THE METHODIST "AUTHORITARIAN FICTION" OF GEORGE BOND

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The Methodist "Authoritarian Fiction" of George Bond

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For my grandmother, Josephine May Briffett
(July 3, 1908-January12, 2008).
She was a true Newfoundland woman, strong and independent
who put education and family above all else. She has made me better,
more determined, and has made my life purposeful.

Abstract

George John Bond (1850-1933), born in St. John's, Newfoundland, had a passion for both the island and the Methodist Church. His fictional oeuvre consists of one published novel, four published and eight unpublished short stories. In the narratives, the religious themes and practice of prayer, conversion, revival, temperance, and Sabbath observance are addressed. By contrasting the lives of his characters before and after the arrival of Methodism, Bond highlights the improvement that he believes occurs when living a spiritually based life. This thesis understands Bond's fictional work as "authoritarian fiction" and discusses the phenomenology of prayer, psychology of conversion, and historical presence of Newfoundland Methodism. It is evident that Bond used both positive and negative exemplary models to relay Methodist theology to the reader. The relationship established between Bond and the reader suggests that the literature was meant to extend beyond entertainment value. The repetition and redundancy in the collection reinforces the motifs for his stories and novel and teaches and preaches nineteenth-century Methodist theology and practice as understood by Bond.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Life, Ministry, and Fiction of George John Bond

Bond's Life and Ministry

The Reverend George John Bond was born in St. John's, Newfoundland, on 1 July 1850[1] to John Bond, a merchant, originally from Kent, England.[2] He was a brother of Robert Bond, one of Newfoundland's most important Prime Ministers. In 1871, Bond was accepted as a candidate for ministry in the Methodist Church by the Conference of Eastern British America. He spent three years studying at Mount Allison University. After his ordination on 26 June 1876 he was stationed in St. John's until his relocation in 1877.[3] From 1877 to 1891, Bond ministered in six different Newfoundland communities, Tilt Cove (1877-1878), Fogo (1878-1879), Trinity (1879-1882), St. John's East (1883-1885), St. John's West (1887-1890), and Grand Bank (1890-1891). In 1881 he married Lucy Macpherson and had two children. Ten years later, Bond moved to Halifax, where he ministered until 1894 when he was posted to Canso, Nova Scotia. The next year Bond became the editor of the *Wesleyan* magazine in Halifax, and in 1902 editor of the *Christian Guardian* in Toronto. Fourteen years later, Bond was invited back to Newfoundland as minister of Cochrane Street Centennial Church in St. John's, a position

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[1] "Biographies and Eulogies, George Bond, 1933" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 16.

[2] Ibid., 1.

[3] Ibid., 16.

he maintained until 1921 when he moved back to Halifax, where he continued as an active church member until his death on 22 June 1933.[4]

During his career, Bond served as the President of the Newfoundland Conference of the Methodist Church in 1885, 1888, and 1919. He held the same position in the Nova Scotia Conference in 1911.[5] Bond also visited China during his lengthy career and documented his experiences there in his book *Our Share in China and what we are doing with it.*[6] This book was well received by reviewers because of Bond's "ability to picture general conditions, industrial, racial, and social in the light of Christianity."[7]

Bond's fictional literary oeuvre consists of one published novel, as well as four published and eight unpublished short stories. His first published work was titled *Skipper George Netman: A Story of Outport Methodism in Newfoundland*[8] and appeared in nine installments in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* between February and December 1885.[9] It was published unchanged in book form in 1911 and was widely read and received.[10] In June and July of 1891, "The Castaway of Fish Rock" [11] appeared in the

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] George Bond, *Our Share in China and what we are doing with it* (Toronto: Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1911).

[7] "Biographies and Eulogies, George Bond, 1933," 5.

[8] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman: A Story of out-port Methodism in Newfoundland* (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1911).

[9] *Skipper George Netman* was published in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* in nine installments. They appeared in the following issues: 21, no. 2 (Feb. 1885): 164-176; 21, no. 3 (Mar. 1885): 269-273; 21, no. 4 (Apr. 1885): 336-340; 21, no. 5 (May 1885): 431-436; 21, no. 6 (Jun. 1885): 518-525; 22, no. 7 (July 1885): 63-67; 21 no. 8 (Oct. 1885): 365-367; 21 no. 9 (Nov. 1885): 445-448; 21 no. 10 (Dec. 1885): 542-547.

[10] "Biographies and Eulogies, George Bond, 1933," 15.

Methodist Monthly Greeting. Two years later, in April 1893, "The Spectre Dory,"[12] and in October 1893, "Bob Bartlett's Baby,"[13] appeared in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine*. His last publication in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* came in two installments in February and March of 1895 and was titled "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove: A Story of Early Methodism in Newfoundland."[14]

Bond not only was a committed Methodist minister but also "loved his native Dominion" and thus wrote largely about Newfoundland life.[15] He was viewed by his peers as a cultured and educated man whose priorities and life always revolved around the Methodist Church.[16] His love of and personal engagement with the island can be seen in his fiction since it serves as the setting for each of his works and in large part determines the plot and themes that are developed in each narrative. In many of Bond's stories, livelihood of the characters is placed at the center of their existence; however, he also demonstrates how the Methodist movement was able to establish itself within Newfoundland society, since Methodist faith and ethos became central even on the fishing grounds. Bond's fiction demonstrates by contrast the difference between how fishing and everyday lives were conducted before and after the Methodist movement arrived in the communities. The effect Methodism had on the Newfoundland population

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[11] George Bond, "The Castaway of Fish Rock," *Methodist Monthly Greeting* 3, no. 11 (Jun 1891): 286; 3, no. 12 (July 1891): 302-304.

[12] George Bond, "The Spectre Dory," *Canadian Methodist Magazine* 37, no. 4 (April 1893): 372-386.

[13] George Bond, "Bob Bartlett's Baby," *Canadian Methodist Magazine* 38, no. 4 (October 1893): 370-381.

[14] George Bond, "How the Gabbites came to Gull Cove: A Story of Early Methodism in Newfoundland," *Canadian Methodist Magazine* 41, no. 2 (February 1895): 143-149.

[15] "Biographies and Eulogies, George Bond, 1933," 5.

[16] Ibid.

sparked change in how people conducted their daily lives and set their priorities, a theme consistently established and developed in Bond's fiction.[17]

The Phenomenology of Prayer in Bond's Fiction

Friedrich Heiler's book *Prayer: History and Psychology,*[18] will be used to explore the type of prayer used by Bond in his stories by outlining the theology and practice of primitive and prophetic prayer, both in terms of its form and content. Although primitive and prophetic prayer are, according to Heiler, fundamentally different, there are commonalities between the two. By examining Heiler's categories of prayer, the theology of prayer in Bond's narratives can be better understood. Through Heiler, I will also examine the prayer involved in conversion to Methodism as presented in Bond's collection. Free prayer is viewed as the most direct means of communication between God and humankind and is the predominant topic of Bond's fiction.

Primitive and prophetic prayers are not independent of one another, but elements of primitive prayer are often included within prophetic prayer. In Bond's stories, both types of prayer are used, primitive prayer when praying for protection of life while out at sea, and prophetic prayer during revivals and in conversion narratives. The depictions of primitive and prophetic prayer in Bond's stories are meant to acquaint the reader with fundamental aspects of Methodist theology and spirituality.

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[17] The biographical information in this thesis regarding the life and ministry of George John Bond is limited because of sparse availability of personal accounts. The most factual biographical information is contained in the eulogies that have been included in the George Bond collection at the Archives of the Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies at the Queen Elizabeth II Library of Memorial University.

[18] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932).

Bond's Psychology of Conversion

Since Bond closely links prayer to the conversion experiences of his characters, William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*[19] will be used to examine the relationship between prayer and conversion in Bond's narratives. James describes conversion as a "relation that goes direct from heart to heart, from soul to soul, between man and his maker."[20] Like Heiler, James, too, considers emotion as a key ingredient in religious experiences. A deep religious experience often contains a strong emotional response.[21] James will be used to understand the psychological changes in Bond's characters after conversion has occurred.

Conversion, according to James, refers to "religious ideas, previously peripheral in his consciousness," [that] "now take a central place, and that religious aims form the habitual centre of his energy."[22] Both gradual and sudden types of conversion narratives are discussed by James, and are labeled as *volitional type* (gradual conversion) and *type by self-surrender* (sudden conversion).[23] This typology is relevant to conversion in Bond's work.

Bond depicts both conversion and religious observances that he deems to be important to Methodism in his stories. Both temperance and Sabbath observance are abundantly presented in the stories and novel as a means of portraying an attainable ideal that Methodism demands and that flow as a result from the changed lives after

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[19] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2004).

[20] Ibid., 37.

[21] Ibid., 52.

[22] Ibid., 177.

[23] Ibid., 185.

conversion. Perhaps one of the most distinguishing social characteristics of Methodism was its insistence on the sobriety of its members. Although not adhered to by every Methodist, to the majority of the religious community temperance was strongly encouraged and followed. Naboth Winsor addresses this in his unpublished M.A. thesis "Methodism in Newfoundland 1855-1884." He suggests that the converted members of the Methodist Church in Newfoundland viewed consumption of alcohol as being "a cardinal sin."[24] Bond, too, associates salvation with the renunciation of alcohol. In fact, it is often a sign in Bond's fiction that individuals have been saved and have chosen to join and actively participate in the Methodist movement.

Similarly, Sabbath observance is viewed as determining one's spiritual development. Neil Semple in *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism.*[25] establishes Sabbath observance as a strict ritual for Methodists throughout all of Canada. In Newfoundland, this practice, too, seemed to hold great importance for the Methodist Church. Beardsall suggests that "the Sunday ritual covered the community like a blanket. Anyone who did not take part had nothing to do, and no one with whom to do it."[26] For those who converted to Methodism and observed the Sabbath, the change in lifestyle before and after the conversion became publicly evident. Bond viewed Sabbath observance as an opportunity for spiritual growth as well as providing social interaction for fishermen whose work week did not allow for any leisure time.

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[24] Naboth Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland, 1855-1884" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1970), 75.

[25] Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 67.

[26] Sandra Beardsall, "Methodist Religious Practices in Outport Newfoundland" (Unpublished Th.D. thesis, Victoria University and the University of Toronto, 1996), 111.

Revivals in Newfoundland History and Bond's Narratives

Although Bond's depiction of revival appears in only two of his stories, revival has an influence on the overall message of his literature because it influenced the way he viewed the effectiveness of changing public morals in his fiction. Hans Rollmann, in his study of Laurence Coughlan, the founder of Newfoundland Methodism, discusses revivals as providing, "moral, emotional, and aesthetic rewards resulting from a life of holiness."[27] In Bond's work, the contrast made between life before and after the revivals is clearly expressed in "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove."[28]

Dawn Barrett, in her unpublished thesis, "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism," writes that it was the piety offered by the Methodists that attracted people to the movement since they preached piety through "personal experience."[29] It is argued by Barrett that this sense of God's power in the lives of his people is what appealed to the Newfoundland population, as it gave them a sense of comfort while partaking in the dangerous and often lethal fishing industry.[30] In nearly all of Bond's fiction, he stresses that the dangers experienced by fishermen in Newfoundland resulted in a personal God becoming a comfort to the people.[31]

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[27] Calvin Hollett, "The Study of Methodism in Newfoundland and the Maritimes" (Unpublished History 7001 Paper, April 12, 2004), 18.

[28] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 26.

[29] Dawn Barrett, "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism, 1766-1774" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1993), 36.

[30] Dawn Barrett, "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism, 1766-1774," 90.

[31] Although Laurence Coughlan arrived in Newfoundland in 1766, the Methodist revivals did not occur until three years later. The first revivals occurred in Conception Bay but continued throughout Newfoundland, spreading the Methodist message. For a more detailed history of Newfoundland Methodist revivals see: Dawn Barrett, "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism, 1766-1774" and Hans Rollmann, "Laurence Coughlan and the origins of Methodism in Newfoundland," in *The Contribution of Methodism to Atlantic Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 53-69.

Revivals had specific characteristics that were evident in the tone and message of the clergymen. The pleading for the congregation's souls and the exhortation for people to convert are two key elements used by Bond in his portrayal of revival. According to Gordon Wakefield, definite spiritual characteristics developed in the Methodist movement that began with a revival. Included in these is the notion of instantaneous perfection or "perfection received in a moment,"[32] an issue Bond identifies with since immediate perfection is also a point expressed during the clergyman's exhortations.

Bond's Oeuvre as it Relates to the *Roman à thèse* Genre

Susan Rubin Suleiman, in her book, *Authoritarian Fictions: The Ideological Novel As a Literary Genre,*[33] outlines the common characteristics that are found in the *roman à thèse* genre. Suleiman defines this genre as

> a novel written in the realistic mode (that is, based on an aesthetic of verisimilitude and representation), which signals itself to the reader as primarily didactic in intent, seeking to demonstrate the validity of a political, philosophical, or religious doctrine.[34]

Although the texts discussed by Suleiman are strictly novels, the characteristics outlined by her apply to Bond's entire fictional work, short stories and the novel, since he attempts to influence his readers through the Methodist theology presented within the stories. In the case of *Skipper George Netman,* the *roman à these* seeks to clarify a normative ideal

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[32] Gordon Wakefield, *Methodist Spirituality* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 1999), 43.

[33] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions: The Ideological Novel As a Literary Genre* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

[34] Ibid., 7.

to the reader so that the interpretations that result from reading the text are didactic and limited in scope.[35]

Suleiman, in describing particular types of literary genres and how they relate to the *roman à these*, views exemplary narratives as implying an interaction between the reader and the novel. They also outline a set of values that stand independently of the text itself.[36] For Suleiman, the positive exemplary version is a replacement of values meant to convey an idealization of an ideology. Such applies also to Bond's conversion narrative, which contrasts the life before Methodism and life after conversion, when strict religious ideals have taken hold. There is recognition within the narratives about an error committed, followed by the realization of how and why the act or idea was erroneous. Then there is a subsequent presentation of the truth to replace the error.[37] The negative exemplary version contrasts the positive and negative characters distinctly so that the positive ideal in the hero of the novel is made clear.[38] Essentially, the *roman à thèse* is a culmination of the two.

The role of the reader in this genre is made clear, as he or she is expected to mimic the behavior of the characters.[39] The overall goal of the work is to transform the readers' understanding of life with the ideology explored by the author.[40]

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[35] Ibid., 10.

[36] Ibid., 54-56.

[37] Ibid., 74-77.

[38] Ibid., 84.

[39] Ibid., 142.

[40] Ibid., 148.

> The reader is presumed to undergo an ideological evolution, which can even be a total conversion. This model presupposes a reader who at the outset is not convinced, or who may perhaps be downright hostile to the novel's thesis, for it is only in relation to such a reader that one can speak of a genuine persuasion exercized by the novel.[41]

This attempted conversion is accomplished by the author through redundancy and repetition in the novel.[42] Although Bond's audience was confined to fellow Methodists, he sought to teach inactive church-goers or uncommitted individuals and reinforce Methodist ideals for those who had been converted.

It is the purpose of this thesis to treat Bond's literary oeuvre as Suleiman does in the *roman à these* genre. Ingram's definition of the *story cycle* will also be used to describe Bond's collection of short stories as a cycle of individual works that cohere and represent a literary whole.[43] This will be accomplished through the examination of common themes that are present throughout his stories and novel. The narratives will be linked through Bond's common portrayal of prayer, conversion, and revivals in his collection as well as their shared theology.

Bond's literary intention coincides very much with the agenda for Methodist fiction of his day, which was expressed in the lead article of the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* in 1875 "A Native Methodist Literature."[44] Here, William Withrow describes the purpose of the short, fictional narratives that the magazine began publishing. Withrow writes:

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[41] Ibid., 142.

[42] Ibid., 149-197.

[43] Forrest Ingram, *Representative Short Story Cycles of the 20th Century: Studies in a Literary Genre* (Paris: The Hague, 1971).

[44] William Withrow, "A Native Methodist Literature," *Canadian Methodist Magazine* 1, no. 1 (January 1875): 76-78.

> [U]nless literature is instinct with high moral principles it will be a curse rather than a blessing. It is a literature loyal to Methodism and to truth that we wish to develop- a literature that shall unfold our principles, defend our doctrines and illustrate our polity.[45]

Stories for Withrow and for Bond that did not follow this agenda would not have been accepted or printed in a national or local Methodist magazine.

In this thesis, I will offer a literary analysis of Bond's work, and draw on Heiler's phenomenology of prayer and explore conversion as well as the religious psychology of his characters and their historical context. The variety of methodologies being used corresponds to the methodological pluralism prevalent in religious studies. It aims at providing a fuller understanding of the stories and of bringing to light the historical consequences and desired human impact of Methodist theology portrayed in Bond's fiction.

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[45] Ibid., 77.

Chapter 2

Bond on Primitive and Prophetic Prayer

Friedrich Heiler's Categories of Prayer

Friedrich Heiler, a phenomenologist of religion, wrote *Prayer: History and Psychology.*[46] It is an exploration of prayer, both in its "primitive" and "prophetic" expressions, which can help in understanding prayer in Bond's literature.[47] Since the prayer he addresses in his fiction falls under both categories it is useful to understand both types and conclude why Bond used them in his fiction as a means of conveying Methodist ideals.

Qualities of Primitive Prayer

As in Bond's fiction, Heiler's study does not focus on liturgical prayer, because in his opinion, "people" begin to "recite" liturgical prayer "without feeling or mood of devotion, untouched both in heart and mind."[48] Instead, free prayer is viewed as being meaningful for both personal and communal devotion since it is "the spontaneous expression of one's own experience or at least the fruit of what one has experienced and gained in struggle."[49] In contrast, liturgical prayer is structured and does not offer equal

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[46] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology.*

[47] Friedrich Heiler was a German theologian who was raised in a conservative Roman Catholic home. After converting to Lutheranism he studied the writings of Martin Luther extensively and incorporated Luther's ideas of prayer into his own typology of prayer. In *Prayer: History and Psychology,* Heiler uses Luther's writings as examples in many of his ideas regarding prophetic prayer. For more biographical information on Heiler see, Annemarie Schimmel, " Friedrich Heiler (1892-1967)," *History of Religions* 7, no. 3 (Feb. 1968): 269-272. For further information on Martin Luther's ideas surrounding prayer, both free and fixed, see John Dillenberger, ed., *Martin Luther: Selections from his Writings* (New York: Anchor Books, 1962), 216-227.

[48] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology,* 65.

[49] Ibid., xxiii.

spiritual benefits because the focus during this type of prayer is on what is being said rather than on the emotions being experienced. Heiler contends that once a prayer has been written down and mass-produced it loses its sense of authenticity.[50] The words are known but the emotion experienced by the author of the prayer cannot be fully realized by the person repeating the liturgy. According to Heiler, primitive and prophetic prayer both have fixed and free forms. In this thesis, however, only the free forms will be dealt with since Bond does not address fixed prayer in his stories. It should be noted that Bond did not make such a value judgment but chose not to address liturgical prayer in his collection.

As the label implies, "primitive prayer" is a basic form of prayer discussed by Heiler that consists of requesting a deity for the essentials of life.[51] These needs are fundamental for the survival of humans and often stem from the need for the protection of human life, both for an individual and the community.[52] In times of great distress, Heiler claims, individuals are not likely to repeat a learned prayer, but are more likely to cry out to God in their own tongue by using informal speech.[53] "The most prominent characteristic of primitive prayer is its ingenuousness," Heiler contends. "Everything that stirs in the soul of him who prays, anxiety, urgency, desire, trust, vexation, desperation, is expressed freely."[54] In this outcry of need, people plead with God to help comfort them.[55]

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[50] Ibid., xxii-xxiii.

[51] Ibid., 10.

[52] Ibid., 2.

[53] Ibid., 10.

[54] Ibid., 15.

There is a sense of the individual as being small, weak, and dependent on God. According to Heiler, this is the origin of the feeling of sin since a prayerful person experiences a "tormenting feeling of moral unworthiness."[56] After the prayer has been spoken, there is a sense of fulfillment because people have learned to depend on God.[57] This occurs in much the same way as a child who makes a heartfelt request to his or her parents. Reliance on God equals for many a close relationship that mirrors human "social relationships."[58] This results in "a feeling of absolute dependence," in which one shows oneself "courteous, submissive, devout," sometimes even falling "into fawning servility."[59] Although primitive prayer may be limited to basic human needs, it is not independent of prophetic prayer. The only fundamental difference is the content of prayer, or what is being prayed for. Prophetic prayer includes basic human needs but also addresses greater, more spiritually-based requests.

Integration of Primitive Prayer in Prophetic Prayer

Prophetic prayer comes about when humans experience a need that is concerned with human values. "It is when the healthy love of life, the elemental, vital sense is menaced, or when a conflict arises between a value experienced and the actual reality which threatens it, that the motives arise for calling upon God in prayer."[60] This type of prayer is not limited to personal or communal needs since it also includes the needs of

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[55] Ibid., 17.

[56] Ibid., 35.

[57] Ibid., 37.

[58] Ibid., 41.

[59] Ibid., 62.

[60] Ibid., 228.

those unknown to the individual.[61] Prayer is extended to others because of people's ability to empathize. As with primitive prayer, emotions, too, play a large role in prophetic prayer. The difference, however, is that prophetic prayer is centered on the emotions created in prayer, whereas in primitive prayer, emotions arise out of the physical need itself. The dependent relationship that develops in primitive prayer between humanity and God does not extend beyond the concrete. In prophetic prayer the dependence placed on God embraces the whole religious existence of the individual.[62]

Form of Prophetic Prayer

Heiler writes that an emotional outpouring of the human heart to a divine being cannot consist of fixed and elaborate words. Prophetic prayer is "almost always a *free* outpouring of the heart."[63] It is not memorized or learned but, rather, everyday, common words are being used to express the needs and desires of the individual. Methodism took this view as well since "prayer is seen in Wesleyan spirituality to be a truly egalitarian activity; neither learning nor status is considered necessary for one to be powerful in prayer."[64] This allows for a certain level of creativity, as the person is able to pray to God based on his or her understanding of the world. Prayers that have been written, when used in the context of prophetic prayer, are not consciously chosen by the person praying, but, rather, the words come from the person's heart. For instance, the Lord's Prayer may take on the qualities of prophetic prayer if the person praying uses the fixed prayer to "express

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[61] Ibid., 229.

[62] Ibid., 232.

[63] Ibid., 236.

[64] Kenneth Cracknell and Susan White, *Introduction to World Methodism* (New York: Cambridge, 2005), 155.

the agitation of the soul."[65] The emotion behind this type of fixed prayer creates a new type of prophetic prayer that is not free in its form.[66] According to Luther, Bunyan, and Heiler, without an unspeakable longing to communicate with God the prayer of the individual is useless.[67] The form of prophetic prayer, although not always free, tends to reject the fixed form because its focus is on the words that are being spoken, not on the emotion experienced. Likewise, the content of the prayer has as its center the emotional release of an individual's heartfelt plea.

Content of Prophetic Prayer

The content of free prayer, as examined by Heiler, is an emotional outburst of an individual to God whereby he or she "confides to Him the agitation and tumult of his inmost soul, his fears and troubles, his desires and hopes, even his doubts and rebellion."[68] By incorporating doubts and fears into a prayer for a person's needs, the emotion that is manifested through prayer is not limited to that of happiness but includes anxiety for the state of one's soul. It is through meaningful prayer where every emotion is expressed to God that total reliance on him occurs.[69] It is a requirement that humans take every feeling, thought, and idea, and transmit them to God as a means of correcting any faults that they are aware of. Without open dialogue between humankind and God, total reliance cannot be achieved. It is God's command to "be careful for nothing; but in

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[65] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology,* 238.

[66] Ibid., 236.

[67] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology*, 228-239; Harold E.B. Speight, *The Life and Writings of John Bunyan* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1928), 16; and John Dillenberger, ed., *Martin Luther: Selections From his Writings*, 215-222.

[68] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology. 240.*

[69] Ibid.

everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."[70] There is no distinction made in this biblical verse about what is to be prayed for and what is not; and therefore, everything must be brought to him in the form of prayer.

There are common patterns that emerge in prophetic prayer. Usually a prayer begins with a complaint or question directed at God. This most often takes the form of an individual asking God: "Why has no solution yet come for my problem?" This is followed by a petition of the individual to God as a means of solving whatever problem has arisen. "The kernel of prophetic prayer is," Heiler writes, "like that of primitive prayer, the simple request for deliverance from an evil or for the granting of gifts and favor."[71] The next step is a means of persuasion whereby the person praying pleads with God in an attempt to talk him into fulfilling his or her prayer. "He gives motives and reasons; he seeks by every indication and argument to move God to fulfill his wish."[72] This is followed by the person's expression of dependence and trust in God whereby he or she admits weakness in the presence of God and the belief that he has the ability and will to aid in whatever is required. Finally, thanksgiving and praise are expressed to God since there is an internal belief that the prayer will be answered. Each of these steps outlined by Heiler may not occur in every prophetic prayer; however, this is the most common content.[73]

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[70] Philippians 4:6 (King James Version).

[71] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology,* 241-242.

[72] Ibid., 253.

[73] Ibid., 240-274.

Motivation of Prayer

The motivation for prophetic prayer is to release an individual's emotions concerning a problem to God in an attempt for him to provide a solution. These emotions are most often associated by Heiler with fear and suffering and rarely are they emotions of joy.[74] It is human nature to become more spiritually conscious during times of distress; but during times of joy this is less likely to occur.[75] The emotion that results in this type of prayer stems from the idea that individuals are part of the whole, with one person's distress resulting in an emotional outburst by the whole community.[76] "The emotional intensity of sympathy, the feeling of oneself in another's distress, bodily or mental," writes Heiler, "urges to prayer, as the sense of one's own need."[77] This provides a strengthening of the spiritual community and gives a sense of membership and belonging to its members. Heiler most often links prayer with the individual; however, communal prayer serves a specific role in prophetic prayer as well.

Prayer in Bond's Literature

Bond's *Skipper George Netman* is the only literary text that has as its center the prayer of a clergyman during a life-threatening disaster. It is more common in his stories for prayer to be said by lay members of the Methodist church, because most often clergy were not available in the outports. In this particular situation, however, there is a permanent minister who meets at Skipper George's house as a group of men lead the search for William and John Netman, Richard Tuffin, and Henry Burton, the lost men

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[74] Ibid., 230.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid., 230-231.

[77] Ibid., 232.

that had been stranded out on the ice.[78] Along with a group of elderly men, women, and children, the clergyman, Mr. Fairbarin, stays at Skipper George's house to pray and waits for news of the missing men. Although they are essentially helpless, Mr. Fairbarin tells those gathered that they can still pray for the stranded, even though they are unable to physically provide aid for them. His prayer does not contain any liturgical form or content but is instead a free prayer. He begins by reassuring the gathered people that God is present with the men because God's presence has no physical boundaries. He then proceeds to explain that they must pray for the will of God to become reality, whatever that will is, whether it be life or death. Bond writes:

> And then in an earnest prayer, emphasized by the sobs and ejaculations of the little company, Mr. Fairbarin commended the missing ones to God, praying that, if it were His will, they might reach their homes again; that those who had gone to seek them might be under Divine guidance and care; and that those left in such terrible anxiety might have patience and trust to bear the present burden, and to meet the future, whatever it might bring forth to them.[79]

It is important to note that the will of God is the central theme in this prayer, and that the safety of the men is dependent on what God's will is. Although the prayer is for the men to return, there is according to Mr. Fairbarin no guarantee that this will in fact happen. This passage articulates Bond's and Heiler's belief that God is a party who has an investment in the lives of his followers. He cares for the converted and, when in distress, prayer should be brought to him with anticipation that the problem will be corrected and the men saved.

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[78] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 68-79.

[79] Ibid., 78-79.

Prayer by clergymen is not the norm in Bond's literature. Rather, the task of praying for people's well-being is usually left to local members of the Methodist church, although the form and content remain basically the same. In "The Spectre Dory," Ben Tibbo and Tom Harris are caught in a storm and are unable to find their way back to their sealing vessel. In this particular instance, Tibbo is the only character in the story who prays for his and Tom's safety. He realizes that they are helpless in this situation and must rely on the will of God to protect and save them.[80] He relies on God's special providence to comfort himself and his mate when Tom's spirits fall and he becomes weak.[81] Again, Heiler's ideas of an involved God are mirrored in Bond's work. God's involvement is not limited to one type of situation or circumstance but is available for all people in all times.

The closeness of God to his congregation is especially evident in "The Castaway of Fish Rock," when Solomon French finds himself stranded on a large rock after his schooner is shipwrecked.[82] There is no detail given of the prayers that Solomon prayed, however, he prayed often and with great passion.[83] These prayers provided comfort and reassurance to him as he lay waiting for what he thought would be his death. "I had the assurance of His love, an' favour, an' forgiveness." Solomon said, "Jesus was with me, an' I rested on His arm."[84] As in the previous story, Solomon does not pray for his life;

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[80] George Bond, "The Spectre Dory" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 9.

[81] Ibid.

[82] George Bond, "The Castaway of Fish Rock" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 79-93.

[83] Ibid., 88.

[84] Ibid., 86.

instead, his prayers reflect the deep trust that he has in *his* God. God's assurance is a belief held by Bond's characters since God's interest lies in the common person. "Skipper Joe Burton's Strange Christmas Box" reflects this view as well when Skipper Joe receives word that a schooner had been shipwrecked during a terrible winter storm. He tells his wife, Aunt Betsy, to pray for the men on the rescue mission as well as for any survivors that they might find.[85] Skipper Joe believes in the will of God being done when he tells Aunt Betsy that both the rescuers and the stranded are "in God's hands."[86] In this particular case it is primitive prayer that is being used since Aunt Betsy is instructed to pray for the physical safety of the men's lives as well as the lives of those stranded on the ship. Using Heiler's categories, this story includes primitive prayer because it aims at the preservation of life and is thus not prophetic prayer, because no spiritual requests are being made.

"The Yarn of the Nancy Bell: A Labrador Story" is vague when describing the seriousness and intent of men and women onboard the ship while praying. It is described as being "earnest,"[87] which suggests a certain amount of distress given the uncertainty of the characters while caught in a storm onboard a schooner. The effects of the prayers of both the men and women are evident, because it gave "us faith" in "ourselves that somehow God would make a way out of it for us, black as it looked."[88] In each of the

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[85] George Bond, "Skipper Joe Burton's Strange Christmas Box" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 107.

[86] Ibid.

[87] George Bond, "The Yarn of the Nancy Bell: A Labrador Story" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 121.

[88] Ibid., 120.

previous stories, details are lacking in the description of prayer, but the result of praying is well documented. Based on the details that are given, it can be concluded that the prayer is a free prayer, since the characters were praying for God's intervention in a specific situation, for which no liturgical prayer would be appropriate. Like the previous story, this narrative, too, uses primitive prayer since the women are praying for the safety of themselves and the men on board the ship.

Unlike the other literature by Bond, "A Strange Entry in the Log of the Barque 'Selina'" has a supernatural element. The plot is based on a ship in distress, and as a result, the passengers onboard turn to their faith for help.

> Some of the passengers were praying quietly in one corner of the room;
> and listening to them and joining in with the prayers as I lay there, tired out,
> there came to my mind the thought of Christ going to the help of His disciples
> in the storm on the Sea of Galilee, and I prayed earnestly that He would,
> in some way, intervene on our behalf and save us.[89]

This passage is written from the perspective of a fisherman who appears to the Captain of the Barque 'Selina' and gives him the location of the distressed ship. This suggests knowledge of scripture that is not evident in the other literature. In fact, the meditation of scripture could be interpreted as a prayer within itself, since it is the intent and thoughts of the person that define something as being prayerful.

"In the Grip of the Gale," the prayer spoken by Kate Stanton's father for Kate's missing husband is described in detail to the reader and includes the words spoken and the emotions that accompany them. As he prayed, Kate's father was "tremulous with emotion…and commended him and those with him to the divine love and

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[89] George Bond, "A Strange Entry in the Log of the Barque 'Selina'" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 140.

guardianship."[90] This description of prayer is more typical of Bond's collection, and includes strong emotions that appear in many of his stories. In this narrative, the requests being brought to God are primitive in nature; however, Bond also includes the emotionality often present in prophetic prayer. The subject matter being prayed for, however, would be labeled by Heiler as being primitive since it is directed to the physical safety of Kate's husband. This content of prayer distinguishes primitive from prophetic prayer.

The final story that exhibits Bond's ideas on prayer is "Saint Patrick's Last Christmas." This story deals with the illness of a child and the inability of his parents to save him. Patrick, who was commonly called "Saint Patrick" by his loved ones, is diagnosed with diphtheria. With no doctors immediately available, his parents are helpless to help him. When the doctor finally arrives they are told that death is almost certain. It is this sense of desperation that leads the parents "to watch and wait and fight and pray for the life of their child."[91] This description is rife with emotion because of the circumstances in the story. Although the prayer is not described in detail, the circumstance suggests a certain level of desperation and hopelessness for the parents. It can also be concluded that the prayer is not liturgical since it is a plea for a very specific issue, for which there would be no fixed prayer available. Although this story deals mainly with primitive prayer for the physical recovery of Patrick, there is mention of prophetic prayer as well. Patrick's mother prayed for his soul because she had some sense that something was wrong with her child long before the illness settled in.

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[90] George Bond, "In the Grip of the Gale" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 151.

[91] George Bond, "St. Patrick's Last Christmas," 165.

The requests that are being made by the characters in Bond's stories fall mainly into the category of primitive prayer outlined above by Heiler, in that they are requesting they be provided with the basics to sustain human life. Their first priority seems to be the welfare of their loved ones and is linked to God's special providence. The will of God must take a central role because, along with their pleas for God to save the people who are in danger, they are essentially asking for the will of God to be fulfilled, regardless of the outcome. Their spiritual maturity has evolved so they can understand that their immediate needs may not coincide with God's will. During the plea, they acknowledge that the request may not be granted.

Prayer and Female Characters

In "Skipper Joe Burton's Strange Christmas Box," the role of Skipper Joe's wife, Aunt Betsy, is clearly distinguished from that of her husband's. Aunt Betsy's Christianity is already known to the reader since it is part of her everyday life. She nurtures her own spirituality by singing hymns while completing mundane tasks around the household[92] and is "devoting herself in personal ministration to the sick and the poor."[93] Aunt Betsy's character expresses a strong sense of social responsibility. She sought to improve the lives of people who were not able to help themselves by providing them with the most basic human needs.[94] She also considered it as her responsibility to pray for her husband

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[92] George Bond, "Skipper Joe Burton's Strange Christmas Box," 103.

[93] Ibid., 105.

[94] The Christian notion of social awareness, according to Ronald White and Howard Hopkins, in their book *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America,* can be defined as "the application of the teaching of Jesus and the total message of the Christian salvation to society, the economic life, and social institutions…as well as to individuals." For further information on the history of social awareness see Ronald White and Howard Hopkins, eds., *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), xi.

when he is summoned to help find survivors on a shipwrecked schooner.[95] Based on the description given of this character, she is pious in nature and expresses her Christianity in every aspect of her life, whether it manifests itself in her attitude toward chores or her prayers for her husband and the potential survivors onboard a ship.

"The Yarn of the Nancy Bell" also exhibits the piety of female characters. In this story Bond establishes fundamentally the same principle as in "Skipper Joe Burton's Strange Christmas Box," although through a different plot. In this narrative, Bond surprisingly places the female characters in the same physical danger as the males; however, they are kept as much out of harm's way as is possible under the circumstances. While enduring stormy weather onboard the Nancy Bell the women are kept below deck and the men are responsible for the ship and exposed to the elements. With the women kept safely below, they once again take on the responsibility of praying for the men and themselves. "We could hear them women singin' an' prayin' off an' on through the noise o' the storm; an' I tell 'ee it did us a power o' good."[96] The spirituality of the women is used to show how all Methodists, both female and male, rely on God in all instances. God is viewed as being intimately involved in the lives of his followers. The women in particular pick up on this theme and are always the first to call out to God for his help in their time of need.

In "The Grip of the Gale," the role of a woman is portrayed differently than in the other works. Kate Stanton is distressed over her husband's failure to return home one

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[95] George Bond, "Skipper Joe Burton's Strange Christmas Box," 107.

[96] George Bond, "The Yarn of the Nancy Bell," 118.

evening.[97] Instead of her praying for Jim's return, it is her father who says the prayer, "tremulous with emotion, his voice rose and fell as he pleaded with God for the life of the loved one in peril on the sea."[98] Jim, Kate's husband, was not the only man who had failed to return home. Bond writes that for the majority of the community it was women who prayed, and not men, as most men were fighting for their lives.

> Women wept and prayed by turns, sometimes pacing the floor distractedly, sometimes sitting in the stupor of despair, while old men did their best to comfort, and boys and girls looked on in silent tearfulness at agony with which they sympathized but were too young to fully understand or feel. Fathers, husbands, brothers, sons, lovers, were in deadly peril, what could women do but weep and pray?[99]

This description of prayer in the story is typical of Bond's characters because women felt compelled to pray for their loved ones. Women seem to represent the spiritual strength of the community, while the men represent the physical strength of society.

Skipper George Netman, like the rest of Bond's fiction, places the responsibility of prayer on the women in the community. When four young men go missing on the ice, the men in the community form a search party, but the older men, women, and children gather for prayer and comfort.[100] Since this is the only narrative of Bond's with a permanent minister in the community, he, too, stays behind and leads a prayer with the distressed women and older men.[101] The women, however, do not wait for the minister to

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[97] George Bond, "In the Grip of the Gale," 143-144.

[98] Ibid., 151.

[99] Ibid.

[100] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 68-82.

[101] Ibid., 78.

arrive before they begin their own prayers.[102] As in the previously discussed stories, women are unable to provide physical help to their husbands, brothers, or sons. Bond presents spirituality as a habitual activity in the lives of the female characters. No one in any of his stories questions what should be done when news of danger arrives. The women go to prayer as though it was second nature to them. Females in all of Bond's stories take upon themselves the worry and concern, and respond to the situation with prayer whereas the male characters engage instantly and without hesitation in action.

A different plot that demonstrates similar expected behavior can be found in "Saint Patrick's Last Christmas," where both parents take on the responsibility of prayer for their ill child.[103] As both parents were not in close proximity to other family members, prayer became their only means to fight for their child's life since they were unable to provide Patrick with any physical assistance.[104] Previous to the child's illness, however, it was indeed his mother who had an instinctual knowledge that something was not right with her son, although she had no indication of what it was or what might be done to assuage the bad feelings she sometimes had.[105]

> There was something in the mother's heart, however, that made her shiver at times when she looked at her lovely boy. It was not apprehension, but it was akin to it. Not that his health gave any cause for anxiety…Yet there was something, she could not tell what, that at times would make her snatch him to her heart and cover his face with passionate kisses, and at times would send her to her knees in an outburst of tearful praying on his behalf and her own.[106]

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[102] Ibid., 77.

[103] George Bond, "St. Patrick's Last Christmas,"165.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid.,163.

[106] Ibid.

Although the illness caused both parents to pray for their son, it was his mother that had the maternal instinct that knew something was wrong beforehand, and turned to prayer as a means of saving her son from whatever it was she felt was wrong with him. This female character, as well as the other women in Bond's stories, are always submissive to God's will in that they never rely upon themselves but are totally reliant on God. The men, on the other hand, rely on both, God's and their own abilities during dangerous situations.

All female characters seem to stay within their domestic, traditional roles by concerning themselves with the home, their children, and their husbands. This is reflected in the form and content of their prayers. The female characters partake almost exclusively in 'primitive prayer' when requesting safety for the male characters. There is not a single instance in Bond's oeuvre of a woman praying exclusively for herself, but, rather, female prayers are always centered on male members of their families. This, of course, does not extend to prayers during the conversion process, as these are always personal prayers on behalf of the individual. In these cases female characters do pray for their own well-being. It is noteworthy as well that there is no instance in Bond's work of a woman praying for another woman. Women do not pray for each other but pray solely for male characters. There is no doubt why Bond addressed women as he did in his fiction. Bond likely sought to convey a particular message to female readers through the use of his ideal female characters, in particular, the necessity of prayer and piety in female Christian life and the obligation of women to become spiritual examples in their homes to their husbands and families.

Conclusion

The term "form" is used to identify whether the prayer is fixed (liturgical) or free, meaning prayer that is not written or memorized. The presence of prayer plays an essential role in George Bond's fiction, and fits into the form of "free prayer". This can be concluded based on the intense level of emotions that are described by Bond in nearly all descriptions of prayer. The occasion for such emotions almost always revolves around the threat to a character's life. The concern and worry that is felt by the characters informs their prayerful plea that the lives of the men in danger be spared and that the will of God be done, even if this means that ultimately the lives of the men are taken. The repetitive character of Bond's portrayal of prayer indicates the didactic nature of the stories. He incorporates in the stories, the form, content, and emotionality of what Heiler considers primitive prayer, then gives the reader examples of how to pray according to Methodist practice, thus sharing many of the features that Heiler identifies for free prayer, a direct communication between God and his followers, and, therefore, of greatest significance. Primitive prayer is used by Bond during life-threatening experiences and prophetic prayer during conversions.

Heiler makes clear throughout his book that strong emotions are essential for both primitive and prophetic prayer. Bond, too, depicts prayer in his short fictional narratives and novel as filled with emotion. His emotion-centered prayer can be understood in his fiction as coming from God as a benevolent giver. The lives of his characters may often be in danger, but prayers offered on their behalf can be viewed in terms of thanksgiving for the blessing that God has not yet provided. In Bond's fiction this responsibility usually falls to the female characters as they are required to pray for their sons, brothers,

and husbands. The spiritual burdens of the family almost exclusively fall to the women, as men are often the individuals that are in need of prayer.

Prayer is a central idea presented in Bond's fiction, and its repetition within his work intensifies the Methodist practice and theology that are being conveyed. It is through the repetition of themes that the didactic intent of Bond can be realized. Not only is the general theme of prayer repeated constantly throughout his work, but also the form and content of the prayer that he portrays are consistent and have exemplary function. He deals only with free prayer in his texts that revolve around either the saving of lives or the prayer needed in the conversion of individuals. The repetition is meant to emphasize the theme of prayer to the reader. A general reader of the narratives could easily identify with the characters in Bond's fiction and was given the needed advice for his or her own prayer. The emotionality of the characters is meant to resonate with the reader, provide some type of emotional stimulus, and communicate and explain the Methodist teaching on prayer, as Bond saw it.

Chapter 3

Conversion and its Social Consequences

William James' Psychology of Conversion

Gradual and Sudden Conversion

William James, one of America's preeminent philosophers and psychologists, studied religious experience in the conscious and subconscious mind.[107] James's lectures on *Varieties of Religious Experience,*[108] published later in book form, discuss conversion as a psychological process that begins with feelings of inferiority.[109] It is a human realization of one's own weakness and dependence on a higher being that leads to an individual being converted to a particular religious, in this case, Christian commitment. The conversion process is a communication that "goes direct from heart to heart, from soul to soul, between man and his maker."[110] Although the presence of fear may be present, conversion is a highly personal event that does not require any outward actions or observances.[111] "We find that deliverance is felt as incomplete," James writes, "unless the burden be altogether overcome and the danger forgotten."[112] What humans gain from

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[107] William James was an American religious scholar whose work became recognized worldwide. For further biographical information see T.J. Jackson Lears, "William James," *The Wilson Quarterly (1976-)*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (Autumn, 1987): 84-95.

[108] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience,* are lectures given by William James in Edinburgh between 1901 and 1902. For further information on the lectures contained in the text and publishing information see the Introduction of William James *Varieties of Religious Experience.*

[109] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience,* 37.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid., 119-150.

[112] Ibid., 77.

their personal conversion is a relief from fear that they would otherwise be unable to obtain. Fear may take multiple forms such as the fear of death, hell, and life. In Bond's narratives, conversion is used in these ways since it is a means to overcome sinfulness and provide comfort when characters are facing certain death.[113] The physical danger being faced by his literary characters is not forgotten, but it appears that after conversion their anxiety is reduced substantially.

James defines conversion broadly in his book as the spiritual and emotional movement from unhappiness and discontent to happiness and contentment. The divided self stands in opposition to "the author of one's being"[114] whereas,

> to be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right superior and happy.[115]

Conversion is a psychological change and a replacement of values, where at one time physical well-being and success may have been considered important, now religious and spiritual ideals take precedence.[116]

Gradual and sudden conversions are distinguished in *Varieties of Religious Experience* as *volitional type* and *type by self-surrender*.[117] These terms, borrowed from

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[113] A typical demonstration of conversion resulting from life-threatening dangers can be found in George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 20- 31.

[114] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 155.

[115] Ibid., 171.

[116] Ibid., 175-177.

[117] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 185.

the psychologist Starbuck do not imply any value judgment.[118] The first type, a gradual conversion, or the *volitional type,* is a "regenerative change…and consists in the building up, piece by piece, of a new set of moral and spiritual habits."[119] This type of conversion does not play a major role in Bond's fiction and occurs only in "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays."[120] It does, however, provide a contrast to sudden conversions, a phenomenon repeatedly addressed by Bond. Sudden conversions *"by self surrender"* are based on a conscious decision by the individual whereby "the personal will…must be given up." The threat of death or physical harm "forces them to focus their thoughts on existential questions,"[121] whereas previously people may not have felt compelled to deal with their spirituality. While life-threatening experiences do not always produce conversions, in Bond's stories they certainly do. Sudden conversion, however, exposes the unconverted to a much greater sense of torment and struggle. It is not until the person surrenders to the will of the divine and makes it his or her own that conversion may occur.

The Convert's Internal Psychological Struggle

Internal struggle before and during conversion is present in nearly all of Bond's works and fits well with James' ideas. "First, the present incompleteness or wrongness, the 'sin' which he is eager to escape from" must be realized, "and, second, the positive

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[118] Ibid., 185-193.

[119] Ibid., 185.

[120] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL).

[121] Dawn Barrett, "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism, 1766-1774," 180.

ideal which he longs to compass" must be acknowledged.[122] It is the realization of their own inadequacies and of the ideal that they must live up to as a spiritual being. Cognitive processes in the individual change the focus whereby every aspect of life is viewed in terms of a divine existence. The moral reference point in a person's mind that determines whether something is good or bad is altered. The moral compass after conversion is the will of God.[123] After the experience, internal struggle may still persist, but, overall, there is a "loss of worry, the sense that all is ultimately well with one, the peace, the harmony, the *willingness to be*, even though the outer conditions should remain the same."[124] Usually such experience is accompanied with a sense of joy as well as a sense of inadequacy after conversion since the Christian ideal is viewed as being unattainable. Although Bond distinguishes between the thought process of characters before and after conversion, he fails to give his characters any psychological depth. He fails to demonstrate the struggles that people underwent prior to conversion.

Henry Rack, in *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism*, also addresses doubt and fear during conversion that stems from trying to live up to the Christian ideal. He writes that doubt should be considered independently of the intellectual atmosphere of the time. Instead, it should be viewed within the context of the Methodist movement, as a religious, psychological phenomenon in its own right. "This is a familiar experience in the literature of conversion and should be seen as part of the

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[122] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience,* 187.

[123] Ibid., 188.

[124] Ibid., 219.

psychology of this type of convert."[125] After conversion has taken place doubts remain but involve the person's feelings of inadequacies. This sense of questioning is not immediately felt by the convert, but instead, relief and joy tend to be the first emotions felt, followed by a sense of uncertainty when incorporating alternative ideas into an already established routine and thought process.[126] Rack's and James' ideas all describe fear as being present during conversion experiences. The fears and doubts that exist are felt because new converts are presented with an unattainable goal that Christians must strive toward.

Prayer in Conversion

The efficacy of prayer is the central religious theme in George Bond's literature and is present in every story, although to varying degrees. The entire corpus of literature includes the words 'pray,' 'prayer,' 'praying,' and 'prayed' a total of 101 times throughout the collection. The terms 'conversion,' 'converted,' and 'convert,' however, only appear three times in Bond's collection. Instead, the word 'saved' is used to describe the conversion of his characters and appears thirteen times.

Bond discusses prayer in the conversion process in "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove." More specifically, it is used during the revival that occurs at the end of the story. The first glimpse of prayer occurs midway through the story when the lay preacher, Martin, and the clergyman, Joseph Jeynes, first encounter an ill, elderly woman. As Joseph reads a common verse from the woman's prayer book, she begins to speak of her wish for God to heal her rheumatics. He continues reading to her, and as he proceeds, "he

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[125] Henry Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* (London: Epworth Press, 1989), 425.

[126] Dawn Barrett, "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism, 1766-1774," 232-234.

could see the pain-drawn face work with emotion and the hungry eyes fill with tears, as he spoke of the great love of Jesus for men and His willingness to forgive and help all who seek Him."[127] The clergyman then prays for the elderly woman in "fervent prayer," asking that God would grant her mercy and provide her with healing. [128] Later, while the first revival meeting was taking place, the minister again prayed a similar prayer. It was a "prayer for the present manifestation of the saving power of God,"[129] the result of which was that the woman encouraged others to join her in her newfound faith.

"Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays" portrays the function of prayer in the conversion process differently in that there is no clergyman present, but, rather, it is Captain Sam's interaction with Methodist lay people that leads to his conversion. Unlike the other narratives, this is the only one that suggests a gradual conversion, as it took Captain Sam a full year to finalize his transition, but the prayer leading to his conversion is similar to the previous prayer since it involves also strong emotions.

> Then when I got over the shock a bit I prayed to God to forgive me…
> An' there, sir, on that Easter Sunday, lyin' on my bed in Gibralter hospital,
> Jesus heard my prayer an' saved me, an' praise His name, He've kept
> me ever since.[130]

The simplest example of what prayer entails in the conversion process is shown in "Bob Bartlett's Baby." The main character, Bob Bartlett, experiences an emotional response directly before his prayer and conversion. "Bowing himself there, with an outburst of weeping that was not bitter, but sweet and soothing, the strong man poured out his simple

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[127] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 11.

[128] Ibid., 12.

[129] Ibid., 17.

[130] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 54.

soul to God, and sought His pardon and grace and help."[131] The emotions experienced by the character as well as the intense longing for communion with God are aspects of prophetic prayer that are essential for Heiler as well as Bond. Finally, in *Skipper George Netman,* Skipper George recalls his own prayer during his conversion as a plea for forgiveness. Along with this plea was a desperation that manifested itself through an emotional response.

> And I prayed with all my heart. I prayed that God would forgive me, and take away my sins; that He would do it now. I was in an agony; my sins seemed greater than I could bear, and I cried to God from the depths of a wounded spirit.[132]

There is no detailed account of the prayer itself, but in his description of prayer Bond demonstrates common qualities and characteristics. In this prayer the agony described by Skipper George in his conversion narrative coincides with James's ideas about the internal struggle experienced by people during the conversion process.

In each of the previously discussed conversion narratives, there appears to be a particular order of events. There is a recurrent emotionality in all conversions, usually occurring before or during prayer. Only in "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays" is there no mention of a strong emotional outpouring in the description of the prayer itself. Prior to the event there is a strong outpouring of emotion, but it arises from a sense of guilt for treating the men on board his ship poorly when they refused to work on the Sabbath.[133] The prayers consist of a realization of sin, a request for forgiveness, and a plea to God

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[131] George Bond, "Bob Bartlett's Baby" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 37-74.

[132] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 30.

[133] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 52.

that he would bestow his grace on the individual. Prayer is portrayed by Bond as being a personal act between God and man. It is very much left up to the individual to ask for forgiveness and make the plea to God, even when other characters are present to witness the event.

Although not specifically mentioned in James, conversions usually occur in Bond's stories during or directly after a life-threatening experience. The fear associated with death and dying force the characters to contemplate their spirituality whereas before this was not a priority. Conversion does not require special intellectual acumen or context. It is an aspect of Methodism that can be experienced by the common person in a variety of settings and situations, including life-threatening situations while out at sea.

Conversion in Bond's Sermons

Conversion, as discussed above, is dealt with by Bond, both in his fiction and sermons, because it was a fundamental part of the Methodist message and appeal. In Bond's sermon, "Is It Such a Fast That I Have Chosen? Is Not This The Fast That I Have Chosen?" written in 1890, he states that conversion, although immediate, does require "repentance, humiliation, and self-examination."[134] Whether gradual or sudden, conversion is only the starting point of a process leading to a mature spiritual development. The only demonstration of gradual conversion in Bond's oeuvre is in "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays." His own view, as conveyed in his sermon, would suggest that conversion is instantaneous, but spiritual maturity continues as a process. In the preceding sermon there is no mention of gradual conversion; rather the emphasis is

[134] George Bond, "Is It Such A Fast That I Have Chosen? – Is Not This The Fast That I Have Chosen?" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 9-10.

placed on instantaneous conversion after the sermon has been delivered.[135] The limited time between sermon and the requested decision would undoubtedly lead to a strong emotional response since the individual would recognize his or her sinful nature and inadequacies as a human. The narratives usually begin with an individual who is unaware of his or her own religious disposition but who becomes aware of her spiritual needs through various encounters with other Methodists. As a result of their encounters or life-threatening experiences, Bond's fictional characters make a conscious decision to become converted, beginning with prayer.

According to James, conversion results in the individual becoming united and happy, whereby the turmoil and fear that he or she first experienced is no longer prevalent. In Bond's fiction this is certainly the case. Characters who experienced fear during a life-threatening experience, such as the men and women caught in a storm out at sea in "The Yarn of the Nancy Bell,"[136] seem to become less fearful because of their faith. They have the assurance of God's love, and so death or physical injury is not to be feared. The converted experience a shift in their awareness whereby their own safety is of less importance than God's providence and care. This cognitive shift seems to occur rapidly after conversion because Bond immediately begins to describe the emotional and mental state of his characters as being more calm, such as in "The Castaway of Fish Rock." Before conversion, physical safety is their main concern whereas after they have

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[135] For further understanding of Bond's personal ideas about conversion see: George Bond, "Is Thine Heart Right?" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection236, Memorial University, St. John's, NL); George Bond, "There is Forgiveness With Thee That Thou Mayest Be Feared." (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL); and George Bond, "The Son of God Who Loved Me and Gave Himself For Me" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL); and George Bond, "Except Ye Be Converted" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL).

[136] George Bond, "The Yarn of the Nancy Bell," 120-121.

surrendered and become converted, God's will is their only priority and the concern over personal safety is diminished.

The Social Consequences of Conversion

Temperance and Sabbath Observance

Although James argues that converting need not result in formal religious observances, Bond viewed temperance and Sabbath observance as important ethical and religious changes effected in the life of converts. Both temperance and Sabbath observance are addressed throughout Bond's fiction as Methodist observances necessary after conversion. In Bond's writings, Sabbath observance appears more often and with a greater degree of detail than temperance, although both reflect contemporary Newfoundland Methodist practices. Bond, as a Newfoundland Methodist clergyman, was aware of what he and his religious contemporaries considered to be social problems in society. He wanted to offer an alternative to what he perceived as being a destructive force of learned behavior in the island's culture. He sought to combat perceived faults in society with Methodist moral directives and aimed at improving the lives of his readers. These values are also reflected in the lives and behavior of his literary characters.

Alcohol Consumption Before and After Conversion

Bond's fictional work sharply contrasts Newfoundland culture before Methodism arrived on the island with the changes that occurred after its acceptance and spread throughout the island. First, Bond states what he perceived as a problem, the social function of alcohol in Newfoundland life. He then describes the Methodist social and moral stigma associated with this behavior, and, finally, temperance as a suggested alternative. By offering an alternative lifestyle to the one previously observed, a

replacement of values takes place within the characters of his narratives, which, the author hopes, may carry over to the reader. Temperance and Sabbath observance are requirements that must be met by individuals after conversion has occurred and which in turn validate the conversion experience.

Social Function of Alcohol

Unlike other stories by Bond, "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society" is completely devoted to the Methodist message of sobriety. The main character, Big Rich, a native of French Cove in Trinity Bay, is described by Bond as being a sensible man with a talent for fishing. In this particular story, Big Rich recollects his reasons for joining the Temperance Society, which resulted from an encounter with an unknown man when Rich and his fishing mates went searching for alcohol after they reached port in St. John's.[137] According to the story, alcohol was often used by fishermen during their leisure time in port in and after the fishing season. In the story "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," Aunt Betsy comments that the Methodists do not permit converts to drink rum or dance.[138] This suggests that alcohol was used for entertainment value for the general population and its use was not limited to male consumption but also included female participation. Furthermore, in the same narrative, Mr. Brown, the town clerk, expressed his fear that the Methodists might destroy his business, that of selling rum to the community.[139] Alcohol was a profitable business for the merchants and indebted the population to them since they sold the only available alcohol in the outport communities.

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[137] George Bond, "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St. John's, NL), 97.

[138] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 2.

[139] Ibid., 14.

Alcohol was thus a means of entertainment for the population, a business for the merchants, and a social problem because of the financial instability it created for the fishermen and their families.

Social Stigma of Alcohol and the Consequences of its Use

The social stigma associated with alcohol consumption is thematized in Bond's story "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society," which describes in detail the changes that occurred throughout the community after sobriety was accepted, indeed, demanded, by a large number of people. The Temperance Society embraced several Protestant denominations and members who were "unseparated by thought, or word, or creed, or party, on the broad, open platform of temperance and mutual help."[140] Not stated as being exclusively Methodist, this society was developed to improve the community as a whole.[141] Bond views sobriety as an aspect of life that everyone can and should benefit from, regardless of spiritual or political preference. In this narrative, the changes that occurred after communal sobriety took effect were evident to all, even to those who did not themselves subscribe to temperance.[142] Once the movement had expanded to include the majority of the community, obtaining alcohol became increasingly difficult and carried with it a sense of shame for those who chose not to adhere to this principle.

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[140] George Bond, "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society," 95.

[141] Newfoundland Anglicans and Methodists were unified in their message of sobriety; however, after Bishop introduced Tractarianism to the Church of England, the denominations became less cooperative. For further information, see Charles Scobie and John Webster Grant *The Contribution of Methodism to Atlantic Canada*, 37 and Sandra Beardsall, "Methodist Religious Practices in Outport Newfoundland," 64-73.

[142] George Bond, "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society," 96.

> But, now, the man that brings a jar of liquor to French Cove, for his "Christmas," is half ashamed of being seen to carry it openly, and hides his "little brown jug" in a breadbag, perhaps, or, at best, with a sort of sneaking bravado hurries his booty home.[143]

The above description associates shame with alcohol because the substance itself was viewed by the general population as being unacceptable. Prior to the establishment of the Temperance Society, alcohol use was a common aspect of Newfoundland life. Afterwards its consumption became a taboo, and those who disagreed with its use were vocal in their objections while those who did not agree with the new community mores were ashamed and hid their activities.

Although not the norm for Bond's stories, the harsh opinions of the characters in "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society" centre around the idea that the safety of the population lies in its insistence on sobriety. At the end of this narrative, Bond states that personal and communal safety is not possible without restrictions. It is the only story written by Bond that preaches the lesson or moral of sobriety through a clear didactic statement at the closing of the text. Usually, the lesson or moral conveyed in the story is not highlighted for emphasis in the narrative itself but appears through the actions of the characters. In this narrative, however, with a narrowly focused theme, the consequences of intemperance are made clear by a moral maxim so as to ensure no misunderstanding by the reader.

> The man that drinks at all is in danger of all the consequences; all the more in danger because every man thinks that he, at least, is strong enough to resist it. Drink is doing its awful work in our country every day, and many a widow weeps, and many an orphan starves, and many a kindly, noble heart is ruined, that the publican's till may be filled and the publican's fortune made.[144]

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[143] Ibid.

[144] George Bond, "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society," 99-100.

Bond does not limit this teaching only to Methodists but insists throughout his story that all people, regardless of religious preference, should embrace this practice as a means of maintaining a safe and economically sound life and community. He generalizes his discussion and writes about the devastation that alcohol can have for the entire country. This is also the first story that extends its moral to the wider population, whereas the other narratives are very limited in their purpose and message, and are restricted to Methodists or potential converts.

Methodist Teaching of Sobriety

Historically, the problem of alcohol abuse began in Newfoundland because of its wide availability, cheap price and ability to provide fishermen with relief from their difficult life. Pitt, in *Windows of Agates*, describes the availability of alcohol in St. John's, Newfoundland, where fishermen often came into port after the fishing season had ended. Newfoundland fishermen were in a continuous cycle of debt with the merchants as well, which contributed to their need for distraction.[145] "Much more numerous are the taverns," Pitt writes, "equally dark within, dirty and noisy, where Jamaica and Demerara rum, the cheapest commodity in town, is always in plentiful supply and the business always brisk."[146] Hans Rollmann's article "Laurence Coughlan and the Origins of Methodism in Newfoundland" points out that upon Laurence Coughlan's arrival in Newfoundland in the eighteenth century, he found alcohol consumption a considerable

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[145] For further information on the social and economic problems facing Newfoundlanders see Jacob Parsons, "The Origin And Growth of Newfoundland Methodism 1765-1855" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1964), 1-12.

[146] David Pitt, *Windows of Agates* (St. John's, Newfoundland: Jesperson Press, 1990), 12.

challenge in Conception Bay, which, however, was remedied through changed lives after conversion and led not only to life-style changes but greater economic independence.[147] Naboth Winsor, in "Methodism in Newfoundland 1855-1884," discusses the Methodist practice of abstaining from drinking alcohol despite its prominence in Newfoundland culture. He writes that temperance was one of the characteristics that identified Methodism. Instruction to converts about this subject was very strict, going so far as to discourage any type of alcohol consumption unless it was ordered by a physician for the physical well being of the individual.[148] It should be noted, however, that although temperance was a common practice among converted Methodists, not all church-goers subscribed to it. Winsor writes:

> While total abstinence was not practiced by all Methodists, yet those who were 'converted' and many others were total abstainers, and by these the drinking of intoxicating liquors was looked upon as committing a cardinal sin.[149]

In *Gender and the Social Gospel,* Wendy Deichmann Edwards and Carolyn De Swarte Gifford associate the teaching of temperance as an element of social awareness that was adopted particularly by female members of the movement.[150] These ideas and theologies were articulated during the time that Bond first began to write his fiction.[151]

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[147] Hans Rollmann, "Laurence Coughlan and the Origins of Methodism in Newfoundland," in *The Contribution of Methodism to Atlantic Canada,* 61.

[148] Naboth Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland, 1855-1884," 73.

[149] Ibid., 75.

[150] Wendy Deichmann Edwards and Carolyn De Swarte Gifford, *Gender and the Social Gospel*, 5.

[151] Ibid., 1.

In Semple's *The Lord's Dominion,* the temperance movement in the Methodist church is discussed in a wider national context. He writes that, "in denouncing dancing, popular amusements, and drinking, they served other important social links that helped to dispel the inherent loneliness and frustration of pioneer life."[152] Particularly in Newfoundland, temperance societies provided men and women with a social setting where they could gather and socialize while still maintaining their strict Christian identity. It became a means to interact with like-minded people whose sense of isolation and struggle with the fishery could be understood. The social relationships that developed as a result of the restrictions that had been placed on Methodist converts helped in replacing the previous social norms. This replacement function is evident in Bond's literature, as communal Christian gatherings are very much presented as an important aspect of life once alcohol was no longer acceptable. Historically, the Methodist movement was very closely connected with temperance since its observance was a proof that one had converted and had entered a life of holiness.

Bond's sermon "The Crime and Curse of Meroz" speaks of alcohol consumption in Newfoundland during his time and provides reasons to support the temperance movement. He writes that

> intemperance, with its attendant evils, still exists in the province to an alarming extent, is a constant source of misery, pauperism and crime, and a persistent hindrance and menace to the moral and material well-being of our people.[153]

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[152] Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 56.

[153] George Bond, "The Crime and the Curse of Meroz" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 1.

The strong language used by Bond expresses concern for the people of Newfoundland and the effects that alcohol had and continues to have on the population. He even goes so far as to associate alcohol use with other major societal problems like crime and a general lack of morality in the population. In his address "Christianity and the Social Order," Bond outlines four categories of social issues that in his view contributed to, and in large part caused, the breakdown of social relationships. They are: "the problem of poverty, the problem of unemployment, the problem of the relations between capital and labor, and the problem of drink."[154] Bond used "the problem of drink" as a separate category and labeled it as a "disease."[155] He considered it a benefit of World War One that many nations prohibited the import and consumption of alcohol during this period.[156] In his stories and sermons, Bond makes it clear that alcohol is not to be tolerated and has dire consequences for those who choose to partake of it, both on a spiritual and social level. The spiritual consequences relate directly to Methodist piety, which cannot be properly developed if individuals are impaired or reliant on a human-made substance. Financially, people are disadvantaged by alcohol because the money spent on such items could be spent in furthering the Methodist cause or contributing in some other meaningful way to society, not to mention the stability it provides for the family.

Sabbath Observance in Bond's Fiction

Sabbath observance in Bond's fiction is an ubiquitous theme and present in several narratives. Bond presents the reader again with a contrast between life before and

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[154] George Bond, "Christianity and the Social Order" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection 236, Memorial University, St.John's, NL), 6.

[155] Ibid., 9.

[156] Ibid., 10.

after conversion, highlighting the absence of Sunday observance before the religious change. "Bob Bartlett's Baby" is the only story that differs in the presentation of this theme, in that the main character, although withdrawn from society, adheres to Sabbath observance while refusing to partake in formal religious Sabbath services.[157] Bond writes that Bartlett, because of the heartbreak that he had experienced when his love died, never engaged in society in any capacity. He left his boat tied up on Sundays and carefully avoided any unnecessary work on that day. "Indeed his neighbours seldom saw him," Bond writes, "for he never went to church, though his boat lay at her mooring all the Sabbath, and he was never seen outside his house on that day."[158] Although the main character lacked formal spiritual awareness, he still had some sense of respect for Sabbath observance so that when he finally experienced a conversion, he continued a reverential posture toward the Sabbath as before. In the remaining narratives that address this theme there is previously a complete lack of spiritual life on the part of the characters, who are not even aware of the Sabbath and its significance. Thus, these individuals must begin their religious journey from the beginning, as no spiritual demarcation of sacred time had previously been established.

Changes in the Sabbath Ritual

"Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays" provides a distinct contrast between a disregard of Sabbath observance before his conversion, and Sabbath observance after his religious change. This story goes further than the others in describing Captain Sam's attitude toward his Methodist crew members, who wished to observe the Sabbath while

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[157] George Bond, "Bob Bartlett's Baby," 55-56.

[158] Ibid., 56.

out at sea. Before Methodism became a social and religious reality, Sunday was viewed as just another day of the week by fishermen. "I didn't care much for Sunday then, sir, I'm sorry to say, an' I wasn't alone in that. There was many a man then that didn't think more of breakin' the Sabbath than he did of eatin' his dinner."[159] This disregard is reflected in the narrative when some members of his crew requested leave from the ice one Sunday, but their request was not granted by the captain since the ship had come into the 'fat.'[160] The captain's concern lay not in respecting the religious practices of his crew, but, rather, in meeting his quota of seals for the year. Captain Sam sent the men out on the ice, but followed them to observe their reactions to his instructions.[161] As he approached the men on the ice, he expressed surprise to see

> Dave French readin' the Bible, an' the other men standin' around listenin'… Then they began to sing a hymn…an' all of a sudden I remembered that 'twas Easter Sunday. Then they knelt down---right down there on the cold ice, an' three or four of 'em prayed---such prayers I thought I never heard afore.[162]

It was this single event that began the conversion process for Captain Sam, although it was one year after witnessing his crew praying on the ice that he actually underwent a decisive conversion. The insistence by these men to follow the Sabbath as a religious duty was ultimately responsible for the conversion of their captain. In this case, it was not

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[159] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 40.

[160] The phrase "in the fat" by definition refers to a herd of seals. This was a common phrase used by fishermen in Newfoundland to describe an abundance of seals on the ice. In the context of Bond's writing, it is also an indication that the schedule of the fishermen would increase significantly until the ship's quota had been filled. For further information see "Fat," *Dictionary of Newfoundland English Online* http://www.heritage.nf.ca/dictionary/d8ction.html (accessed on March 1, 2009).

[161] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 42-43.

[162] Ibid., 43-44.

preaching that effected a conversion, but the men's dedication to Sabbath observance that began the process of spiritual awareness in their superior.

In a similar occurrence in *Skipper George Netman,* Tom Williams, the sole Methodist aboard the *Hunter,* also requests permission to refrain from hunting seals on the Sabbath.[163] As in the previous narrative, the captain insists that Williams go out on the ice and does not grant his request for leave. In a fit of rage, the captain attempts to strike Williams, but he does not flinch. Instead, "Tom never moved, only looked steadily at him, and he dropped his hand and went quietly aft without another word, while Tom went quietly below."[164] Unlike "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," the captain in *Skipper George Netman* finally allows Williams to remain onboard the ship, but their encounter is not without confrontation. [165] In contrast to "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," there is no further reference in the narrative to this captain's spiritual state. The reader is not told whether the captain experienced any spiritual awakening. Instead, Skipper George Netman develops the theme of how Methodism affected his life and the Sabbath rituals that the skipper established on his own schooner after his conversion.[166]

Both of these narratives express a level of spiritual awareness by the crew members that is not extended to the captains. In both stories, the authority figure is not given the same degree of spiritual discernment as the lesser-ranked men. Instead, the demonstrated behavior of the crew teaches the captains a lesson. The captain in "Captain

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[163] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 18.

[164] Ibid., 19.

[165] Ibid., 18-19.

[166] Ibid., 115-126.

Sam's Two Easter Sundays"[167] moves from an utter lack of spirituality to spiritual awareness. In this particular circumstance, simple fishermen influence their authority figure through their behavior rather than through verbal communication. While this is not uncommon, in this situation, spiritual awareness and religious change come through the demonstration of Sabbath observance and not from Methodist teaching or preaching about salvation.

The Change in Life at Sea

After Captain Sam's conversion in "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," he is given the option by the owner of the *Sea-Gull* to have the same ship the following year. Captain Sam, although new in the Methodist Church, tells the owner that in the preceding year, part of his quota was met while sealing on a Sunday, and that this would not be occurring again since his religion now took precedence over his livelihood. "'Sir', says I, I partly loaded her on Sunday that time; but I've signed articles with the Lord Jesus Christ since then, an' no more Sunday works for me. If I can have her on these conditions I'll take her; if not I can't."[168] Since this conversation took place directly after Captain Sam's conversion and subsequent return to St. John's, it can be concluded that Sabbath observance must have been a fundamental aspect of the Methodism he was taught. Not working on Sunday would not have occurred naturally after conversion without the expectation of its observance by other Methodists.

In *Skipper George Netman*, there is a much longer time span between Skipper George's conversion and the time he obtained his own schooner. In this particular case,

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[167] Ibid.

[168] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 54.

the narrative is set during the time Skipper George was already a well established and respected member of the Methodist church in Notre Dame, and thus aware of his religious obligations, however, he goes one step further in his Sabbath observance while on board his ship. Not only does he not permit labor on Sundays, but he also holds church services onboard his schooner for the crew and the crews of nearby ships that wish to participate.[169] In this story, Bond describes in detail the worship service that was held onboard Skipper George's schooner, the *Foam-Crest,* one winter morning in Labrador. A punt[170] was sent out in the harbor that contained "a large white flag, with the word BETHEL[171] in red letters upon it."[172] This word signifies that the commercial vessel had been transformed on Sunday into a "house of god." It was well known by the other fishermen by this time that the appearance of the punt meant that a service would be held on Skipper George's craft. Once the men were aboard the ship the service began, with Skipper George leading the first hymn, "Oh for a Thousand Tongues to Sing." This hymn plays a significant part in Bond's stories in that it is sung by Methodist converts in both "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" and *Skipper George Netman.* The hymns' culture of Wesleyan Methodism in eighteenth-century England carried over into the

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[169] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 115-126.

[170] A punt is a "'flat-bottomed shallow boat, broad and square at both ends" that was used by fishermen in the coastal fishery. For further information see "Punt," The Dictionary of Newfoundland English Online http://www.heritage.nf.ca/dictionary/d8ction.html (accessed March 9, 2009).

[171] Bethel is a term that indicates the sanctity of an area. In particular, this term was used to describe a church used by sailors. For further information see http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/bethel (accessed on April 1, 2009).

[172] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 118.

nineteenth century as a potent expression of Newfoundland Methodism. [173] After the hymn, there was a prayer, followed by a short address by Skipper George. He described a fearful experience he had had while out at sea, but because of his strong devotion and trust in Jesus, fear was not felt by him or those aboard as seriously as if they had had no faith.[174] He then proceeds to ask the fishermen what decision they would like to make, whether they accept Jesus or reject him.

> A deep seriousness rested upon the faces of the little company during the Skipper's short address, and the stillness showed how close was the attention with which he was heard. The half dozen prayers which followed were intensely earnest and full of spiritual energy and touching through homely pathos; and when the meeting was over, and the men were moving off in their punts to their respective vessels, it was evident, from the absence of the usual chatter and banter, and the almost universal silence which prevailed, how deep the impressions that had been made, and how solemn the feelings which the service had evoked[175]

The church service described above reflects the fishermen's longing for their closeness with Jesus even without an ordained minister. Lack of a clergyman did not deter the spiritual growth and communication between God and the fishermen. Rather, Skipper George used his own experiences and language to convey to the men the need for close spiritual reflections.

In these two stories, Bond first describes the ignorance of men and their hostility toward those who wish to observe the Sabbath and then develops these characters further by incorporating a sense of spiritual longing and insight. In these narratives, Sabbath observance is an identifying characteristic that distinguished non-Methodists from

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[173] For further publishing and historical information on this hymn see http://www.nethymnal.org/htm/o/f/o/ofor1000.htm (accessed February 10, 2009). For further information on the musical influence in Methodism see Gordon Wakefield, *Methodist Spirituality,* 10-12 & 18-21.

[174] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 120-125.

[175] Ibid., 126.

Methodists. It also allows for the Methodist characters to reaffirm their faith when confronted with adversity by their superiors, as well as developing spiritually while at sea through services being held on sealing ships. For the characters in Bond's fiction, Sabbath observance sets individuals apart from their comrades and establishes their faith when no church building is available to them.

Methodist Teaching of Sabbath Observance

Sandra Beardsall, in her unpublished Th.D. dissertation, "Methodist Religious Practices in Outport Newfoundland," describes the detailed Sunday ritual and its social significance for Newfoundlanders. The Sabbath in outport Newfoundland historically began on Saturday evening after the fishermen had finished storing their gear and when preparations for Sunday supper had been finished by the women.[176] The work that took place on Sunday was such that even the women were required to prepare the Sabbath evening meal a full day in advance. Even the act of peeling vegetables was not permitted, only the cooking of the meal itself was allowed. Sunday followed a very strict and definite timeline, with little room for flexibility. "The pattern is essentially the same for every outport," writes Beardsall, "morning worship at 11:00 am, Sunday school at 2:00 or 3:00 pm followed by an afternoon service, and church again after supper, at 6:00 or 7:00 pm, followed by a prayer meeting, or 'after service.'"[177] Although such detail is not given in Bond's narratives, it is important to note that the requirements of Sabbath observance in the Methodist church did not consist of merely an hour-long obligation but rather required that the entire day be devoted to church and Christian spiritual development.

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[176] Sandra Beardsall, "Methodist Religious Practices in Outport Newfoundland," 109.

[177] Ibid., 110-111.

Similarly, Semple establishes more generally Sabbath observance as a strict ritual in his book *The Lord's Dominion* when he writes that

> Sunday was not simply a day of rest, it was a day of active worship… Methodists obviously did no unnecessary work. After private devotions for the household, the day was spent in at least two church services, Sunday school, and sometimes class meeting, and it ended with hymn singing and prayer.[178]

Methodists in Canada thus followed similar, although not always identical activities. Sunday was such an important day for the Methodists that they sought to protect it from "desecration" and shielded the day during Canada's economic development.[179] The Methodist church in Canada did not limit its role to strictly spiritual matters, but in its maintenance of Sabbath observance also fought on behalf of laborers and

> called for factory safety, higher wages, the eight-hour workday, a minimum wage, the prevention of child labor, pensions, unemployment insurance, and compensation for job-related injuries…In order to improve labor conditions and enhance moral rectitude, Methodism also strove to protect Sunday from desecration." [180]

Methodists, in Newfoundland in particular, stressed Sabbath observance as a day of worship since the fishing culture of the island had men working every day of the week, and prior to encountering Methodism viewed Sabbath observance as an unimportant aspect of Christian observance.

Despite the tragedy and harsh nature of life in Newfoundland for fishermen and their families, Sunday offered them a day where they could rest and forget the worries that had plagued them during the previous week. "Where life was generally experienced

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[178] Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 67.

[179] Ibid., 357.

[180] Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 357. For further information the Methodist role in the fight for labor rights in Canada, see Neil Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 355-362.

as tragic," Beardsall contends, "Newfoundland Methodists found a way to be—of all things—'happy' for a little while each week."[181] For a single day, a struggling fisherman could concentrate on family and God, and enjoy social interaction that he otherwise lacked throughout the week. For Newfoundlanders, the Sabbath was not only a day of worship, but it provided some relief from everyday life. It also served as a measure of one's spiritual development and Christian faith.[182] This dual purpose, both spiritual and social, gave Newfoundland Methodists a stronger sense of community, since their religion drew them closer together.

Naboth Winsor, in "Methodism in Newfoundland 1855-1884," writes that Sabbath observance was in decline directly prior to the time when Bond's stories were written, to which the following statement given at the Conference of 1875 testifies:

> The Conference is grieved to know that in many parts of this Island there is a great degree of Sabbath desecration. Believing the divine command to keep holy the Sabbath day to be binding, it would not forget to remind our people of their duty in this most important matter.[183]

This resolution then goes on to instruct clergy to give sermons about the importance of Sabbath observance on the first Sabbath of February of that year.[184] Since this decline occurred prior to Bond's writings, he may have used his stories to caution against any further decline and thus promoted Sabbath observance in his didactic literature.

In his fiction, temperance and Sabbath observance is not a Christian principle that is intrinsically known to new Christians but has become an adopted and learned behavior

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[181] Sandra Beardsall, "Methodist Religious Practices in Outport Newfoundland," 132-133.

[182] Ibid., 109-112.

[183] Naboth Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland, 1855-1884," 22.

[184] Ibid., 65.

that previously did not exist. Based on the church's attempt to influence the population in every aspect of life, fictional works written by George Bond also confirm this religious ideal in each reader. In this case, it is the need and benefit of temperance, both in the Christian and secular world, as well as Sabbath observance.

Conclusion

James's typology of conversion sheds light on Bond's understanding of conversion. James begins by describing conversion as a personal transition from unhappiness to happiness. The newfound happiness is a result of replacing old values and ideas with something new. Conversion may take two forms, sudden and gradual, and both are valid in their own right. The conversion experience is not without its struggles, however. Often there is an internal dilemma because the new set of values leaves the individual unsure of whether he or she is able to live up to its requirements.

Bond's stories deal with conversion and prayer. Like James, Bond views conversion as highly personal and an emotionally charged event. In each of Bond's representations of conversion, the emotionality of the characters is brought to the forefront of the plot. This stems as well from the life-threatening circumstances surrounding the conversion narratives. In his stories and novel, sudden conversion is the most common type, although gradual conversion occurs as well.

Bond casts the required religious observances of temperance and Sabbath observance in his literature as consequences of conversion and required ideals. Prior to conversion many people viewed the consumption of alcohol as being part of everyday life. After conversion, however, Bond's characters renounce alcohol and view sobriety as proof of their conversion.

In Newfoundland, alcohol was used as a means for fishermen to escape from the toils of their hard lives. After conversion alcohol consumption is replaced by temperance societies and offered fishermen a more productive escape. Although not all Methodists obeyed this teaching, truly converted members did and Sabbath observance was viewed as proof of one's spiritual commitment and conversion. In Bond's fiction, converted lay members not only observe but also hold church services on board their vessels on the Sabbath. Sabbath observance was a means for spiritual growth among the congregation and at the same time offered them a period of leisure.

Bond's inclusion of temperance and Sabbath observance in his fiction creates a religious ideal that every convert was expected to live up to. By writing about conversion and its social consequences, Bond explains or reminds his readers of the religious desiderata that he viewed as being important for Methodism: the radical change of people's lives and the religious observances that he deemed necessary to continue religious growth after conversion.

Chapter 4

Revival in Bond's Fiction and Newfoundland History

Spiritual Consciousness in Bond's Fiction

In the *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, Michael McClymond defines revival as a series of "corporate, experiential events,"[185] whose literary representation occurs in narratives describing the events of both the individual and the community.[186] "Revivalism," writes Phyllis Airhart, gave Methodism, "a distinct piety… by shaping its understanding of religious experiences, guidelines for personal and public behavior, expression of religious ideas, and associations for cultivating the religious life."[187] The notion of "revival" is directly addressed in two of Bond's narratives: "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" and *Skipper George Netman.* Bond uses revivals to give the reader a Methodist understanding of an ideal spiritual life. Usually his fictional characters witness preconceptions held about Methodism before the actual movement arrived in their area. The arrival and role of clergymen in outport Newfoundland is then narrated in detail, followed by a description of the revival itself. The two narratives address revivals in Methodism and then correct the existing prejudgments by describing how the communities changed after the revival.

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[185] Ibid., xix.

[186] Ibid., xx.

[187] Phyllis Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 4.

Views of the Methodist Movement prior to Revival and Conversion

Although Bond's characters eventually embrace Methodism, their original attitude is described as being hostile. In "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," Aunt Betsy remarks on the drastic changes she has heard of occurring in new converts after they accepted the Methodist message. "Why, they tells me they won't let 'ee drink a sup o' rum or go to a dance at all."[188] It is clear that she feels animosity toward their teachings and views them as being a potential threat to the Newfoundland way of life. Her apprehension stems from her ability to distinguish between Methodism and traditional Anglicanism, the religion that her father brought with him to Newfoundland from England.[189] This is reinforced when two clergymen visit her home. Upon discovering that they are Methodists, she immediately sends them away.[190] It is also clear that many in the community share her sense of apprehension toward Methodists when they are repeatedly turned away when seeking a place to stay overnight. Mrs. Susan Adams, an elderly and ill woman, who often provided lodging for visitors, turned the men away when they informed her housekeeper that they were Wesleyan missionaries.[191]

In "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," Captain Sam describes his moral and spiritual state before his conversion. He was unaware of his soul or his own spirituality. In this case, hostility is not a factor in his reticence, but his lack of a religious commitment is responsible for his resistance to the movement. "I hardly knew I had a soul, I was that thoughtless, an' careless, an' a ter'ble hand to swear when I was in a

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[188] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 2.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid., 8.

[191] Ibid., 9.

passion."[192] His view of Methodism and religion in general can best be demonstrated when a few of his crew request leave from the ice on the Sabbath because of their Christian duty. He sends them out regardless of their religious responsibilities. As far as Captain Sam was concerned, their only duty was to him and his ship. He did not respect or grant their wish to remain on board for religious reasons but insisted that they follow his orders. Finally, in *Skipper George Netman*, Skipper George relates his first encounter with a Methodist named Tom Williams, who is abused both physically and verbally by the other crew members for his outward religiosity while on the seal hunt.[193] Bond describes the abuse as being a source of entertainment for the crew members, who threw objects at him and taunted him for his religious disposition.[194]

Each of the previously mentioned characters was apprehensive in some way towards the Methodist movement and its converts. Based on the harassment experienced by Tom Williams in *Skipper George Netman*, the harsh treatment of the clergymen in "How the Gabbits Came to Gull Cove," and the crew members in "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," it was not unusual for the Methodists first to be held in disregard by their comrades and communities.[195] With the arrival of the Methodist movement and the clergymen, however, the individuals who were once hostile to the message began to tolerate the doctrine and eventually more converted. In Bond's fiction there is always a differentiation made between the lack of spirituality of his characters prior to the arrival of the Methodist message and their subsequent religious behavior. It demonstrates and

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[192] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 37.

[193] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 13-14.

[194] Ibid., 13-14.

[195] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 13-14, George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove,." 8, and George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 37.

highlights the improvement in the quality of life that the movement is said to have brought to the community. This contrast is also an indication of the didactic intent of Bond's work because the improvement in the lives of the character's meant to resonate with the reader and produce a religious change in response to the religious ideas espoused in Bond's narratives.

The Presence of Clergymen

"How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" shows a typical situation in outport Newfoundland, in that, in this story there is no permanent ministerial presence in the community. Two ministers, one a lay preacher, the other an ordained clergyman, come to visit the community from Bonavista, a larger town where a minister was a permanent resident. In this particular village it was the norm for the parson to visit occasionally, but these visitations did not normally occur during the time of year in which the story is set.[196] The men's intention was to remain in Gull Cove for a short time, a week or two at most.[197] The outcome of the short visit was to preach in the community and gain converts for Methodism, although a revival is not specifically mentioned as being the desired outcome. Since having a permanent clergyman in smaller communities was often not financially feasible, Bond's stories reflect the Methodist way of spreading their message through previously inaccessible outports. It is also important to note that although the clergymen were met with hostility by many in the community, they were not discouraged by such opposition and their being unable to find a place to lodge, since Methodists

[196] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 5.

[197] Ibid., 9.

traditionally used temporary lodgings to preach and conduct services.[198] "At the worst," the clergy said, "we can sleep aboard our boat, and have service in the open air. That would be like old times to me; I've often preached in the streets of England."[199]

In *Skipper George Netman,* however, clergy have a much more stable presence since there is a permanent minister in Notre Dame, the community that provides the setting for the story. The reader is told in the second chapter that Skipper George is retelling his conversion narrative to his minister, Mr. Fairbarin.[200] Instead of a clergy-initiated revival, the characters in this novel experience a spiritual awakening in response to the life-threatening experience of four young men.[201] The extreme physical danger seems to have encouraged spiritual inquiry among those who had witnessed the threat but had not yet been converted. This, in fact, is the likely cause of the revival that occurred in *Skipper George Netman* since the event takes place directly after the rescue.[202]

The Role of Clergymen during Revivals

Perhaps one of the most defining characteristics of Newfoundland's spread of Methodism was its reliance on lay preachers and lay people to continue the spiritual progress of the congregation after the clergymen left. In "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," the clergyman and lay preacher stated that it was not their intention to spend a

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[198] Kenneth Cracknell and Susan White, in *Introduction to World Methodism,* discuss Methodism's origins and expansion. The first Methodists preached in "the streets, the town squares, the marketplaces…fields and meadows, barn steps and market crosses to spread the message of renewal." Kenneth Cracknell and Susan White, *Introduction to World Methodism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 15-17 and David Hempton, *The Religion of the People*, 39-40.

[199] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 9.

[200] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 35.

[201] Ibid., 69-70.

[202] Ibid., 92-101.

prolonged period in Gull Cove.[203] Their main objective was to help convert as many of the population as their time would allow, after which they would return to Bonavista and a lay preacher would then supervise the spiritual growth of the congregation. Bond portrays a different situation in *Skipper George Netman.*[204] Mr. Fairbarin, in a letter home, writes that his duty as a minister required much travel since the communities he ministered to were not in close proximity. Each story provides a different perspective to the reader. In "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" Bond describes revival from a small outport perspective where the community relied on itself for religious understanding. In *Skipper George Netman,* the community is comfortable with an ordained clergyman so that there is no hostility toward him or the Methodist message. The attitudes of the community towards the clergymen in the story and book are likely due to the previous exposure or lack of exposure that individuals had to Methodism. This is why in "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" the clergy and lay preacher were viewed as outsiders and intruders, whereas in *Skipper George Netman* the clergyman is seen as being a member of the community.

Naboth Winsor, in *Hearts Strangely Warmed: A History Of Methodism in Newfoundland 1765-1925,* relates the role of lay preachers in England during Methodism's early expansion and their contribution in establishing Methodism in their respective communities.

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[203] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 9.

[204] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 46-56.

> They did not preach in chapels only, but also in fields and gardens, in streets and lecture – rooms, in market places and churchyards…In most of the congregations there was a lay person who conducted services when the minister was at some other preaching appointment of the mission or circuit.[205]

Winsor also distinguishes commonalities between early English lay preachers and lay preachers in Newfoundland in his unpublished thesis, "Methodism in Newfoundland 1855-1884." He elaborates on the critical shortage of ministers and the employment of laity by the church to further its cause.[206] With the infrequent visits from clergymen, congregations "would have suffered a system of feast and fast in spiritual diet-- feast during the minister's presence, fast during the greater period of his absence-- but for earnest helpers in the gospel among the people themselves."[207]

The nineteenth century tradition of outdoor preaching is echoed in Winsor's *Hearts Strangely Warmed: A History of Methodism in NL 1765-1925*[208] and is evident in Bond's story, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove." In this story, the minister and lay preacher both take on the responsibility of spreading the message.

The preaching in both "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" and *Skipper George Netman* matches the content of sermons described in the historical records, including Bond's own sermons, notably God's concern for the lives of his followers and his forgiveness. It is clear from Bond's sermons that his views on the nature of Methodism inform his fiction, since the clergy in both stories work tirelessly to spread

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[205] Naboth Winsor, *Hearts Strangely Warmed*, 16.

[206] Naboth Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland, 1855-1884," 56 &129-134.

[207] James Lumsden, *The Skipper Parson,* 88.

[208] Naboth Winsor, *Hearts Strangely Warmed*, 9.

the gospel and bring people to spiritual maturity. Especially in Newfoundland, lay preachers found success and satisfaction in the movement, because for the first time, men without a formal education were given a leadership role in the church, whereas before, this was severely limited.[209] The reliance upon lay people by the Methodists allowed the movement to spread to rural areas of the island that were inaccessible to clergy. Winsor writes,

> Methodism has practically restored the primitive 'priesthood' of the people, not only by the example of its lay ministry twice as numerous as its regular ministry, but by its exhorters, class-leaders, prayer leaders, and the religious activity to which it has trained its laity generally.[210]

Although these specific roles do not all appear in Bond's literature, his fictional characters exercise the freedom of prayer and demonstrate spiritual independence during prayer and conversion. This allowed congregations to affirm their self-sufficiency. It also helped to identify with the lay preachers on a cultural and intellectual level, which made the congregation more susceptible to the message being presented. In the two stories that address revivals, Bond depicts two situations, one that includes a clergyman as a permanent resident in their community, and the other that features a traveling clergyman and lay preacher. The sermons, while different, in that one focuses on God's forgiveness and people's response, while the other demonstrates God's intervention in people's lives and the need for thankfulness, do share a common message.

First, the problem of sin is described and its consequences are made known to the congregation. Then, a solution to the problem is offered. The clergy, in both narratives,

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[209] Dawn Barrett's "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism, 1766-1774," 93 & 234.

[210] Naboth Winsor, "Methodism in Newfoundland, 1855-1884," 176.

speak of the love that God has for his people. Forgiveness that is made available to them is stressed, followed by the question: "Will you accept the forgiveness that is being offered to you?" The listeners are thus only required minimal decision-making, since they only have to affirm or deny forgiveness. As shown in "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," the members of the congregation who accept God's forgiveness are then kept back while those who do not accept it are dismissed from the service.[211] The example set by the clergyman is the primary model available to the new lay preachers, since the clergymen leave soon after the revival takes place. There is no mention made by Bond of their own Bible reading.

Revival as a Product of Preaching

In "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," Bond describes in detail the order of the church service that spawned the revival as well as the preaching during the service. He makes a point of recognizing the emotional response of the congregation before the start of the church service, which was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Brown. There was "extreme curiosity, mixed with more or less of a feeling of awe…while not a few [were] plainly and unmistakably hostile."[212] The service opened with the singing of the hymn "Oh for a Thousand Tongues to Sing,"[213] which was followed by a short prayer. The prayer was brief but set the mood for the following revival, in that the focus of the congregation, and indeed the reader, was unmistakably on God. The preaching took place

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[211] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 24.

[212] Ibid., 16.

[213] Written by Charles Wesley in 1739, "Oh for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" and was known as a popular Methodist hymn. For more information on Methodist music see http://nethymnal.org/htm/o/f/o/ofor1000.htm (accessed on Feb. 20, 2009).

following the prayer and Bond provides a brief description of the content and tone of the sermon delivered to the congregation by the minister.

> He pointed out first the awful character and the awful results of sin, its guilt separating a man from God, its power enslaving him in toils from which it was impossible to escape; he drew a terrible and graphic picture of sin as a disease, destroying the…soul and impossible of self-cure; he dwelt on the universality of guilt and consequent helplessness and danger, and appealed to the consciences of his hearers in proof of his solemn and searching students.[214]

This short section of text provides the reason for the conversions that followed. The minister points out that humankind is naturally sinful and that no one is able to escape sin apart from God's grace. The problem of sin is explained and the consequences of it are shown to the congregation and the reader. The clergyman then offers a solution to the major human problem that has been brought to the awareness of the audience. The Methodist solution to the human plight is conversion.

Skipper George Netman presents the revival somewhat differently, even if the outcome is the same. The revival occurred on the Sunday following the rescue of four young men from almost certain death on the ice. The setting in which the revival took place is also different from the previous narrative since the church service was held in an actual church building and not in the home of some earnest seekers. The clergyman, Mr. Fairbarin, began his sermon by referring to the rescue that had taken place earlier in the week, insisting that because of the prayers that had been offered to God by the worried community, the men's lives had been spared.[215] With this example given, Mr. Fairbarin

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[214] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 18.

[215] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 94.

then requests his congregation to show thankfulness for the grace that God had bestowed upon his flock. Bond then comments that

> [God] hears and answers the prayer of those in trouble, applying it to the present instance, and to the experience of his hearers in similar circumstances in the past, he wound up with an appeal to them to let their gratitude take practical shape in lives of living obedience.[216]

Mr. Fairbarin does not necessarily pay attention to the physical response of the congregation; however, he does write about their "spiritual energy"[217] directly after the sermon and throughout the revival,[218] showing how the Holy Spirit spread throughout the community.[219] Suddenly, in this outport Newfoundland village, simple, uneducated people began to experience

> fluency and eloquence of speech, the clearness of idea, the fullness of sight, and the fervor and pathos of expression with which new converts, often utterly illiterate, and by nature modest and shrinking, are enabled to tell of their experience and appeal to their unconverted friends.[220]

The language used in this story is cognitive in nature and would again suggest the didactic and communicative intent of Bond's writing. Both stories focus on the expansion of Methodism through lay people. It was the responsibility of every new convert to encourage others in the community to become converted as well. He writes about

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[216] Ibid.

[217] Ibid., 95.

[218] In both fictional stories, Bond does not elaborate on the spiritual well being of the new converts. His exploration of revival ends with the conversion of the congregation, but goes no further.

[219] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 96-105.

[220] Ibid., 105.

normative Methodist practices involved in revival and God's care for the fishermen of Newfoundland. The care God has in the story extends beyond the fiction to include all of humanity.

Revivals in Newfoundland History

Calvin Hollett, in his unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, "A People Reaching for Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism in Newfoundland: 1774-1874," examines nineteenth-century Newfoundland Methodism through an historical analysis of the period directly preceding Bond's writing. Using David Hempton's analysis of the Methodist movement, Hollett views conversions as a personal response to the forgiveness God offers, which even in the context of a revival setting, remains thoroughly personal.[221] To him, the converts view the revival as a "dramatic, instantaneous, reception of the Holy Spirit" that resulted in weakening "the authority of all church hierarchy and tradition."[222] The freedom experienced by people through Methodism was not confined to a particular place or kind of worship; instead, it "offered a type of religious expression that the fisherman and sailor could take with him."[223] This point in particular allowed Methodism to thrive in Newfoundland. Religion was now being viewed not in terms of a God as an absent deity but as one who interacted with his people.[224] Bond's use of revivals is similar in that the decision to become converted is seen as being a truly personal choice. In the

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[221] Calvin Hollett, "A People Reaching for Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism in Newfoundland: 1774-1874" (Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2008),139-140.

[222] Ibid.

[223] Calvin Hollett, "Historiography of Religion of 19th Century Newfoundland" (Typescript of paper submitted for History 6200, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2000), 12.

[224] Dawn Barrett, "Revivalism and the Origins of Newfoundland Methodism, 1766-1774," 90.

revivals of his fiction the decision is solely left to the individual after the preaching has commenced. Bond emphasizes the close interaction between a human being and God.

James Lumsden's book *The Skipper Parson*, published in 1905, also reflects similar ideas about revivals as Bond. In his memoir, Lumsden describes his experiences while ministering in Newfoundland. He understands revivals as the breath of life needed by a church, an event that prevents spiritual stagnation. In reference to revivals he writes that "cold conventionality and stiff respectability pray not to be disturbed, asking only to be allowed to sleep on; but the breath of the Spirit is the life of the churches and the salvation of the nations."[225] In this context "spirit" also animates revivals. His use of language is similar to that of *Skipper George Netman* when the revival occurred. Also the location where the revival began in Lumsden's book is similar to Bond's story "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove." Like Bond's fictional narrative, Lumsden relates how the revival that he witnessed began in the house of his host.[226] Differences, however, do exist between Lumsden and Bond. In both of Bond's stories, there are clergymen present and revival occurs only after the preaching has commenced. Lumsden's narrative, however, reveals that it was only on the first night of the revival that he preached.[227] Since Bond and Lumsden wrote around the same time, both men expressed revival in much the same way.

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[225] James Lumsden, *The Skipper Parson* (Eaton & Mains: New York, 1905), 80.

[226] Ibid., 81.

[227] Ibid.

Content of the Sermons that Led to Revival

The revivals described by Bond are similar in content and form, although the motivations for the revivals vary. The service that began the revival in "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove"[228] first established the people's need for God during the opening prayer, thus setting the mood for the remainder of the service. It was noted by an observer that the lay preacher prayed as though God was in the room with his followers. It is after the prayer that the minister begins his sermon by first explaining what constitutes a sin and how humanity is able to escape a sinful life.[229] While describing sin and exploring its danger, the voice of the clergyman changes and projects itself and thus creates an atmosphere of power. There is no explanation given for the raising of one's voice during the sermon, but this vocal technique was often used to promote a sense of authority. It can be concluded that the loud vocals in this narrative evoked a similar response by the congregation. The clergyman then begins to preach of God's love and his willingness to forgive sin. This is shown in the sermon through the story of God's sacrifice, the crucifixion of Jesus. He then begins to question the congregation on their current relationship with Jesus, thus pointing out their spiritual shortcomings.[230] The sermon and its delivery resulted in an emotional response, experienced by some but not by all. Bond, through his use of emotion, brings to the forefront of the message what he considers to be inadequacies in his characters and readers.[231]

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[228] Ibid.

[229] Ibid., 18.

[230] Ibid., 19.

[231] Ibid., 20.

In *Skipper George Netman*, however, a revival takes place because the lives of four young men had been rescued the previous week. Mr. Fairbarin suggests to the congregation at his Sunday service that it was God who saved these men. God's will and the people's prayers during the rescue led to their deliverance. The minister evokes an emotional response by the congregation that results in revival. In this case, however, the emotion comes not from the sinful nature of the people, but from a contemplation of God's grace and mercy for his followers. The passion and authenticity that result from the preaching is first felt by the minister, but then transmitted to the congregation.

> An intense love for his people possessed him, an intense longing for their salvation agonized his spirit…The common-place conventionalisms of the pulpit were forgotten; gesture, voice, manner were the exponents not of trained habit, but of the sudden startling, supernatural quickening of knowledge, sympathy, and affection for God and souls.[232]

This revival in particular uses emotionally charged terminology. Previously, there was no sense of a supernatural presence. The clergy simply pointed out a problem with humanity and offered a solution. Here, however, it is as though Mr. Fairbarin is seized by God, because he seems to have only limited control over his speech. It is as though God was speaking to the congregation through him, but despite emotionally-charged language and enthusiastic tone, the situation remains orderly.

Women's Role in Revival

In "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," the most resistant of the female characters, Aunt Betsy, who eventually converts to Methodism during the revival, is inquisitive when she first encounters the two missionaries.[233] The first half of the tale

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[232] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 95.

[233] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 5.

presents us with female characters whose attitudes toward Methodists are clearly described and explained. Aunt Betsy, in particular, reveals her animosity toward the movement, but shows signs of curiosity when she offers the two men tea and a loaf.[234] After experiencing such resistance, it is also a woman who makes available to the missionaries the only lodging in the community.[235] It is this ill and elderly woman, who expresses a sense of longing to share with the newcomers her inadequate knowledge of and reliance on God.[236] She expresses her spiritual uncertainty to the men and tells them that she no longer feels certain of heaven by simply going to church regularly and partaking of the sacraments. This woman's Christianity had previously been preoccupied with her everyday actions, with not much attention being given to her spirituality. In theological terms, the elderly woman displayed only formal works-righteousness.[237]

> "Our passon do say," she interrupted, "that if anyone is baptized and confirmed and takes the Sacrament reg'lar as they can, and leads a good life, them may hope for forgiveness, but I ain't sure…and I'd like to be, I'd like to be."[238]

In this narrative it is this unnamed woman who first questions the nominal Christianity she had been taught throughout her life. She is instrumental for the revival in the community since she is the only townsperson willing to offer the men lodging and her

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[234] Ibid., 4.

[235] Ibid., 10.

[236] Ibid., 12.

[237] *Justification of Works* and *Justification of Faith* were two distinct soteriological ideas outlined by Martin Luther. *Justification of Works* focuses primarily on Christian acts that were believed to result in a heavenly reward, whereas *Justification of Faith,* established by Luther, promoted Christian reward by the grace of God in faith. For further information see John Dillenberger, ed., *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, 23-29 & 110-130.

[238] George Bond, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," 12.

kitchen as a temporary church. Thus, she plays a fundamental role in the introduction of Methodism in the outport community of Gull Cove.

Emotionality in Bond's Literature

Although Bond's stories have a sense of emotion, passion, and a display of enthusiastic Christianity, the revivalistic enthusiasm of early revivalism observed by Ann Taves' book *Fits, Trances, and Visions* is not present in any of the stories. Taves describes an enthusiasm that is only partially comparable to what we can observe in Bond. In Bond's narratives, enthusiasm consists primarily of emotionality and the passion possessed by characters to spread Methodism among others who have not yet heard or accepted the message. In her book, Taves describes enthusiasm in terms of the shout tradition and trances of the Second Great Awakening, which are not at all characteristic for Bond's work. Although emotion is part of prayer and conversion in his stories, there is no discussion or description of "healings, visions, and people falling as if dead."[239] The revivals and emotional outbursts that occur in Bond's works are demonstrated through tears, a sign of inner spiritual conflict and joy that God has responded to the pleas of the people. In this sense, Bond and his characters were not enthusiasts like those in the American revivals of the early nineteenth century. Neither was Bond a strict traditionalist, rejecting emotionality, but, rather, the theology and ethos of his literature can be described as a moderate, internalized, revivalism.

Bond does not speak directly about revivals in his sermons, but Christian passion and enthusiasm are addressed in several of these. In his sermon "If I Forget Thee O Jerusalem," Bond writes that it is Christian passion that is essential to converts, both old

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[239]Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 79 & 241.

and new.[240] It is essential to establish passion in new converts because of the excitement it provides to spread the message, and it is essential to more mature converts because it prevents spiritual stagnation. This sense of excitement in established converts will be witnessed by others who have not experienced conversion and will strengthen and promote the Methodist message. Passion, Bond writes, is essential to the Christian life and fundamentally drives Christianity.[241] The level of passion that an individual exhibits is in direct correlation to his or her spiritual well being.[242] In another sermon, Bond states that it is in fact the responsibility of every Christian to possess and develop this sense of enthusiasm.[243] He believes that the passion exhibited by clergy and members of the Methodist Church will result in revival if this passion is demonstrated and encouraged in others.

Bond's personal theology reflected in his fictional oeuvre conveys a passionate but not disorderly Methodism. Revival, although not as prominent in Bond's stories as prayer and conversion, is still capable of evoking within a reader a certain degree of enthusiasm with lasting consequences for the individual's spiritual state, which is no doubt why Bond included it in his literature.

Conclusion

Bond addresses revival in two of his stories, where it becomes a major theme. He begins by first describing the attitudes of people before the Methodist movement came to

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[240] George Bond, "If I Forget Thee O Jerusalem" (Archives and Manuscripts Division, George Bond Collection, Memorial University, St. John's, NL), 5.

[241] Ibid.

[242] Ibid., 10.

[243] George Bond, "Take Away This Child and Nurse Him For Me, And I Will Give Thee Thy Wages," 3.

the community. In some cases characters are outright hostile and in others there is spiritual ignorance. He then paints a picture of the role of clergymen and their relative absence in outport communities. Although in both stories a clergyman is present, lay preachers are also viewed as being important to Methodism. Lay preachers were better able to identify with the fishermen and their families and proved to be instrumental in the spread of the movement. How the ministers preach their sermons and the motivation for the onset of the revivals is particularly important. In "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," the revival is held in a man's house, while in *Skipper George Netman* the revival begins in a church. Both locations were common in Methodist history for revivals and the spread of Methodism. Like Bond's stories, Lumsden's portrayal of revival also takes place in the home of a follower and is described by using similar language as in the revivals depicted by Bond. The sermon in "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" consists of an explanation of sin and how humanity is able to overcome sin. In *Skipper George Netman* the revival comes about only after the life-threatening experience of four young men. In this sermon, the minister focuses on being thankful for the men's saved lives. God's providence and continual care is also thematized in this sermon.

According to Calvin Hollet's dissertation, God's involvement in the lives of his followers is one of the major Methodist appeals in that God is present with the men out on the ice as well as with the women in the home. The role of women in the revivals as found in Bond's fiction shows them to be the most receptive to the revivalist message. Bond's enthusiasm is not the excessive enthusiasm as the Second Great Awakening analyzed by Taves in that it does not overshadow the Methodist message but encourages its spread by the newly converted lay people.

Chapter 5

Literature as Authoritarian Fiction

Each of Bond's narratives describes particular beliefs that he deems to be of importance for human spirituality or salvation. His narratives begin by describing a culture that in all likelihood would be unknown to the reader, since most of the narratives were published in the Canadian national Methodist magazine but whose plot is set in outport Newfoundland. Those publications that appeared in the Newfoundland Methodist magazine (*Methodist Monthly Greeting*) did not need to explain Newfoundland's culture in detail. In these cases, the theological ideas are presented more directly in the stories without such contextualization. The focus of each of Bond's narratives has within them the replacement of a faulty cultural attitude or practice with Methodist doctrine and required religious practices. Not all of Bond's short stories were published, but they may have circulated in some capacity. Since the setting, plot, and overall message of the unpublished narratives coincide with those published, the published narratives should be given equal status in determining Bond's ethos and theology. Undoubtedly, Bond's goal in his storytelling was to instill within the reader a set of values or the theology that he felt strongly committed to. This can be seen when his collection is considered as a story cycle and understood with Suleiman's definition of "authoritarian fiction."

Bond's Collection as a Literary Whole

By considering Bond's literary corpus as a unit, while also paying close attention to the individual narratives, a more comprehensive understanding of common themes can be established. With Ingram's notion of a *story cycle* one can understand Bond's work as "a set of stories so linked to one another that the reader's experience of each one is

modified by his experience of the others." The individual narratives maintain their own literary identity because each one contains a specific Methodist belief or practice that contributes to the overall understanding of normative Methodism in the collection.[244] It is necessary to identify within each individual work commonalities in plot and theme because by doing so Bond's personal theology becomes evident. In this way the overall message of the collection can be more accurately determined.

Ingram states that there must be some intention by the author to create a *story cycle*; however, this intention may not be explicitly stated.[245] Instead, the *story cycle* may occur because of an author's natural tendency to repeat themes and plot structure in his or her work. In relation to Bond, there are no written statements that discuss his theory of fiction and that he intended for his fiction to be considered as one collection. Based on the similar settings, themes, and character development that he portrays in his stories, however, his collection fits Ingram's notion of a *story cycle*. Although Bond did not intentionally write his stories as a collection, a pattern can be discovered within his work, such as, the type of prayer he favors and the common conversion narratives he deems paradigmatic. "The cyclical habit of mind," writes Ingram, "is merely the tendency to compose, arrange, or complete sets of individual units so that they form a new whole through patterns of recurrence and development."[246] It is feasible to consider Bond's work as a collection since his human need of repetition allowed him to convey the most important normative aspects (prayer, conversion, and revival) of Methodism. Ingram

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[244] Forrest Ingram, *Representative Short Story Cycles of the 20th Century: Studies in a Literary Genre* (Paris: The Hague, 1971), 15.

[245] Ibid., 16.

[246] Ibid., 24.

states that repetition in literature deepens "one's appreciation of the significance of an action."[247] In Bond's case, the acts of prayer, conversion, and revival, can be identified as especially prominent for his works. Bond uses repetition to convey Methodist ideals as underlying these teachings and practices.

One of the most significant characteristics of Bond's entire literary work is the emotionality that his characters exhibit, which in turn is transmitted to the reader. In his portrayal of prayer and conversion, there are numerous instances of an outpouring of emotion. Bond uses emotionality as a bridge to literarily transfer the emotions of his characters to the reader. In *Images of Truth: Remembrances and Criticism,* Glenway Wescott describes the importance of emotion in fiction for the reader, writing that "the emotion of a story has a more pacifying, fortifying effect on our wild hearts than any amount of preaching and teaching."[248] Wescott's idea about emotion and fiction reflect Bond's portrayal of emotion and sheds light on the reason for strong emotions in his literature. The emotion experienced by the characters was more likely to resonate with the reader if Bond used this literary technique. It is likely, therefore, that Bond used his literary craftsmanship to convey his message, including his use of emotionality. Readers were then better able to identify with the strong emotions experienced by the characters.

As a native Newfoundlander, Bond wrote about the religion, culture, and struggles of a people that he knew from personal experience. The foundation of his work and the messages conveyed by the collection, however, are not limited to one specific audience or time. The theology and practices that are being communicated transcend time

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[247] Ibid.

[248] Glenway Wescott, *Images of Truth: Remembrances and Criticism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1939),19-20.

and space and are relevant for any number of people and applicable to a variety of periods. Ghose, quoting William Faulkner, in *The Art of Creating Fiction,* writes that

> the primary job that any writer faces is to tell you a story, a story out of human experience – I mean by that, universal mutual experience, the anguishes and troubles and griefs of the human heart, which is universal, without regard to race or time or condition.[249]

By using a shared humanity between the reader and the literature as the foundation of his writing, Bond was able to present his ideas about Methodist theology and practice. Although Bond's fiction always shares the same setting, that of outport Newfoundland, the grief, sorrow, and struggles that are expressed in his stories can be understood by all. Even readers who are unfamiliar with Newfoundland culture and religion can understand the context and drama conveyed by Bond through his portrayal of prayer, conversion, and revival. Each of these themes expressed by him contains wider truths about the suitability of Methodist theology and ethos for the modern world and is not limited to an understanding of Methodism by Newfoundlanders.

Authoritarian Fiction

Susan Rubin Suleiman, in her book, *Authoritarian Fictions*, examines the exemplary narrative both in terms of positive and negative models.[250] In both cases there is a common formula for the interpretation of the text. The sender in each case refers to the author who provides the message or thesis to the receiver (reader). The receiver, through a cognitive process interprets what is read, identifies within the text, message or lesson being given by the author, and incorporates that belief into his or her own

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[249] Zulfikar Ghose, *The Art of Creating Fiction* (London: Macmillan Academic and Professional Ltd., 1991), 50.

[250] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions,* 25-61.

existence.[251] The positive exemplary model is one that adheres to Bond's work most commonly. The narrative begins with ignorance on the part of the characters, followed by some type of trial, which results in truth being realized, after which a new life is established within the reader.[252] In the negative exemplary type of narrative, a contrast is made between right and wrong, with the right ultimately prevailing. The difference between the two is established through the type of character. The positive relates the message through the hero of the work, whereas the negative transmits a similar point by identifying faults within a less ideal character. [253]

Although Suleiman's notion of an authoritarian fiction addresses largely the novel, both types of exemplary narratives are present in Bond's novel as well as in his collection of short stories. Bond uses both positive and negative exemplary narratives in his work, although in differing degrees. The positive exemplary narrative is most common in Bond's portrayal of the conversion narrative. In each of his stories and novel the characters begin in a state of ignorance. They are unaware of the Methodist message. *Skipper George Netman,* a primary example for the positive exemplary model, has the main character, Skipper George, being unaware in his youth of his own spirituality,[254] thus corresponding to the first step of the model, that of ignorance. The second step, trial, usually occurs in Bond's work as a life-threatening situation. Suleiman suggests that trial results in an awareness of truth.[255] The final step in the drama is that of a new life.[256] The

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[251] Ibid., 33.

[252] Ibid., 77.

[253] Ibid., 84-100.

[254] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 11-13.

[255] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions,* 77; George Bond, *Skipper George Netman,* 17-34.

conversion narrative casts Bond's characters in such a way, by beginning a "Christian life."[257] "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays" follows a similar pattern, in that Captain Sam had previously been unaware of his own spirituality,[258] but because of his encounter with a Methodist crew member while in a hospital, he becomes spiritually awakened.[259]

The negative exemplary narrative, however, also appears in Bond's work. Again, in *Skipper George Netman*, the negative exemplary narrative is explored through the unnamed character of the captain of the *Hunter.* Through the captain's harsh response to Tom Williams' request of leave when he attempts to observe the Sabbath, the reader is able to identify a wrong-doing.[260] The reader immediately sympathizes with Williams and internally chastises the captain. Thus, the reader develops a spiritual bond with the characters by identification with the positive and by contrast to the negatively-portrayed character. Even the most hostile of readers would quickly sympathize with William's mistreatment when he speaks of his religious obligation.

One of the most defining features of Bond's collection is the role of the reader in the process of reading. In Bond's work, as in the *roman à thèse* genre, the reader is not independent of the text, but, rather, the reader is to mimic the described behavior of the idealized main character.[261] In the narratives described above, both the positive and negative models require an action from the reader in response to the characters' behavior.

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[256] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions*, 77.

[257] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 37.

[258] George Bond, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays," 37.

[259] Ibid., 34-35.

[260] George Bond, *Skipper George Netman*, 18-19.

[261] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions*, 142.

In Bond's work, particularly the positive exemplary version is used most often, and "the reader is presumed to undergo an ideological development or a total conversion."[262] In all of Bond's fiction, the main characters are immediately given a sense of admiration by the reader, thus establishing the framework for the acceptance of the thesis contained in the work. The reader, therefore, has a definite level of participation and interaction with the text upon reading the collection.

Each of Bond's narratives demonstrates a particular Methodist ideal that needs to be established within the story. At the beginning of each narrative a society is presented as dysfunctional apart from the Methodist movement and its ideals. Throughout the stories, however, a replacement of values takes place so that at the end of each narrative, the society and the lives of the characters have been transformed and improved in some way by Methodism. It is Bond's expectation that the text will correct faults within the reader's spirituality and religious practice, or the story will simply introduce Methodist doctrine to the reader. *Skipper George Netman*[263] was the only work published that was available to the general public on a national scale and was likely intended for a wider audience. The other works in the collection were not circulated as widely and likely sought to correct any misunderstanding of Methodism to already-established Methodists. The only novel in the collection, however, did not have the same purpose, but rather, it was meant to introduce the doctrine of Methodism to non-Methodists, most likely in an attempt to gain converts.

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[262] Ibid.

[263] Ibid.

Suleiman argues that literary redundancy is necessary in texts to provide constant reminders within the narrative of the thesis that is being transmitted.[264] Particularly in longer works, it is possible for readers to lose themselves in the creativity of the work and forget the message that the author is attempting to convey. In Bond's short stories the length of the work would not result in redundancy; instead, it is likely that redundancy and repetition occurred so that the sole focus was on the themes being presented. In order to have the desired effect on the reader, that of conversion or spiritual awareness, Bond used redundancy to reiterate his themes, such as prayer, conversion, temperance and Sabbath observance, and revival, thus leaving no opportunity for the reader to overlook the conveyed message. Redundancy becomes necessary so that the thesis advanced in the work is always at the forefront of the reader's cognitive apprehension of the text. In the world of this type of literature, there cannot, Suleiman argues, be any transmitting or communication of ideas without redundancy.[265] Although none of Bond's work is particularly long, the stress that he places on the specific themes explored in the thesis are of such magnitude that the reader is unable to forget, even for a moment, what the points of the narratives are. It is in this manner, that Bond's Methodist theology takes and maintains a prominent role throughout his stories and novel. There is no question that Bond wrote as a means of instilling the ideals of Methodism within his readers and as a means of gaining converts to the movement, as well as demonstrating the truths of Methodism for the individual and society.

Prayer takes precedence over the other themes in Bond's collection since it is viewed as being essential to Methodist spirituality. It serves as a means by which God is

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[264] Ibid., 154.

[265] Ibid., 150.

relied upon by his people. Likewise, conversion was viewed as being essential. Since it was not enough to obey the doctrines of Methodism as mere obligation, a deep longing and emotion accompanied the conversion narrative in Bond's collection. The emotions portrayed in his fiction have the purpose of making an impact upon the reader and establish an identity with the preferred ideal. Wescott writes in *Images Of Truth,* that narratives must possess a functional quality for the work to engrain itself in the reader.

> In order to last a novel must be functional. To be sure, it must entertain, and it must convince, and it must thrill somehow; but it must also help. It must be adaptable to, and serviceable in, people's lives as they privately lead them day in day out.[266]

Any work of authoritarian fiction has thus some greater meaning beyond mere entertainment. Somehow, the book must contribute to the spiritual well-being of its reader. In Bond's work this is accomplished through his discussion of prayer, conversion, and revival since these elements of his work are the foundation for recognition, spiritual transformation, and development. The religious practices presented in the narratives can only occur once an understanding of prayer and conversion has been established.

Also Ingram's discussion of repetition within a *story cycle* is applicable to Bond. He views repetition as the means by which the author is able to point out the most significant aspects of a narrative's thesis:

> Time does not exist in a cycle for the sake of hurrying through a single series of events, but rather for going over the same kind of action again, for repeating the situation while varying its components, for deepening one's appreciation of the significance of an action.[267]

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[266] Glenway Wescott, *Images of Truth: Remembrances and Criticism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1939), 20-21.

[267] Forrest Ingram, *Representative Short Story Cycles of the 20th Century*, 24.

Each theological idea and religious practice in his work has as its ultimate goal the transmission of Bond's normative Methodism to his reader. By repeating the form and content that prayer should have, the way in which conversion should take place, the importance of temperance and Sabbath observance, and the function of revival in Methodism, Bond sought to portray Methodism as necessary for the readers and the society in which they lived.

William Withrow's programmatic article about the purpose of Methodist fiction states this point exclusively.[268] The literature, including Bond's, that was being published in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* was intended to contribute to the reader's understanding of Methodism and assist in spiritual formation through entertainment. Withrow wrote in his article that such literature was meant to enhance the Methodist consciousness of the reader as a means of deepening one's spiritual awareness:

> Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; these things we shall endeavour to promote and to urge upon the hearts and consciences of our readers.[269]

Withrow and Suleiman articulate similar ideas about authoritarian fiction, although Withrow naively projects its purpose as a self-evident agenda. Suleiman, the literary scholar, however, explores further the genre of the *roman à thèse* and describes the different types of narratives contained therein.

Through Bond's advancement of prayer and conversion in his fiction, he gives the reader what he considers necessary to become converted to and grow spiritually in the

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[268] William Withrow, "A Native Methodist Literature," *Canadian Methodist Magazine* 1, no. 1 (Jan 1875): 77.

[269] Ibid., 77.

Methodist faith. His inclusion of temperance and Sabbath observance is of equal importance since conversion to Methodism has socially redemptive consequences. The discussion of revival not only reflects the religious realities of outport religious dynamics but also has the purpose to convey the desired enthusiasm Methodists are to exhibit.

Conclusion

The themes and presentation of George Bond's novel and short stories can be understood with Ingram's *story cycle* and Suleiman's *roman à these* genre. The themes of prayer, conversion, and revival are common in all of Bond's writings and aid in the reader's complete understanding of Methodism. This composition of common themes was not merely intentional in Bond's work but also occurred habitually. He presented the most important aspects of Methodism, thus creating a collection of fiction that complements each other, resulting in a *story cycle.* He used emotions as the basis to convey his message to the reader so that the reader became emotionally involved with his literature. Bond begins his stories with a shared human experience that any reader could identify with and then develops his authoritarian fiction.

Suleiman explores the *roman à these* genre in terms of positive and negative models. The positive model allows for the reader to integrate the teachings of the fiction into his or her own life. The negative model contrasts right and wrong in the fiction by pinpointing the faults of a character. Bond most commonly uses the positive model in his work and follows the steps of ignorance, trial, and a new life in the plots of his stories and novel. In Bond's collection the reader is involved with the story and is expected to react to the characters' behavior. In turn, the reader begins to replace old thought patterns with those promoted by Methodism. This is done in large part through repetition and

redundancy. Additional themes presented in the stories complement Methodist theology and ethos so that a comprehensive idea of Methodism is included in the literature. Bond offers readers religious guidance after conversion so that not only prayer, conversion, and revival occur in his stories but also temperance and Sabbath observance are presented as ideals and indicators of peoples' changed lives. Repetition is also common in the *story cycle* and helps to link one story to another. Withrow's article in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* points out the purpose of the fiction being published. While it had to entertain the reader, the most important aspect of such fiction was to convey Methodist ideas and ideals to the public.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

George Bond, the Methodist clergyman from St. John's, Newfoundland, addresses in his fiction several Methodist religious preoccupations and practices: prayer, conversion, temperance and Sabbath observance, and revival. By exploring prayer in light of Friedrich Heiler's phenomenology, conversion through the psychology of William James, and revival within its appropriate Newfoundland context, a better understanding of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Newfoundland Methodism can be gained. Literarily, it becomes also evident, that Bond's literature can be understood as authoritarian fiction as established by Suleiman.

Heiler's notions of primitive and prophetic prayer, in his *Prayer: History and Psychology,* provide the basis for identifying the form and content of prayer found in Bond's stories and novel. Primitive prayer can be identified by the personal requests made that ask for the basic necessities of life. This includes the need for food, shelter, and the protection of human life.[270] Primitive prayer as found in Bond's stories is most often used when a disaster at sea has taken place. It is noteworthy that this type of prayer is usually uttered by women when praying for their husbands, sons, and brothers. Only rarely is it employed by men, since it is viewed as the woman's responsibility to take on the burden of the male characters.

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[270] Friedrich Heiler, *Prayer: History and Psychology*, 2-10.

Prophetic prayer, however, is distinct in that the requests that are being made have a spiritual basis and deal mainly with human values.[271] The emotionality experienced by the individual also sets prophetic prayer apart from primitive prayer. It is almost always free prayer and allows for an expression of creativity.[272] Every heartache and concern is brought to God so that the requests being made are no longer confined to physical necessities.[273] Prophetic prayer follows, but is not limited to, a pattern. It begins with a complaint or question, followed by persuasion, and ends with thanksgiving.[274]

The motivation for this kind of prayer is usually associated with fear or suffering. During or after times of distress, individuals use prophetic prayer to comfort themselves. Unlike in primitive prayer, prophetic prayer includes an emotion that comes from the internal struggle of the individual, not the external hardships that are being faced. It is also viewed as a highly personal activity in which such prayer cannot be said on another's behalf.[275] In Bond prayer takes precedence over the other themes because it is required for the conversion and spiritual maturity of individuals.

William James book *Varieties of Religious Experience* understands the conversion process as being the process by which a divided self becomes whole.[276] Conversion is the transition from unhappiness and discontentment to happiness and

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[271] Ibid., 228.

[272] Ibid., 232-238.

[273] Ibid., 240.

[274] Ibid., 241-274.

[275] Ibid., 230-232.

[276] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 155-171 & 37.

contentment.[277] Both gradual and sudden conversions occur and no value judgment is made as to which type is preferable. Sudden conversion results in personal torment that is not present in gradual conversion. In sudden conversions there is a sense of inferiority and uncertainty by individuals whether they can live up to the requirements demanded by their new-found faith.[278] Gradual conversion is different in that the person replaces thought patterns of one's old self with the new ones over an extended period of time. First, there is a recognition of sin, followed by an awareness of the positive ideal the individual is required to live up to.[279]

The prayer found in Bond's fiction during conversion is the most personal prayer that individuals participate in. There is always a sense of desperation in the individual and the emotions that result from the experience are felt strongly. The conversion process in Bond occurs quickly, with a gradual conversion occurring only in one of his stories. Conversion as presented in Bond's works usually begins with being aware of Methodism or its teachings. Upon encountering other Methodists, the religious views and spirituality become known by observing and interacting with Methodists. A strong desire on the part of the individual and some internal struggle is needed. It is this struggle between the old self and the ideals that the new self is trying to achieve that results in such strong emotions. Bond's sermons also indicate his leaning towards sudden conversion. There is a sense that a decision must be made directly following the sermon. The forgiveness offered by God is instantaneous, but spiritual growth is seen as a process.

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[277] Ibid., 171.

[278] Albert Outler, *John Wesley,* 274.

[279] William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience,* 187.

Bond views temperance and Sabbath observance as indicators of the changed life after conversion and a mark of the experience's authenticity. Temperance, although not addressed often in Bond's collection, has an entire story dedicated to demonstrating the dangers involved in the consumption of alcohol. Sabbath observance occurs in several of Bond's stories but is especially thematized in "Why Big Rich Joined the Temperance Society." Bond states explicitly at the end of the narrative the societal dangers that result from alcohol. Based on this story and his other writings, the clergyman and author viewed alcohol as injurious to health and to society on a larger scale. Sabbath observance indicates in Bond's stories and novel a way to encourage believers to mature spiritually through interaction with fellow Methodists. It is also likely that poor church attendance was a motivation for Bond to include this religious requirement in his fiction.

Revival played a large role in the expansion of Methodism, particularly in Newfoundland. As a special theme it is present in two of Bond's works, "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" and *Skipper George Netman.* The attitudes people had prior to the arrival of the Methodist movement help to establish the sharp contrast in attitudes and outward behavior that resulted from its introduction in Newfoundland. In *Skipper George Netman* and "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," some characters are hostile while some express ignorance of Methodism. *Skipper George Netman* has a permanent ministerial presence in the community whereas in "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" the minister and lay preacher only visit the community to gain converts and then intend on leaving again. The roles of clergy and lay preachers as found in *Skipper George Netman* and "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove" accurately reflect historical Newfoundland Methodism in which it was not feasible for a permanent clergy to be

stationed in every community. Lay preachers became essential for the Methodists since they were a part of the congregation and were able to relate to the people in a way that clergymen could not. Formal theological education was felt to be not necessary in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Methodism. Instead, common people influenced others and spread their religion to other communities.

During revivals, Bond's focus is not so much on the church or organized Methodism, but on the individual's spiritual state. The preaching in both of Bond's stories about revival is similar, but the events leading up to the revival are different. In *Skipper George Netman,* the revival comes about because of four young men being spared when lost out on the ice. In "How the Gabbites Came to Gull Cove," a revival follows the church service held in the house of two willing members of the community. The preaching in both stories begins with describing sin as a great danger to individuals, followed by a description of God's concern for his people and the forgiveness he offers to all. Bond's presentation of revivals parallels other historical accounts of revivals during the same period, notably Lumsden's experiences with revival in Newfoundland. The presence of clergymen at the revivals, as well as the sermons that led up to the event, receive support from both Hollett's and Lumsden's observations of nineteenth century Methodism in Newfoundland.[280]

Women play an important role in Bond's representation of revival. Often the most resistant and hostile characters before the revivals occurred, they became the first to accept the preached message. Although Bond's experiential language describing the

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[280] Lumsden in *The Skipper Parson* and Hollett's dissertation "A People Reaching for Ecstasy" both address the introduction of Methodism to Newfoundland in the nineteenth century and how the society changed after Methodism was accepted.

revivals suggests degrees of "enthusiasm," it is by no means the unrestrained emotionalism often observed during the Second Great Awakening. Unlike the enthusiasm described by Taves in her *Fits, Trances, and Visions,* Bond did not let emotionality overtake the Methodist message but confines it within socially acceptable limits. He presented a freedom that allowed for heartfelt, free prayer, expressions of distress, such as tears, while at the same time remaining orderly. Such "enthusiasm" accompanied conversions and was meant to prevent spiritual stagnation and encouraged new and old converts alike while the Methodist message remained in focus at all times.

By thematizing prayer, conversion, and revival, along with the religious practices of temperance and Sabbath observance in his fiction, Bond's collection meets Ingram's definition of a *story cycle.* According to Ingram, each story modifies the others so that the themes presented can be fully understood.[281] The theological ideas and religious practices explored in Bond's collection provide a coherent idea of Methodism and can be understood and applied by the reader. By viewing the collection as a *story cycle* as defined by Ingram, a well-rounded idea of Methodism can be comprehended by the reader.

By examining Bond's stories and novels as one collective unit and incorporating Suleiman's ideas about authoritarian fiction in the *roman à thèse* literary genre, the didactic nature of Bond's work becomes apparent. Suleiman explains this genre in terms of positive and negative exemplary models. The positive exemplary model begins with the reader reading the fiction and incorporating the characteristics of the hero into his or her own life. The negative exemplary model contrasts right and wrong and points out the negative characteristics in a less ideal character. Bond uses both types of models in his

[281] Forrest Ingram, *Representative Short Story Cycles of the 20th Century: Studies in a Literary Genre,* 15.

story cycle. His characters begin in a state of ignorance and go through some kind of trial, after which the needed religious truth is realized.[282] Readers play an important role in such authoritarian fiction in that they are expected to internalize the behavior of the characters and are meant to adopt that behavior.[283] The internalizing of behavior by the reader is enhanced through repetition in the stories. In Bond's case, the similar themes of prayer, conversion, temperance, Sabbath observance, and revival are presented in a variety of his stories and the reader's knowledge of the themes develops with each story. Repetition is, according to Ingram, necessary since the duplication of themes makes the reader more aware of the message.[284]

Withrow's programmatic article states the religious requirements for this type of didactic Methodist literature. The fiction was specifically meant to transmit Methodist ideals while at the same time providing a source of entertainment.[285] Through his use of the positive exemplary narrative and constant repetition of themes Bond makes clear that his writing extended beyond pure entertainment. He sought to convey what he believed to be the most important Methodist thought and practices for the reader. By doing this he also intended the conversion and moral improvement of the reader as well as his or her growth in spiritual maturity. His desire to imprint Methodism on his readers is obvious throughout his work since he gives the reader the tools needed for conversion, the enthusiasm to spread the Methodist message, and insights on how to maintain a healthy spiritual life.

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[282] The stages of conversion in literature can be found in Susan Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions,* 34-35, 77.

[283] Ibid., 142.

[284] Forrest Ingram, *Representative Short Story Cycles of the 20th Century: Studies in a Literary Genre,* 24.

[285] William Withrow, "A Native Methodist Literature," 77.

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