:ðər | bɪ 'æftə jʉu] (Dark Cove) T C355,67-31.

B40.2. Often, too, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and other older relatives are used to threaten children away from things belonging to these people. When a small child is tempted to play with grandfather's tools, for example, a whispered "Grandpa's coming!" will quickly move her away. (Dark Cove) Q67-856.

Indirect

B40.3. I know when I was young my mother used to tell us that my grandfather had a cat-o'-nine-tails and if we didn't do right we'd..he'd beat us with the cat-o'-nine-tails, but I never saw them used! (St. Mary's) T C12,64-6.

STRANGERS, FOREIGNERS AND RELATED FIGURES

The role of the stranger[32] as a threatening figure emphasises the use of threats to maintain a certain unity within a community, to resist sudden change or interference from outside and to maintain discipline and obedience within the family circle. The isolation of many communities in Newfoundland gives rise to a type of social structure in which the stranger is regarded with some suspicion as an intruder from the outside world. His dress, speech, general appearance and behaviour may set him apart from the other people

[32] For a full discussion of the stranger's role, see Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", pp. 68-75.

in a community, and when he is used in threats attention is focussed on the alien nature of these characteristics.

A stranger has something of the aura of many supernatural/invented figures in that his origins and intentions are unknown, he lacks definite location and positive identification, his behaviour is unpredictable (and therefore less controllable) and he is potentially malevolent and dangerous. It is therefore not unnatural that tourists and other casual visitors, or such strangers as salesmen, public officials, research workers and the like are used as threatening figures. During my own fieldwork in many different parts of the Province I found people using me in this way, and other fieldworkers have had the same experience.[33] It also comes as no surprise that people may feel some degree of apprehension about the representatives of different racial, linguistic and even religious groups within their community, and such "strangers" may become the target of suspicion, gossip and legend. It is a relatively easy transition from this to their use as threatening figures. They are, as it were, aliens within the community, and the fear of them, as Firestone observes, is "a means by which adults can displace generally acquired hostility".[34]

Peripatetic individuals and people of no fixed abode, such as tramps, peddlers and gipsies, are predominantly strangers,

---

[33] See, for example, Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", pp. 71-72, J.C. Faris, "Mumming in an Outport Fishing Settlement: A Description and Suggestions on the Cognitive Complex", in Halpert and Story, p. 130, fn.3, and an example from my own fieldwork in B42.4 below.

[34] Firestone, "Mummers and Strangers", pp. 74-75.

CUT BUNDLE

and are still feared to some extent by adults, as this Archive report from Long Cove, Trinity Bay illustrates:

> Strangers are referred to as tramps, and if the father is not home, nobody will answer the door to a stranger, especially during the summer when there are so many bums about. (Q67-663).

The tramps and other wanderers, however, also have other characteristics which mark them out as unusual or abnormal, such as their dress and the fact that they often carry bags or packs. All unusual people, on the other hand, are to some extent strangers by virtue of their abnormalities, and all strangers may be regarded as abnormal simply because they are unknown quantities. One might extend the investigation of the stranger motif even further and suggest that many threatening figures are conceptualised as outcasts or outsiders. They are not dissimilar from figures such as Cain or the Wandering Jew, which society for one reason or another either rejects or finds difficult to accept.

B41. Stranger.

B41.1. "Watch out for strangers." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-1121.

B41.2. "The stranger doesn't like bad boys (girls)." (Fortune) Q67-528.

B41.3. The stranger is usually threatened on a child mostly for the amusement of the adult. The parent teases the child by saying, "I'll give you to the man[35] I think." This usually makes the child cling to the person who threatens him.[36] (Buchans) Q67-1005.

---

[35] The adult stranger is often referred to simply as "the man". This impersonal mode of reference was frequently used when people were speaking among themselves about me during my fieldwork. Cp. B41.7, B41.9, B41.14, B41.16, B41.19, B41.23, B41.25, B41.27 and B41.28. See also B66 below.

[36] This example illustrates the use of threats in such a way as to amuse the adults, thus emphasising the gulf between their world and that of the child, while at the same time teasing him, exercising a measure of control over him and maintaining the bonds of affection within the family.

B41.4. "I'll give you to that stranger." (Upper Island Cove) Q67-320.

B41.5. "You'd better be good or I'll give you to the first stranger who comes along." This is a threat I have heard some parents use at Bay Roberts, including my own, when I was a child, to get obedience. (Bay Roberts) 66-5.

B41.6. "I'll sell you to a mean stranger if you torment me any more." (St. John's) Q67-112.

B41.7. Strangers, too, were to be feared by the children. They were threatened with them only when they [i.e. the strangers] were in sight. Threat: "If you don't be good, I'll sell you to that man over there." (St. John's) Q67-1111.

B41.8. Stranger -- "If you go out after dark the stranger will get you." (South River) Q67-1197.

B41.9. ....to keep him from being naughty while there were strangers around, "the big man[37] will put you in his pocket." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-606.

B41.10. "A stranger will come and take you away in a big suitcase." (Bell Island) Q67-725.

B41.11. Stranger - "Be good or the stranger will come and take you away." (Lewisporte) Q67-1272.

B41.12. Stranger: "Here comes a stranger to take you away." (St. John's) Q67-1034.

B41.13. Stranger - "If you don't behave a stranger will take you away." (St. John's) Q67-72.

B41.14. Some children were very shy around strangers, and when these children disobeyed in the presence of these strangers, the parents often said, "If you don't be a good little boy, that man is going to take you away with him." (Whitbourne) Q67-446.

B41.15. Stranger - If there was a stranger in the house and the children didn't behave quietly, the mother would say, "If you don't be quiet, the stranger will take you away with him." (Heart's Content) Q67-1035.

B41.16. [The stranger might be] sitting down having a cup of tea or..and the youngster would be there underfoot. An' the mother would say, "Now

---

[37] As with many of the other human figures, the adult size and status of the stranger are deliberately emphasised in threats. See also B41.19, B41.23, B41.25a and B66 below.

TIGHT BINDING

listen here! The man'll take you when he goes!" [nau 'lɪsn hiər | dɔ̃ə mæ·n l tɛik jɯu wɛn ɪ· gouz]. (Fortune Bay area) T C371,67-31.

B41.17. "When a stranger comes, behave or he will take you." (Bay of Islands) Q67-896.

B41.18. If you did not behave in the proper manner while a visitor was in the house, then you would go with him. "You be good or so-and-so will take you to such and such a place when he goes." Sometimes the stranger would pretend to take a child upon leaving, but soon this was stopped by a loud cry from the child. (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-1099.

B41.19. Stranger: A parent may use a visitor to make a child behave by telling the child: "Be good (or do this or do that), or the big man will take you." (Burin Bay Arm) Q67-538.

B41.20. ...."A stranger will come and carry you off if you don't be good." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

B41.21. "The stranger is coming to carry you away." (Port aux Basques) Q67-182.

B41.22. "The stranger will carry you away." Said to younger brothers and sisters if they wanted to go with older [brothers and sisters]. (Fortune) Q67-529.

B41.23. ...."That big man will carry you away." (Pass Island) Q67-644.

B41.24. "If you are bad, the stranger will carry you away." (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

B41.25. Stranger: "That big man will carry you away if you aren't good." (Hillgrade) Q67-1056.

B41.26. "That stranger will carry you away if you do that again." (Botwood) Q67-1223.

B41.27. "You better be good or the man will carry you away." (The man was usually a stranger).

This I can remember being used by parents with children who are about one or two years of age. I have only witnessed this being used when there were strangers in the house and the child was making a noise or "showing off" (doing things he normally wouldn't do). The threat was whispered into the child's ear. It was, however, said loud enough for the person referred to to hear it. The person usually made a remark similar to: "Yes, that's what I will [do], if you don't

behave yourself."[38] (Francois) 68-3.

B41.28. Sometimes when there was a stranger in the house and I was bad, my mother used to say, "Be good or the man will carry you away." I wasn't worried about these threats because the stranger always smiled and seemed kind. (Lewisporte) Q67-437.

B41.29. Some threats involve strangers, such as, "If you go out on the street, a stranger might pick you up and carry you away and never bring you back." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

Indirect

B41.30. Another common way of frightening youngster[s] was when [a] visitor was at a house the parents would tell their children that they were going to give them to the stranger to take home with him. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1047.

B41.31. They also threaten them by saying they will give them to the stranger who comes to the community looking for bad little boys and girls. (Jerseyside) Q67-65.

B41.32. ....if they speak to a stranger, he would take them away with him. (Embree) Q67-654.

B41.33. When a stranger was coming to the house, we would be told to be good or the stranger would take us. (Bay Roberts) Q67-106.

B41.34. If a child misbehaves while a stranger is in the house he is threatened that the stranger will carry him off. (Burin) Q67-326.

B41.35. Some people make their children afraid of strangers [by] telling the children that if the stranger caught them he would put them in a bag and carry them away. (St. John's) Q67-946.

B42. The Strange man [ðə 'strɛindʒ mɛn] / [də 'strɛindʒ mɛn] / [ðə 'strɛindʒ mɛən].

B42.1. "I'll give you to the strange man." [aɨl gɪv jə tʉ ðə 'strɛindʒ mɛən] (North River) T C418,67-31.

---

[38] This example contrasts vividly with B41.28 which follows it. The stranger may either offer to take the child, as has been threatened, or alternatively he may negate the effect of the threat, or at least reduce its impact, by behaving in a friendly manner.

B42.2. "The strange man will get you" is an expression one occasionally hears. (Norris Arm) Q67-125.

B42.3. ...."Be good or the strange man will come and take you away." (Glenwood) Q67-1239.

B42.4. When I was visiting Mr. (N) (N) at Fortune Harbour during a field trip in the area in the summer of 1964, a small child came into the house. To keep the child quiet, Mr. (N) said to him in a joking way, "The strange man will take you!" [də 'strɛindʒ mɛn l tɛik jə] In this case "the strange man" was me! The child was immediately quietened by the threat, in spite of the fact that it was said jokingly and with a smile.[39] (Fortune Harbour) 67-22.

B42.5. ....[if] in church....a kid won't behave, they'll say, well, "[The] strange man over there will take you!" ['strɛindʒ mɛən 'ouvə ðɛər wɨl tɛik jɯu] (North River) T C418,67-31.

B42.6. ....if a child starts crying while in a store or elsewhere and there is a strange man nearby parents will often say, "Stop crying or that man will take you." (Corner Brook) Q67-763.

B42.7. ...."Eat your dinner now or the strange man will take you." (St. Mary's) Q67-366.

B42.8. ...."That strange man is going to carry you away." (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

B42.9. "You'd better be good or the strange man'll carry you off!" [jʊd 'bɛtər bɪ gʊd ɔər ðə strɛindʒ mɛən l 'kæri jə ɑ:f] (Dark Cove) T C355,67-31.

Indirect

B42.10. ....oh strangers were..were very frightening figures. ....I was really afraid of them. ....The strange man would come..come an' get you. The strange man would carry you off. (Fortune) T C355,67-31.

B42.11. Children were often frightened with the threat that if you didn't behave the strange man would take you away. (St. John's) Q67-126.

---

[39] This is one of several examples from my own fieldwork in which, as a stranger to the community, I was used as a threatening figure.

TIGHT BINDING

5. Chinaman, Chinese laundryman (including named individuals).

B43.1. Honney [Honey?] Blue Bag. This is a chinaman who is dressed poorly [in] rag[ged] clothes and lives alone in a worn down Home. He is feared by all children because he always carries a "Blue Bag", which I know he uses....for carrying things. Because of his poor rank in society and the possession of a blue bag, people picked on him as a threatening figure. Since his bag was used for carrying things, older people, in order to frighten children, replaced "things" [with] "bad boys and girls". E.g. "If you don't be good, Honney is coming and [will] put you in his bag and take you away." This really worked; I know from an experience with Honney.[40] (St. John's) 267-391.

B43.2. Frightening Figure: "The Chinaman will take you away." My mother told me that when she was a child this threat was used to make her obey her parents. When she was a young child, the Chinamen ran laundries in St. John's and they would go around the city with a bag on their backs. The bag was used to put the laundry into. So her parents told her that the Chinaman would take her away and she visualised the Chinaman putting her into his bag and taking her away. She also told me that as a child she frequently had to take her father's collars to the Chinese laundry to be cleaned. When she got to the laundry, she would not go into the store any more than was absolutely necessary. She would frequently stretch out her hand with the collars in it and place the collars on the counter, while at the same time she would have one foot holding the door open in case the Chinaman ran after her. This shows the extent to which she was afraid of the Chinaman. (St. John's) 68-5.

Indirect

B43.3. Apart from the usual threats and figures used to frighten children and get them to behave themselves....there is one uncommon one on Bell

---

40 This figure, in addition to his foreign nationality, is characterised by other features typical of many threatening figures. His reclusive life, his poverty, his dress and the bag he carries, for example, mark him out as unusual.

Island which is used. He has existed for as long as I can remember. He is an old Chinese man who used to go around with a blue bag to collect laundry. Parents have sometimes threatened children by telling them that Honey Blue Bag would take them away. He was represented to the children as one to be feared. (Bell Island) Q67-244.

The Eskimos (Esquimaux) [də ʌskɨ'mɔ:] / [də ʌskɨ'mɒ:].

B44.1. They'd say, well, if you didn't be good, you know...."The Esquimaux'll be after you....!" [də ʌskɨ'mɒ: əl bɪ 'æftə jʉʉ] (Lush's Bight) T C302,66-25.

Frenchman (named individual).[41]

B45.1. "Now behave yourself because I'll send after Louis (N) ! I'll send after old Louis!" [næu bɪ'ɛiv jə'sɛlf bɪ'kɔz ɑɨl sɛnd 'æftə 'lu:ɪ(N) ɑɨl sɛn 'æftər oul 'lu:ɪ] (Portland Creek) T C264,66-24.

Indirect

B45.2. There was an old Frenchman....out at Daniel's Harbour by the name o' Louis (N), his name was. ....we were all frightened to death of him. ....Oh, he had a sort of..his lip was sort o' curled over the top. Yeah, his lower lip. ....He talked peculiar. ....He'd always say he was goin' to put 'em [i.e. children] in his jam-block, see. Oh that's a..a stick o' wood with a notch sawed out into un, see; what the old people one time used to hew sticks. They sawed out the square notch, saw down so far into the log like that, an' split it out, an' jam that in, see, and wedge it in, keep it in place for hewin'. Well this is what they used to call the jam-block. This is what he was goin'..Louis (N) used to tell 'em he'd put 'em in the jam-block, see! (Cow Head) T C255,66-24.

---

[41] This Frenchman travelled up and down the north west coast and in addition to his various frightening attributes he was said to be a runaway from a French ship. See also B52 below.

B45.3. Old Louis (N) - a Frenchman who lived at Daniel's Harbour and frequent visitor to other settlements. He had a dried up fish bone and would point it at the children and tell them their wrong doings. Many parents used Louis (N) to discipline children. (In one instance put a child's legs in "stockings" - used to hold wood in place for sawing.) (Daniel's Harbour) Q64A.

B46. Gipsies.

B46.1. Children years ago were threatened with: "If you aren't asleep soon I'll give you to the ....gipsies when they come." (St. John's) Q67-1043.

Indirect

B46.2. If children were misbehaving the parents would tell them to behave or they would be given to the gipsies.... (Gander) Q67-254.

B47. Indians

Indians are reported as threatening figures from Gander and also from the Conne River area where there is a Micmac community. A report from Little Bay Islands (B47.2) gives details of a half-breed Indian who was reclusive and lived in poverty.

B47.1. Another common saying in Milltown is the fear of Micmacs. For some reason or other, many old people actually believe that the few Micmacs living in Conne River, Bay d'Espoir, can actually cast a spell on, or "witch" a person or thing. This is often told to children to make them obey. The parents say they will tell the Micmac "to witch" them if they are not good. This causes a fear and a certain uncalled-for dislike of the Micmacs in our community. (Milltown) Q67-362.

B47.2. (N) (N) lived all by himself on the back

of Little Bay Islands in Silly Ann's Cove....[42] He was a half-breed indian, a real hermit type. The parents would tell their children that (N) would come and put them in his knapsack if they weren't good.... (Little Bay Islands) Q64A.

B48. Negroes.

B48.1. I can remember people telling me not to go out after dark or the big black niggers from the [air] base would come along and kidnap me. They would emphasise this by telling me cases where this had happened before. (Stephenville Crossing) 68-6.

B49. Salesman.

B49.1. ....perhaps some..some stranger..probably some salesman would come to the house selling books some day, and a small kid would be there misbehaving. And you threaten to give the kid to the..to the salesman: he'd take you away, you know.... (Buchans) T C367,67-31.

B50. Peddler (including named individual).

B50.1. In our community there is a man who is sometimes used to frighten children. Most children are frightened by his appearance. This man has a long beard, long hair, and is usually very dirty. He usually wears three coats, one over the other; one short, one knee-length and one floor-length. In winter he wears a funny hood, and boots three sizes too big for him. He is usually seen pushing a wheelbarrow in which he carries a variety of articles collected from the door-to-door garbage picking which is his daily chore. However of late he has been seen pulling a child's wagon containing a suitcase in which, he claims, he has goods for sale. Apparently he buys articles from the local stores and goes from door to door selling them for twice the cost, thus calling himself a peddler. He goes to different houses asking in a low squeaky voice for a cup of tea. He usually knows all the town

[42] Local name for Suley Ann Cove.

TIGHT BINDING

gossip and can tell you everything that happens. He can't read or write, but can quote scriptures as well as any clergyman. It is very common to hear a mother say, "Stop your crying, 'cause I see (N) (N) coming down the road." (Stephenville) Q67-273.

Indirect

B50.2. No local people in my mother's community were used by parents to frighten children, but sometimes they would be threatened with an old peddler who came to the community several times a year, and told that if they were not well behaved, he would put them in his bag. (Cappahayden?) Q67-1070.

B50.3. ....there was the common threat in my father's childhood that if he misbehaved his mother would give him away to the peddler. (Port de Grave) Q67-277.

B51. Beggar, tramp.

The beggar man is reported as a threatening figure from Burin, no further details being given. Beggars and tramps often combine several unusual and frightening attributes and there are many reports of individual people of this kind who are used in threats in various parts of the Province.

B51.1. ....there was a pretty famous story about an old man, a tramp, in the area, and apparently this man did exist because he..he could be seen in real life at times. His name was..I think it was (N) (N). And even though you could at times see him at the door, due to the fact that your mother told you so much about him, that he was goin' to get you, you..in your mind you had a new concept created whereby this (N) (N) in real life an' (N) (N) inside your head was two fairly different people altogether, and you could go up an' talk to (N) when you saw him, but he wasn't at all the same (N) that you had created in here [i.e. in your mind], you see; an' you were pretty worried about this fellow in here, and the fellow on the street didn't mean too much to you, so

that....by the time you had grown old enough to realise who (N) (N) really was, the concept....in your head had fairly well vanished or worn itself out. And..and eventually you came to realise that....this is (N) (N), and there's nothing to worry about. .... She [i.e. my mother] 'd tell you..she'd look down the road; she'd see that he was probably coming up the road, and she'd say..come to where we were playing, she'd say, "Come on! Come on! Yous hurry on! (N) (N) is comin'!" [kʌm ɒ·n | kʌm ɒ·n | jɐz 'hʌrɪ ɒ·n‖ (N) (N) ɨz 'kʌmɨn] And we'd all come in! (Brigus?) T C429,65-16 (rec. H. Halpert).

B52. Runaway.

Deserters from ships, especially French naval vessels, are known as "runaways" and are occasionally used as threatening figures.

B52.1. I was often scared by....a Run-Away. The latter really terrified me. It was supposed to be [an] old man who went around with a sack on his back in which he would put bad children.[43] (Heart's Delight) Q67-1133.

MISCELLANEOUS FRIGHTENING TYPES

In addition to the human figures already discussed, there are numerous types of people which are also used as threatening figures in Newfoundland. These types are characterised by some distinctive feature or abnormality of appearance or behaviour, either singly, or, more usually, in combination. Typical figures include the following:

---

[43] See also B66d.8 and B66d.15 below.

1. People of no fixed abode.
2. People with abnormal physical or mental characteristics.
3. People with unusual, dirty or criminal occupations.
4. People whose behaviour is odd or violent.
5. Old people.
6. People living alone.

A selection of these figures, including a number of typical individuals, will now be presented in alphabetical order to give some idea of their considerable range.

B53. Ash man.

B53.1. Sometimes the parents would say to the children ....: "I'll give you to the ash man if you're not good." (St. John's) Q67-472.

B54. Convict, person with criminal record.

B54.1. Other things were also used to frighten children. By far the commonest was (N) (N). .... he was a local person who had a police record and was a bit of a rebel. Therefore he was feared by the people. (Bay Roberts) Q67-774.

B55. Crippled people.

B55.1. Some of my childhood friends told me that they were often told that if they didn't behave Uncle (N) (N) would take them and they wouldn't get home any more. Uncle (N) (N) was a crippled old man who lived in a dilapidated old house in a deserted section of the community. (Grand Falls) Q67-1201.

B56. Deaf and dumb people.

B56.1. At my home town, there is a dummy. His name is Dummy (N). Every now and then he walks down the street. Every young child is afraid of

him even though he has never harmed anyone. If a child wants to go out in the night, all its mother has to say is, "Dummy (N) is out there" and outdoors is never mentioned any more that night. (Appleton) Q67-1082.

Indirect

B56.2. A man who is deaf and mentally retarded was used to frighten children. Children were frightened because the man was tall and strong and quite frightening when seen at night. (Riverhead, St. Mary's?) Q67-269.

B56.3. If children refused to do something, their parents would often tell them that "the Dummies" were coming. "The Dummies" was the name given to two men who were born deaf and dumb. They were never put in a supervised home but were allowed to roam around the streets and were often found rummaging through the garbage or sitting on the side of the road banging on a tin can. (Curling) Q67-526.

B57. Deformed people.

B57.1. ....some people in the community were used as frightening figures. These included....someone deformed.... (St. John's) Q67-1068.

B57.2. Children were also threatened by strange or odd people in the community, such as....the physically deformed. (St. John's) Q67-949.

B57.3. Usually a local character of low mentality or physical deformity was used to scare naughty children. (North River) Q67-572.

B57.4. A deformed, mentally retarded man in his seventies named (N) (N). Not actively hostile, but parents threatened to leave children with him if they were naughty. (St. Vincent's) Q64A.

B58. Drunken people.

B58.1. ....local people who are suggested to be harmful to children....[include] a person who is generally drunk. (Cavendish) Q67-591.

TIGHT BINDING

B58.2. Local people are sometimes used to frighten children. The most common of these seem[s] to be an old drunken man who is untidy and who teases children very much, under the influence of liquor. Also they are frightened by the idea of these men hurting them. (St. John's) Q67-954.

B59. Eccentrics, odd or unusual people.

B59.1. For the past three months we have been living in Carbonear, and nearby lives a real eccentric, a certain Mr. (N). He is continually walking back and forth [on] the road looking for his wife. ....His wife has been dead for twenty years. Mr. (N) represents a local Boo-man and all the parents along this road say, "Eat your dinner and be good or Mr. (N) will come in." (Salmon Cove, Carbonear) Q67-908.

B59.2. Local characters are also used to frighten children. This is usually some odd or old person who is strange to the children. For example, parents tell children, "I'll give you to so-and-so if you do that again." (North River) Q67-571.

B59.3. Sometimes there are certain people in a place or community that acts and talks fully or bold, or dress a little odd from other people in some way. Children are usually frightened when they see these people, especially if they say anything to scare them. Parents then use this when their children are bad, and say, "If you don't behave I'll give you to this person" or "I'll tell them to come after you." (Hillgrade) Q67-1056.

B59.4. It was a habit of some children in Ship Cove (near St. Anthony) to poke fun at "odd" or "queer" people in the community. One day my girlfriend and some other children were laughing at an old man who had a funny sound in his voice. When my girlfriend's mother saw the children laughing at the old man, she pointed her finger at them and said, "Now you're going to get just like him if you don't stop laughing." (Ship Cove, GNP:W) 66-7.

TIGHT BINDING

Indirect

B59.5. Local people are sometimes used to frighten children because they act rather oddly. (Bonavista) Q67-1051.

B59.6. Children were also threatened by strange or odd people in the community. (St. John's) Q67-949.

B59.7. Sometimes an odd character was given distasteful qualities and used as a means to make children behave. (Gull Island, CB) Q67-312.

B59.8. Some of the threats used against the children were based on certain people in the community who were a bit odd. In this case the figure was an odd-mannered woman who always smoked a pipe and would sometimes ask someone for some "baccie" (tobacco). Sometimes she would come around in a dory and the children would make fun of her as the boat approached the shore, but as soon as she would set foot on the shore the children would scatter and run. (Informant from St. John's) Q67-947.

B59.9. Some local people are used to frighten children. These are usually queer-looking people.... The one in our town is bent over, his hair is almost gone, his eyes are sunk in and his eyebrows are very thick over them. He has a long nose, no teeth and smokes a pipe. (Port aux Basques) Q67-182.

B59.10. ....unusual-looking people are used to frighten children. In some cases these are able to put a spell on you. (Burin) Q67-326.

B59.11. There are a few oddballs here, and parents warn misbehaving children that they will take them (especially if we stay out late at night). (Upper Island Cove) Q67-317.

B59.12. To keep children from going near wells or wharfs, an old man (N) (a local odd fellow) was going around in a little boat to push them into the water, they were told. (N) (N) (another local odd fellow) went around visiting wells and would push little children in if he saw them. (Petit Forte) Q67-1244.

B60. "Foolish", "silly" and retarded people.

B60.1. Local people such as half-wits, sillies and foolish people are sometimes used to keep

TIGHT BINDING

children, as they say, "under the thumb". The mother would probably say, "Don't go out after dark because so and so is going around tonight." (Bishop's Cove) Q67-927.

B60.2. There are no local people at home now who are used to frighten children. When I was small there was a man who was not very bright. He was by no means idiotic, and quite harmless. Small children who had never seen him or [known] him were told he was foolish. They probably thought or were told he would harm them if he came near them. Therefore, parents and older brothers and sisters would threaten the child in such a way as this: "Don't do that; I'll tell (N) (N) to come and get you." (Dark Cove) Q67-856.

B60.3. There used to be in our neighbourhood a candy store which is still there (St. John's West). It was a sort of hangout when I was about eight. The old lady who owned the store, when she got annoyed with us, would say, "(N) (N) is coming." I don't really know why I was scared of him, but I really was. He was simple and walked with a funny walk; maybe this is the reason. He did however chase us on one occasion, and threw rocks and sticks at us, but this usually resulted from us calling him names - from a safe distance. (St. John's) 68-6.

B60.4. Silly Willy. My parents would say, if I wasn't good, "Silly Willy will get you." I had to pass Silly Willy's house....every day on my way to school, and I was always scared that he would come and get me as I went past, so I'd run as fast as I could. (St. John's) Q63B.

B60.5. I remember the kids next door were told that they'd be given to Silly Willy, or, "Silly Willy'll get you!" ['sɪlɪ 'wɪlɪ] get jə] (St. John's) T C368,67-31.

B60.6. My Mom used to say when I was quite young, about five to seven [years old], "Come in when I call you, or 'Silly Willy' will get you." This used to terrify me because I, as all the children in the immediate neighbourhood [did], knew him to see him. We had heard stories about him told by other children - how he would take you to his hut.

Silly Willy was simple, as his name indicates. He was frequently seen in our neighbourhood walking around, looking in garbage cans, or in the local

TIGHT BINDING

candy store asking for candy. ....I was still a bit scared of him at about fifteen. I think it was his appearance and the stories I had heard about him. (St. John's) 68-6.

B60.7. I have known a case where a certain person living in the community was perhaps more fit to be in a mental institution. This person often swore a great deal or carried on an unruly kind of behaviour. Such a person was used to frighten children. "So and so will take you if you don't be good." (Heart's Content) Q67-1035.

B60.8. One local figure that was used as a boogy man in our town years ago was (N) (N). He was a simple old man who went around with a brin bag over his shoulder. He has moved to Stephenville now and he has a wheelbarrow instead of carrying the sack on his back. He has a long grey beard.

I believe it was the neighbours who used this threat on me; they would say, "If you are not good, (N) (N) will come and carry you off in his sack." ....

(N) wore a ragged overcoat that went to his ankles. He had...a large pair of old Army boots. ....(N) squints his eyes and bends over to speak to you. The smell is as repulsive as the appearance.[44] (Stephenville Crossing) 68-8.

Inuirect

B60.9. People in the community who are retarded are sometimes used as threatening figures. (Norris Arm) Q67-125.

B60.10. A local figure used to keep us at our best was a person named (N) (N). He was young and a "bit" mentally retarded, or even more than a "bit". He was a blocky type of person with very bony features. His hair was black and very unruly, his eyes were very large and seemed to come right out of his head, but seemed to always be directed towards the ground. He was bent over, with his knees bent and his toes turned in very much. This is the way he "scuffed" along the streets near St. John's harbour, and [he was] usually dressed in an old-fashioned pair of pants which were very "baggy" and which folded many times beneath his feet. His tongue, which was larger than normal, protruded from his mouth at all times and he constantly drooled. (St. John's) Q67-160.

---

[44] This is the same individual described in B50.1 above.

TIGHT BINDING

B60.11. In St. John's there is a person commonly known as Silly Willy, and many parents, mine included, would tell their children that they would hand them over to Silly Willy unless they were good and respectful to their parents. Silly Willy to this day still roams the streets of St. John's. Sometimes he spits at people and very often chases them. I have seen him many times, especially in Bannerman Park after school was out. We kids would torment him and he would curse us to hell. One day as we were tormenting him in the park he began to chase us and he caught one of us. My friend started to cry hysterically and a park attendant ran over and made Silly Willy release my friend. Ever since then I have been scared stiff of him; even now when I see him on the street I stay away from him. After this incident in Bannerman Park my parents would always use the name of Silly Willy to keep me good and obedient. (St. John's) Q64A.

B60.12. There are sometimes local people who are used to frighten children. There were a couple such people in my hometown. One of them was (N) (N). He was an old bachelor and sort of retarded. For no reason at all he would chase after someone, especially children. So if parents wanted children to behave themselves they would say that (N) was coming. (Winterton) Q67-948.

B60.13. When my mother was a little girl she was often frightened by one of the local people. When she was bad she was threatened by saying (N) (N) was coming to get her. (N) (N) was supposed to be foolish or mentally retarded, and he was often spoken of in order to frighten children in that community. (Gander?) Q67-250.

B60.14. Very often local people are used to frighten children. For example, in Port aux Basques there was a man who was retarded, and may parents told their children that if they weren't good this man would come and take them away. (Port aux Basques) Q67-737.

B60.15. When I was younger, there was a mentally retarded person in our community. He was very dirty and contrary. His name was (N) (N). I can very vaguely remember being threatened that he would take me if I marked the walls again, or tore up the books in the bookcase. (Carmanville) Q67-218.

B60.16. A long time ago a retarded boy (N) disliked a girl and one day he caught her and pushed her

TIGHT BINDING

head down the outdoor toilet hole. Of course she was in quite a mess and sick to her stomach for a long time. Parents use this as a threat to get children home after school. They tell the children to come home immediately after school or (N) will catch them and push their heads down the toilet hole. (Victoria) Q67-633.

B60.17. In St. John's west there was a retarded man about thirty five years old. This man had warts all over his body. If you were caught by him you were turned into a wart. (St. John's) Q67-946.

B60.18. While I was in grade school a local man who was slightly retarded was often seen around schools or down town. Silly Willy (as he was called) was feared by us all, partly because he used to wander around talking to himself and partly because parents and older children exploited our fear and told stories of how he gathered children into a huge bag and carried them home to kill. (St. John's) Q67-745.

B61. Grocery man.

B61.1. When the children were mischievous or naughty, they were threatened with being given to the grocery man. He apparently was an old grouch who hated children and used to "shoo" them out of his shop. This was considered a milder threat. (St. John's) Q67-729.

B62. Hermits, recluses and people living alone.

B62.1. Children are scared by people who live alone, usually old people. A parent will say, "If you don't be good, Uncle (N) will get you. (Point Leamington) Q67-237.

Indirect

B62.2. There is one man [at] home who is old and who lives alone. He wanders around the streets and doesn't speak to anyone. In the past few years I have heard a lot of parents threaten their children that if they were bad they would get this man to take them. The children are really scared of him and they run when they see him coming. But he is just a harmless old man. (Marystown) Q67-147.

B62.3. Local people are sometimes used to frighten children - usually some old person who lives alone and who doesn't like children for some reason. (Newmans Cove) Q67-31.

B62.4. Also in Heart's Delight lives an old man, who can possibly be called a hermit, and who has the reputation of being everything from a thief to a miser, who is used very frequently as a threat to the children. He is known to be very fond of roaming alone at night, and because of references made to him by older persons, children developed a fear of him, and he proves to be a very effective deterrent against those children who like to wander out at night. (Heart's Delight) Q67-252.

B62.5. (N) (N) was the hermit type and did not associate with the other people - [he was] used to scare the kids. (Holyrood) Q64A.

B63. Hunchback.

B63.1. In mom's neighbourhood there was an old hunchback whose name was (N). If the children misbehaved and were bad they would be told that "Old (N) " would come after them. (St. John's) Q67-327.

B63.2. ....in one community I lived there was an old man with a hunch-back who was often used to threaten children. If children were bad, parents threatened to get this old man to scare them. (St. John's) Q67-1053.

B63.3. In Gander one frightening figure was Mr. (N) (N), who supposedly lived in the woods, who took away little children if they were caught in the woods. He was usually built up by the children [i.e. in their imagination] because he had a hunched back and was short and old. (Gander) Q67-1057.

B64. Kidnapper.

B64.1. ...if we would stay out late at night, a.... kidnapper would come along and take us away somewhere and kill us. This was used many, many times to get us in early at nights. (Corner Brook) Q67-934.

TIGHT BINDING

B65. Mad or deranged people.

B65.1. There were two local characters in Bay Roberts who were often threatened on the children. One of these was a tall, thin, demented woman.... It was often said to a child, "Don't go, or (N). (N) will have you." (Bay Roberts) Q67-1295.

Indirect

B65.2. Occasionally a local person is used to frighten children. Generally this person is slightly mentally deranged.... (Channel) Q67-486.

B65.3. When I was growing up my mother used to threaten me by telling me that Aunt (N) would get me. Aunt (N) was an old lady who lived in Victoria, and after her husband died she became a bit insane. When you'd pass along by her house she'd throw rocks at you. All the younger generation used to regard her house as some sort of a mysterious place with all sorts of strange passages and dingy corridors. (Buchans) 66-2.

B66. Man.

B66.1. "If you don't be good I'll tell that man to carry you away." (Bloomfield) Q67-716.

B66.2. "Don't do that or I'll give you to that man over there." (St. John's) Q67-1194.

B66.3. "You'd better be good because there's a man coming to take you in a sack on his back." This was what Mom and Dad told us as kids to make us behave. I remember one morning after we were very bad, Dad came in dressed up with a pair of spectacles and a moustache, and a sack on his back. He gave my sister and I quite a scare so that we behaved for a while. (Bay Roberts) 66-5.

B66a. Big man [big men].[45]

B66a.1. The big man. I have heard parents use this

[45] The adult size of the human figures is constantly emphasised, especially by the use of the adjective "big".

one when they did not want children to go too far away from home. They might say, "Don't go up the road because the big man is up there." (Norris Arm North) Q67-771.

B66a.2. "Now you be good....or this big man is going to take you." [næ jɐu bɪ gʊ·d | ɔər ðɪs bɪg mæn ɪz 'gʊɪŋ tə teɪk jɐu] (Burin Bay Arm) T C360,67-31.

Indirect

B66a.3. One threat used by my grandmother in Traytown with her children was that if they were bad the big man upstairs would come down and get them.[46] (Gander) Q67-1057.

B66a.4. If children were misbehaving when there was company in, the parents would quite often say that the big man or woman, as the case may be, is going to take them away if they did not behave. (St. Anthony) Q67-205.

B66b. Big man with pliers.

B66b.1. Toothaches called for the big man with a pair of pliers. (Bishop's Falls) Q67-1059.

B66c. Giant of a man, giant size man.[47]

B66c.1. There was one person [at] home who was a giant of a man with a huge appetite, and although he was the friendliest kind of person, he was sometimes used to frighten children; such as, "If you goes down to the landwash (beach) Uncle (N) will get you" or if it was real stormy outside, "You can't go out today; Uncle (N) is waiting to catch all bad little boys out there." (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-1246.

---

[46] As no details are given, it is possible that the man is mythical, and this could also be true of those in B66a.1 and B66a.2.

[47] See also A49 above.

Indirect

B66c.2. In Cape Broyle there used to be a giant size man of about seven feet tall. He had enormous feet and stamped like a giant when he walked. His name was Mr. (N). When children got out of line, they would be threatened that if they stayed out too late or were bad at home or in school, then Mr. (N) would come and get them. This really frightened them because this man was real. (Cape Broyle) Q67-1111.

B66d. Old man [oul mæn] / [oul mɛən].

B66d.1. "Old man down there." [oul mɛən daun ðɛər] (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

B66d.2. An oldish type man who used to walk around the streets with a cane. [He was] kind of rough-looking [and] had a beard. Threat: "If you don't stop that, I'll call Wood Chisel (nickname for the man)." (Stephenville) Q67-10.

B66d.3. There was an old gentleman living in Roundabout, a few miles from home. Everyone knew him as Uncle (N). He was often used to make children behave or to get them in the house before dark. Children were told, "If you do that, I'll send you to Uncle (N)" or "Hurry up and come in; Uncle (N) is down in the cove." (Lord's Cove) Q67-719.

B66d.4. "If you go down there, that old man living down there close by just might grab you!". [ɪf jo gou dæun ðɛər ðæt oul mæn 'lɪvɪn dæun ðɛər klous bai dʒəs mæit? græb juu] (Burin) T C354,67-31.

B66d.5. She remembers an old man who was the terror of the locality as far as the children were concerned, and all the mothers had to say was, "Uncle (N) (N) will get you." He would take fun in chasing kids and scaring them. (St. John's?) Q67-481.

B66d.6. In our neighbourhood there lived a very old man who had a long white beard. He had the odd name of "Thousand Dollars". Every day he was seen walking down the road with his cane. The children would never go near this old man though he was harmless. When children were naughty they were threatened with, "You better be good or Thousand Dollars will get you." (St. John's) Q67-174.

TIGHT BINDING

B66d.7. In my home town there is one old man in particular who is used to scare children. He lives alone in an old house which is very dark and dirty-looking both inside and out. He is deaf (partially) and used to go around by night and steal wood from someone else's woodpile to burn in his stove the next day. In the daytime when we saw him he was dirty and very untidy-looking, and the thought of meeting him at night was very frightening indeed. I was told that if I wasn't a good boy, he would come that night and take me away to his house and lock me in a dark room with no windows. This really scared me because all my friends were told much the same thing, and indeed even some women were afraid of him, especially if they saw him at night. I still remember my mother saying quite sternly, "If you don't do what I tell you, (H) (H) will take you tonight and lock you in that dark old room in his house and keep you there." (Belleoram) Q64A.

B66d.8. "An old man with a bag on his back will come and put you in the bag and carry you off." (Outer Cove) Q66-110.

B66d.9. My parents usually threatened me by saying, "Be good or Mr. So and So (an old man who used to cut wood with a big axe and saw) will come and cut you up." (Chapel Arm) Q67-962.

Indirect .....

B66d.10. Most old men were used as a threat to children to make them behave. Old people were afforded much more respect and were to be feared more than they are today. The expression "to be seen and not heard" was quite common. This was particularly true when in the presence of older people; therefore in the minds of children they were to be feared. (Champney's East) Q63B.

B66d.11. There was an old man who used to sleep under the railway station and he was used as a threat by some parents to keep them [i.e. children] from staying out late in the nights. (St. John's) Q67-545.

B66d.12. An old man who once chased his wife with a pitchfork was often used to frighten children. If they didn't do what they were told, parents said this man would chase them with the pitchfork. This was often told to me when I was young and many parents are still using it in Holyrood. (Holyrood) Q67-662.

B66d.13. My parents sometimes warned me that if I were bad they would give me to an old man to put me in a bag. (St. Lawrence) Q67-438.

B66d.14. An old, stern-looking man, with a wooden leg, was once used as a threat to very small children. Apparently, a squeaking sound could be heard when this old man, (N), walked. One child was told (N) would get him if he went near the well. (Corner Brook) Q67-151.

B66d.15. If children saw an old man with a sack on his back, they usually became quite frightened. The man was supposed to take children away in the sack. (Goulds) Q67-305.

B66d.16. A very cranky and old man who spoke very gruffly, by the name of Uncle (N) (N) - which was a local name and not his real surname. [We were] usually told that he would cut us with his big splitting knife (fish knife) if we went near stages and boats. (St. Lawrence?) Q67-352.

B67. Murderer.

B67.1. Another of these local creatures lived in the time of my grandmother's childhood. He was a gnarled man with a twisted face who lived beside the Coish, or river-head, and he was believed to be a murderer. (Bay Roberts?) Q67-1295.

B68. Nightwatchman.

B68.1. ....in Ramea there was once a nightwatchman.... who actually used a rope if necessary to get kids from the wharf or [nearby] property.... He was contrary and quite hard to get along with. Some people used his name to scare kids into doing that which they didn't want to. The fact that he chased children with rope, and shouted as he ran, was known by all. He is also remembered for his swearing. (Ramea) Q67-644.

B69. Oil man.

B69.1. ....she sometimes threatens her small child with the Oil man. The child is afraid that the driver of the Oil truck may take him away. (St. John's?) Q63B.

B70. Whisker man ['wɪskər mæn].[48]

B70.1. ....he'd always say, "Go to bed! The whisker man is coming!" [gou tə bɛd ðə 'wɪskər mæn ɪz 'kʌmɪŋ] (St. Shotts) T.C530,68-43 (rec. H. Halpert).

B71. Widow.

B71.1. Mostly an old stern widow is used to frighten the children. (St. Thomas) Q67-681.

B72. Witch.

B72.1. Usually an old woman in the settlement was labelled a witch and the children were terrified of her. The threats were serious. (Informant from St. John's) Q67-179.

B72.2. Sometimes old women, usually Old Maids, were said to be witches, and people would use these as a means of scaring the children. (Deer Lake) Q67-1041.

B72.3. My mother remembers a particularly frightening old woman who was used by all the parents in that part of town as a means of making children behave. She was supposed to be the proverbial witch feared by all. (St. John's) Q67-1134.

B73. Wizard.

B73.1. Other times we were told not to go too far from the house because an old man who was supposed to be a wizard lived only a little ways away and he would capture us and probably change us into a rat. (Corner Brook) Q67-436.

B74. Woman.

B74.1. Sometimes parents would threaten to give a bad

---

[48] Whiskers and beards are a common frightening characteristic among the human figures. See Faris, "Mumming in an Outport Fishing Settlement", p. 130, f/n. 3.

child to Mrs. (N), a hard woman who lived on the street. ...."Eat your dinner or I'll give you to Mrs. (N)." (St. John's) Q67-222.

B74a. Old woman.[49]

B74a.1. A favourite person was an old woman who lived with her daughter in an old house on a hill overlooking the settlement. Her name was (N) (N) (N) ....and it was not uncommon to hear parents saying to their children, "(N) (N) is going to get you" or "I'll tell (N) (N) on you." (Elliston) Q67-537.

B74a.2. ....a favourite threat is the name of some person familiar to the people, who is known to be fearful [i.e. fearsome]. Example: Grandma (N) was an old woman who lived in Bishop's Falls when I was small. When we would go anywhere alone, my mother would yell at me, "Grandma (N) will chase you with the axe if you don't stay in the garden." (Bishop's Falls) Q67-1059.

Indirect

B74a.3. I remember one old woman in Corner Brook who would go out around the roads trying to talk to youngsters, and after a while they all became very scared of her. So if children were bad, their parents would say they were going to phone this woman to come up and get the kids. (Corner Brook) Q67-97.

B74a.4. At Whitbourne there lived a very old woman who was said to have a coffin in her home waiting for her death. Many of the older children often threatened the little ones by saying that if they were not good the old woman would capture them and place them in the coffin. (Whitbourne) Q67-980.

B74a.5. We had an old woman, who lived in a shabby old house, of whom we were afraid. We very rarely saw her but the older people, if they saw us

[49] See also B71 and B72 above.

around the house, would tell us that if she caught us near the place she would do all sorts of frightening things to us. (Freshwater, PB) Q67-522.

The Newfoundland Archive also includes many reports of named individual threatening figures, in addition to those already quoted above as representative of various frightening types of human being. These figures are simply manifestations of the types and usually embody several typical frightening characteristics which are emphasised or exaggerated for the purpose of threatening children. These individual figures are too numerous to discuss within the limited scope of the present study. Such a multiplicity and variety of examples, however, is evidence of the strong tradition of verbal controls in the Province and suggests the possibility of an interesting field of research for the sociologist and the psychologist.

SECTION C.

Class C: Animals, Objects, Locations and Natural Phenomena.

Although the majority of threatening figures recorded in the Newfoundland Archive may be assigned either to Class A or Class B as outlined above, there are also a number of figures which are neither supernatural/invented nor human in form. These include four principal groups:

1. Animals and other living creatures.
2. Inanimate objects, including instruments of physical punishment,
3. Locations (e.g. cellars, closets and cupboards) where adults threaten to put the child.
4. Natural phenomena (e.g. lightning).

Each of these will now be considered briefly, together with selected examples of the threats, in order to indicate something of the potential range of figures in this class. The examples in each group are presented in alphabetical order.

ANIMALS AND OTHER LIVING CREATURES

Various living creatures are frequently used as threatening figures. Certain animals, especially those which are wild and dangerous, such as bears and wolves, for example, are frightening both to the adults and to children. Other voracious wild animals, such as foxes and beavers, or birds of prey such as eagles and

hawks, are natural choices as threatening figures. Although larger animals such as moose are occasionally used, it is of course the more ferocious creatures such as the bear, often described as big and black, which are most commonly reported. Threats involving wild creatures are usually connected with the hazards of the natural environment. For example, the bear is used mainly to keep children away from the woods and other dangerous places, or to get them in before dark. However small they are, the wild animals are stranger and more mysterious than domestic ones, especially to children, and they therefore seem to be more frightening. In addition, certain creatures such as rodents, reptiles and insects often arouse feelings of intense dislike and disgust. The dislike of rats is particularly strong. As an elderly woman living in Windsor put it: "Rats is the dirtiest thing in the world"[1] and this distaste, actively utilised in the threats, accounts for the frequency of rats in the Newfoundland reports. By contrast, it seems that such innocuous creatures as rabbits usually have pleasant connotations and are therefore not used in threats.

Domestic animals, including dogs, cats, horses, bulls, cows and goats may also be frightening, especially when encountered suddenly or in dark or lonely places. The large animals may be frightening to children simply by virtue of their size or because children are not used to them. Animals such as dogs and cats may also be linked in the popular mind

---

[1] From an interview which I tape-recorded in Windsor in 1964.

TIGHT BINDING

with the supernatural. For example, the large black dogs, some of them dragging chains, which are referred to in several local legends in the Province are often associated with the Devil. This supernatural aura, makes real dogs appear more frightening, especially if they are met with during the hours of darkness. Although domestic animals are used less frequently than wild ones in threats, their frightening characteristics are exaggerated and distorted to make them appear more fearsome. In the same way, wild creatures such as the bear, fox and fish may be represented in threats as exceptionally voracious, and are often endowed with certain supernatural characteristics such as those often attributed to the human threatening figures. For example, a fish is said to be big enough to swallow a child, and although whales and large fish such as sharks are well known in Newfoundland waters, they are said to be capable of attacking and eating children who venture even on wharves near the shore. The deliberate emphasis on the voracity and general malevolence of the living creatures used in threats also links them with the supernatural/invented figures. The exaggeration of these characteristics is sometimes so extreme that the harmless sparrow, for example, is represented as a creature which will peck out the eyes of naughty children while they are asleep.

C1. Animals (general).

C1.1. To keep children from going near animals they [i.e. adults] would always say, "Don't go near that or he'll eat you." (Cormack) Q67-1012.

C1.2. To prevent them interfering with animals, e.g. "Don't touch that _____; it will bite you." (St. Anthony) Q67-115.

Indirect

C1.3. The most common frightening figures [include] ....any ferocious animal that the children would find fearsome. (Bell Island) Q67-725.

INDIVIDUAL ANIMALS AND REPTILES

C2. Bat.

Bats are reported as threatening figures from Grand Falls (Q67-673) and Windsor (Q67-79). In the Windsor report they are referred to as "wind bats".

C3. Bear.

C3.1. To get the kids in before dark: "There are bears out in the night." (King's Point) Q67-186.

C3.2. Sometimes I have heard the threat, "There is a bear in the woods today." (Bell Island) Q67-1143.

C3.3. Then again, if I wanted to go in the woods they [i.e. parents] would say, "There are bears in there." (King's Point) Q67-186.

C3.4. "Stay out of the woods because there are bears in there." (Norris Arm North) Q67-771.

C3.5. "The Big old Black Bears are coming out of the woods." (Lawn) Q67-352.

C3.6. "You can't go outside in the dark now 'cause the....bears are out of the woods." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

C3.7. "The Big Black Bear is coming." (Lewisporte) Q67-1272.

C3.8. To get the children in before dark the parents would threaten them with the "big bear". "You'd better come in before dark, Johnny, before the

TIGHT BINDING

big bear chases you. There was a little girl once who disobeyed her mother and a big bear came and hugged her to death."[2] (Little Harbour East, PB) Q67-1226.

C3.9. The bear is a popular one [i.e. a popular figure]. Parents do not want their children to go in the woods because they might get lost, so they say to them, "If you go in the woods the big bear might get you." (Norris Arm North) Q67-771.

C3.10. "Don't make fun of him - the - bear - will - come - and - carry - you - away." I remember this being used as a threat by my mother to keep me from making fun of bald-headed men. ....This threat stems from a story in the Old Testament where a bear came and carried away a number of children who were making fun of one of the b headed prophets. I could imagine the bear down from the hills and carrying me away, bu where I could never imagine. (Francois) 68-

C3.11. To get children in before dark, parents somet say, "You had better come in or a big bear will eat you." (Trinity, BB) Q67-103.

Indirect

C3.12. The bear and the moose were viewed as two huge saucy animals from which there was very little chance of escape. Attention was brought to the power of the bear's paws and teeth and also to his hairy appearance. The moose, however, is feared for its sharp charging antlers. (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

C3.13. The "bear" was used to scare me from the dark outdoors. (Carmanville) Q67-218.

C3.14. The "Big Black Bear" was threatened on children to keep them from going in the woods and other dangerous places. (Gambo) Q67-638.

C3.15. The Big Black Bear was threatened when children were to stay out of the woods or....when they wanted to go berrypicking. (Port Anson) Q67-402.

C3.16. To keep them from going too far in the woods berrypicking, they are told there are bears around. (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

---

[2] Cp. C3.28 below, where a Wellerism acts as a rider to the threat in the same way as the cautionary tale summarised here.

HIGH BINDING

C3.17. ....if a child wouldn't eat his supper he was threatened to be put out with the bears or some other animal...." (Bloomfield) Q67-37.

C3.18. If they [i.e. children] wanted to go somewhere they [i.e adults] would tell the youngster that if he came they would set the bears on him.... (Rocky Harbour) Q67-901.

C3.19. To get children to behave themselves, parents usually tell them that the....bears will come after them. These threats are most often used and usually effective to keep children from going into dangerous places or places where they aren't permitted. (Milltown) Q67-892.

C3.20. ....the big black bear will come out of the woods and grab them. (Windsor) Q67-629.

C3.21. People also told their children that if they stayed out after dark, the big black bear would grab them on the way home. (Bell Island) Q67-385.

C3.22. To prevent children from going to dangerous places like the woods -- the bear would get them. (Dunville) Q67-389.

C3.23. They [i.e. adults] tell them to stay close to home or a bear will get them. (Port aux Basques) Q67-737.

C3.24. Bears. If I were bad or wanted to go somewhere, my parents would say the....bears were going to have me. (Burnt Cove) Q63B.

C3.25. If children were out after dark the parents would tell them that....the bears would have them. (Campbellton) Q67-531.

C3.26. "The Bears" - In our community of Sandy Cove, if children were not home at dark, their parents would tell them that the bears would have them. Children believed that a number of bears would attack them if [they were] out at dark. (Sandy Cove, BB) Q67-758.

C3.27. To prevent children from going to dangerous places like the forest, they were told the ....bears would have them. (Newmans Cove) Q67-31.

C3.28. My parents often used such threats as....the bear to keep us from going to dangerous places, and they used them also when we were naughty. ....The bear was said to take those children who said, "I don't care". A common expression used in Burin when children said this was,

"That's what Jack said and the bear got him."[3] (Burin) Q67-143.

C3.29. If he wanted to go to a dangerous place or into the woods alone, he was told that....the bears would take him. (Bay of Islands area) Q67-896.

C3.30. Children were also threatened with being carried off by a big, black bear. These threats succeeded in the majority of cases because the children were really terrified at the mention of these frightening creatures. (Topsail) Q67-600.

C4. Beaver ['bi:vər].

C4.1. ....a small brook used to run quite near our house, an' my parents..my mother was always warning me....about going near that brook. An' the figure she always used to frighten me was..was a beaver,....unusually enough. But ....I never really knew what a beaver looked like, but I..I remember seein' one on..on the back o' the dime, of course. But she..she said that if I fell into the brook, if I went too close to the brook an' fell in, that the.. the beaver would come up an' wind itself around my legs an' pull me down, you see. And this.. I remembered almost having nightmares about this sort o' stuff! ....you have certain ages where you..where you take on more responsibility. At a certain age....if you go near a brook you have sense enough to look after yourself. You don't fall in, an' if you fall in you can pull yourself out....I would say around the age of six. .... "Don't..don't go down Big Brook! There's beavers down there!" [dount? | dount? go dæun big brɔk? ‖ dərz 'bi:vərz dæun ðɛər] (Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

C5. Bull.[4]

C5.1. Several different frightening figures are used such as....the big bull.... (Forrest's Point) Q67-158.

---

[3]This Wellerism might be regarded as a threat and could therefore be classified with the examples in direct speech.

[4]Mummers sometimes used the dried head of a bull as a disguise, or made a figure, similar to the hobby-horse, which was called "the bull" and was particularly frightening. See pp. 426-7 above.

C5.2. Words used by parents to get children to behave include....the Mad Bull.... (St. John's) Q67-222.

C6. Cat.[5]

C6.1. There was an old character called Uncle (N) (N) who would threaten a tomcat on all the local youngsters and then proceed to chase them. (Perry's Cove) Q63B.

C7. Cow.

C7.1. To prevent them from interfering with animals, usually they use some saying about the moo-cow. (St. John's) Q67-303.

C8. Dog [dɑg].

C8.1. "Big black dog in there! You can't go near there!" [bɪg blæk? dɑg ɪn ðɛə || jə kænt? gou nɪər ðɛər] [said with an urgent though lowered voice] (Brigus) T C364,67-31.

C8.2. "The dogs is after you." [ðə dɑgz ɪz 'æftə jə] ....They'd say, well, "The dogs is goin' to chase you!" [ðə dɑgz ɪz 'gouɪnə tʃeɪs juu] (Port Saunders) T C270,66-24.

C8.3. "You be good or I'll throw you to the dogs." (St. Anthony) 66-3.

C8.4. The children were threatened when they misbehaved, or, "Get in before dark or the....big black dog will take you." (Holyrood) Q64A.

Indirect

C8.5. When parents and other adults try to get children to behave, they use such terms as ....the Big Dog. (Mary's Harbour, Lab.) Q67-784.

---

[5]Cp. A46, A92 and A107 above, and C15 below.

TIGHT BINDING

C8a. Bulldog.

C8a.1. Bulldog: Used to quiet [sic] children of ages two to four. Heard mostly within my own home. This bulldog named Kirt [sic, Kurt?] was brought to my hometown some ten years ago and it was the only one most people had ever seen, and quite a few older people were afraid of the horrible-looking dog. I guess the mothers of quite a few families, along with my own mother, used the dangerous characteristics of this dog to quiet or frighten children into obeying. Here's one [incident] I remember quite clearly: Mother would get Tommy home maybe at seven thirty or eight p.m. by some Boo-Darby method.[6] Generally speaking, he would be kicking and squealing furiously. Becoming impatient, mother would motion to one of us older children to go to the door. We'd know what to do because it happened almost every night. I would go to the door and sing out rather loud to Kirt, or else to Mrs. (N), its owner, and tell her to send Kirt over after Tommy. This would close him up long enough to wash him, and then to get him out of his fright someone would go to the door and tell Kirt to go back now because Tommy is good again. (Ramea) 67-10.

C8a.2. If children were naughty they were told that the bulldog would take them. (Placentia) Q67-398.

C8b. Newfoundland dog.

C8b.1. Such expressions [as threats of the boogie man] were never used by her parents, but if she didn't do what she was told, her sister would often bring in her Newfoundland dog. She claims that's why she is afraid of dogs today.[7] (St. John's) Q63B.

C8c. Pups.

C8c.1. Sometimes, to induce children to sleep, mothers

---

[6] I.e. by threatening them with the Boo-Darby. See A80, and especially A80.1 above.

[7] In this example the threat is apparently implied in the bringing in of the dog and is not expressed verbally. Cp. C46, C47 and C48 below.

BINDING

say, "The pups are coming." They call the pups; then to win the child they say, "Get on, pesh [sic]; you're not going to get Johnny!" (Green Island Brook) Q67-564.

C9. Fox.

C9.1. Some thing[s] parents used to frighten children [with include....the] fox.... (Heart's Delight) Q67-942.

C9.2. When I was small I remember I was threatened that the foxes would come and get me, by my father, in an attempt to get me in before dark. (Bonavista) Q67-172.

C10. Frog [frɑg].

C10.1. And another thing they used to tell the young race [i.e. younger generation] was....frogs. "Now mind! You be careful, 'cause [there's] a big frog there; and little children don't mean much to them!". [nəu main ‖ jəu bɪ 'kɛərfəl | kəz ə bɪg frɑg ðɛə | ænd 'lɪtl 'tʃɪldrən daunt? mi:n mʌtʃ tə ðɛm] (St. Shotts) T C527,68-43 (rec. H. Halpert).

C11. Goat.

C11.1. "The billy goats will come and eat you up." (Anderson's Cove) 66-12.

Indirect .....

C11.2. I always used to be terrified to go near the Orange Lodge because my parents used to tell me that there was a huge goat with enormous horns in there which would run after me if I ever went near the place. As a result I stayed away. (Blaketown) Q67-889.

C11.3. A very common frightening figure was "the goat in the Ante Room".[8] This the children

[8]Both this figure and the one in C11.2, like others in Class C, might equally well be classified as supernatural/invented. Although they have prominent supernatural characteristics, however, they are apparently presented to the children as real animals. Cp. C30, C40, C44, C45 and C48 below.

were threatened with to keep them quiet during church service and Sunday School. The Ante Room was located at the end of the church - near the pulpit - where maintenance equipment was kept. If children disobeyed the Sunday School teacher or their parents, they were told that they would be taken to the Ante Room where the goat would deal with them. This was very effective and children believed it until they were six or seven years old. (Campbellton) Q67-749.

C12. Horse.

C12.1. "If you go handy to the horse, it will bite you." (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

Indirect

C12.2. There were many wild horses loose in the community when Mrs. (N) was a child, and of these she was afraid. Her mother took advantage of this whenever she could by telling her daughter she would throw her out to the horses. (Valleyfield) Q63B.

C13. Mole.

C13.1. "....moles are coming." (Lawn) Q67-352.

C14. Moose [muus].[9]

C14.1. You see, when we lived in Frenchman's Cove we'd probably be....we weren't very old, but, you know, we would never be at home! There's no way to keep track of us! My father wasn't home, only my mother. She had some smaller kids than we were. ....myself an' my older brother we would be gone all the time, now I think about it, sometimes! You know what we used to do - the mischief we used to get into! We'd be gone all day long. We'd hardly come home to eat, you know! An'..an' usually

[9] See also C3.12 above.

TIGHT BINDING

probably she..if she heard us talking about going in the country somewhere - an' it happened pretty often - probably go trouting or just....I don't know - you'd probably go in for anything: setting rabbit snares an' things like that, you know. An' she would ..she would probably mention the moose, you know: "You better be careful about the moose!" [jɯu 'bɛtər bɪ 'kɛərfɷl ə 'bɑutʔ ðə mɯus] (Frenchman's Cove, FB) T C355,67-31.

C14.2. You know, you see a..a child go in the woods an' you go along an' you say, "You shouldn't go in there! There's moose in there!" [jɯu 'ʃɷdntʔ gou ɪn ðɛər || ðɛərz mɯuz ɪn ðɛər] (Dark Cove) T C355,67-31.

C14.3. "Eat your supper or I'll let all the moose in." (Burnt Woods, Conne River) Q67-213.

C14.4. The moose is used in Dark Cove to keep children from wandering in the woods. "Don't go in there; the moose will have you." (Dark Cove) Q67-856.

Indirect

C14.5. The two threats mainly used in Gander are/were the "Boogie-man" and the "moose". These were playful and the majority of the children were quite frightened. The "moose" is of course an animal very [common] in and around the Gander area. Children have heard many tall tales about the moose and thus it's use[d][10] as a frightening figure. (Gander) Q67-661.

C14.6. Another....way to frighten children is to tell them....a big moose will get them. (Port au Port) Q67-123.

C15. Mountain cat (i.e. lynx).

C15.1. ....[children were told] not to go away in the woods 'cause mountain cats would get them, see. (Hawkes Bay) T C276,66-24.

C16. Mouse [mæus].

C16.1. Oh, it was really about eating his supper....

---

[10] The contributor wrote "thus, it's use as" and perhaps intended to write "hence its use as".

tryin' to coax him to eat his supper. "If you don't do this I'll get the mouse after you." [if ju dount? duu ðis ail get? ðii mæus 'æftər juu] (St. John's) T C369,67-31.

C16.2. ....instead of the Boogie-man they sometimes say, "Big mouse will get you." (St. John's) Q67-136.

Indirect
.....

C16.3. When parents wanted to make the children behave they [i.e. the children] were threatened with the....mouse.... (Ferryland) Q67-577.

C16.4. To keep children from going somewhere where they were not allowed, parents used to tell them that there were mice out there. (Winterton) Q67-948.

C16.5. When my aunt would baby-sit me when I was small, she would always tell me that if I didn't eat my supper a little mouse would come along and eat it. This didn't frighten me, but for a little mouse to eat my meal was just too much to take, so I would eat my meal. This couldn't be really classified as playful or serious either, and I can't say that it was truly a frightening figure. (St. John's) Q67-1024.

C17. Rat [ræt].[11]

C17.1. "There's rats in there!" (Mount Pearl) Q67-380.

C17.2. Rat: "I've got rats stored up in my attic for naughty little boys like you." (Heart's Delight) Q67-76.

C17.3. The rat. Parents use this sometimes when they want their children to stay away from the cellar. They might say, "Don't go near the cellar because there are rats down there." (Norris Arm North) Q67-771.

C17.4. "If you don't be quiet, I'll put you down in the cellar with the rats!" (St. John's) Q67-222.

C17.5. To get children to be quiet and to go to sleep when put to bed, parents would sometimes say, "Lie down before the rats come...." (Western Bay) Q67-605.

---

[11] See also B15.74 and B15.116 above, and C31.1 below.

C17.6. "Go to sleep before the rat comes." (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

C17.7. ....some people use "rat" as a scare word.... "The rats are coming" accompanied by a scraping noise....made on the walls unnoticeable to the child. (Lawn) Q67-352.

C17.8. One of the threats used in my area to cause children to behave properly is to say to them, "The rats are coming!" This is said rather fast but in a spooky tone of voice. It always follows or is followed by a scratching on the nearby wall with the fingers. Sometimes the adult puts his fingers under the chair to scratch the bottom surface unnoticed to the child. (Sop's Arm) 68-10.

C17.9. They sometimes say, "The rats are coming" and with that they sometimes tell the story of a little boy who, while sleeping, got his face chewed away by rats. (Port aux Basques) Q67-182.

C17.10. "Listen, the rats are coming." (Rodgers Cove) Q67-712.

C17.11. "If you go there, the rats will get you." (Mount Pearl) Q67-1256.

C17.12. The big rat was used to get children to sleep. "There is a big rat out there, who will get you if you don't stop crying and get to sleep" a mother would say to her child who didn't want to stay in bed and go to sleep. (Elliston) Q67-537.

C17.13. Others say, "The rats will have you." (Bay Roberts) Q67-106.

C17.14. Rats - very, very common. "Rats'll have you in the cellar!" [ræts l hæv jəu ɪn ðə 'sɛlər] (North River) T C417,67-31.

C17.15. "The rats will carry you away." (Chapel Arm) Q67-962.

C17.16. Rat - "If you're not good....the rat will bite you." (St. John's) Q67-303.

C17.17. "If you don't go to sleep the rats will bite your toes." (St. John's) Q67-144.

C17.18. "If you go in there the rats will eat you." (Spaniard's Bay) Q67-318.

Indirect

C17.19. In order to stop them from going in dangerous places they were threatened with rats.... (Bishop's Cove) Q67-1124.

C17.20. If a father has tools or paint or nails in his shed, to keep small boys away he might tell [them] there are rats in there. (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

C17.21. The only threat given seriously at all was that the child would be put in the closet where there were supposed to be rats. This threat was taken seriously by only a few people. (Grand Falls) Q67-1293.

C17.22. If you didn't go to bed, the rats would come and get you. (Heart's Delight) Q67-693.

C17.23. [If children were] crawling around in half-fallen-down houses -- the rat would get them. (Dunville) Q67-389.

C17.24. The rat is used when parents wish their children to stay away from some room or building. They warn them that the rats will get them if they go there. (Heart's Delight) Q67-493.

C17.25. If they wouldn't go asleep, they were told that the rats would come and eat their toes. (St. Phillips) Q67-1147.

C17.26. A friend of mine, when she wanted to take bread to bed with her, was told that if she did, the rats would come and eat her. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1234.

C18. Weasel.

C18.1. A weasel was often also used [in threats]. (St. John's) Q67-464.

C19. Wolf.

C19.1. "Don't go out in the dark or the wolves will get you." I heard this expression in Fogo from my boarding house lady. She would say this to her son, age five, when she didn't want him to go out, or she was trying to get him ready for bed. (Fogo) 68-6.

Indirect

C19.2. The wolf was used to keep them from going in dangerous places, such as the woods. (Terra Nova) Q67-466.

TIGHT BINDING

C20. Worm.

C20.1. Mom says a worm will come out and bite your tongue off.... I recall she uses this expression with the children: "Now, Florence, you know you shouldn't suck your thumb, and if you don't take your thumb out of your mouth a big worm is going to come out of it and bite your tongue off; then what will you do?" Florence just looks shyly at Mom and goes to another room and puts her thumb back in. (Corner Brook) 68-9.

BIRDS

C21. Greep (i.e. eagle).

C21.1. When I was a young boy (eight to twelve years), I was often subject to the frightening figure. Here is one instance, however, which I can remember very vividly, when I was really frightened. I had gone to this house with a friend of mine around six o'clock in the evening, in December, 1954. This young fellow wanted to go out with me again, but his mother didn't want him to go out. She said: "If you goes outdoors any more the night [i.e. tonight], that greep (eagle) will get you and pick out your eyes." I did not know what a greep was. I thought it was a man, who would pull out my eyes with a hook or something. (Seal Cove, FB) 68-13.

C22. Hawk.

C22.1. One of the most dreaded birds at Seal Cove, among the small children, is a hawk. It is a frightening figure for them. They believe that it will pick their eyes out, if they come into contact with it when there are no grown-ups around. The parents have done this, no doubt, because they tell their children this, when they don't want them to go away near the water, or on the pond when the ice is not good. Children from ages six to twelve are [the] ones who fear the bird the most. (Seal Cove, FB) 68-13.

TIGHT BINDING

C23. Jay.

C23.1. If you had a hole in your clothing, you were told not to go out, because the jays would have you. (Harbour Grace) 67-21.

C24. Owl.

C24.1. The "Hootin' Owl" would frighten us too. We would be threatened with, "If you don't come in before dark the Hootin' Owl will carry you away." A hootin' owl can be heard in the trees after dark, and they sound very scary but no-one is afraid of [them] in a cosy bed or warm kitchen. He is usually only used to frighten small children. (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-552.

Indirect

C24.2. A very common frightening figure at home to get children to come in before dark is the "Harn Owl" (Horned Owls). Because they are very common and their horribly human noise can be heard at dark and just after, it's one of the most popular and effective ways of getting children in near dark. But the horned owl is slowly becoming an extinct bird. (Cartwright, Lab.) Q67-121.

C24.3. Horny Owl. This owl would carry away children who were bad. (Windsor) Q67-

C25. Sparrow.

C25.1. I remember once her [i.e. my neighbour's] daughter and myself killed a little sparrow in its nest and when we told her what we had done she told us that the mother sparrow was going to peck out our eyes that night when we were sleeping. I went home crying and was afraid to go to bed that night. All my mother's coaxing could not quiet me down. I think that this scaring children affects them when they are older. They seem to be lonely and afraid of the dark throughout their lives. (Freshwater, Carbonear) Q67-904.

TIGHT BINDING

FISH AND OTHER MARINE CREATURES.

C26. Fish.

C26.1. To keep them away from the river - a fish would swallow them. (Holyrood) Q67-662.

C62a. Big fish.

C26a.1. To prevent children from playing around wharves, parents have said, "A big fish....will come and get you." (Harbour Deep) Q67-822.

C26a.2. ...."the big fish will get you." ....the threat of the big fish was used to keep them from going near the water. (St. John's) Q67-36.

C26a.3. "If you go near the water the big fish will swallow you." (Embree) Q67-654.

Indirect

C26a.4. The big fish was used as a warning to children to keep away from wharves, or any place where there was danger of falling into the sea. (Informant from St. John's) Q67-706.

C26a.5. "Big fish" was used by my father when I was around the wharf or dock with him. It was meant to keep me away from the edge of the dock. It was very effective because I could visualize a large fish jumping from the water and swallowing me. (Belleoram) Q64A.

C26a.6. She [i.e. my mother] use[d] to tell me not to go down to the beach or near the water, or the big fish would come and grab me and pull me out to sea and eat me. (Lewisporte) Q67-437.

C26a.7. The big fish or shark was always a dread to the young swimmers who swam around the wharfs at the beach. It was always known that if you swam out too far from the wharfs a large fish will eat your person. (Bell Island) Q67-602.

C26a.8. The Big Fish: this was described to me as being somewhat [similar] to a shark, but much larger. He would eat me if I went on the beach or near the water. (Curling) Q67-698.

C26a.9. One way of frightening children away from the water in Grole is to tell them that a big fish will come in and eat them. I can remember my parents telling me this. Children from the ages of five to seven are frightened by the threat but from seven onwards no notice is given to it. I imagined that a great big shark would come in. I had seen them brought in by fishermen in their nets.

I was always told that the sharks came in on the western side of the harbour, so we dare not go near the water. Not only our parents told us, but also other people. (Grole) 68-7.

C26a.10. The big fish was a favourite of the fathers of the children. When they [i.e. the fathers] told them this they would exaggerate the size of fish and tell their children that if they went near the pond this big fish would come along and swallow them. (Harbour Grace) Q67-1047.

C26a.11. Children were sometimes threatened against a big fish that will come and swallow them if they don't stay away from the sea water. (Blue Cove) Q67-177.

C27. Conger eel.

C27.1. Another sort of figure that I have heard mentioned is the Conger-eel -- a giant of an eel that is supposed to be living in a certain pond near home. (Shearstown) Q67-782.

C28. Shark.

C28.1. "The sharks are coming." (Moreton's Harbour) Q67-606.

C28.2. "Don't you go getting overboard - 'cause - the - sharks - will - get - you - if - you - do." This was often used by my mother when I was a youngster to keep me from swimming in the harbour. I have since heard her use this same phrase with my brother's young fellow (approximately nine years old). This phrase....was said with the first words rather loud and fast, and each succeeding word was drawn out. Usually it was accompanied with a shaking of her finger as well.

I used to imagine the shark being a monstrous

TIGHT BINDING

size. I imagined it emerging from the water, opening his mouth and gulping me down. (Francois) 68-3.

Indirect

C28.3. Children were threatened by sharks to prevent them from going into dangerous places.... (Oderin) Q67-84.

C28.4. If a child goes out on a pier or near deep water the shark will come and take him away. (St. John's) Q67-874.

C29. Tansy.

C29.1. Any day our parents didn't want us to go swimming, my sisters....and I would be told that the tansies would be thick. We were really scared of getting in the water, which was salt bay water, and feeling a tansy around our feet. They are long thin fish that coil around you like a snake and I think they live only in salt water. The children at home know of these tansies too, and fear them when they're swimming. They may not bite you but it doesn't feel very good having them wind around your legs while in the water. (Little Heart's Ease) 68-4.

C30. Whale.

C30.1. One pond was "supposed" to have a monstrous whale in a huge cave beneath its surface. (Bell Island) Q67-725.

INSECTS AND SPIDERS

C31. Insects (general).

C31.1. "Be good or I'll put you in the cellar where the rats and the insects will eat you up." this is said to the young children of my town when they are annoying their parents. The older siblings of the family, or the parents, may say this. The children are afraid of the

TIGHT BINDING

dark, as well as the rats, worms, ants, etc., which are usually found in the cellars. Being eaten by such horrible things terrifies the children and they usually obey the warnings. (Buchans) 66-16.

Indirect

C31.2. My parents used to tell me that if I were not good, then they would poke me into a dark cellar and let the insects eat me. Children are really scared when threatened, as they think their parents can make insects....eat them. (St. Lawrence) Q67-438.

C32. Bugs.

C32.1. When my father put me to bed when I was small he always used to say, "Sleep tight, don't let the bugs bite." This was to try and get me to go to sleep quickly and quietly. (St. John's) Q67-610.

C33. Lice.

C33.1. A threat my mother remembers that she said frightened her when she was young cautioned her to keep clean. - "If you go to school and get lousy the lice will carry you to Goose Pond!" - Goose Pond is an actual place on the Port au Port Peninsula where dynamite for a limestone quarry was kept. (Port au Port) Q67-651.

C34. Spiders.

C34.1. "There's black spiders in there!" (Mount Pearl) Q67-380.

C35. Wasp.

C35.1. For children sucking their thumb a cure for this was [to] say that if they kept sucking it a wasp would come out of it.... Example: my brother's daughter, Florence, is always sucking

TIGHT BINDING

her thumb; her mother....says....: "Florence, if you keep sucking your thumb a big wasp will come out of it and sting you! Florence then takes her thumb out of her mouth and looks at it. She goes off where [her mother] doesn't see her and puts it back in. This was also said to me by my sister....when I was about four or five. Florence is four years old. (Corner Brook) 68-9.

INANIMATE OBJECTS, INCLUDING INSTRUMENTS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE.

A number of inanimate objects are used as threatening figures. They include various instruments of physical punishment in addition to those referred to in numerous examples quoted above,[12] and hint at the potential range and violence of such threats. The remaining examples of miscellaneous objects used in threats illustrate the fact that such objects often have supernatural connotations similar to those of many other figures in Class B and Class C.

INSTRUMENTS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

C36. Belt.

C36.1. "I'll take off my belt to you." This was sometimes said by my father when he became tormented with....me making a noise in the house. This was about ten to fifteen years ago. (Port de Grave) 66-10.

Indirect

C36.2. ....I had a crowd out the other evening, kind of late, and the way I frightened 'em in - I

[12] See, for example, pp. 40-47.

drawed off this old belt! And once..and when I went out like that and hauled off the belt, I said, "Get in there for the night!" You see them goin'! (Long Cove, Burin) T C151,65-16 (rec. H. Halpert).

C37. Billy-knocker ['bɪlɪ ˌnɑkər].

C37.1. ....I remember I used to be afraid of a policeman's billy-knocker [i.e. truncheon]. Mother used to always tell me she was goin' to get that for me - tan me with that!.... you know, the long..the long stick that the policeman carries. I've no idea why I was frightened of it, but I was. I was scared to death of his billy-knocker. ...."[If] you keep that up now, you know what's goin' to happen to you! Remember the billy-knocker!" [jʉu kiːp ðæt ʌp nau | jʉ nou wəts 'gənə 'hapʔn tʉ jʉu || rɪ'mɛmbə ðə 'bɪlɪ ˌnɑkər] (St. John's) T C367,67-31.

C38. Boot.

C38.1. A much more effective threat is "your father's boot!". (Lord's Cove) Q67-719.

C39. Ironing cord.

C39.1. "Where's the ironing cord?" This was a threat that my mother and father made to me when I was a child. Even though they made many threats they weren't very frequently carried out. ....Heard in St. John's 1946-60. (St. John's) 67-9.

C40. Knife.

C40.1. Mrs. (N) 's father saw her sticking her tongue out at him one day when she was a little girl. When she went inside the house she was afraid as he had told her not to stick out her tongue and she expected him to smack her. He came up to her and she shielded her face, expecting a smack, but he said, "Next time you

TIGHT BINDING

lick out your tongue, a big knife is going to drop down from the sky and cut it right off!" Mrs. (N) added that she was very careful not to stick out her tongue after that! (St. John's) 69-47.

C41. Slipper.

C41.1. My father....used the direct method. He'd say, "Where's my slipper....?" (St. John's) Q67-1232.

C42. Strap.

C42.1. ....but if she really got mad she'd say, you know, "I'm goin' to take the strap to you!" [ɐm 'gonə tɑik ðə stræp tə jɑ] (St. John's) T C367,67-31.

C42.2. An' another thing was that if you got a strap in school, mother'd always say, "You come..you come an' tell me you got a strap in school an' you'll get another one when you come home!" [jɯu kʌm | jɯu kʌm ən tɛl mɨi jɯu gɑt ə stræp ɨn skɯul ən jɯul gɑʧ ə'nʌðə wʌn wɛn jɯ kʌm oum] (Brunette Island) T C353,67-31.

C43. Switch.

C43.1. "Where's my....switch (sapling branch)....?" (St. John's) Q67-1232.

MISCELLANEOUS INANIMATE OBJECTS

C44. Crust.

C44.1. ....the crust [of bread] was supposed to turn into some kind of an animal if you didn't eat it, and it would crawl after you. ....if you don't eat the crusts of bread they would crawl after you. And I..I wouldn't..I'll always

TIGHT BINDING

eat the middle of the bread and leave the crusts. ....They would say, "Alright! If you don't eat it, they will crawl after you!" [ɑəl'ræit? || ɪf jə dount i:t ɨt dɔcil krɑəl 'æftə jə] (Harbour Buffett) T C411,67-31.

C45. Fog-horn.

C45.1. Fog-horn called Boo-man on account of the sound made by it. Usually effective on a dull foggy evening if some small child did not wish to go in the house when called from playing with [his] friends. (Port Elizabeth) Q64A.

C46. Feather.

C46.1. Feather - for [mis]behaviour: feathers blown at a child in order to frighten him. (St. Anthony) Q63B.

C47. Fur mitt.

C47.1. I know of a parent who used to put a fur mitt or collar on the stairs because her child was afraid of a fur and therefore the child would stay off the stairs. (St. John's) Q67-341.

C48. Mat, "Mattie".

C48.1. Mrs. (N) told me of a time she was spending a few days with some relatives who lived in a nearby community. While she was there, two or three of the younger children would play about in the kitchen or other rooms. For a short time everything would go along fine; then one or more of them would get a bit too noisy to suit some of the older members of the family, who would threaten them with "The Mattie" if they did not behave themselves. This threat would quiet them for a little while; then someone would forget - with drastic results, for the threat would be carried out immediately. A large mat....would be quickly snatched up from the floor, held in front of the person, who would go after the culprit. Usually there were terrifying screams or the child would fall on the floor crying; in any case, promises

for better behaviour were given before "The Mattie" would leave them. Although the children knew what "The Mattie" was, it always seemed to have a frightening effect on the children in that family and in a few of the neighbours' [families] as well. ....This took place about fifty years ago. It may still be done by the younger parents there. (Port Elizabeth) Q64A.

C49. Oven.

C49.1. "I'll put you in the oven...." (Stag Harbour) Q67-203.

FRIGHTENING LOCATIONS

Children are sometimes threatened directly with certain locations which are either intrinsically frightening or are made to appear so for the purposes of social control. These places may be either in the house or outdoors. Those in the house are usually dark, and the child is threatened that he will be shut up in them. The outdoor locations are usually dangerous or frightening in themselves.

C50. Blowing hole.

C50.1. Also sometimes children are threatened with the blowin' hole if they go near the sea. (Lord's Cove) Q67-388.

C51. Cellar.[13]

C51.1. 'Put us in a....old cellar somewheres.... Bar you in, see. What you had for puttin'

[13] See also C17.3, C17.4, C17.14, C31.1 and C31.2 above.

TIGHT BINDING

potatoes in, see; cellar built in the ground, see, for keepin' potatoes in. .... If the children did anything naughty against parents' wishes they would say..., "I'll lock you in the cellar." (St. John's) Q67-341.

Indirect

C51.2. ....they'd tell you they was goin' to put you in the cellar, you know. They wouldn't put you in the cellar, but.... Yes, [they would be] scared to go to the cellar then. Yes sir! They fall down that cellar, you know, they'd break their neck. ....Yeah, 'cause it [would] be deep down in there, see. (Hawkes Bay) T C276,66-24.

C52. Cemetery ['sɛmətɹi].

C52.1. ....in September month we go berry-picking, and Mother would be probably worried about us if we didn't get back by six or six thirty, because it was getting dark, and our mothers or somebody would say, "Better be back because you got to pass the cemetery!" ['bɛtər bɪ bæk bɪ'kəz ju gɛt tə pæs ðə 'sɛmətɹi] (Greenspond) T C362,67-31.

C53. Closet.[14]

C53.1. A dark closet, or being put alone in a dark place, are sometimes used to frighten children. (Port aux Basques) Q67-999.

C53.2. ....if he were bad, his parents would often put him in the dark closet.... (St. John's) Q63B.

C54. Cupboard ['kʌvərd].

C54.1. But I remember in our house there was a cupboard, and my Mother or somebody would say, "If you're not good, I'll put you in the cupboard!" [ɪf

[14]See also C17.21 above, and C54.4 below.

TIGHT BINDING

juər nɑt̚ʔ gɔd ɐl pɔt jɐu ɪn ðə 'kʌvərd] (Greenspond) T C362, 67-31.

C54.2. "I'll bar you in the cupboard." My mother ....usually said this to me when I was not behaving properly. The "cupboard" was a small room in the house where the beef barrel, flour barrel, flour bag of bread, [which] was hung up to the ceiling, and the pots and pans were kept. It wasn't the type of cabinet cupboard so common today. Heard about ten to fifteen years ago. (Hibbs Cove) 66-10.

Indirect
.....

C54.3. Children were punished usually for being naughty. The usual punishment was a slap or being put in a dark cupboard for ten minutes. (Fortune) Q67-709.

C54.4. Another threat was to bar [lock] one in the cupboard, clothes closet, or space under the stairs, and this was really frightening. (Botwood) Q67-30.

C55. Room.

C55.1. Well....sometimes they used..they were goin' to bar 'em in a room an' frighten 'em that way. (Cow Head) T C265,66-24.

C56. Stairs, steps.[15]

C56.1. Often I have heard parents say, "If you don't behave yourself, you will be barred in under the steps in the dark!" (Grole) Q67-253.

C56.2. Threats of being locked away under the stairs [were also used]. The threats were often said in a serious tone because parents, usually mothers, wanted children to behave. (Middle Brook) 67-515.

---

[15] See also C54.4 above.

TIGHT BINDING

NATURAL PHENOMENA

Natural phenomena such as thunder, lightning, wind and storm, weather lights, darkness, the sun, moon and stars, frequently give rise to apprehension and fear which are reflected in the many beliefs and customs associated with them. Such fears, as might be expected, are utilised in threats, as the following examples indicate.

C57. Lightning.

C57.1. "Get in under there [i.e. under the table], or the lightning will strike you!" Said by a young mother in Mrs. (N) 's house in St. Lawrence during a severe thunderstorm in mid August, 1968. The house was full of very young children, both from the....family and neighbours. The children were already frightened by the storm and this threat was said to them to keep them out of mischief and also stop them from going out in the heavy rain while the storm was on. The children were frightened and stayed under the table, very quietly, until the storm passed over. (St. Lawrence) 69-47.

C58. Moon.

C58.1. An' the moon'll come down....gobble you up an' take you up in the sky. (St. John's) T C376,67-33.

C58.2. Grown-ups in my community usually tell children that we see the face of a bad boy in the moon. The boy went and chopped wood on Sunday after being told not to do so, and was put in the moon because of it to punish him and to show other boys and girls what will happen to them if they're bad. (Nipper's Harbour) Q67-1155.

Natural phenomena such as lightning are often associated in the popular mind with the awesome power of God, and these examples of their use in threats bring us back full circle to the supernatural figures with which this discussion began. Indeed, in a sense, the supernatural element runs through all three classes outlined above. It links the various figures together and makes even those which are the most realistic seem larger than life and therefore more effective in their social function.

TIGHT BINDING

SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

1. The deliberate use of threats and other types of traditional verbal control in the disciplining of children is common in many cultures and is probably worldwide.

2. Traditional verbal controls have been studied by social scientists, some of whom have commented on how the controls operate in a given culture. Their linguistic aspects, however, especially their structural patterning, have been neglected.

3. Frightening figures, which have been studied by philologists and folklorists since the early nineteenth century, have been known in Europe at least since the heyday of classical Greek civilisation. Although early evidence is scanty, it is clear that such figures were used from the earliest times to threaten children, and this phenomenon is still widespread today.

4. It is important to distinguish between figures which are intrinsically frightening (i.e. "frightening figures") and those which are selected or adapted from among them for use in threats (i.e. "threatening figures").

5. Previous studies have concentrated either on the mythological aspects of the frightening figures or the sociological

TIGHT BINDING

significance of the threats. There appears to have been no large-scale attempt to treat both the figures and the threat-structures as aspects of an integrated system of control. There is much to be said in favour of a combined approach which takes account not only of mythology and etymology, but which also attempts to analyse the linguistic structures used and to comment on their social function.

6. While the present study makes no claim to be comprehensive, even within its geographical and temporal limits, it demonstrates how a considerable variety of figures is used in threats and indicates some of the ways in which the verbal control systems operate between adults and children in Newfoundland during a specific period of time.

7. Although this study is not intended to be comparative, it does make reference to similar figures, threats and linguistic patterns in the English-speaking world, and also in continental European areas and elsewhere. A number of observations made in the discussion, together with some of the notes and the bibliography, suggest that equivalent figures, and possibly also similar threat-patterns, are to be found in many other cultures. Although the structure of other languages inevitably gives rise to variations in the linguistic patterning of the threats, the figures used in many divergent cultures are remarkably similar in conception and they all share the same function in controlling children.

TIGHT BINDING

8. Traditional verbal social controls exist in a variety of forms and operate in different ways. The forms include proverbs, cautionary tales, riddles, blessings, curses and put-offs. It is threats, however, which are apparently the strongest and most efficacious of verbal control devices.

9. Like other verbal traditions, threats survive and persist because they are essential or useful as mechanisms of social control within a culture.

10. The linguistic form of threats and other traditional verbal controls is patterned in such a way as to be memorable. The repetition of similar structural patterns in threats, together with the descriptions of the figures as mysterious and awe-inspiring entities, aids the cultural transmission of these verbal devices from one generation to another.

11. For the purposes of this study a threat is defined as a linguistic structure, or series of structures, uttered with the specific intention of influencing or directing the behaviour of others. It demands or encourages conformity with certain acceptable norms or courses of action.

12. Whether children are threatened with traditional figures or by some kind of physical punishment, the threats themselves are substantially similar in form and function. Their deep structure, reveals, however, that in threats of physical punishment the adult himself assumes the role of threatening

TIGHT BINDING

figure rather than transferring the responsibility for punishment to some external agency.

13. It is clearly demonstrable that in Newfoundland there exists a complex system of verbal controls for guiding children's behaviour. These controls include a wide variety of figures whose names are uttered in threats by adults according to certain typical linguistic patterns in an appropriate situational context.

14. The present study confines its attention to the threatening figures. Of these only one group - the supernatural/invented figures - has been studied extensively by the limited number of scholars who have examined this subject. It is clear, however, that in addition to this supernatural/invented group a wide variety of human beings and other living creatures in the real world are also used in threats. Indeed, their use is increasingly frequent in urban western culture as the older beliefs and traditions decline. The Newfoundland material demonstrates that actual figures of authority such as the policeman, when used in their threatening role, appear in threats with apparently equal frequency to that of the more popular figures in the supernatural/invented group. Furthermore, the threateners endow them with characteristics similar to those typical of the supernatural/invented figures.

15. This study attempts to broaden the scope of the figures

TIGHT BINDING

studied by also examining those drawn from real life. Although the Newfoundland research originated in an investigation of the supernatural/invented figures, the wealth of collected data has prompted the inclusion of the realistic figures which have hitherto been regarded as a minor aspect of the subject.

16. The material for this study was collected both extensively and intensively in Newfoundland during the five-year period 1963-1968. A combination of methods was used in the eliciting of the data during fieldwork. These included the extensive use of questionnaires, tape-recorded interviews, and a variety of information volunteered during class discussion or from individual contributors. Through these means a wealth of data has been assembled in the Newfoundland Archive. It covers a wide range of communities representative of the dominant English and Irish ethnic groups throughout the Province.

17. In the Newfoundland material a limited number of structural patterns are used in threats. Certain nominal slots in these linguistic structures are consistently occupied by the names of a wide variety of threatening figures. The choice of figures used to fill these slots is potentially infinite, and is bounded only by the extent of human imagination. Nevertheless, within this immense range, certain types of figure clearly predominate as typically selected to serve the threatening function. Those favoured

TIGHT BINDING

by society to fulfil this role include not only a wide range of supernatural/invented figures but also many living people and animals. These are either regarded as intrinsically abnormal in some way or are endowed with abnormal characteristics for the purpose of threatening children.

18. The primary function of threats in a given culture is to control behaviour regarded as socially or individually unacceptable in some way, whether at the family level or in the wider society. In addition, threats are used for an infinite variety of specific reasons ranging from the protection of the child or of property and goods, to the mere deterring of him from annoying the adults. Both the general and the specific functions are amply illustrated in the Newfoundland material. It is inevitable, however, that cultural and environmental differences between one area and another result in certain variations in the function of verbal control patterns found in the Province from those found in the parent cultures and elsewhere.

19. While the Mannhardtian school of mythologists contended that threatening figures are believed in by those who use them in threats, von Sydow went to the opposite extreme of denying any element of belief in them. It is clear, however, that there is still some degree of belief, at least in the supernatural figures, in many cultures today, and this is also true to some extent in Newfoundland.

20. The fact that living people are also used as threatening figures argues an awareness that society gives them official authority, whether permanently or simply as a temporary measure in the context of social control. Parents and other adults are conscious of the power which the living authority figures possess. In using such figures in threats adults deliberately exaggerate this power in their descriptions in order to accomplish certain immediate social ends.

21. The variety and complexity of the threatening figures makes it difficult to evolve a typology which is sufficiently flexible to accommodate them all. Consequently, the tentative categories suggested in the present study are intended primarily as a working basis for examining the figures used in the Newfoundland threats. These categories, however, also appear to hold good for the parent cultures of England and Ireland and for other parts of the English-speaking world. They are not necessarily applicable, of course, to data collected in other regions or by other means. Attempts to set up universal categories of threatening figures are equally inadvisable, especially in the absence of comparative data which might indicate which elements of the threatening process are universal and which are more localised or idiosyncratic. The figures used in each culture or

TIGHT BINDING

region may have various unique local features which call for different typologies or even for completely different approaches to the whole subject of verbal control.

22. Previous studies in this field are especially notable for their extensive listing and discussion of threatening figures, but treat the threats only incidentally and give very few examples of them. By contrast, although this study lists a considerable number of figures, its principal focus of attention is rather on the extraordinarily large number of ways in which the threats themselves are expressed. In order to demonstrate the richness and variety of these traditional linguistic usages in the living context of social control, and to illustrate something of the multiplicity of variant figures used, it is important to include an extensive sampling from the full range of the Newfoundland data. In this way a considerable body of unique material is made available for the first time in a study of this kind, and this in turn allows scope for different interpretations of the data and for other types of investigation.

23. Although other studies have noted that figures drawn from the real world are used in threats, they have neglected a significant point which is made clear in the Newfoundland material. They have apparently failed to recognise that, for the purposes of social control, these living figures

TIGHT BINDING

are endowed with some of the power, mystery and authority typical of their supernatural/invented counterparts. Even this limited study demonstrates that in an area which for various geographical and sociological reasons has retained some of the older traditional patterns in rich measure, the modern realistic figures are nevertheless beginning to replace their supernatural/invented equivalents.

24. Although the emphasis in urban western tradition is moving away from the use of supernatural/invented figures in the threatening of children, parents who would not think of using the boogie man or similar figures in threats may use an authority figure such as the policeman, or may invoke the father himself as a means of control. Parents will always face the problems of guiding children along acceptable paths of behaviour, and verbal controls are thus essential to the whole process of child-rearing. When children are too young to respond to rational explanation, the verbal controls continue to play a necessary role in the relationships which children have with adults. The threatening utterances are also, of course, a substitute for physical punishment, and not only provide an important alternative to it but also a useful release mechanism which allows the adult to give vent to his anger or frustration. It is therefore perhaps unwise to discard such verbal devices too readily.

THE BINDING

25. This study makes accessible a substantial body of data for comparative study not only by linguists and folklorists but also by those who approach the subject from the viewpoint of other disciplines. It is hoped that it will stimulate further research on this topic in other geographical regions.

TIGHT BINDING

ARCHIVE SOURCES

The Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive. (Cited as Newfoundland Archive).

Professor H. Halpert's personal archive collection of folklore from oral tradition and printed sources, including material from the British Isles, North America and many other parts of the world. (Cited as Halpert Collection).

The Survey of Language and Folklore: Archives of Cultural Tradition, University of Sheffield.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADDY, S.O. — A Glossary of Words Used in the Neighbourhood of Sheffield, Including a Selection of Local Names, and Some Notices of Folk-Lore, Games, and Customs London: Trübner and Co., for the English Dialect Society, 1888.

------ — Household Tales, with Other Traditional Remains, Collected in the Counties of York, Lincoln, Derby and Nottingham London and Sheffield: David Nutt, and Pawson and Brailsford, 1895.

ALLEN, H.E. — "Influence of Superstition on Vocabulary: Two Related Examples", Proceedings of the Modern Language Association of America L, 63 (1935), 1033-1046; LI, 60 (1936), 904-920.

ANDERSEN, H.C. — Andersen's Tales for Children Trans. by A. Wehnert. With illustrations by E.H. Wehnert, W. Thomas et al. London: Bell and Daldy, 1861. Quoted in OED under "sand-man".

ARBUTHNOT, M.H. comp. — The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, New York: Scott, Foresman, 1953.

TIGHT BINDING

BARING-GOULD, S. A Book of Folk-Lore London: Collins, 1913-1914.

BARTLETT, F.C. Psychology and Primitive Culture Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928.

BATCHEN, L.S. "El Abuelo - The Whipping Man", in "Three Tales from Las Placitas", Western Folklore XV, 2 (April 1956), 89-92.

BEN-DOR, S. Makkovik: Eskimos and Settlers in a Labrador Community: A Contrastive Study in Adaptation Newfoundland Social and Economic Studies, No. 4. St. John's, Newfoundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1966.

------ "The 'Naluyuks' of Northern Labrador: A Mechanism of Social Control", in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 121-127.

BERREY, L.V., and M. van den BARK, eds. The American Thesaurus of Slang: A Complete Reference Book of Colloquial Speech New York: Thomas Crowell, 1943.

TIGHT BINDING

BØDKER, L. Folk Literature (Germanic) Vol. II of the International Dictionary of Regional European Ethnology and Folklore Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, for the International Commission on Folk Arts and Folklore, 1965.

BONSER, W. A Bibliography of Folklore, as Contained in the First Eighty Years of the Publications of the Folklore Society London: William Glaisher, for the Folk-Lore Society, 1961.

BRAKELY, T.C. "Lullaby", in M. Leach, ed., Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1949-1950, II, 653-654.

BRAND, J. Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain: Chiefly Illustrating the Origin of our Vulgar and Provincial Customs, Ceremonies and Superstitions Arranged, revised and enlarged by Sir H. Ellis. 3 vols. London: Henry Bohn, 1849.

BREWER, E.C. The Reader's Handbook of Famous Names in Fiction, Allusions, References, Proverbs, Plots, Stories, and Poems New edn., revised and enlarged. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1899.

BRIGGS, K.M. Pale Hecate's Team: An Examination of the Beliefs on Witchcraft and Magic among Shakespeare's Contemporaries and His Immediate Successors London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962.

TIGHT BINDING

BRIGGS, K.M. The Anatomy of Puck: An Examination of Fairy Beliefs among Shakespeare's Contemporaries and Successors London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959.

------ The Fairies in Tradition and Literature London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967.

------ The Personnel of Fairyland: A Short Account of the Fairy People of Great Britain for those who tell Stories to Children Oxford: Alden Press, 1969.

BROCKETT, J.T. A Glossary of North Country Words in Use Newcastle upon Tyne: printed by T. and J. Hodgson, for E. Charnley, 1825.

BUNZEL, R. "Zuñi Katcinas: An Analytical Study", in Forty Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1929-1930 Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1932, pp. 936-941.

BURNE, C.S. The Handbook of Folklore New, edn., revised and enlarged. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, for the Folk-Lore Society, 1914.

------, ed. Shropshire Folk-Lore: A Sheaf of Gleanings From the collections of Georgina F. Jackson. London: Trübner, 1883.

TIGHT BINDING

BURNS, R. Poems and Selected Letters Text edited by A. Hepburn, with an Introduction by D. Daiches. London and Glasgow: Collins, 1959.

CADRAWD, Ap. "Bob-baw!" in Notes and Queries, 9th ser., II (October 29, 1898), 355.

CAMPBELL, D.T. "The Mutual Methodological Relevance of Anthropology and Psychology", in Psychological Anthropology: Approaches to Culture and Personality, ed. F.L.K. Hsu. Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1961, pp. 333-352.

CASSIDY, F.G., and R.B. LE PAGE, eds. Dictionary of Jamaican English Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

CERTEUX, A. "Les Épouvantails des Enfants Parisiens", Revue des Traditions Populaires, VI (1891), 663-665.

CHAMBERLAIN, A.F. The Child and Childhood in Folk Thought: (The Child in Primitive Culture) New York and London: Macmillan, 1896.

CHAMBERS, R., ed. The Book of Days: A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities in Connection with the Calendar 2 vols. London and Edinburgh: W. and R. Chambers, 1869.

TIGHT BINDING

CHIARAMONTE, L.J. "Mumming in 'Deep Harbour': Aspects of Social Organization in Mumming and Drinking", in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History. [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 77-103.

CHRYSANTHIS, K. "The Personification of Plague and Cholera According to The Cypriots", Folk-lore, LVI, 2 (June, 1945), 259-266.

CONEYS, T. de V. An Irish-English Dictionary, Intended for the Use of Students and Teachers of Irish Dublin: Hodges and Smith, for the Irish Society, 1849.

COURTNEY, M.A., and T.Q. COUCH Glossary of Words in Use in Cornwall London: Trübner and Co., for the English Dialect Society, 1880.

CRAMER, F. "Galloromanische Kinderschrecken", Volkstum und Kultur der Romanen, IX (1936), 118-148.

CRIPPEN, T.G. Christmas and Christmas Lore London, Glasgow and Bombay: Blackie, 1923.

DAIKEN, L. The Lullaby Book London: Edmund Ward Ltd., 1959.

TIGHT BINDING

TIGHT BINDING

DAVIES, W. "Boggarts, Feorin, etc.", Notes and Queries, 4th ser., V (February 19, 1870), 216.

DEUTSCH, M. "The Face of Bargaining", Operations Research, IX (1961), 886-897.

DULEY, M. Cold Pastoral London: Hutchinson, [1939].

DUNDES, A. The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales Folklore Fellows Communications, vol. LXXXI, No. 195. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1964.

------ "Structural Typology in North American Indian Folktales", in A. Dundes, The Study of Folklore Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965, pp. 206-215.

------ The Study of Folklore Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965.

ELWORTHY, F.T. The Dialect of West Somerset London: Trübner and Co., for the English Dialect Society, 1875-1886.

ERICH, O.A., and R. BEITL, eds. Wörterbuch der deutschen Volkskunde 2nd edn., Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1955.

EVANS-WENTZ, W.Y. The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne: Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1911.

TIGHT BINDING

FARIS, J.C. Cat Harbour: A Newfoundland Fishing Settlement Newfoundland Social and Economic Studies, No. 3. St. John's, Newfoundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1966.

----- "Mumming in an Outport Fishing Settlement: A Description and Suggestions on the Cognitive Complex", in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 129-144.

FESTINGER, L. "Cognitive Dissonance", Scientific American, CCVII, 4 (October, 1962), 93-102.

----- A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance Evanston: Row, Peterson, 1957.

FIRESTONE, M.M. Brothers and Rivals: Patrilocality in Savage Cove Newfoundland Social and Economic Studies, No. 5. St. John's, Newfoundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1967.

----- "Mummers and Strangers in Northern Newfoundland", in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 63-75.

TIGHT BINDING

FIRTH, J.R. The Tongues of Men, and Speech [With an Editor's Preface by P. Strevens]. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Folk-lore, I-LXXXII (1890-1971).

Folk-lore Journal, I-VII (1883-1889).

Folk-lore Record, I-V (1878-1882).

FORBES, T.R. The Midwife and the Witch New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966.

FOSTER, J.C. Ulster Folklore Belfast: H.R. Carter Publications, 1951.

FOWLER, H.W., and F.G. FOWLER, eds.
The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English 5th edn., revised by E. McIntosh, Etymologies revised by G.W.S. Friedrichsen. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.

FRIEND, J.H., D.B. GURALNIK, et al., eds.
Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language College edn. Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1960.

Gazetteer of Canada: Newfoundland and Labrador Ottawa: published by authority of the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, 1968.

TIGHT BINDING

GEIGER, P., and R. WEISS, eds.
Atlas der schweizerischen Volkskunde
Basel: Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Volkskunde, 1950.

GENNEP, A. van Manuel de Folklore Français Contemporain
Vol. i, pts. 1-7, vols. III and IV. Paris: Auguste Picard, 1937-1958.

GIBBENS, V.E. "Progress Report on a Word Geography of Indiana", Midwest Folklore, XI (1961), 151-154.

GIMSON, A.C. An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English London: Edward Arnold, 1962.

GOMME, G.L. Ethnology in Folklore London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., 1892.

------, ed. The Handbook of Folklore London: David Nutt, for the Folklore Society, 1890.

GOVE, P.G., et al., eds.
Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Springfield: G.C. Merriam Co., 1961.

GRAVES, R. The Greek Myths [2 vols. in one].
New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1959.

GRIMM, J. Deutsche Mythologie Göttingen: Dieterich, 1835.

TIGHT BINDING

GRIMM, J. Teutonic Mythology 4 vols. Translated from the fourth edn. with notes and appendix by J.S. Stallybrass. London: George Bell and Sons, 1883-1888.

GUTMANN, B. Das Recht der Dschagga Münich: Beck, 1926.

F.C.H. "Charms for Ague and Tooth-ache", Notes and Queries 2nd ser., X (November 10, 1860), 364.

HALPERT, H. "Legends of the Cursed Child", New York Folklore Quarterly, XIV, 2 (Fall, 1958), 233-241.

------ Note to "Old Wall-Eyes", in V. Randolph, The Devil's Pretty Daughter and Other Ozark Folk Tales New York: Columbia University Press, 1955, p. 172.

------ "Raw Head and Bloody Bones" in "Down Our Way: Unfinished Pages of Kentucky Folklore", Kentucky Folklore Record, I (Jan. - March, 1955), 7-8.

------ "Some Observations on American Frightening Figures". Unpublished paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society, Toronto, 1967.

------ and G.M. STORY, eds. Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969.

TIGHT BINDING

HAND, W.D., ed. Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from North Carolina. Vols. VI and VII of The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore edited by N.I. White et al. 7 vols. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1952-1964.

------, and G.O. ARLT, eds. Humaniora: Essays in Literature, Folklore Bibliography, Honoring Archer Taylor on his Seventieth Birthday. Locust Valley, New York: J.J. Augustin, 1960.

HARDY, J., ed. The Denham Tracts: A Collection of Folklore by Michael Aislabie Denham and Reprinted from the Original Tracts and Pamphlets Printed by Mr. Denham between 1846 and 1859. 2 vols. Publications of the Folk-Lore Society XXIX and XXXV. London: The Folk-Lore Society, 1891-1895.

HAROU, A. "Mythologie et Folk-Lore de l'Enfance", Revue des Traditions Populaires, XXIII (1908), 218-219.

------ "Pour Effrayer les Enfants", Revue des Traditions Populaires, XX (1905), 96.

HARRISON, J. Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion New York: Meridian Books, 1955.

HAZLITT, W.C. Faiths and Folklore: A Dictionary of National Beliefs, Superstitions and Popular Customs, Past and Current, with their Classical and Foreign Analogues, Described and Illustrated 2 vols. London: Reeves and Turner, 1905.

TIGHT BINDING

HENDERSON, W. Notes on the Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties of England and the Borders Publications of the Folk-Lore Society II. London: The Folk-Lore Society, 1879.

HENRY, P.L. "The Goblin Group", Études Celtiques, VIII, No. 2 (1959), 404-416.

HERTZLER, J.O. A Sociology of Language New York: Random House, 1965.

HEWETT, S. The Peasant Speech of Devon 2nd edn. London: Elliot Stock, 1892.

HIGSON, J. "Boggarts and Feorin"; Notes and Queries, 4th ser., IV (December 11, 1869), 508-509.

------ "Boggarts, Feorin, etc.", Notes and Queries, 4th ser., V (February 5, 1870), 156-157.

HILGER, Sister M.I. Arapaho Child Life and its Cultural Background Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 148. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1952.

------ Chippewa Child Life and its Cultural Background Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 146. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1951.

TIGHT BINDING

HILGER, Sister M.I. Field Guide to the Ethnological Study of Child Life Behavior Science Field Guides, I. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1960.

HOCKETT, C.F. A Course in Modern Linguistics New York: Macmillan, 1958.

HOFFMANN, H. Struwwelpeter, or Merry Rhymes and Funny Pictures London: Blackie, 1903.

HOFFMANN-KRAYER E., and H. BÄCHTOLD-STÄUBLI, eds. Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens 10 vols. Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter and Co., 1927-1942.

HONE, W. The Every-Day Book; or, Everlasting Calendar of Popular Amusements, Sports, Pastimes, Ceremonies, Manners, Customs, and Events, Incident to Each of the Three Hundred and Sixty-Five Days, in Past and Present Times 2 vols. London: Hunt and Clarke, 1826-1827.

------ The Table Book London: Hunt and Clarke, 1827.

------ The Year Book of Daily Recreation and Information, Concerning Remarkable Men and Manners, Times and Seasons, Solemnities and Merry-Makings, Antiquities and Novelties, on the Plan of the Every-Day Book and Table Book London, Glasgow and Dublin: Thomas Tegg, R. Griffin and Co., and J. Cumming, 1832.

TIGHT BINDING

TIGHT BINDING

HONKO, L. "Memorates and the Study of Folk Beliefs", Journal of the Folklore Institute, I, 1/2, 5-19.

HSU, F.L.K., ed. Psychological Anthropology: Approaches to Culture and Personality Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1961.

HUDSON, W.H. A Shepherd's Life: Impressions of the South Wiltshire Downs 3rd edn. London: Methuen, 1911.

HULTKRANTZ, A General Ethnological Concepts Vol. I of the International Dictionary of Regional European Ethnology and Folklore Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, for the International Commission on Folk Arts and Folklore, 1960.

HUNT, J.M. "Expérience and the Develöpment of Motivation: Some Reinterpretations", Child Development, XXXI (1960), 489-504.

HYMES, D. ed. Language in Culture and Society: A Reader in Linguistics and Anthropology New York, Evanston, and London: Harper and Row, 1964.

JACKSON, G.F. Shropshire Word-Book, A Glossary of Archaic and Provincial Words, etc., used in the County London: Trübner, 1879.

JAHODA, G. The Psychology of Superstition [London]: Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, 1969.

TIGHT BINDING

JENNESS, D. The Ojibwa Indians of Parry Island: Their Social and Religious Life National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No. 78, Anthropological Series No. 17. Ottawa: J.O. Patenaude, [King's Printer], 1935.

JOBES, G. Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols New York: Scarecrow Press, 1961-1962.

JONES, D. An Outline of English Phonetics 8th edn. Cambridge: Heffer, 1956.

JONES, E. On the Nightmare The International Psycho-Analytical Library, No. 20. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1931.

JOOS, M. The English Verb: Form and Meanings Madison, Milwaukee and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968.

JOYCE, P.W. English as We Speak It in Ireland London: Longmans, 1910.

KIDD, D. Savage Childhood: A Study of Kafir Children London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906.

KITTREDGE, G.L. Witchcraft in Old and New England Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1929.

TIGHT BINDING

KRAPPE, A.H. The Science of Folk-Lore London: Methuen, 1930.

KRUEGER, G. "Bob-baw!", Notes and Queries, 9th ser., VII (March 23, 1901), 232.

KURATH, H., S.M. KUHN, and J. REIDY, eds. Middle English Dictionary [A - L] Ann Arbor and London: University of Michigan Press, and Oxford University Press, 1956-.

LANE, T.O'N. "Bucca-Boo", Notes and Queries, 11th ser., VII (May 10, 1913), 378.

LANG, A. Books and Bookmen 2nd edn. London: Longmans, 1887, pp. 40-65.

LEACH, M. ed. Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend 2 vols. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1949-1950.

LEAN, V.S. Lean's Collectanea Edited by T.W. Williams; "Memoir" by J.L. Woodward. 4 vols in 5. Bristol: J. Arrowsmith, 1902-1904.

LOORITS, O. Grundzüge des estnischen Volksglaubens Skrifter Utgivna av Kungl. Adolfs Akademien för Folklivsforskning, XVIII, 1-3. Lund: 1949-1957.

Lore and Language: The Journal of the Survey of Language and Folklore, IV (January, 1971).

LYS, C. de — A Treasury of Parenthood and its Folklore New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1958.

MACALPINE, N. — A Pronouncing Gaelic-English Dictionary New edn., 1929, rpt. Glasgow: Alexander Maclaren and Sons, 1962.

MacARTHUR, W. — "Bucca-Boo", Notes and Queries, 11th ser., VIII (July 5, 1913), 15-16.

MANNHARDT, W. — Wald und Feldkulte 2 vols. 2nd edn., Berlin: Gebrüder Borntraeger, 1904-1905.

MARCHANT, F.P. — "Bucca-Boo", Notes and Queries, 11th ser., VII (February 22, 1913), 155.

MARETT, R.R. — Psychology and Folk-Lore . New York: Macmillan, 1920.

MAYALL, A. — "Bob-baw!", Notes and Queries, 9th ser., II (October 29, 1898), 354-355.

MAYHEW, A.L. — "Bucca-Boo", Notes and Queries, 11th ser., VII (February 1, 1913), 89.

TIGHT BINDING

MEAD, M. Growing up in New Guinea: A Study of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1942.

MILES, C.A. Christmas in Ritual and Tradition, Christian and Pagan 2nd edn. London and Leipzig: T. Fisher Unwin, 1913.

MILLER, N.E., and DOLLARD, J. Social Learning and Imitation New Haven: Yale University Press, for the Institute of Human Relations, 1941.

MORISON, S.E. The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

MURRAY, J.A.H., et al., eds. The Oxford English Dictionary 12 vols; and Supplement. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933.

NANCE, R.M., ed. An English-Cornish Dictionary Marazion: The Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, 1952.

NEWELL, W.W. Games and Songs of American Children New York: Harper, 1883.

Notes and Queries, I-CXCI (1849-1946).

Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset, I-XXVIII (1888-1960).

TIGHT BINDING

Old Cornwall, I-VI (1925-1965).

ONIONS, C.T., et al., eds.
The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.

ORTON, H., and M.F. WAKELIN, eds.
The Southern Counties, in H. Orton and E. Dieth, Survey of English Dialects: The Basic Material, Vol. IV, Pts. I, II and III. Leeds: E.J. Arnold and Son, for the University of Leeds, 1967-1968.

ÖSTLING, C. "Skrämselväsen - Fikt och Verklighet" [Frightening Beings: Fikt and Reality]. Unpublished dissertation. Presented at the Folklivsarkivet, Lund, 1969.

Ó SÚILLEABHÁIN, S.
A Handbook of Irish Folklore Introductory note by S. Ó Duilearga. [Dublin]: The Educational Company of Ireland, for the Folklore of Ireland Society, 1942.

PARSONS, E.C. "The Zuñi Aâoshlĕ and Suukĕ", American Anthropologist, XVIII, 3 (July-September, 1916), 338-347.

PARTRIDGE, E. A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English 4th edn. London: Routledge, 1951.

TIGHT BINDING

PEELE, C. Encyclopædia of British Bogies Drawn by C. Peele. Oxford: Alley Workshops, [1930 ?].

PLOSS, R., and B. RENZ. Das Kind in Brauch und Sitte der Völker 2 vols. 3rd edn., revised B. Renz. Leipzig: Th. Grieben's Verlag, 1911.

POTTER, C.F. "Fear of the Abnormal", in M. Leach, ed., Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1949-1950, I, 372-373.

PUCKETT, N.N. Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1926.

RANDOLPH, V. The Devil's Pretty Daughter and Other Ozark Folk Tales, with notes by H. Halpert. New York: Columbia University Press, 1955.

------ Ozark Superstitions New York: Columbia University Press, 1947.

RANKE, F. "Kinderschreck, Popanz", in E. Hoffmann-Krayer and H. Bächtold-Stäubli, eds., Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens, IV. Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter and Co., 1931-1932, cols. 1366-1374.

RAUM, O.F. Chaga Childhood: A Description of Indigenous Education in an East African Tribe London: International African Institute, 1940.

TIGHT BINDING

Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art, V-LXXX (1872-1948).

Revue des Traditions Populaires Paris, 1886-1918.

RILEY, J.W. "Little Orphant Annie", in M.H. Arbuthnot, comp., The Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1952, p. 131.

ROBBINS, R.H. The Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology [London]: Crown Publishers, Inc., for Bookplan, for Paul Hamlyn, 1959.

ROBINSON, F.K. A Glossary of Words Used in the Neighbourhood of Whitby Pts. I and II. London: Trübner and Co., for the English Dialect Society, 1875-1876.

ROULEAU, E. "Some Newfoundland Vernacular Plant Names", Studies on the Vascular Flora of the Province of Newfoundland (Canada), II, Contributions de l'Institut Botanique de l'Université de Montréal, LXIX (1956), 25-40.

ROWE, J.H. "Buccaboo and Tarraway", Old Cornwall, II, 10 (Winter, 1935), 38-40.

ROWSE, A.L. A Cornish Childhood London: J. Cape, [1942].

TIGHT BINDING

RUMPF, M. Ursprung und Entstehung von Warn- und Schreckmärchen. Folklore Fellows Communications, vol. LXIIV$_{10}$, No. 160. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1964.

RUNEBERG, A. Witches, Demons and Fertility Magic: Analysis of their Significance and Mutual Relations in West-European Folk Religion, with an Appendix: "Psychoanalytic Interpretation of European Bronze Age Religion". Commentationes Humanarum Fennica, XIV, 4. Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1947.

SAXON, L., E. DREYER, and R. TALLANT, comps. Gumbo Ya-Ya: A Collection of Louisiana Folk Tales. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin, 1945.

SCHAPERA, I. Married Life in an African Tribe. London: Faber, [1966].

SCHWAB, G. Tribes of the Liberian Hinterland. Edited, with additional material, by George W. Harley. Report of the Peabody Museum expedition to Liberia, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, vol. XXXI. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Peabody Museum, 1947.

SCOT, R. The Discoverie of Witchcraft, with an introduction by the Rev. Montague Summers. [London]: John Rodker, 1930.

TIGHT BINDING

SEARY, E.R. Place Names of the Avalon Peninsula of the Island of Newfoundland Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, for Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1971.

------, G.M. STORY, and W.J. KIRWIN. The Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland: An Ethno-linguistic Study National Museum of Canada, Bulletin 219. Ottawa, 1968.

SÉBILLOT, P. "Mythologie et Folk-Lore de l'Enfance", Revue des Traditions Populaires, XVIII (1903), 489-493, and XXIII (1908), 217-218.

SIMMONS, D.C. "A Further Note on Rawhead and Bloody Bones", Journal of American Folklore, LXX (1957), 358-359.

SIMMONS, L.W., ed. Sun Chief: The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian New Haven and London: Yale University Press and Oxford University Press, for the Department of Sociology, Yale University, 1942.

SMITH, G.P. "The Origin of an Illinois Tale", Southern Folklore Quarterly, VI, 2 (1942), 89-94.

SMITH, Sir W. A Classical Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography, Mythology and Geography Revised and in part rewritten by G.E. Marindin. London: John Murray, 1919.

TIGHT BINDING

SPENCE, L. — British Fairy Origins London: Watts and Company, 1946.

------ — The Minor Traditions of British Mythology New York, Melbourne, Sydney, Cape Town: Rider and Co., 1948.

SPOCK, B. — Baby and Child Care Revised and enlarged edn. New York: Pocket Books Inc., 1946.

SYDOW, C.W. von — "Comparative Religion and Popular Tradition", in Selected Papers on Folklore. Selected and edited by L. Bødker. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1948, pp. 166-188.

------ — "The Mannhardtian Theories about the Last Sheaf and the Fertility Demons from a Modern Critical Point of View", in Selected Papers on Folklore. Selected and edited by L. Bødker. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1948, pp. 89-105.

------ — Selected Papers on Folklore Selected and edited by L. Bødker. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1948.

SZWED, J.F. — Private Cultures and Public Imagery: Interpersonal Relations in a Newfoundland Peasant Society Newfoundland Social and Economic Studies, No. 2. St. John's, Newfoundland: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1966.

TIGHT BINDING

SZWED, J.F. "The Mask of Friendship: Mumming as a Ritual of Social Relations", in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 105-118.

TAYLOR, A. "Raw Head and Bloody Bones", Journal of American Folklore, LXIX (1956), 114, 175.

------ "Raw Head and Bloody Bones", Kentucky Folklore Record, VI (Jan. - March, 1960), 19-20.

------, and B.J. WHITING. A Dictionary of American Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases 1820-1880 Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1958.

TAYLOR, I.K. "Phonetic Symbolism Re-examined", Psychological Bulletin, LX, 2 (1963), 200-209.

TEDESCHI, J.T., T. BONOMA and N. NOVINSON. "Behavior of a Threatener: Retaliation vs. Fixed Opportunity Costs", Journal of Conflict Resolution, XIV (1970), 69-76.

THOMPSON, S. Motif-Index of Folk-Literature 6 vols. Revised and enlarged edn. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955-1958.

TIGHT BINDING

TIJSKENS, J-P. "Les Noms du Croquemitaine en Wallonie", Enquêtes du Musée de la Vie Wallonne, X (1965), 257-392, and XI (1966), 1-59.

TILLHAGEN, C-H. "The Conception of the Nightmare in Sweden", in W.D. Hand and G.O. Arlt, eds., Humaniora: Essays in Literature, Folklore, Bibliography, Honoring Archer Taylor on his Seventieth Birthday Locust Valley, New York: J.J. Augustin, 1960, pp. 317-329.

TOMMOLA, B. "Yliluonnolliset Olennot Lastenpelotuksina", [Supernatural Beings Used for Frightening Children], Suomi, CVII, 2. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1955.

TONGUE, R.L. Somerset Folklore Edited by K.M. Briggs. Publications of the Folk-Lore Society [CXIV], County Folklore VIII. London: The Folk-Lore Society, 1965.

TROUT, A.M. "Greetings", [newspaper column], The Courier-Journal, [Louisville, Kentucky], 7 October, 1950.

------ "Greetings", [newspaper column], The Courier-Journal, [Louisville, Kentucky], 23 April, 1952.

TUCKER, A. The Light of Nature Pursued, VI (1834), p. 596. Quoted in OED under "Raw neck".

TIGHT BINDING

UDAL, J.S. Dorsetshire Folk-Lore, With a Fore-Say by the late William Barnes. Hertford: printed by Stephen Austin and Sons, 1922.

WAKELIN, M.F. ed. Patterns in the Folk Speech of the British Isles London: Athlone Press, 1972.

WALLIS, R. "Bob-baw!", Notes and Queries, 9th ser., III (March 18, 1899), 213-214.

WARD, H.S. "Bob-baw!", Notes and Queries, 9th ser., II (October 29, 1898), 354.

WASSON, V.P., and R.G. WASSON. Mushrooms, Russia, and History New York: Pantheon Books, 1957.

WENTWORTH, H., and S.B. FLEXNER, eds. Dictionary of American Slang New York: Thomas Crowell, 1960.

WHITING, B.B. Six Cultures: Studies of Child Rearing New York: Wiley, 1963.

WHITING, J.W.M. Becoming a Kwoma: Teaching and Learning in a New Guinea Tribe . New Haven: Yale University Press for the Institute of Human Relations, 1951.

------, and I.L. CHILD. Child Training and Personality: A Cross-Cultural Study New Haven and London: Yale University Press and Oxford University Press, 1953.

TIGHT BINDING

WIDDOWSON, J.D.A.
"The Bogeyman: Some Preliminary Observations on Frightening Figures", Folklore, LXXXII (Summer, 1971), 99-115.

------ "Mummering and Janneying: Some Explanatory Notes", Appendix II in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 216-221.

------ "Proverbs and Sayings from Filey", in M.F. Wakelin, ed., Patterns in the Folk Speech of the British Isles London: Athlone Press, 1972, pp. 50-72.

[------] "S.L.F. [Survey of Language and Folklore] Research Projects: Systems of Social Control. Project I: Threats and Other Verbal Constraints Used in Controlling Children", Lore and Language: The Journal of the Survey of Language and Folklore, IV (January, 1971), 2-3.

------, and H. HALPERT.
"The Disguises of Newfoundland Mummers", in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 147-164.

TIGHT BINDING

WILGUS, D.K. "'Raw Head' in Butler County", Kentucky Folklore Record, VI (Jan. - March, 1960), 20.

WILLIAMS, C.E. "Janneying in 'Coughlin Cove'", Appendix I in H. Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore, and History [Toronto]: University of Toronto, for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1969, pp. 209-215.

WILSON, E. "Mycophile and Mycophobe", [Review of V.P. Wasson and R.G. Wasson, Mushrooms, Russia, and History], in his The Bit Between my Teeth: A Literary Chronicle of 1950-1965. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1965, pp. 339-354.

WOODS, B.A. The Devil in Dog Form: A Partial Type-Index of Devil Legends Folklore Studies, XI. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959.

WRIGHT, E.M. Rustic Speech and Folk-Lore London: Oxford University Press, 1913.

WRIGHT, J., ed. The English Dialect Dictionary 6 vols. London: Henry Frowde, 1898-1905.

WRIGHT, T., comp. Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English, Containing Words from the English Writers Previous to the Nineteenth Century Which Are no Longer in Use, or Are not Used in the Same Sense. And Words Which Are Now Used Only in the Provincial Dialects 2 vols in one. London: Henry Bohn, 1857.

YOUNG, K. Handbook of Social Psychology London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., 1946.

TIGHT BINDING

APPENDIX

Examples of Questionnaires Used During Fieldwork

1. Irish Folklore Commission Questionnaire, [1943 ?].

Irish Folklore Commission

Childhood Bogeys

1. Is any bogey mentioned in your district as a threat to children:

   (a) When they are naughty?
   (b) To prevent them going to dangerous places (wells, lofts, etc.)?
   (c) To prevent them interfering with animals, crops, or tools?
   (d) To get them in before dark?
   (e) To induce them to sleep?

   Is the same bogey used in all these cases? Name(s)? How is (are) the threat(s) worded?

2. Is the bogey supposed to have a particular dwelling-place? Where? Are there any other traditions extant about it, apart from its being a children's bogey, or to account for its being chosen as one?

3. Are living persons ever mentioned as bogeys? Who? Why?

4. Is (are) the same bogey(s) used nowadays as in the childhood of older people? If not, please answer all questions for both bogeys of former times and those of today.

(Examples: An Bobogha, Baw Man, Bogeyman, Boodyman, An Púca, Núileóg, Cailleach na bhFiacla Fada, Johnny Nod, the Sandman, Seán Dearg, Rawley, Moll Shaßnessy [sic], Sir Felim O'Neill, wee Popes, The Fenians etc.)

TIGHT BINDING

2. Original Newfoundland Questionnaire on Frightening Figures, September 1963.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of informant:
2. Place of birth:
3. Present place of residence:
4. Age:
5. What creatures or things were used to frighten you with when you were a child? (e.g. the devil; bogey man; etc)

   (list EACH scary figure and elaborate on: its name, the place where it is used, its frequency, its potency etc).
6. Do you still use these or similar expressions yourself when you might wish to impress, say, good behaviour on children?
7. Do you remember any special customs which include masked figures or other frightening figures? (elaborate where this is possible).
8. Does the community you live in (or any other community you know) have any LOCAL scary figures? (e.g. a local person who is renowned or remembered for his eccentricity or for any other reason). Give names and details.
9. Do you know of any rhymes or songs which include references to scary figures? (This includes children's rhymes etc).
10. Do any local place-names, including names of houses, fields etc., contain any reference to scary figures?
11. Are such people as the local doctor, policeman, nurse etc. used to frighten children with? (For instance might a child be told to behave himself or else "the policeman will take you away"?)
12. Are the mummers or similar figures used to scare children? Give details of the activities of the mummers.
13. The interviewer should then add any other details relevant to the subject, noting with details the specific places where the information is obtained.

Name of interviewer:

Date of interview:

BINDING

3. Revised Newfoundland Questionnaire on Frightening Figures, January 1964.

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Please obtain answers to the questions below, using separate sheets of paper for each interview).

1. What creatures or things were used to frighten or threaten you with when you were a child? (e.g. the Devil; bogey man etc). (List each scary figure and elaborate on: its name, the place where it is used, frequency, potency etc.).

2. Were the threats playful or serious? Did you really feel scared when threatened? (Give details where possible).

3. Were children threatened for any of the following reasons?

a. Because they were naughty
b. To prevent them going to dangerous places
c. To prevent them interfering with animals, crops or tools
d. To get them in before dark
e. To induce them to sleep
f. Any other reasons

4. Do you remember any customs which include masked figures or other frightening figures?

5. Do you know of any local figures used to scare children? (e.g. a person renowned for his eccentricity or any other reason. Give names and details).

6. Do you know of any rhymes or songs which include references to scary figures? (Include children's rhymes).

7. Do any local place-names (including names of houses, fields, roads etc.) contain any reference to scary figures? Do these scary figures live in any particular place?

8. Are such people as the local doctor, policeman, nurse etc. used to frighten or threaten children with? (For instance might a child be told to behave himself or else "the policeman will take you away"?). Can you remember the words actually used in any of the other threats? (Involving bogey-men etc.).

9. Are the mummers or similar figures used to scare children? Give details of the activities of the mummers.

10. Do you use the terms BOGEY, BOO, BOO-MAN or any similar term (list any variants) to mean anything other than a frightening figure?

11. What do you say to a child when its nose needs wiping? (Refer to BOO(S), BOO-BAGGER(S), BULLY-BOO(S), LAMB'S LEGS, CONKER BELLS, and list any other terms or points of interest).

12. Please add any other details relevant to the subject, and give:

Name of informant
Place of birth
Present place of residence
Age

Name of interviewer

Date of interview

F/L 1.W (Revised Jan. 1964, with acknowledgments to IFC Ques.)

4. Newfoundland Christmas Customs Questionnaire, December 1965.

NEWFOUNDLAND CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Worksheets for English 100 and 200 Students

Newfoundland is rich in tradition and customs, perhaps richer than any other part of English-speaking North America. These traditions and customs are something of which Newfoundlanders have a right to be proud: they should be valued. They are also of exceptional interest to scholars. Masking, for example, on certain occasions is as ancient as the rites from which classical Greek drama springs. The performance of a Christmas play is a very old English folk-custom which is described in Thomas Hardy's novel The Return of the Native (see especially chapters 4, 5 and 6). Members of the Department of English have been engaged in collecting information (both from students and through field-work) about these Newfoundland customs for some time and we already have an extensive collection from many parts of the Province. At the moment we are particularly interested in certain special Christmas customs and traditions. We are anxious to have as complete a collection as possible, and you are being asked to co-operate with us in gathering information.

Some of the richest material comes from very isolated outports; but we have found equally interesting material in such places as Corner Brook, Harbour Grace, Grand Bank, Bonavista, St. John's, Bishop's Falls, Springdale, and Port-aux-Basques. Wherever you are from, you are being asked by the English Department to contribute from your own knowledge, or that of your parents, relatives and neighbours, as much information as you can. (Older members of the community, in particular, are often good sources of information.)

This is not a questionnaire to be answered briefly by yes, no, or single words. Wherever possible, information should be presented in whole sentences, paragraphs, or even full-length essays, giving as much detail and explanation as possible. Some of the questions will probably be on subjects and customs unfamiliar to you; but we ask you to make every effort to find someone from your community who is able to help. Please indicate whether information you give is from your own personal knowledge or from other people.

The Worksheet is to be handed in to your English Instructor at the beginning of the Second Term.

Course (e.g. English 100):_____ Instructor:_____

Student's Name:_____

Community or communities reported on:_____

_____

_____

PLEASE RETURN THIS WORKSHEET WITH YOUR ANSWERS

1. Is there, or has there been, dressing up, disguising or masking at any time during Christmas in your community or any other communities you know about?
2. What were the dressed-up people called? (Some names that we have heard of are: fools, mummers, janneys, johnnys, darbies, maskers, guisers, white boys, soldiers, geezers.) If there is more than one name, which do the oldest people say they used? Approximately when did a newer term come into use?
3. On what day or days during the Christmas season did people dress up? Did they visit other houses? At what time of the day or night? How did they announce themselves? How large a group went visiting? How did they behave (a) outside the house, (b) inside? How did they ask admittance? Did they have any special way of talking? Did they dance, speak, sing? Were they rowdy? How were they received? Were they ever turned away? Why? What did they say when asking admission? What was the reply whether favourable or unfavourable?

4. We would like full details on the most common disguises, and on any that strike you as unusual, odd, interesting, comic or funny. Can you give details on the materials used for masks, body disguises, etc?

5. From some communities we have had reports of a play being put on by the disguised visitors. Was there any such play in or near your community? Can you give any details? For example, what was it called? What were the names of the characters? What was the play about? Did it have any fighting in it? Can you give any of the speeches? (Even fragments of dialogue and descriptions of parts of the action would be valuable to us). Was there a "Doctor" among the characters? Did he have any queer kind of cure? Was there a Turkish Knight? (Some of the characters who have appeared in different plays include Father Christmas, Roomer, the Devil, sometimes called Beelzebub or Little Divil Dowt, Oliver Cromwell, Nelson, King George or Prince George, Patrick.) Did they take up a collection at the end? Did anyone do any sweeping with a broom before or after the performance? (See chapters 4, 5 and 6 of Hardy's Return of the Native for an English example of such a Christmas play.)

6. Was there any use made of animal disguises (for example, a bull, a ram, a horse). If there was a horse figure, what was it called? Can you get a description? Is there one of them still around in your community? Photos would be most welcome, or drawings, or models.

7. Were any of the masked figures regarded as frightening? Were they used in any way by adults to scare children with? Were adults ever nervous about them? What other scary figures do you know about in your community?

8. Can you give any information about Hunting the Wren? When did it take place? Was there a procession? (please describe). Was any use made of disguise or costume? Was there a song? Can you give the words? Can you describe the Wren?

9. If you don't have information on any of the above customs, perhaps you would care to describe other Christmas customs and activities in your community. For example, parties, Christmas concerts (at school or elsewhere), present-giving, etc. Can you give an account of any differences between Christmas in the old days and Christmas today?
(PLEASE RETURN THIS WORKSHEET WITH YOUR ANSWERS)

BINDING

5. Christmas Questionnaire (FLCQ 66/67), December 1966, Sections II, III and IV.

II

MUMMERING

1. We are trying to find how many areas of Newfoundland have had some form of Christmas disguising and house visiting often called Mummering or Janneying. Even a brief report that it existed in your community and whether it is still carried on would be helpful. If you can say something on this point please do so, even if only briefly.

2. A more detailed description, and particularly complete details of one set of disguises and one house visit would be more helpful than many generalizations.

3. We would like to get specific details on any of the following:

a) What do people call those who dress up in various disguises during Christmas in your community, or in any others you know? (Name each place.) (Some names used include fools, mummers, darbies, janneys, johnnys, jenneys, guisers, geezers, maskers, dress-ups, soldiers, white boys, ribbon fools, etc.) If there is more than one name, which did the older people use? When did the newer one(s) come in? Please try to find out what brought in the change.

b) On what day or days during the Christmas season did people dress up? At what times of day or night did they visit other houses? About how many houses? How many people were in one group? How did they announce themselves? Give examples of typical ways of asking admission, and typical replies. If they have any special way of talking, please describe it and give examples of what they might say.

c) Describe their behavior while going between houses. (Noisy? Singing? Marching or casual walking? Peaceable or rough? Any fights or chasing? Describe what they carried in their hands (stick? walking canes? split? hobby horse, etc.) and how used?

d) If admitted how did they behave? (Were they quiet or rowdy? Describe any tricks they might play.) If they were expected to entertain, what would they do? (e.g. dance? sing? recite? tell stories or jokes? play musical instruments?).

e) Describe how people tried to find out who the disguised visitors were, and how the visitors reacted. Were there any differences in the ways men or women behaved?

f) If anyone in your community remembers an old act or play which the visitors sometimes performed, we should be very glad to have any details however small. Although we only have a few reports of this perhaps you can find someone who remembers such details as the fight(s), the collection, or the names and costumes of the characters. These last vary from place to place but might include some of the following: Father Christmas, Roomer, Jack or Jan, George, Patrick, Turkish Knight, the Doctor and some Devil figure, a Captain, someone dressed in woman's clothing, etc. etc.

g) Give a complete description from top to toe of at least one common disguise and one more interesting, odd or amusing. You might add to this other details on the kinds of materials used for costumes and how these were made up. Some materials used include the following: Old clothes, quilts, sheets, pillows, rags, unusual clothes, new clothes, oil clothes, underwear, white clothes, animal skins, cardboard, birch rind, boots and shoes, headgear, feathers, ribbons, paper, uniforms, animal disguises etc.

h) In which of the following ways did mummers disguise their faces? Paint? soot? blacking? lipstick? veils? stocking? bag? box? mask? (of cloth, oilskin, paper, cardboard, wood, animal skin, store-bought, etc.) Describe as many of these as you can in detail. For the masks, especially, even a rough drawing would be helpful.

III

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS: ANIMAL AND BIRD

ANIMAL DISGUISES.

Have you seen or heard of a horse figure or horse's head used as part of Christmas activities? Some of the names reported are Hobby Horse, Horsey Hops, Lop-chops. Which of these names, if any, have you heard? What others do you know? We would be glad to get information on any of the following:

1. Who made the horse-figure?

2. How was it made? (Mention size, details of manufacture such as wood, nails, cloth, fur, paint used, appearance; did it have eyes, nose, mouth, ears, etc.; how lifelike was it? Was a real horse's head ever used? How were the movable jaws constructed and operated? etc.

3. How was the head carried? How was the carrier disguised or covered? If the horse had wooden legs or feet were they movable? How were they operated?

4. Describe the behavior of the figure and the reactions of those involved.

5. What other animal figures have you heard of which are used during the Christmas season? (We should like to get reports of the Christmas Bull, or figures which include cows' heads, rams' or sheep's heads (sometimes called The Derby Ram) or any other animal figure. Describe the figure and its use fully.

6. Write down what you know of any song, speeches, dialogue or play connected with any of these figures.

7. WREN. Can you give any information about Hunting the Wren (or Ran)? When did it take place and for how long? How was the procession organized and who took part? Describe especially how the wren was secured, prepared, decorated and

carried; also the house-visits, drinking, what was collected and how the collection was used. Was any use made of disguise or costume? If there was a song please give the words.

8. OTHER CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS. We shall be pleased to have descriptions of any other Christmas plays, games or customs, such as "Shoeing the horse", "selling" a man for being away from home on Christmas Day, etc.

IV

FRIGHTENING FIGURES

1. Sometimes parents and other adults have various ways of getting children to behave themselves. What is said to children at such times? For example, are children sometimes threatened, either playfully or seriously, with such things as the Boogie-man?

   (There is a wide variety of such threats and figures in Newfoundland and reports include the Boo-man, Jack o'Lantern/Jacky Lantern/Jack the Lantern, Rawhead and Bloody Bones, The Black Man, the fairies, witches, Boo-baggers, the Devil, the big fish, mouse, rat, bear, Jack the Ripper, the Hockshaw Man, the Crust Man and others.) Please describe each one you have heard of and give an example of the threats used in each case. Were the threats playful or serious? Are children really frightened when threatened? Why?

2. For which of the following reasons were children threatened:
   because they were naughty;
   to prevent them from going to dangerous places;
   to prevent them interfering with animals, crops, tools, etc.;
   to get them in before dark;
   to induce them to sleep, etc.
   Give any reasons you have heard with examples of the actual threats.

3. Do the frightening figures you have heard of live in a particular place? Where exactly is each supposed to live? What local place-names include references to frightening figures?

4. If local people are sometimes used to frighten children or if children are frightened by such people (perhaps this may be someone who acts rather oddly or is unusual in some way), please describe as fully as possible.

5. What threats, if any, are used which involve such people as the doctor, nurse, policeman, teacher, priest, stranger, etc. Give examples of the ways in which such threats or warnings are said.

6. If the Mummers or Janneys frighten children, describe how and why the children (and sometimes adults) are scared. Give examples of any threats which involve the Mummers or Janneys. If the mummers brought a hobby-horse with them and it was used to frighten, describe (a) how it scared people, (b) who were most scared.

7. Write down any rhymes or songs which include references to

anything which frightens people, and especially to anything which scares children.

8. The words Boo, Boo-man, Bogie, Boogie-man, Bully-boo, Boo-bagger, etc. sometimes mean something quite different from the frightening figures listed above. Give examples of any other meanings you have heard for any of them.