SPIRITS NOT BROKEN:
THE HAIDA PEOPLE
AND THE
FISHERIES RESOURCE

by

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Abstract

The fisheries resource is of substantial value in British Columbia, representing an important source of income for the province and employment for thousands of people. Fishing, however, is an increasingly difficult way of life, and many people who depend on the fisheries for their primary occupation and sole source of income are facing great hardship.

The importance of the fisheries resource and the problems associated with its use are perhaps most clearly demonstrated in terms of aboriginal communities in B.C. The participation of aboriginal peoples in the fishing industry is associated with issues of profound social, political and economic consequence. Fishing lies at the heart of most aboriginal cultures, and it is consistent with the traditions and lifestyles of those living in remote regions. Yet aboriginal peoples have increasingly been eliminated from participation in the Pacific fishery since the earliest development of the industry, resulting in drastic changes in their lives.

This thesis considers these issues by attempting to promote an understanding of the relationship between the fisheries resource and one aboriginal group - the Haida. Through the use of an interpretive approach, information was gathered from the Haida people themselves regarding their fishing traditions, their views of the history of the fishing industry, and their perceptions of fisheries management. Based on a feminist view of research, this work was developed in cooperation with the Council of the Haida Nation, and the Haida were involved in almost all aspects of the research design.

The work begins by describing the traditional use of the fisheries resource by the Haida people, and its importance in terms of their lifestyle and heritage. It then traces the people's

gradual exclusion from the fisheries harvest, and the changing nature of their use of the resource. The impacts of these changes are then examined, and it is demonstrated that the Haida people continue to suffer from the economic and social effects of their displacement.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

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Howa

There are a number of other people to whom I owe a great deal. I would like to thank my committee members, Frank Cassidy and Dave Duffus, for their thoughtful criticisms and advice, and Colin Wood and Leslie Brown, for reading a draft of my work. I could also not have have completed this thesis without the guidance and constant support provided by my supervisor, Stephen Lonergan.

In addition, I would like to thank James Strapp for his ever-available technical assistance, and I will always be grateful to Sarah Parry for living with me through the writing of this thesis. And of course, thanks to Scott Prudham for always listening and making me smile.

In a reflective moment, an elder once told me that "the Haida people have been stepped on so much, their spirits are broken".

It would not be surprising if this were true. Like all aboriginal peoples of Canada, since their first contact with European settlers the Haida have been decimated by the introduction of foreign diseases, they have been exploited by a system which they knew nothing about and which was never explained to them, and they have been betrayed again and again by a society which generally seemed to allow them no rights.

In spite of these pressures, however, I found the comment I heard quite surprising. While they are facing a great many problems still, I feel in the people of Haida Gwaii a renewed spirit, and an increasing determination to retain their culture and heritage and to regain control of their lives. The history of the Haida's use of the fisheries resource and their current demands to be included in its future development is but one reflection of that spirit.

Preface:
The Raven and the Salmon

The Raven had discovered the first people. Then after the flood he provided them with fresh water by creating lakes, rivers, and streams, but he still had to populate these empty waters with all kinds of fish for himself and the Haida people to feed on.

While travelling about one day, the Raven saw in the distance two men whom he knew to be Beavers. Before they caught sight of him he took the form of an old man, and when they came closer he greeted them as good friends. The Raven looked so friendly that the two men invited him to go home with them and offered him a place to sleep and food to eat for as long as he wanted to stay.

They lived in a huge traditional Haida house made of red cedar planks with handsome carved interior house-posts representing the Beaver crest. Inside, at the very back of the house, was a doorway screen with an entrance leading into what appeared to be a storage space. On the sides of the entrance hung the skulls of two mountain sheep. One of the men took a skull in each hand, and banged them together, causing sparks to fly. These set fire to a pile of wood, and soon a good fire was burning in the centre of the house. The other man in the meantime had gone behind the screen and returned, carrying some fresh salmon for their dinner.

During the meal, the Raven, who is usually a glutton, restrained himself and ate sparingly, playing his role of an old and well mannered man rather well; but of course it was very much against his inclination.

The Raven decided to stay as long as it would take him to discover the secret of the Beavers' food supply. He noticed that whenever the men needed fresh salmon they went to the back of the house and returned with all they needed.

He waited until one day his hosts went out gambling, leaving him alone. As soon as they left, the Raven decided to investigate the storage space at the back of the house, behind the screen. Instead of a place for keeping fish, to his amazement and delight, he discovered a complete lake and river system teeming with salmon, with fish traps already in place to catch them. In the

presence of all that food, he soon forgot the conventions, table manners and etiquette required of him while he was a guest in the Beavers' house, and quickly gobbled up as many fish as he could possibly hold. As the salmon berries were ripening in abundance along the lake, he picked a basketful and ate them also. It took quite some time and much more food to satiate his appetite, and he would have kept on eating even then but it was now time to stop as the Beavers were coming back from gambling.

After a good night's sleep, the next day, the Beavers decided to go gambling again. This time the Raven decided to steal the lake, the rivers and all the fish as well as the land around them. The trouble was that they were far too big for the Raven to carry. But a little difficulty like that never stopped so determined a master of magic as he, so he simply rolled the lake up like a mat and put it in his beak.

The Beavers were on their way home and as they reached the threshold of their house, they saw the Raven trying to fly away with their property. The rolled up landscape was so heavy that he could only fly a short distance at a time, stopping often to rest in whatever tree was nearby.

The returning gamblers knew they could not catch the Raven as long as he was flying, or perched in a high tree, but they quickly formed a plan which they hoped would catch the thief and recover their food supply. It meant returning to their natural forms, to Beavers, and using their powerful gnawing teeth to cut down the tree where the Raven was perched. However as soon as they attacked the first tree the Raven flew to another one. They felled several trees on which the Raven had perched but just before the trees began to fall, the Raven flew to a safe perch. In despair, they sent the Marten and the Loon to pursue him, but they also failed to catch him.

The farther the Raven flew with his burden the easier it was for him to carry it. Soon he felt strong enough for the flight to Haida Gwaii. There he dropped the lake and streams and salmon berry bushes, and planted the salmon in pairs, one female and one male in all the waters of the islands. In time the fish multiplied and supplied the favourite food to the Raven and incidently to the Haida people as well.

A Haida legend, copied in this version from:
Reid, Martine J. (1990). Myths and Legends of the Haida Indians of the Northwest. California: Bellerophen Books.

Part One:
The Research Context

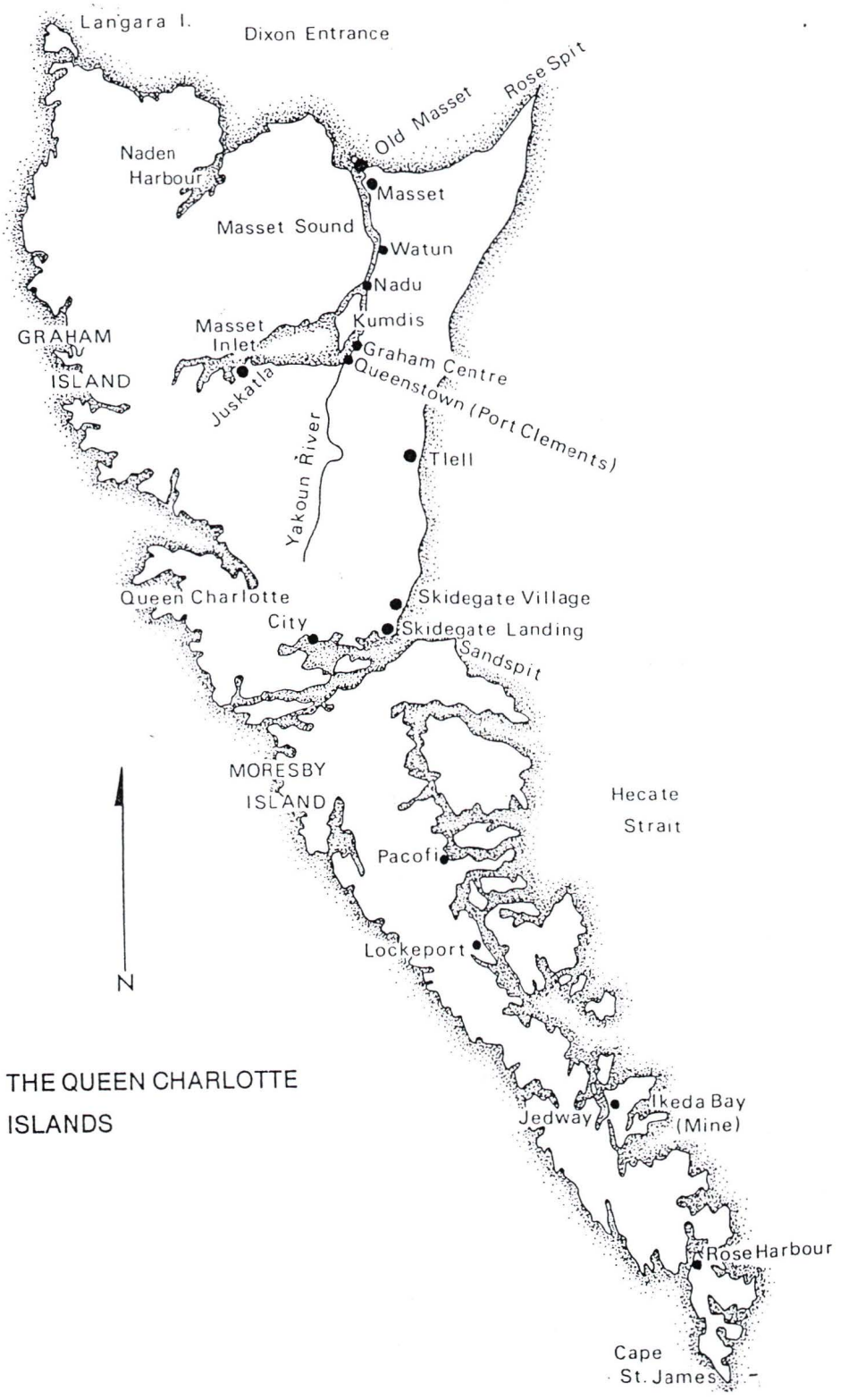

Figure 1 Haida Gwaii

Chapter One:
Introduction

> The story began long ago ... it is old. Older than my body, my mother's, my grandmother's. ... The story never really begins nor ends, even though there is a beginning and an end to every story, just as there is a beginning and an end to every teller. One can date it back to the immemorial days when a mighty group of men attributed to itself a central, dominating position vis-a-vis other groups; overvalued its particularities and achievements; adopted a projective attitude toward those that it classified among the out-group; and wrapped itself up in its own thinking, interpreting the out-group through the in-group mode of reasoning while claiming to speak the minds of both the in-group and the out-group.
>
> Trinh T. Minh-ha
> Woman, Native, Other

My Field Work and the Research Methodology

To some extent, I still wonder how I got involved in a study of fishing traditions and the history of the Haida people's participation in the industry. Before I began my research, my experience with fishing amounted to occasionally throwing a line in a lake while on a canoe trip (and even with this my success had always been extremely limited). I had never been on a fishing boat, and there is no way that I could have distinguished between a troller, a seiner or a gill netter. I had never imagined that one day I would find myself out trolling the north coast of Haida Gwaii[1], hauling in large grey cods and the highly prized, beautiful purple and pink spring salmon. And I am still surprised when I now look at passing boats with interest and a

[1] Haida Gwaii, a group of islands off of the northwest coast of British Columbia, is commonly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands (see Figure 1).

greater understanding of and admiration for the people on board, who spend long days and anxious hours, patiently hoping to catch enough fish to break even and make the trip worthwhile.

But from the earliest stages of my work I was determined to conduct a study which would be of use to the participants, and based on this desire, fishing seemed to be an appropriate issue for research for the Haida. This project was developed cooperatively with representatives of the Council of the Haida Nation (CHN). In the spring of 1991, I approached the CHN, expressed an interest in doing research with them, and outlined my experiences and background. With these factors and their needs in mind, we discussed a number of possible projects and eventually focused on this work.

The Haida and Fishing

The purposes of this study are to investigate the traditional use of the fisheries resource by the Haida people, the historical development of the fishery harvest in the area, and the cultural and economic impacts related to changes in the Haida people's participation in the fishing industry. It is clear from both oral histories of aboriginal peoples throughout British Columbia as well as from past academic studies that the fisheries resource has always been indispensable to the first peoples of this province. This is also true in the case of the Haida people. However, as this thesis demonstrates, the development of the fishing industry gradually eliminated most Haida from its harvest, culturally displacing a nation already struggling to retain its identity and leaving many people in the isolated community with even fewer employment opportunities. The Haida remain determined to continue to use the resource, to increase their participation in the fishing industry, and to regain their traditional control of the fisheries surrounding Haida Gwaii.

As a result, the Haida have recently become involved in a number of confrontations associated with their efforts to direct the development of fishing enterprises in the waters surrounding Haida Gwaii. The Haida consider the lands and waters of Haida Gwaii to belong to them, and the fisheries resource of the islands should thus be under their jurisdiction. A growth in the number and size of sports fishing franchises operating off the west coast of the islands, however, has raised fears of a depletion of these resources. The Haida are committed to regulating this use, and in order to do so they have recently implemented a series of management plans. Some sports fishing operators, however, have refused to take part in the Haida initiatives. The resulting "sports fishing conflict", described in greater detail in chapter

Figure 2 A Haida Fishing Person at Work

three, has led to the arrest of several people who have attempted to interrupt the operations of groups which do not cooperate with the Haida management efforts. Also, some members of the Haida Nation have been arrested in the past because of their food fishing practices, occasionally conducted in the absence of a valid licence. According to the Council of the Haida Nation's lawyers, in disputes over resource ownership/access it is necessary to show that the people have always fished in the Haida Gwaii region, and that the fisheries resource was and continues to be an essential component of their lives. Thus, the Haida need to document information on

traditional ways of fishing, and the importance of the resource in terms of their culture and lifestyle.

Also, a Royal Commission on Pacific Coast Fishing notes that "a major impediment to developing a satisfactory policy for the Indian fishery has been a lack of public understanding of the Indian's traditional reliance on fish, the cultural and economic significance attached to these resources, and the complicated legal questions surrounding them" (Pearse, 1986). It is important, then, to document the history of the Haida people's use of the resource and the developments which have resulted in their increasing exclusion from its harvest. My research is intended to provide this information, which can be used by the Haida in their negotiations with the government or the legal system or to raise general awareness about the reasons for their current arguments and practices.

My Field Experience

I first arrived in Haida Gwaii to start my field research on October 15, 1991. I had heard a great deal about the Islands. The stories referred mostly to the beautiful scenery and spectacular wildlife, and of course I had been repeatedly warned about the continual rain and terrible weather which always plagued Haida Gwaii. I arrived in Masset in a raincoat and a thick wool sweater, but the day was warm and sunny and the people around me were dressed in light clothes and were wearing sunglasses. Someone was supposed to pick me up when I arrived, but no one was waiting for me and when a person at the airport offered me a ride into the village I gladly took advantage of the chance. Later, I looked back and felt that I had learned my first and most valuable lesson for my experience - expect the unexpected and be flexible.

The time I spent in Haida Gwaii was exciting and hectic, and few things ever worked out as I intended. The day after I arrived I was invited to a potlatch being held for twelve Haida men who had been arrested during the summer for their role in the sports fishing protests staged at the Northwest end of Haida Gwaii near North (Langara) Island. The men were leaving that evening to spend three days in Prince Rupert, where their case was being heard at a preliminary hearing. Because the protest was related to fishing and the dispute with sports fishing operators in the region, I was invited to go with the group. As a result, after I had spent just 24 hours on the Islands I found myself on a ferry leaving.

I was very nervous when I first arrived in Haida Gwaii. It was my first experience doing such extensive field work, and I really had no clear idea of what to expect. I planned to stay for one month, gathering information and interviewing the Haida people about their experiences in the fishing industry, and the importance of the resource to their way of life both now and in the past. In fact, I found that the month was not enough time to do and see all that was available, nor was it enough time to talk to all of the people who were willing to share their thoughts and experiences with me. I was to return on three other occasions to Haida Gwaii, first for two weeks during my Christmas break, later for a second field session in March, and once again in July.

The time I spent on the islands was an enjoyable experience. The hospitality of the people was overwhelming. I was seldom alone for long, as a guest was almost always welcome in any home, and visitors continually dropped into the bed and breakfast where I was staying. The response to my requests for interviews was excellent. People with whom I casually discussed my project at lunch would later arrive at my door, often with another friend who had some experience to share. At times, people who offered me a ride while I was walking from Haida (the reserve, where I was staying) into the town of Masset would invite me to come to their home to "talk fishing". And once when I was casually walking down the street, a truck pulled up beside me and the driver yelled "are you the one up here doing the project about fishing?". Not really sure of what to expect, I acknowledged that I was indeed doing research, and I was subsequently told "well have I got some stories for you - get in"! I spent many hours listening to Haida elders and younger people attempting to get into the fishing industry, and all of the people with whom I spoke had relevant stories to tell and interesting insights into the history of fishing in the region.

I think that because the project had been developed cooperatively, and because I was conducting research **"with"** the Haida rather than **"of"** them, I was accepted much more readily than I would have been otherwise. On more than one occasion when I was introduced to someone as a researcher, I was met with rolling eyes and some comment to the effect of "not another one!" In almost all of these instances, however, when I explained who I was and my association with the CHN I was welcomed. The process of designing a project that would be useful gave my work a credibility it would otherwise have lacked, and people seemed more willing to participate in a study which was intended to benefit them.

Figure 3 After the Clam Digging Season

The Research Methodology

My participation in this project and the research design reflects my understanding of a feminist perspective of scholarship. In acknowledging this fact, I recognize that there may be some confusion - and perhaps even some disagreement - with my decision to base my work on feminist theory. Because of the fact that this study does not deal specifically with what have traditionally been defined as "women's issues" or some aspect of gender relations in society, I am in some ways extending the bounds of what seems to be the common interpretation of feminist

research. However, I believe that feminist research does and should involve more than a choice of topic. Feminist views of research are associated with ways of conducting work which are less limiting than many traditional approaches. And because I feel that the concept of a feminist research approach involves "breaking out" and moving beyond conventional expectations, I am also comfortable extending its use beyond the common use and applying a feminist view of research to my work. I believe that there are characteristics of feminist theory and methodology which are relevant to this research and make it an appropriate framework for a study involving an aboriginal nation.

When I refer to using a feminist methodology, it is important that I clarify my meaning. I use the term methodology in much the same way that Cook and Fonow (1990) do in their work. Instead of referring to techniques for gathering and analyzing information, the authors use the term methodology to refer to "the study of methods and not just techniques themselves" (p. 70). This type of definition is supported by many feminist authors. Jayaratne and Stewart (1991), for example, distinguish between three terms:

i) methods: particular procedures for gathering evidence;
ii) methodologies: theories of how research is carried out, or broad principles about how theories of research are applied; and
iii) epistemologies: theories of knowledge.

The term theory is not used here in the positivist sense, as in a set of hypothesis and constraining conditions which, if validated empirically, assume the status of laws. Rather, I am using the term in the sense of a means of conceptualizing a framework within which reality is apprehended. As Johnson (1981) outlines, in this case the test of a theory is its coherence and practical adequacy, rather than its empirical adequacy, and its provision of a satisfactory basis for understanding (and changing) society. The aim of methodology, then, is to describe and analyze methods, revealing their limitations and clarifying their presuppositions and consequences. Thus, there may be a feminist methodology without a distinct set of feminist methods. Feminist researchers use any and all research methods, but how they carry out the evidence gathering procedures is what makes their work unique. The emphasis is not only on selecting methods which can best be used to answer the research question, but it is also on using them in ways which are consistent with feminist goals and ideologies (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991).

The Concept of a Feminist Methodology

The development of feminist theory and its gradual incorporation into the university setting has had a significant impact on the conduct of research. Initially, the effect of women's movements was somewhat limited. As the feminist voice was increasingly heard, there was a greater recognition of the necessity for pay equity, and a greater understanding of the need for increased numbers of women in influential positions in universities in order to involve women equally in the design and administration of institutions where knowledge is produced and distributed (Harding, 1987). There was also some acknowledgement that much of the academic work being conducted was gender biased, and to remedy this there were attempts to include women in research. For some time, however, women were simply " added on" to typical studies; their roles were explored and documented, and empirical evidence about women and their actions was amassed (Mackenzie, 1989).

This method of including women, however, was found to be insufficient, as it was increasingly recognized that the new material which arose was not compatible with existing frameworks of academic discourse. The content and political inquiries were seen to require new ways of thinking, and researchers were forced to question the adequacy of the theory and methodology of their disciplines and to look for ways to accommodate the new subject matter being considered (Mackenzie, 1989). Thus, feminist criticism began to question the content and methodology of research, challenging the foundation of academic disciplines. Increasingly, feminist theory has started to focus on science as practice rather than content, and as process rather than product (Longino, 1989). Accordingly, there has been a movement away from research simply about or including women, to "feminist research".[a]

Outlining what constitutes feminist research, however, remains a difficult task, and I believe that it is important to recognize that in some ways the concept is still evolving. Some theorists claim that feminist research is based on what are said to be innately feminine traits - complexity, interaction, and holism. They further argue that these traits allow women to understand the true nature of social processes, as society also reflects the characteristics labelled "feminine" (Longino, 1989). Many researchers disagree with this position, however, and they view women as "constructed", with virtues and values assigned to them through socialization. Women, like men, are too diverse to be rigidly assigned traits, or to be represented by a single framework. Accordingly, it is increasingly argued that there must be a focus on the concept of

"feminist work", not simply on work done by women, because not all women think or work alike. There is no automatic association between the gender of the researcher and the research methods used, and it is important not to confuse women and feminists and stereotype all female researchers.

Feminist research, then, has been described as contextual, inclusive, experiential, involved, socially relevant, multi-methodological, complete, not replicable, open to the environment, and inclusive of emotions (McCarl-Nielsen, 1990). Generally, the concept of a feminist methodology is described as a reaction against conventional, empirical science. There are also a number of features which are common to examples of feminist research. Clearly, not all of these traits are applicable to all work done by feminists. Just as it is impossible to describe "women" and thus label work feminine, it is also not possible to offer a definitive explanation of feminist methodology and the concept remains somewhat elusive. Harding (1987) actually argues against the idea of a "feminist methodology", suggesting that a pre-occupation with method mystifies what have been the most interesting aspects of feminist research programs. The critique of conventional research systems and their focus on totalities and analytical thinking has made feminists suspicious of totalizing feminism (Malson et al., 1989). Thus, there is a paradox for researchers interested in promoting the use of feminist methodology. On the one hand, there is desire to encourage the use of a less limiting research framework and as a result many feminists want to present a unified position; yet a need for plurality and multiplicity is also seen as crucial, making this goal difficult. While recognizing the diversity of feminist research, however, it is still possible to identify features which are both central to feminist theory and also common to many examples of feminist research - characteristics which are both important and distinguishing, and which have relevance for my work.

The characteristics which I think are most significant are:

i) an emphasis on techniques which allow for maximum input from the research subjects. This inclusion should not be limited only to the collection of data, but the formulation of a research question, the choice of a research process, and the evaluation of the conclusions should all involve the people participating in the study;

ii) a definition of the research framework from a wider perspective than has previously been the case. In the past, research has generally reflected the predominant perspective of white, middle class men, and feminist theory emphasizes the need

to broaden this scope to include those people who have been excluded from the research process;

iii) an acceptance of "politically" or "goal" motivated work as acceptable. In the past, it has often been argued that research should be neutral and objective, but according to feminist theory the relationship between social science and social movements in which research is viewed as apolitical must be revolutionized. All work is subjective, and this fact should be embraced. There should simply be an attempt to reduce the impact of bias by clearly outlining for the reader the background and beliefs of the researcher; and

iv) a discussion of the perceptions of the research participants which includes those of a variety of people. Research designs often include the selection of only white male subjects, or overgeneralize the findings and apply to women theories tested only on men. Instead, work should emphasize the roles and views of women and men, as well as people with a variety of experiences, thereby recognizing alternative truths.

Focusing on these features as a description of "feminist methodology" allows for a comparison with more traditional approaches to research and also provides an alternative framework to make work less limited and more inclusive.

Characteristics of a Feminist Method, and Applications to This Study

Many of the characteristics of feminist methodology are significantly different from those common to typical or text-book social scientific research, reflecting a reassessment of traditional methods in order to include a multitude of realities. Feminist research can generally be described as part of a larger movement and shift away from established social science methodology. McCarl Nielsen (1990) argues that there are a number of assumptions (many of which are unstated or unconscious) commonly shared by social scientists: i) that the social world is knowable in the same way that the natural world is, through observing and recording "objective" reality as it appears to a researcher; ii) that there is a separation or distinction between a subjective knower and objective to-be-known world; iii) that the subjective should not infect objective truth; iv) that verification of claims should be based on the use of the senses, which are assumed to give accurate and reliable information even about human behaviour, and that different

observers exposed to the same data will reach the same conclusions; and v) that there is order in the social world, a cause and effect pattern, and the overall goal of social scientists is to develop laws or generalizations about the social world true across time and place in many situations and conditions. This view of social science emphasizes rationality, impersonality, prediction and control of the events or phenomena studied. Feminist researchers claim that these theories exclude women as knowers, make it difficult to determine women's understandings of social life, and they claim that the voice of this type of science is masculine (Harding, 1989). Feminist work, then, is largely an alternative to traditional, "positivist" frameworks and epistemologies.

Feminist Theory and the Project Definition

According to a feminist view of research, how social phenomena are defined as problems to be researched is integral to the results. Feminist researchers acknowledge that the questions asked (or not asked) are as important as the answers themselves (Harding, 1987). According to many authors, there has been for some time a selection of elitist and sexist research topics and an absence of research on questions of central importance to marginalized groups (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991). The Haida, for example, have been studied for years by researchers who have posed questions for study based only on their own interests. Problem definition, frames of reference, and the perspectives that define research have traditionally expressed the interests and have arisen out of a particular segment of society - those in control. Thus, the interesting and important phenomena for study have been identified from a largely white-male perspective (Acker, Berry and Esserveld, 1991). Also, many feminists object to the exploitative relationship which often exists between the researcher and the subject. As Ladner (1987) suggests, this relationship is often like that of an oppressor and the oppressed; the researcher (oppressor) defines the problems and the nature of the research, and dictates these to the people being studied (the oppressed). But defining what needs explanation has usually been from the perspective of white, middle class men, and the choice of research topics has largely been based on these men's experiences. Feminist research recognizes the necessity of developing a new frame of reference, conceiving reality from a wider point of view and basing research questions on other experiences. These experiences must also be identified by those groups often excluded from studies, and research should provide the explanations that they want and need.

Crucial to the development of my research design has been my desire to ask the questions that are important to aboriginal people and, more specifically, to allow my study to be flexible enough to be shaped to a large extent by the Haida. Again, when I first contacted the Haida, I outlined my area of interest and suggested that I was interested in negotiating a specific topic with the people involved in the research. This approach seems to have been appropriate. In fact, the Haida would probably not have supported this work to the extent that they did if they had not been so involved in the development of the research topic. Their experiences with academics in the past have often been quite negative, and the Masset Band Council recently acquired control over research being conducted in the area, demanding a right to be consulted on all aspects of its execution before they would agree to participate. Also, as Fonow and Cook (1991) indicate, while researchers and target groups may agree on the general goal of a piece of research, each operates out of a different set of traditions. Cooperation, then, may result in more useful research. In the case of this research, I wanted not only to gather and present new data on the Haida, but I also wanted the study to have a practical component and to be of use to the Haida in the future.[b] This could best be assured by negotiating a topic with the people most aware of their own needs.

Specifying Research Goals

Another fundamental aspect of feminist research is a focus on the questions of an oppressed group. Groups which are disadvantaged, or in some way dominated by other groups, have not traditionally played a dominant role in research; often these groups are not mentioned at all, or they are taken as incidental to those who exercise control over society's wealth and power. According to Mies (1991), the dominant view of reality is limited, because it "continually leaves in darkness and detaches from societal processes those who are exploited and ruled over: women, colonies, nature", and "feminist research cannot simply be inserted into or added onto the old scientific paradigm ... which implies the dominion over women, primitive peoples, and other races" (p. 65, 81 - 82). Feminist research attempts to address this imbalance, and to investigate the roles marginalized groups play in society other than in terms of their adjustment to the white-male-dominated, white-male-determined world (Women and Geography

Study Group[2], 1984). As McDowell (1988) suggests, the experiences of marginalized groups must be accepted as valid, and their views must be seen as important as those of the oppressors, not only in society in general but also within the academic world.

Feminist work also considers how to change conditions so that the marginalized group can develop. If feminist research is viewed as a part of the feminist movement from which it has emerged, then "it is impossible to cling to the dichotomy between thought and action, science and politics" which has for so long been claimed (Mies, 1991). The intention of feminist research is to assist in the promotion of liberation (Fonow and Cook, 1991),[c] and in feminist research when selecting a study topic it is important to consider how that research has the potential to help people and what information is necessary to have such an impact (Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991). Researchers must recognize that their work will have an impact, and according to Millman and Kanter (1987), social scientists should not simply explain the status quo, but they should explore necessary social transformations and encourage a just society. As the Women and Geography Study Group (1988) state, feminist geographers should:

> examine differences between the power, social position, attitudes and behaviour of men and women, put forward theories to account for them and, most importantly, explore ways in which current practices in society might be challenged in order to release women from their subordination p. 25.

Thus, the research should not simply be about an oppressed group, but it should be for them, with an intention for the future rather than a resignation to the present.

The fact that feminist methodology acknowledges and accepts that researchers may have goals and objectives, however, raises the question of whether clearly political work can be regarded as "good science". According to accepted traditions, science is supposed to be value free, neutral, objective, and protected from political interests. For many authors, the goal of science is an acquisition of knowledge, in turn leading to an understanding of reality, but in order to understand reality science should be as objective as possible. Feminist researchers, however, admit that political considerations have relevant influences on reasoning and interpretation, and that these motivations shape the content of their research (Longino, 1989). They still, however, argue that politically motivated work is good science.

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[2] Aside from the forward, no studies in this book are attributed to individuals. It is a cooperative text.

In fact, many feminist authors argue that feminist research often highlights the bias of previous work and provides alternative explanations which are more complete and comprehensive, even from a biased and politically motivated perspective (McCarl-Nielsen, 1990).[d] Millman and Kanter (as cited in Harding, 1989) argue that these better explanations are produced because movements for social liberation make it possible for people to see the world from an enlarged perspective, as they remove previously unrevealed covers and blinders that obscure observation and understanding. According to Sayer (1989), in social science "normative criteria are needed which contain some notion of what would constitute a better state of affairs", and it is feminist research, with its political motivations, which explores the links between the actual and the possible, indicating what people's needs are in the present and what they will need in the near future (p. 218). In fact, it has been argued that research methodologies which simply describe the status quo without promoting change reinforce the devaluation of marginalized people by recording the conditions while systematically ignoring alternatives (Acker, Berry and Esserveld, 1991).

I also feel that the fact that the study has been chosen to be of use to the Haida does not limit the validity of the research; instead, I believe that this in some ways makes it more meaningful. Because feminist methodology includes the concept of putting theory into action, "political" uses of research must be accepted as a necessary and indeed, a positive, result. As Brody (1981) suggests in his study of the Beaver Indians,

> when social scientific research is undertaken at least in part to convey another people's sense of their needs, the problems are as much political as they are methodological. Those who wish, or are obliged, to state their interests and even negotiate their futures must have data, and must therefore allow some kind of research; and those who carry out such research necessarily enter into a very distinct kind of relationship with the people's whose interests they are expected to serve. The research itself is part of a set of processes that, on the one hand, may substantially determine the findings, yet, on the other hand, may go far beyond them (p. xiv).

According to Nick Gessler (1975), an anthropologist who worked with the Haida for many years, political ends may be served by research, even when the projects are seemingly neutral. Research can provide information and tools for either exploitation or self-determination, and the question is who research should serve. Gessler argues that when oppressed people are studied, it is usually for the benefit of the oppressors. In the case of the Masset Haida, their experience has generally been one of exploitation, with academics removing precious art and artifacts, and

books and articles which have been written about the Haida are available in universities for academic research, but offer little advantage for them. Because of problems like these, Gessler suggests that researchers will have to learn how to better serve the interests of the people they study. It was my intention throughout this project to do that.

Theories of Objectivity

The political nature of most feminist research is also compatible with a crucial argument of feminist theory - that no work is "objective". This view challenges the more common perception of social science which is based on the notion that the subject who conducts research should not let her or his feelings "infect" research, and which emphasizes the importance of a strict application of scientific methods to guard against the bias of subjectivity (Westkoff, 1990). Smith (as cited in Westkoff, 1990) instead claims that the methodological norm of objectivity is itself socially and historically constructed, based on an ideology that mystifies the relationship of the knower and the known through procedures that appear anonymous and impersonal. A researcher introduces bias into studies through the choice of a subject, which usually reflects her or his interests, and through the choice of research program and study model, which influences the outcome of the investigation. As Kirby and McKenna (1989) suggest, our observation and understanding of the social world is affected by such variables as gender, race, class, sexuality, age, and physical ability, and while this does not mean that facts about the social world do not exist or that subjective work cannot produce valid data or comments, it does imply that what we see and how we construct meaning is a matter of interpretation. Instead of striving for an impartial or unbiased study, feminist theorists argue that a researcher should accept that all science is value laden, and attempt to choose an appropriate, less limiting framework (Longino, 1989).

The approaches chosen to achieve this goal are usually based on "insider accounts", which seek to present the world as perceived by the study participants.[e] As Millman and Kanter (1987) suggest, it is necessary to recognize the distinction between agency - with a focus on variables, and communion - with a focus on human beings. Agentic research is identified with separation, mastery, and the creation of a controlled reality with the researcher at a distance.[f] The communal approach is humbler, disavows control, and uses the person and her or his subjective experiences as the proper unit of analysis. Ridington (1988), an anthropologist who

writes about his experiences with the Beaver Indians of northeastern British Columbia, quite clearly differentiates between these two types of research in the introduction to his work. He admits that when he began his study:

> I had assumed that the methods, purposes and metaphors governing [academic work] ruled supreme. I had been socialized to think about people, particularly Indian [sic] people, as the proper and inevitable subjects of an objective and imperial social science. More significantly, I did not question the style of that science. I assumed that the people I had come to study were, if not my personal subjects, surely subjects of the kingdom of science whose unquestioned objectivity ruled both their experience and mine.

As Ridington notes, however, he came to view the relationship between the researcher and the participants quite differently and to appreciate an atmosphere of cooperation. A reduction in the distance between the researcher and the researched opens up the possibility that "knowledge-from-below" can influence the research process, and allows people to express their experiences fully and in their own terms. As a result, information which might otherwise be overlooked or taken for granted can be included (Fonow and Cook, 1991). To more fully understand society the interaction of official with less visible, "unofficial" aspects of life must be considered. These aspects include such things as informal, supportive, local social structures, all of which can be revealed most clearly by those people directly effected by them through the use of research methods which focus on information provided by the study participants.[8]

The Participant Observation Approach

In order to gather an insider account, for my research I chose the participant-observation method. In this approach, the investigator to some extent participates in the life of the group or organization studied in order to uncover the nature of the social world through the actions and behaviour of people and how they give meaning to their lives (Eyles, 1988). The aim, then, is to interpret, and present for others' understanding, the situation that one has seen or participated in. Thus, the goal of this research is to describe the experiences of individuals, the processes they have gone through, their reality, and their history. With this description as a base, the researcher can push the analysis beyond the individual to a comprehension of experience as determined by the larger socio-economic structure (Acker, Berry and Esserveld, 1991). To facilitate the analysis, it is useful to gather information and experiences from the participants, make comparisons between them, construct categories which emerge from the themes identified

within the data itself, and finally attempt to pattern or structure the combination of elements to create a unified whole (Kirby and McKenna, 1989; Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991). This constant comparative method is what I used to make sense of the information I gathered in my field work.

The primary data collection technique and the focus of this study is the interviews and discussions I had with the Haida, as well as the observations I made while staying in Haida Gwaii meeting with the Haida people. My aim was to work with the research participants to interpret what I was told and the situations that I observed. This type of interpretive geography stresses the perceptions of individuals and groups, and how they give meaning to their own lives (Eyles, 1988).[h] An interpretive approach, allowing for a maximum of participation, is appropriate for this study because many aboriginal people feel that it is important for them to be allowed to speak for themselves. An aboriginal woman, Skonaganleh:ra (1989), presented this view, saying "I'm interested in articulating our own directions, our own aspirations, our own past, IN OUR OWN WORDS" [emphasis in original text](p. 7).[i] I believe that the approach I chose allowed for the study participants to have a maximum amount of involvement and input into this thesis. Also, when reporting the data I gathered I have tried to express the participants' thoughts in their own words, through the extensive use of quotations. None of the people I spoke with objected to the interviews being recorded, which allowed the voice of the Haida people to be very clear in the report.

The interviews I relied on to ensure the research participants had direct input into the process were really long, free flowing discussions. I was not only interested in the historical facts, but I was concerned also with the personal aspects of the fishing people's lives. Thus, the discussions were a chance for us to get to know one another. We did not usually begin by talking about the study. Rather, we began with talk about the weather or with anecdotes about things going on in the village. Eventually, we would get around to the topic of fishing, and history would unfold as series of stories were built, one onto another, and a picture of the past gradually emerged as people told their tales. Rarely did a conversation end without someone telling of a particularly difficult day when they felt for a time that they would never return home. But these stories were always told with laughter and a tone betraying how much they loved their lives. I also talked to few people who didn't relate to me their experience of catching their first spring salmon. The stories often left me longing to hear more, and I became absorbed by the people who spoke so lightly but with such reverence about fish and their harvest.

I did have some idea of the type of information I hoped to gather in each interview, and I had sketched some of these ideas before my field trip (see appendix 1). During the interviews, however, I used an open ended format to allow new questions to emerge in the course of the discussions, and I attempted to encourage the participants to take a lead in deciding what to talk about. As Taylor and Rupp (1991) note in a discussion of their research, it is important to treat the informants as experts, implying a closer association between the researcher and the researched. This was difficult in the beginning, as people generally seemed to expect a more structured approach in which the interviewer asks a series of directed questions. But the initial feelings of discomfort we all seemed to feel apparently disappeared, and discussions flowed freely. The process was interactive, and throughout the discussions I checked the validity of my sources and interpretations by asking for feedback. I often shared my thoughts with the participants, telling them what I knew and how I was making sense of the information I was receiving. Acker, Berry and Esserveld (1991) describe the research process as a dialogue between the researcher and the researched, during which there is an effort to explore and clarify topics under discussion, and to clarify and expand understanding. I agree with this assessment, and in order to promote this type of atmosphere I felt that it was important to offer my thoughts and concerns. As the authors note, ultimately the researcher must objectify the experience of the participants and translate it into more abstract and general terms if analysis that links the individual to societal processes is to be achieved (Acker, Berry and Esserveld, 1991). However, there is no reason that both the researcher and the participants cannot be involved in this process. In order to further ensure that the participants were involved in this aspect of the research, I sent an initial draft of my data analysis (chapter 3) to Haida Gwaii, where it was available to anyone interested. Later, I returned to Haida to allow for feedback to this draft.

Evaluation of the Research

Interactive approaches, however, with so much emphasis on the involvement of the research subjects, are somewhat difficult to assess. Interpretive techniques limit the extent to which information can be generalized, and it is important to recognize this in the findings. The boundaries and sources of the information must be stated, and it must be clear that any reported understandings of the group involved may not apply to all groups, or even to all similar groups. In fact, feminist research focuses on "people" in the plural. According to McDowell (1988),

Figure 4 Catching a Grey Cod

"feminism has developed beyond the phase in which the communality of women's [or I would argue people's] experiences was emphasized at the expense of variety" (p. 259), and unlike much of the research of the past, there is a greater recognition that women (and men) differ in class, race, and culture, and that there is no universal. While feminist research is based on the concept that men and women inhabit different social, physical and emotional worlds, it is understood that this characteristic also applies to people of different circumstances (Millman and Kanter, 1987).[j] Thus, it is important to outline in the research who was spoken to and how they were involved, and to at least consider how representative they are of larger groups.

It is important to note that this study focused on only one segment of the Haida Nation. There are two main Haida communities on Haida Gwaii. The village of Haida, formerly called

Old Masset and located about a half a kilometre from the town of Masset, is home to approximately 1000 people who are commonly referred to as Masset Haida. There are also almost 500 people in the village of Skidegate near Queen Charlotte City, a number of Haida live elsewhere on the islands, and there are an estimated 2000 Haida in the rest of British Columbia. According to Stearns (1981), in modern as in traditional society, the village is seen as the largest effective social grouping. It is largely in the context of their own village that their identity as Haidas has any meaning or cultural context. I spoke only to people from Haida and Masset, and when I am relating my interpretations of the experiences and understandings of the Haida people based on my field work, I am referring to members of those communities.

It is also important to note that, following in the tradition of feminist theory, I made a specific attempt to include both women and men in this research. As noted earlier, fishing and the fisheries industry is not commonly thought of as a so-called "women's issue", and in fact it in many ways appears to be a male dominated issue. Thus, it was even more important for me to be aware of the roles of both men and women in the harvest of the resource. Many people are not aware of the important role women traditionally played in both the preservation and the harvest of both fish and shellfish, and I attempted to make this clear in my report. Also, when I first arrived in Haida Gwaii and attempted to contact Haida fishing people, I was initially directed to only men. Although the fishing boats and licences are generally owned by men, many women fish with their husbands, and there are an increasing number of women who fish as crew members. In addition, women are very much involved in the food fishery, both in terms of catching and storing fish and in terms of their dependency on it as a source of sustenance. Also, changes in the Haida people's participation in the fishing industry will clearly affect the entire village - not just fishing people - and I attempted to stress the importance of the resource to all members of the Haida community. Thus, in my research I did speak with Haida women, and in fact I was quite impressed with their devotion to fishing as a way of life. As one woman told me, "I fished for seven years, then I had to take seven years off to raise my kids. I couldn't wait to get back into it, and I'm so glad that now I am".

The Research Context

Another difficulty for evaluation of this type of work arises from the intricate role of the researcher her or himself. Findings are often assessed using replication to test the results.

However, because research is not objective this criteria is often not appropriate, and it is certainly not applicable to work in which the background and experiences of the investigator influence the evaluations and interpretations of situations to as important an extent as they do so in this thesis. In this type of research validation must be internal to the discourse itself. The explanations must be justified in terms of the presented evidence, and the search for reliability and validity revolves around detailing the relevant context of all observations. Feminist methodology requires that the researcher not be an invisible, anonymous voice of authority; instead, the class, race, gender and cultural assumptions of the person conducting the study must be revealed. Newton (1973), for example, in his study of the Haida, provides not only documentary material and traditional oral literature, but also an account of his own feelings and impressions, as he has "always been somewhat annoyed by books in which the statements and feelings of others are filtered through the personality of an omni-present author", but in which the author is not well identified (p. 3). I, too, have attempted to provide insight into the factors influencing my observations. In this way, explanations will be produced which are more free of distortion from unexplained beliefs (Harding, 1987).

Also, information must be presented in the context of how it was collected so that the reader is able to place meaningful interpretations on it. One of the key underlying assumptions of a feminist method is the need to reflect upon, examine critically, and explore analytically the nature of the research process (Fonow and Cook, 1991). This is often accomplished by a thorough review of the research setting and its participants, including an exploration of the investigator's reactions to doing the research. According to Kirk and Miller (1986), this can be achieved by providing "extensive, explicit and perceptive field notes, self-analytical reporting of research procedures and research contexts, documentation of sources, documentation of the bases for inferences, and documentation of the ethnographer's theories of society and his [sic] biases" (p. 55).[k] I did keep a journal during my field sessions which I used later when reflecting on my explanations and findings. Thus, although the participant observation approach to research includes and accepts bias, bases its findings on the subjective information provided by those most directly associated with the questions being asked, and depends on a non-neutral position of the researcher, the work is no less valid. The defense of its validity, however, depends on an acceptance of the model of social science it represents.

Throughout my research I have been very conscious of my own biases, and I shared my own feelings about Canadian society and the treatment of aboriginal people with the people with

whom I was involved in Haida Gwaii. The research participants could then also be aware of and evaluate my biases when sharing with me their thoughts and experiences. I have also attempted to make these biases clear in this thesis. I have included my interpretation of the history of the treatment of aboriginal people in this country (Chapter 2). While this literature review was included in part to provide context for my findings, I believe that it also clearly affirms my view that aboriginal peoples have been marginalized by Canadian society and have been consistently ignored, particularly by the government.

Also, my experiences are very different from those of the research participants. I have spent the past six years in a university, while most of the people involved in this study have no post-secondary education and many have little formal education at all. I am from a middle class, urban background, yet Haida and Masset are small, relatively isolated communities. And of course, I am a woman conducting a study of an industry dominated largely by men. These factors have clearly influenced both the research process and my interpretations of the material which I was presented. Also, I am sure that the fact that I am relatively young had some impact on this study. Many people expressed surprise when they met me, as they had expected an older person to be conducting the research. To some extent, my age forced me to prove myself and demonstrate my ability to do the work more clearly than an older researcher would have, and it took several days before I was taken completely seriously. However, in other respects my age was a benefit; I was told that I was not at all intimidating and people of all ages seemed willing to talk to me. I was also told by several participants that they were more comfortable working on this project with a younger researcher, as they believed that because of my age my prejudices were less established and I "carried less baggage". Generally, I do not feel that the differences between my experiences and those of the Haida people had a negative effect on my research. In some ways, as a woman I believe that I may have been more sensitive to the role and impacts on women than a male researcher might have been, allowing me to present a more complete consideration of the Haida people. As with all interpretive research methods, my biases must have influenced my work, and an assessment of my success depends on my description of the research process and the circumstances which resulted in my explanations. With these factors clear, the readers can then appraise this study themselves.

An Outline of This Study

As noted above, this section of the thesis will be followed by a review of some of the literature related to the aboriginal peoples of Canada. This review is not meant to be a comprehensive discussion of all of the issues of concern to the aboriginal peoples of this country, but it is meant to serve as context for the following discussion of the Haida people and their history. It is very interesting to compare what has happened to the Haida people in terms of the fisheries harvest, what has happened to the Haida in terms of other resources and important factors in their lives, and what has happened to other aboriginal nations in this regard. The patterns are disturbingly similar and, while the focus of this research is the experience of the Haida people, I have attempted to discuss the broader implications of changes in the use of the fisheries resource.

The second section of this work is the research results and conclusions. The history of the Haida peoples' use of the fisheries resource will be discussed from the time before contact, when the aboriginal peoples of the northwest coast all depended on fish for their very existence. The impact of European contact and settlement will then be considered, along with the introduction of the commercial fishing industry and rules regulating the use of the resource. These changes had devastating effects on the Haida, who are now struggling to regain some control of what they quite clearly believe to be **their** resource. The conflict they are currently involved in with the government and sports fishing outfits operating in the waters of Haida Gwaii will be presented as an important example of Haida demands to have their fishing rights and heritage recognized. It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the fisheries and questions of access and management of the resource to the Haida people. This issue is not only crucial in terms of both their livelihood and their culture, but it is also associated with the future of the relationship between the Haida and the rest of Canada. Acknowledging the importance of this resource in terms of their history, and allowing them an active and central role in determining its use now and in the future, would be an initial but important step in correcting the failures of past policies and addressing the injustices which have plagued the Haida people for centuries.

Endnotes

a. This trend was also witnessed in the field of geography. Initially, in the field of geography the feminist critique challenged geographers to include women in their studies, and researchers in the field have documented in detail discrepancies between men and women's experiences, between their access to a range of goods and services, to employment and to housing (McDowell, 1988). As in other social science disciplines, however, for some time feminist geographers did not question either the methods or perspectives of traditional approaches to research. For example, Caris (1978) outlines the papers presented at the A.A.G. (April 1977) special session: "Geographic Perspectives on Women", and these works were all "pertinent to women and women's topics", but were all empirical in nature and used traditional geographical models and methods. As it continued, however, feminism - along with humanism and historical materialism - began to question the definition of geography as a "science of spatial relations" and began to stress the reintroduction of the people-environment relationship as the central concern of the discipline (Bowlby, Foord and Mackenzie, 1982). So, as in other fields, the integration of feminist theory into geography did not only increase the number of studies focusing on women, but it also began to emphasize a different approach to any geographical problem. Feminist theory has begun to influence how geographers conceptualize their subject matter, how the discipline is divided for research, and how concepts are defined and operationalized (McDowell, 1988). It is now believed that it is not sufficient for feminist geographers to study spatial behaviour, find that men and women's patterns and perceptions of space differ, and document these changes. As long as the theory underlying geographical study remains grouped in, based on and reinforced by men's experiences and perceptions, even when women are the subject matter they will still be unknowable. Conventional geography, which purports to speak of human beings, still relegates women to particular places, engaging in specific roles, with a set of assumptions about what femaleness is, and what it should mean (McDowell, 1988). Instead, feminist geographers generally break down the category "women", as they generally conceptualize gender as socially or politically constructed and changed. These changes in the perception of women also imply changes in the perception of men, so that "human" is no longer seen to be static. Similarly, in feminist geography the environment is viewed as a socially constructed creation, so that the link between humans and the environment is an active use of time and space, simultaneously altering gender and social relations (Mackenzie, 1989). Thus, feminist geography is concerned with the inequalities in the social structure, with the relationship between men and women, and between people (both men and women in the complete sense) and their environment. Feminist studies add to a fuller understanding of human environment relationships, and is not focused only on women.

b. Boelscher (1988) similarly found that her anthropological research, intended to examine traditional Haida symbols, has not only academic relevance, but that "there is some practical significance that goes beyond the academic audience". Her data and analysis also concerns the ongoing political discourse regarding entitlement to tangible and intangible property, evidencing that the historical

oppression of the Haida have not erased their concern for ownership of their lands and resources. Thus, Boelscher's work adds to the political issue at the forefront of Haida concerns.

c. While feminist theory stresses the importance of changing existing inequalities, it may be questioned how useful academic discourses are in this endeavour. The Women and Geography Study Group (1984) consider this issue, and they present several arguments. First, by changing the way in which people understand the world, feminist studies may lead to a greater recognition of inequalities and the need to change them. In addition, the studies may point out where change is required and how it might be brought about. Also, the academic realm is itself a part of society, and it both reflects and reinforces existing social relations. Thus, as the aims and practices of learning, teaching and research are changed to account for feminist theory, the struggle to do so may result in a clearer understanding of how to achieve wider social changes. Also, as McDowell (1988) suggests, ideas as well as actions are a strong force in altering repressive social structures, and logical arguments and written text may have as much long term impact as political protest and more vocal forms of activism for social change.

d. See, for example, McDowell and Massey's study (1984) of nineteenth century Britain and the expansion of capitalist relations of production. The uneven process and resulting differences between regions have been well documented, but the authors add a dimension overlooked in past research. McDowell and Massey wanted to include impacts on women, and they studied the changes in the relations between women and men associated with capitalist expansion, and how capitalism and patriarchy were articulated together in different ways in various regions. Thus, their investigation results in a fuller understanding of the factors which contribute to the uniqueness of place.
See also Tanner and Zhilman's study (1976, as cited in McCarl Nielsen, 1990) of human evolution. These authors argue that gathering (a largely female activity) as opposed to hunting (a male pursuit), was the major impetus for the development of tool use and communication, and they stress female sexual choice as important rather than the traditional, androcentric theories which stress female passivity in reproduction. While both feminist and non-feminist accounts operate within the context of modern physiology, genetics and social theory, evidence from several sources - studies of contemporary foraging societies and of the social interaction of chimpanzees - now seems to support Tanner and Zhilman's explanation. It is not definite yet if their study is correct, but it does reveal the bias of earlier work, and it provides a new understanding supported by evidence. And yet the researchers were clearly reacting to previous work which they felt devalued women, and they were looking specifically for women's contributions.

e. It is important to note that while interactive methods are most common, not all feminist research is qualitative. Carefully designed research grounded in feminist theory and ethics can take many forms. According to Jayaratne and Stewart (1991), a well crafted quantitative study may be more useful and less limiting than a poorly designed qualitative one.

f. It has been argued by some authors that this "agentic" research represents the masculine voice, which defines the self as distinct and separate, while the female voice defines the self in terms of connections and relationships and is contextual. For example, Bernard (cited in Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991) claims that because most scientists are male, as a result the masculine values of autonomy, separation, distance and control are embodied in traditional research.

g. In fact, it is within private arenas - with home, family and domestic concerns - that women largely participate and around which much of their lives are focused. Traditional approaches, however, often do not reflect this aspect of reality, thus ignoring important contributions and concerns of women.

h. For example, Brody (1981), in his research, found that the people he spoke with established their lives in their own terms, and that their descriptions were placed in the people's own terms of reference.

i. An excellent example of this type of approach is the collective work compiled by Silman (1988). A group of Tobique women approached Silman, stating that "we have been thinking about a book we do ourselves, with you to help us". Silman then lived with and interviewed the women, and presented a series of monologues, allowing the Tobique women to tell their own story.

j. So, for example, just as one of the crucial aspects of feminist theory is the reflection of the experiences of men as representative, one of the first acts in the development of Black feminist theory has been the rejection of the perspectives of white women as representative (Ladner, 1987; Malson et. al., 1989). And not only are there important differences within the classifications "men" and "women", but gender experiences can often conflict with individual experiences. Fox-Keller (1982), for example, addresses the conflict between a commitment to feminism and a commitment to science, which for a female scientist results in both nervousness and defensiveness. Feminist theory also recognizes the fact that people are forced to deal with this kind of dilemma.

k. Including personal thoughts and impressions is in fact not uncommon in studies of aboriginal cultures. Blackman (1982) for example, in her life-history of a Haida woman, discusses her background, her experience with the Haida people and her feelings about her subject, arguing that her intrusion into the narrative is critical to the research and to the understanding of the record. Boelscher (1988) outlines the context of her research in order to put her data into perspective. Brody (1981) also includes a great deal of reflection and introspection in his narrative.

Chapter Two:
Literature Review and Background Material

History of Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal Relations

Problems that aboriginal peoples struggle to overcome today are firmly rooted in the past. Many non-aboriginals want to ignore past injustices, arguing that they have no relevance when examining current antagonisms. But as Dyck (1985) suggests, "that governments should now wish to dismiss the past as being irrelevant to contemporary concerns is ironic" (p. 8), and the concerns of aboriginal peoples can only be fully understood in terms of their historical context. Although well intended policies designed to protect aboriginal peoples were periodically developed, the history of the treatment of aboriginal peoples in Canada is characterized by an appropriation of their land, dispersal of their communities and general neglect (Weaver, 1984). European society, based on the concepts of subduing nature and exploiting the environment, was incompatible with aboriginal principles and cultural imperatives. As a result, the arrival and expansion of European settlement in what later became known as Canada resulted in the erosion of the means of survival for aboriginal peoples; not only was their economic base removed, but their values, languages and social institutions all suffered from attempts to eliminate their traditional way of life (Mackie, 1985).

The central pillar of early Canadian Indian policy was the goal of assimilation or integration; it was expected that aboriginal peoples would abandon their culture, and officials simply believed that they should prepare aboriginal peoples for absorption into the broader Canadian society (Gibbins and Ponting, 1986). The Indian Act of 1876 both embodied this goal and further entrenched racist views into official policy. Initially intended to protect aboriginal peoples, the Act defined the relationship between aboriginal peoples and the rest of society by giving the federal government comprehensive mechanisms of control. However, "this policy of protection, guardianship, or wardship fostered in the administration of Indian affairs an air of paternalism that has been difficult to dispel", and "this protective stance in turn led to the attitude

that Indians' views on their own welfare were not to be given much weight, that the government knew the best interest of the Indian people in the long run" (Gibbins and Ponting, 1986, p. 25). In essence, Indians became wards of the state, administrative systems sought to ensure that they did not become obstacles to settlement, and agencies hoped to convert the "primitive" people to Christian beliefs, the English language, and ways of "civilization" (Dyck, 1985). Even the fact that the policy of assimilation failed, while largely due to the cultural strength of the aboriginal people themselves, was also in part a result of the prejudice and discrimination of many Canadians who were unwilling the accept the aboriginal people into their society (Gibbins and Ponting, 1986).

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES TODAY

While many Canadians are increasingly willing to accept the tragic realities of a hundred years past - from which it is easy to feel detached - it is less easy to feel separated from the misguided policies of today, and so an illusion is created that progressive thinking and improved attitudes have brought justice to aboriginal peoples (York, 1990). In reality, the bias toward aboriginal peoples and their demands, established so long ago, continues to be demonstrated by current policies and administrations, and the early principles and paternalistic assumptions fundamental to relations between aboriginal peoples and the state remain, deeply entrenched in Canadian society. For example, as the goals of aboriginal nations are changing, an inversion of the established relationship is beginning to emerge. Aboriginal peoples now want special status so that they can claim rights based on their original occupancy of this country, but they are being denied the cultural distinction which for so long was forced on them.

The now infamous "White Paper", or "The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy", introduced by the Trudeau government in 1969, is perhaps the best example of this denial. Intended to finally give aboriginal peoples equality with non-aboriginal Canadians, this policy again embodied the notion of assimilation; it eliminated the special status conferred on aboriginal peoples of Canada through the Indian Act, the separate federal department for administration, and reserves, so that aboriginal peoples could become integrated with the rest of the country (Comeau and Santin, 1990). Although the determination of aboriginal peoples and the general public opposition forced the government to withdraw the White Paper in 1970, governments since that time have continued to be reluctant to admit that aboriginal peoples

possess special rights based on their status. Officials continue to insist that there can only be one type of citizen and, while they admit that past relations are regrettable, they maintain that history is irrelevant to contemporary situations (Dyck, 1985).

Yet today, aboriginal communities are still enduring the effects of past policies. Most aboriginal people in Canada continue to live in relative poverty, with assistance so minimal that its impact has been negligible (Siggner, 1986). Aboriginal peoples die, on average, ten years sooner than average Canadians (Comeau and Santin, 1990), they still suffer from so-called "third world diseases" - tuberculosis, gastroenteritis and pneumonia - illnesses that rarely occur among non-aboriginals, and the infant mortality rate is twice as high for aboriginal Canadians as it is for non-aboriginals (York, 1990). There is severe overcrowding and poor housing standards on most reserves; the Department of Indian Affairs acknowledges that 2,000 houses on reserves urgently need replacement and that 10,000 families are on waiting lists for housing, and a 1985 study by the Ekos Research Association found that 47 percent of reserve houses are substandard, very poor or beyond repair (York, 1990). Aboriginal Canadians are jailed at rates that far exceed the proportion of the country's population they represent, and some suggest that an aboriginal person in Canada is at least three times as likely to be sentenced to prison as she or he is to graduate from high school (Comeau and Santin, 1990).

Aboriginal peoples face employment discrimination and forced education of what they view as irrelevant subject matter in distant, foreign schools (Frideres, 1988). According to a Canadian Metis, Howard Adams (1989), "native people cannot avoid seeing the cultural images and symbols of white supremacy, because they are everywhere in society, especially in movies, television, comic books, and textbooks" (p. 14). Aboriginal peoples cannot live in isolation from mainstream society, and so they are continually subjected to racial stereotypes through their encounters with society's symbols. Gasoline sniffing has become an epidemic on some aboriginal reserves, and researchers identify poverty, cultural dislocation, and loss of identity as the primary reason; inhalants are the most inexpensive and accessible means of escape and self-destruction, used by people who have lost a sense of who they are (York, 1990).

Aboriginal peoples are also affected by an array of legislation from which they have little or no legal protection (Demers, 1986). Many decisions which affect aboriginal peoples' lives are made for reasons totally unrelated to them, with little regard for potential effects (Gibbins and Ponting, 1986). In spite of some improvement, even the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, with a mandate to aid aboriginal peoples in their struggle for recognition,

is often criticized for not fulfilling its responsibilities, and for continuing paternalistic relations and inappropriately interfering in aboriginal peoples' politics and affairs (Ponting, 1986).[a] Indeed, the Indian Act is viewed by some as a serious obstacle to development because it assures the federal government involvement in all aspects of aboriginal peoples' lives. The initiatives of aboriginal people can not proceed without the approval of the Minister of Native Affairs and Northern Development. As Lafond (1985) notes, this system is not only outdated, but it is archaic.

Because the Indian Act guarantees that reserve land can not be mortgaged, it is difficult for aboriginal nations to raise capital for investment and new economic projects, and they must rely on government loans for sources of revenue (York, 1990). By controlling the flow of money onto reserves, the Department of Indian Affairs influences some of the most important decisions on reserves; economic development, education, housing, and social programs all rely on funding from the government. And the government has consistently made social programs a priority over economic and business ventures, favouring social programs that continue dependence over economic programs that promote economic self-sufficiency (Lafond, 1985). According to Erasmus (1989b), government agents responsible for aboriginal affairs still consider themselves to be the guardians of aboriginal peoples' interests, and Erasmus believes that when the government suggests that it is willing to transfer responsibilities to aboriginal nations, it maintains control of the funds and policies, while enlisting aboriginal peoples in the task of administering the system already in place.

The needs of aboriginal peoples do not readily coincide with the general political agenda, their concerns often conflict with those of larger interest groups, and in terms of voting and financial power most aboriginal nations are almost entirely insignificant (Dyck, 1985). Government attempts to reconcile the demands of aboriginal peoples with western, non-aboriginal ideologies and institutional arrangements do not recognize the importance of the issues in terms of the very future of aboriginal peoples. All aboriginal nations have, to some extent, involuntarily lost parts of their cultural identity, and they now believe that maintaining what remains of their cultural identity is imperative (Siggner, 1986). This fact, however, is seldom recognized. As a result, aboriginal peoples must continue to raise the consciousness of all Canadians, remind them of the reality and the history of aboriginal/non-aboriginal relations, and explain the necessity of their attempts to achieve independence and control of their lives.

Aboriginal Peoples' Attempts to Regain Control

The problems which aboriginal peoples must now address, then, are largely those of a nation of people who have lost control of their lives and are struggling to regain their self identity. According to Erasmus (1989b), aboriginal peoples are certain that control and manipulation from outside of their community, which has been the rule for centuries, has created an intolerable level of social and economic disorder among them, and what aboriginal peoples now want is "self-reliance, self control, internal growth" in order to start a process of healing. Aboriginal nations are increasingly determined to make decisions regarding the institutions and elements of their communities which directly effect the lives of aboriginal peoples, including their schools, courts, health systems, and social services. According to the President of the National Indian Brotherhood, George Manuel (1970, as cited in Tanner, 1983), the North American Indian is now reacting to the bureaucratic machine which has dictated the lives of aboriginal peoples for hundreds of years, and "he [sic] is struggling to regain control of his [sic] cultural heritage and to achieve social, economic and political independence".

Misperceptions, Stereotypes and Growing Frustration

In Canada, however, a cultural bias is still prevalent (York, 1990). Aboriginal peoples must struggle to dispel a number of stereotypes and myths in order to have their right to self-determination recognized, and aboriginal peoples are aware of a number of beliefs and assumptions which undermine the validity of their claims (Tennant, 1990). For example, it has been suggested that before European contact the indigenous people of Canada were somehow subhuman, and that their land was previously unused, eliminating any need for recompensation. As Mathias (1991) suggests, the racist notion that before the arrival of Europeans aboriginal peoples were too unsophisticated to understand or have the capacity to run any form of government has allowed people to dismiss aboriginal peoples' rights. Before contact, however, aboriginal nations managed their own affairs, maintained control of their territory, and self-government and land ownership did exist.

According to Brody (1981), misperceptions and partial realities of the past have simply been transformed into new distorted images of aboriginal peoples and their lives. Many people now have an impression of aboriginal peoples as alcoholics, completely dependent on the

assistance of welfare agencies and outside planners, and there is a general belief that aboriginal peoples are not capable of controlling their own lives, economies and futures (York, 1990). Examples from throughout the country, however, demonstrate that when aboriginal people are given access to funds and are allowed to pursue their own policies and activities, they have achieved a great deal of success. Community run schools, which include aboriginal language and culture as a central component of the curriculum, produce more graduates and more satisfied students and parents than do schools controlled by outside sources, and they also help to preserve important traditional heritages. Community services controlled by aboriginal nations also have better success at reducing levels of alcoholism, violence, suicide and other negative social indicators. As well, the development projects which have been initiated by a number of aboriginal nations have proven to be financially sound, and economically and socially viable. As Comeau and Santin (1990) note, projects initiated and run by aboriginal peoples are proof that they are capable of managing their own affairs and improving the lives of their people, without the record of tragedy produced by the government.

But many Canadians are still not aware of programs run by aboriginal nations which are successful adaptations to modern society while maintaining the aboriginal culture and heritage. Instead, non-aboriginals generally assume that aboriginal peoples have only two options for the future - either to return to their old way of life, or to abandon subsistence altogether and become assimilated into the dominant society. Aboriginal leader George Erasmus (1989) claims that neither of these options is reasonable, and he suggests a third alternative: for aboriginal peoples to modify their traditional subsistence lifestyle, combining old and new ways to maintain and enhance their identity while allowing their society to evolve. Aboriginal peoples are often accused of being against all development and living in the past, but this accusation is not valid. According to Kassi (1988), aboriginal nations are only "anti-development" if development is always defined in others' terms. Aboriginal peoples understand that the development of resources is key to their continued survival, and they know that they must participate in a twentieth century economy, using twentieth century technology (Robinson, 1985). According to Shortt (1985), the challenge is to find a path to development which respects cultural traditions and world views.

Representatives of aboriginal peoples are also expected to represent a united, uniform constituency, when in reality aboriginal nations are vastly different, spatially separated, and have unique needs and goals. According to Karl Sturmanis, land-use planner with the Kwakiutl Tribal Council representing ten aboriginal bands on northern Vancouver Island, "we have a variety of

points of view about forestry in our bands" (as cited in Nathan, 1991). Aboriginal nations vary greatly in their views of resource use, social planning and in their perceptions of how to protect their culture. A parliamentary task force established in 1982 to consider the question of aboriginal self-government recommended that the concept of self-government be recognized, but that there should be no single model because aboriginal nations are so varied, and the form chosen for one aboriginal nation may not be appropriate for another (Allmand, 1985).[b]

Aboriginal leaders in this country are generally aware that there is a great deal of misunderstanding and many debilitating stereotypes to be overcome before their concerns will be adequately addressed. They are determined to have their voices heard, however, and they are developing new bargaining techniques and continuing to pressure governments in their efforts to have their needs and concerns recognized. Aboriginal peoples are changing the terms of their relationship with non-aboriginals; they are no longer willing to accept good intentions and paternalistic approaches, but they are demanding a relationship based on mutual respect, truth and honesty (Mackie, 1985). Aboriginal peoples' efforts are becoming better organized, and they are involving greater public participation and awareness. They are also increasingly turning to the international community for support, and over the past twenty years international human rights groups have criticized Canada for its policies concerning aboriginal peoples (Comeau and Santin, 1990). Aboriginal leaders are joining forces to ensure that their concerns are finally addressed; in British Columbia, the Indian Chiefs of the province (196 in all) assembled to discuss a long term strategy and a cooperative approach to be taken with both the federal and provincial governments (Tennant, 1982). The task they set out was to entrench aboriginal title in the Canadian Constitution - the same goal that they have had for over four hundred years. If necessary, aboriginal peoples are prepared to articulate their point of view for years to come, and they have demonstrated amazing patience in the past.

However, it is important to remember that the longer it takes both sides to work out their problems harmoniously, the more bitter the dispute will become. As Robinson (1986) notes, "I have been talking to government people for 30 years, and so I have had to increase my volume. I had a very soft voice at the start, but as the years rolled on I found that I was not being heard, so I had to turn up the volume. It is not that the government is deaf, however" (p. 78). Aboriginal nations are becoming more aggressive in their struggles, and if they are not given the right to govern themselves they are increasingly prepared to do so anyway. Aboriginal peoples suggest that they feel betrayed by government, and they feel that the time is now for action to

demand change. Change cannot come about without conflict, but conflict does not have to go the road of violence (Manuel, as cited in Tanner, 1983). As aboriginal peoples are continually ignored, however, the prospect for violence grows (Erasmus, 1989b). Aboriginal peoples are increasing stating that they are tired of the conditions on their reserves, that they are tired of not being heard, and as a result barricades are going up across the country.

The Land Question and Aboriginal Peoples' Control of Resources

The question of land ownership is perhaps the most crucial issue regarding the future of Canada's aboriginal peoples. Regaining territory is perceived by most aboriginal peoples as crucial to the acquisition of independence and control of their future, and the question of land ownership is part of a long standing effort on the part of aboriginal peoples to achieve greater autonomy through the expansion of their territorial base. Whereas corporations and governments tend to view them as questions of control of access to valuable commodities, to aboriginal peoples these claims stand not only for economic interests but for the protection of their culture and community (Dyck, 1985). As Mathias (1985), states:

> Our position is clear. We want title, ownership, to our land and jurisdiction over that land. Our claim is to rivers, the creeks, the seas, the oyster beds, the mountain tops, the wildlife and the forests. It is to educational rights, economic rights, political rights, surface rights, and below surface rights. It can be likened to sovereignty, if not sovereignty, then at least to title. Title is everything to us. p. 78.

Aboriginal peoples' claims to land title are linked to their desire to control their own community affairs, and underlying the land question, although often unspoken, is a desire for non-aboriginal people to recognize and appreciate the diverse culture and rich society which existed pre-contact (Tennant, 1990). As Cassidy (1991) notes, for aboriginal peoples, negotiations and settlements of land claims are about more than economics and politics; they are about "recognition of their historical presence in the land ... long before the settlers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries came to it and recognition that they have a special and unique claim to the land" and, as Cassidy further suggests, while the government wants accommodation, aboriginal peoples want accommodation based on recognition, not upon assimilation.

Aboriginal peoples are quite articulate about both their past and present unique relationship with the land, and its special meaning for them. They have an emotional attachment

to their ancestral territories, and it is crucial to their identity in a way that is incomprehensible to many non-aboriginal people (Tennant, 1990). Bert Mack, the hereditary chief of the Toquaht Band on Vancouver Island claims that his people are very different from non-aboriginal Canadians, who can move from one end of the country to the other without any feeling of loss for the place where they were born; the Toquaht people are instead determined to remain in their traditional land, to retain contact with their elders, their traditions and their culture (as cited in Nathan, 1991). And as Norma Kassi, a member of the Vuntat Gwich'in Nation in the Yukon, writes (1988), "while you may think of us as living in the wilderness of northern Canada, we think of ourselves as being of the wilderness", and she further notes that "scientists like to use big words when they talk about conservation - words like sustainable development, biological diversity and ecological stability roll off their tongues. But to my people of Old Crow, it all means one thing - our survival" (p. 303).

In the traditional aboriginal view, human beings were one element in a partnership with all other elements of creation. The place for people, then, was more humble, and methods for survival allowed for the survival of future generations of all beings (Shortt, 1985). As Mackie (1985) explains, aboriginal civilization existed in a delicate balance with nature, and this concept was fully integrated with the political, social and economic elements so that all aspects of their civilization drove their cultural survival and development as one system.[c] According to Brody (1981) in his study of the Beaver Indians of northeastern British Columbia, aboriginal peoples must insist on the land, a right to its use, and on a right to protect it, because the land and its proper use are inseparable from the people who live with it so closely. Brody (1981) explains that for many aboriginal nations the wilderness is an escape, and that negative social indicators, such as poor health, high rates of accidents, injuries, violence and drunkenness, rarely occur when aboriginal peoples are in the bush. Environmental degradation, then, is often associated with adverse social disruptions of aboriginal life.

And aboriginal peoples are aware of increasing resource exploitation and environmental degradation. For example, the people of the Tla-o-qui-aht Band, who were at the forefront of the protests to save Meares Island in British Columbia, argue that they were forced to take that action because of their concern that there would be no resources remaining on the island by the time land claims were settled because of extensive logging in the region (Nathan, 1991). Aboriginal peoples object to a development pattern which they believe ravages forests, depletes fish stocks and pollutes waters and, accordingly, they want control of their land and its resources.

They do not feel that government representatives, company officials or environmentalists are currently voicing their concerns, and they want a greater voice in determining their lands' use and a just portion of the benefits from it. According to a Grand Chief of the Haida Nation, Percy Williams (1982), degeneration of the land and sea will further reduce the rights of aboriginal peoples, and they therefore have the moral obligation to defend the fate of their tribal territories through the land claims process.

There are three general types of land claims: those underlying all claims in Canada, based on aboriginal rights to land derived from original occupancy, termed comprehensive land claims; those that claim that the terms of specific treaty and scrip settlements were not fulfilled, that the spirit of the treaty was broken, that verbal agreements were not included in the written form, or that settlements were simply unfair, termed specific land claims; and those claiming that reserve land was lost through squatting, surveys or surrender (Ponting, 1986). Aboriginal peoples in Canada are attempting to use the legal system to either regain or get recompensation for the land they claim is theirs by making land claims, and aboriginal nations are increasingly asking the courts to settle disputes and consider aboriginal rights and sovereignty. Aboriginal peoples' rights to land, however, are not clearly defined in the constitution or in the law, and there has not been any clear interpretation of these rights by the courts (Coolican, 1991). In fact, the courts are not really the appropriate place for addressing the land question, as they are based on English Common Law, the application of which discriminates against aboriginal peoples who based their decision making on an entirely different system. The judicial process is also slow and expensive, and the adversarial approach necessary in this route builds division and bitterness rather than a constructive relationship for the future (Coolican, 1991). As well, court decisions are rigid, whereas flexible arrangements which can accommodate any future changes in the relationship between the government and aboriginal nations in Canada have a greater chance of success (Georgetti, 1991). Direct negotiations between the two parties involved can much better meet the needs of both groups in the long term.

But the land claims process has so far been slow and costly. Between 1974 and 1985, $26 million was spent on the operation and management of the claims process, and about $94 million in loans were made to claimant groups for the development and negotiation of claims (Cassidy and Dale, 1988). From the perspective of aboriginal peoples, negotiations have so far been very discouraging; in 1973, the federal government announced its plans to deal with the land ownership question, and according to George Erasmus (1989b), "we [aboriginal peoples] could

scarcely have expected that the claims process then established would move at such a snail's pace. At the present rate of progress, it could take hundreds of years to resolve our claims" (p. 8). Only three comprehensive claims were negotiated in the first ten years after the comprehensive claims policy was introduced. Generally, negotiations have only been successfully concluded when an economic development project has been threatened by delays from legal action or an impending court decision (Coolican, 1991). And even when aboriginal rights are expressed in written settlements, they are often totally or partially ignored, and aboriginal traditions, laws and interests are overridden (Erasmus, 1989a). Many people also argue that the federal government enters into land claim negotiations in order to give the appearance that they are doing something, when in reality its goal is to diffuse pressure (Georgetti, 1991; Mathias, 1991). And some non-aboriginal people still ignore past injustices, viewing land claims as opportunistic in motive and thus dismissable.

In British Columbia, less than twenty percent of the land on which aboriginal nations have indicated that they have a right or claim has been settled, and the provincial government has almost consistently refused to acknowledge an obligation to settle comprehensive claims based on aboriginal title (Walchli, 1985). While the federal government acknowledged that claims to land exist and has at least declared its willingness to negotiate, the provincial government long denied the existence of aboriginal title, acting as if British Columbia were unique and exempt from historical interpretations and legal principles applied in the rest of the country (Tennant, 1990). It was not until August of 1990 that the Social Credit government of British Columbia reversed its position and Premier Bill Vander Zalm announced his desire for "a just settlement of Indian [sic] land claims" (Cassidy, 1991). As Cassidy (1991) notes, however, "the Vander Zalm government has at long last moved British Columbia to the negotiating table, but it still adheres to its traditional position that aboriginal title does not exist and, if the courts find that it does exist, the financial responsibilities for extinguishing such title are the concern of the federal government" (xv). The newly elected New Democratic Party government in British Columbia has also stated its commitment to the land claims process, the outcome of which has yet to be seen.

Aboriginal peoples remain determined to pursue the land question, and they continue to perceive the land claim process as their best hope for establishing their rights. Indeed, a Deputy Minister within the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Clovis Demers (1986), suggests that when land claims are settled there is optimism for the future because "the recipient

community has acquired some tools they hope to use to participate more directly in the regional, national, and international economy", and "the community will be able to influence their own future and determine the future of their children" (p. 73). According to British Columbian aboriginal peoples, it is important to remember that they never surrendered title to their land, and they want the federal and provincial governments to acknowledge that the absence of treaties is not evidence of an absence of agreement on the land question, but is rather proof that aboriginal peoples' title remains in effect (Tennant, 1982). The lack of official response to this argument induces in aboriginal peoples a conviction that their concerns are not really heard and that they will continue to be betrayed - increasing their determination to regain control of their own futures.

Resource Control

Intimately associated with the question of land ownership is that of resource control and management. Security of land tenure makes long-term resource management more possible, and a desire to control both land and resources is also associated with the desire of aboriginal people to direct their own future. After land settlements have been reached, questions will remain regarding how the land and resources are to be managed and conserved, and the issue of the nature of aboriginal rights relating to hunting, fishing, and resource use in general will still need to be resolved. As Berkes (1989) notes, the existing general laws for resource management are based on conservation objectives, and they do not deal with how the resource will be shared among various interest groups. But while these laws are based on "science", and are therefore assumed to be value-free, "the historical experience in Canada has been that resource regulations tend to favour the politically powerful user groups at the expense of the less powerful" (Berkes, 1989, p. 197). Aboriginal peoples appear to be aware of this reality, and they are attempting to redress this imbalance.

And the issue of resource control is extremely important. Aboriginal peoples depend on resources as their economic base, and resource development provides a great deal of revenue for aboriginal nations. Economic interests in areas subject to land claims are often extremely important, and valuable resources can often lead to rivalries and conflict. As Cassidy and Dale (1988) note, natural resource use and management throughout British Columbia often occurs in regions subject to land claims, and a climate of uncertainty exists for all those interested in

developing the areas. Uncertainty as to when and how land questions will be settled raises questions for investors and industry operators, and delays development by aboriginal peoples (Sinclair, 1985). As well, blockades by aboriginal nations, conflicts over resource use, and decisions not to initiate several large development projects because of aboriginal rights issues are causing increasing friction between some aboriginal nations and local communities (Fox, 1991). Many local government officials, private interest representatives and aboriginal nations have all agreed that a decision regarding the land question is required for the development of lands and resources in the areas subject to land claims (Coolican, 1991).

In addition to the economic aspects of the resource management debate, there are also social issues to be considered. George Watts, Chairman [sic] of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council (1985), notes that for years aboriginal peoples have been attending meetings concerning how aboriginal peoples are going to survive, and he suggests that it is no coincidence that at those meetings the issue of resources has always been central, as:

> Our culture, our names, our dances, everything about our life is based on resources. Whether we are talking about the food we eat, ... the houses we build, resources are at the heart of our being. Why then should we not want to gain back control of our resources? p. 6.

According to Usher (1991), "it can be argued that fish and wildlife management, and the economic objectives associated with it, have been used as a means of social control and engineering of aboriginal people, with no less disruptive effect than Indian administration itself" (p. 20). There is a need to develop and expand the economic base of aboriginal communities with regard for their social and cultural priorities, and for the contribution of traditional economic activities to the stability of local employment and income (Berkes, George and Preston, 1991).[d] As well, the issue of resource management concerns not only questions of land rights and self-determination, but it also reflects opinions regarding the validity of aboriginal peoples' world view (Berkes, George and Preston, 1991). As the Grand Chief of the Cree people stated after the James Bay Agreement of 1975 (cited in Berkes, 1989, p. 199):

> It matters very much for the hunter or trapper who lives in the bush to know that it is his [sic] right to lead a traditional life and that that traditional life is being recognized and respected by all peoples of Canada.

In the fields of natural resource use, development, and environmental conservation and assessment, joint management by government and aboriginal nations is emerging as a central principle (Fenge, 1991). All comprehensive land claims agreements concluded to date have sections dealing with aboriginal participation in natural resource and environmental management

(Wagner, 1991). Land claims settlements in northern Quebec and the Beaufort Sea region and prospective settlements in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, for example, are providing institutions to decide jointly how resources will be used (Fenge, 1991). These agreements recognize not only aboriginal hunting and fishing rights and the primacy of local level self-regulation subject to a conservation principle, but these co-management provisions provide a level of user group participation in resource decision making which is unparalleled in Canada (Berkes, 1989). As Pinkerton notes (1989, p.4), co-management agreements are not yet numerous, but "they are indicative of serious problems which are getting worse, and also of the most promising policy solutions to these problems". By instituting shared decision-making among government, resource users, and those effected by its use, co-management systems set up a game in which the pay-offs are greater for co-operation than for opposition and/or competition, a game in which the participants can learn to optimize their mutual good and plan co-operatively with long-term horizons (Pinkerton, 1989).

The concept of co-management, while increasingly recognized as an appropriate goal, is still be no means easily attained. Those who are to become co-managers often approach questions of resource use from radically different cultural and educational backgrounds, and represent different interests, values and world views (Dale, 1989). Most distinct of all among these groups are aboriginal peoples. Berkes (1989), for example, points out that in terms of the fisheries co-management efforts in the James Bay Agreement, the Cree are not convinced that population models can tell anything the local fishing people do not already know, they regard the standard practice of tagging fish as showing disrespect to the animal, and they are repulsed by the practice of live-release currently fashionable in sports fishing. To the Cree, the basic management rules are: "you eat what you catch, you do not kill more than you need, and you approach the task of fishing with basic humility and modesty" (Berkes, 1989).

Also, according to Pinkerton (1989, p. 13 - 14), it is difficult for modern governments to "come to terms with often pre-existing local systems of management which serve local cultural goals for how management should be organized. Such local systems are often **self-regulating**, that is, they have already worked out a long-term, stable relationship with local stocks which allows a sustained yield." Self-regulating systems such as those established by many aboriginal nations have been able to regulate, allocate, and maintain adequate information, but it is not always apparent to modern governments how they do this. It is often difficult for government

to believe that there may be viable management systems other than a particular hierarchical form of standardized procedures and use of expertise.

Co-management agreements often operate well in aboriginal communities, because the areas are generally not too large, there is often an effective communication or well organized sub-groups (such as villages or bands), the groups already have a cohesive social system (based on either kinship, ethnicity, or some other variable), and the membership of the group can readily by defined (Pinkerton, 1989). Co-management agreements can promote co-operation between fishing people and government for the planning of improvements or conservation of resource stocks, a sharing of both the costs and benefits of enhancement or conservation among various groups, an appropriate vehicle for conflict resolution, a willingness to explore new options, a greater trust between groups, and a greater sense of control on the part of aboriginal peoples. Also, co-management schemes allow for development which is most appropriate at the local level, for an enhancement of cultural values and practices of significance to aboriginal nations, and can address specific community concerns (Pinkerton, 1989).

There is also a growing acceptance by non-aboriginal people of many of the strengths of aboriginal cultures, such as the need to live in harmony with nature, and an increasing recognition that involving aboriginal peoples in decisions regarding resource use will add aboriginal experience-based knowledge of ecosystems to the science-based knowledge of those people trained in managing natural resources. As Dobell notes (1990), arrangements for the co-management of resources can be worked out, and the traditional special relationship of aboriginal people to the land and to resources may well have much to teach non-aboriginals about sound resource management. And according to Berkes, George and Preston (1991), cooperative management is a central issue in the implementation of culturally appropriate development, and local-level management can improve information dissemination and policy enforcement. These authors state that "local level resource management and co-management may be seen as promoting ecologically sustainable use of the environment, social health and cultural sustainability of the local population, and their economic well-being" (p. 16).

The concept of co-management and a greater voice for aboriginal people in decisions regarding the use and development of the land and its resources, then, may have important influences on both the well-being of aboriginal nations and the whole of Canada. Co-management is not only about new institutions, but more fundamentally about the new relationships resulting from them. Institutions and legal arrangements can only permit, support, and create incentives

for new relationships; it is the new relationships which generate the communication, trust, and willingness to risk innovations which make the benefits of co-management actually materialize. As Coolican (1991) suggests, both the right to land and the right to determine what happens on the land are essential to the definition of a new relationship between the aboriginal peoples of Canada and the rest of the nation.

THE HAIDA PEOPLE

It is within this setting, then, that the Haida people are asserting their claim to the sea and land of Haida Gwaii and, more specifically, insisting on their right to take part in the management of the resources in the region. I believe that the experience of the Haida people can only be fully understood in terms of the history of aboriginal/non-aboriginal relations and the present situation in the rest of the country. This situation must clearly have some influence on the thoughts and beliefs of the Haida people. Similarly, the traditional importance of the fisheries resource to the Haida people and current trends in its use can also be better understood in the context of the history of the Haida people. In fact, their history very clearly reflects the pattern of development of the aboriginal peoples of Canada described above. Like many nations, the Haida had maintained a flourishing society for centuries, until the arrival of Europeans drastically changed their way of life. Aboriginal nations in general are responding to centuries of neglect and continual poverty, and land and resource control questions are part of an overall effort on the part of most aboriginal peoples to preserve what is left of their culture and protect their heritage. Today, the Haida are struggling to protect their culture and promote their traditions and heritage, and demanding ownership of Haida Gwaii - the Land of the Haida People - and control of its resources.

THEIR HISTORY

Exactly how long the Haida have lived in the area is not known, but they have occupied the chain of islands off of the northwest coast of British Columbia since thousands of years before European settlers came into the region. The Haida - or "the people" - lived in a region protected by forbidding seas, isolated from the mainland except through the use of canoes to cross the dangerous waters for trade and warfare. The people formed a clearly-defined, homogenous group, with a unifying language and a unique social, kinship and inheritance system.[e] It has been estimated that at one time a population of approximately 9000 Haida were spread throughout Haida Gwaii, and there were also Haida living in Alaska, descendants of a group who migrated from Haida Gwaii before contact (Blackman, 1981).

How many villages were built and abandoned before contact is also unknown, but by the early 1800s, 20 groups of villages known by one or more names existed (Drew, 1982). Most

of the villages were accessible only by the sea, and the Haida people were well known for their superlative canoes which they used for travel around the islands and all along the west coast. The Haida are also known for the rich culture they built on the rugged and beautiful islands. Using the abundant resource base available to them, the Haida fished and gathered plants and berries, and they used cedar trees to build their canoes, homes, and the totem poles for which they are now famous. According to Dr. George MacDonald, director of Canada's Museum of Civilization (cited in Johnston, 1977), the people of Haida Gwaii were "unequivocally the most advanced of any hunter-gatherers", and their culture represented "the apogee of the Northwest Coast".

The Haida people, however, had their way of life almost destroyed by the arrival of European traders and settlers. The first European arrived on the islands in 1774, when Juan Perez first encountered the Haida people at North (Langara) Island.[f] Serious trade began in 1787 with George Dixon and it expanded rapidly in the years following, focusing largely on sea otter pelts (Dalzell, 1968). Like many aboriginal nations along the west coast, the Haida were decimated by diseases brought by the traders. Epidemics of smallpox and measles took a terrible toll on the Haida. They suffered from influenza, whooping cough, scarlet fever, tuberculosis, and venereal disease, and pulmonary diseases to which they had no resistance and which had a tremendous impact on the people (Drew, 1982). According to Drew (1982), in 1836 the Haida population numbered approximately 6,600; by 1878 there were only 2,000 people left, and fifty years later only 700 Haida remained.

> In the Haida Gwaii area there were once 160 communities. The Haida had to leave them because they were decimated by epidemics.[3]
>
> My great grandfather was king of this land. Then my people got killed off by the smallpox, which made it easier for the government and big corporations to move in.[4]
>
> There were lots of villages along the west coast. Since I was a boy they're all gone. What happened was the small pox. At that time, my old uncle used to tell me stories on it. It happened mid summer. They'd get up in the morning and they'd be covered in it, and by evening they'd be dead. The young people would sit around together on the grass and sing and sing - they knew their time was limited. By evening it looked like they were all lying down sleeping - dead. The people that survived started to burn the houses down - this is why so few houses

---

[3] A comment made by a Haida man.

[4] A comment made to me by a Haida elder.

> are standing up. They burnt them because they knew the disease that was going around was contagious. They burnt everything.[5]

In addition to disease, the Haida were also culturally displaced by many of the same factors effecting aboriginal peoples throughout the country. Economic changes, often overlooked, had a significant impact on the Haida people; the introduction of European civilization increased the cost of living for the Haida, but did not supply a stable means of revenue (McKay, 1953). After the extermination of the sea otter in the early years of the century, no new commercial traffic of any importance came to take its place. Some trade of fish and other commodities continued, but the Haida generally grew poorer and fewer in numbers. Later, alcoholism also had a devastating effect on the Haida, reducing their numbers yet further, leaving a small group of survivors who abandoned the coastal villages and became concentrated in two villages - Masset and Skidegate.

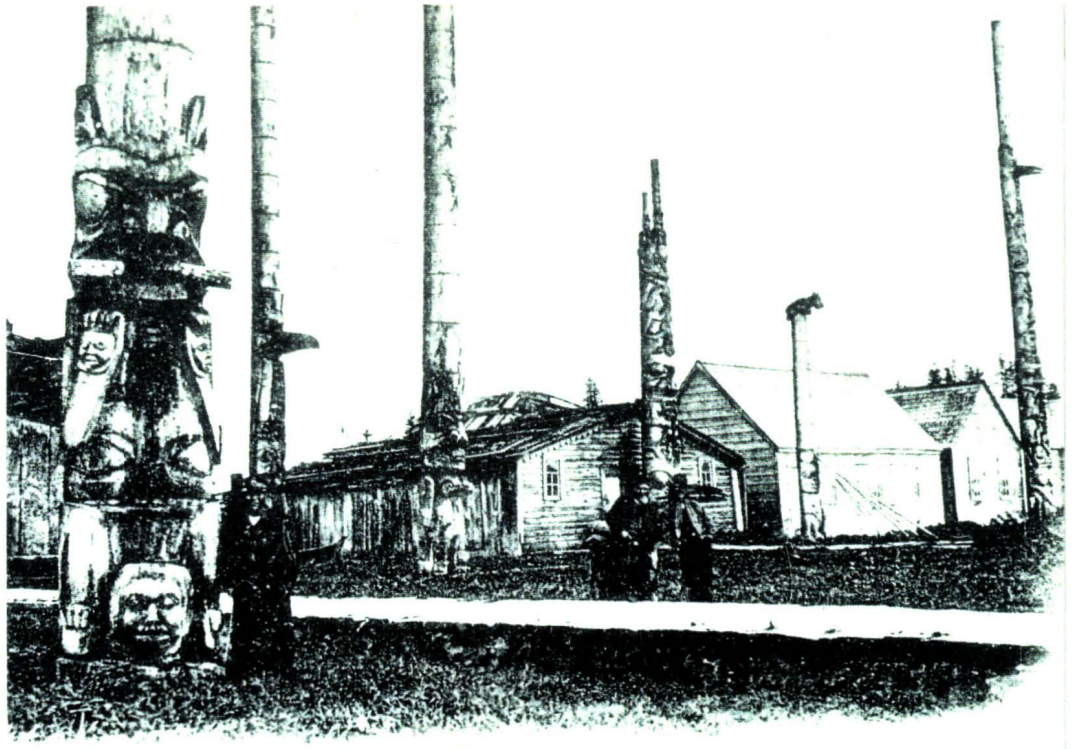

Figure 5 Village of Haida - Time of First Contact

[5] Ibid.

By the 1860s, Protestant Missionaries had begun to work permanently in the area. The Church controlled education, and children were sent to residential schools where the language and heritage of the Haida were not passed on to younger generations. The role of the government also gradually expanded in British Columbia, and as Victoria grew into a colonial administrative centre and began to exercise increasing control, the Haida lost more of their traditional freedom (Drew, 1982). Potlatches, essential social, economic and political events for the Haida people, were banned in 1884, and totem poles, the symbols of a rich heritage, were destroyed. Once the Haida people had gathered into Skidegate and Masset, they were exposed to even greater contact with European traders, missionaries, and government officials. From 1909 until 1966, Masset was under the close surveillance of a resident Indian Agent, who dictated to the Haida rules governing almost all aspects of their lives. The traditional system was so disrupted that tribal customs were no longer practised, and yet the English laws which were enforced had no relevance to the Haida people. The impact of these and other factors left a culture in almost total disarray (Drew, 1982).

> The problems of the past thousands of years do have relevance. The Haida people were displaced from their land by the same system we are going through today.[6]

> In our history, we do not feel that the legal system has provided any justice to us. I want to be convinced that the justice system will serve me, but I'm not. Injustice to aboriginal peoples is very evident in our history and our lives.

> I guess it was tough on our parents, being sent to residential school and they couldn't speak their language in the school or they'd get punished. I always remember my dad talking about that. The only words he knew in the school were yes and no, and one time a guy asked him if he wanted to fight and he said the wrong word - yes. He got beat up. My brothers also went to Alberta to a residential school. They were there for a couple of years. And alot of my friends went to a residential school. They went to Alert Bay. I was one of the lucky ones who didn't go.[7]

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[6] This comment and the one following were made by Haida men at the trial of Haida involved in the sports fishing conflict held in Prince Rupert.

[7] This comment was made to me by a Haida man.

> Only half a dozen people in Haida still speak their language, all elders. The culture is virtually on the brink of extinction, and it may not be able to be saved.[8]

The Haida Today

With the establishment of a town adjacent to the reserve called New Masset, the original Haida village of Masset was renamed Haida. More than simply the name, however, has changed. No longer living in communal dwellings and long houses as they once did, the Haida reserve is now composed of modern houses equipped with modern conveniences. The ancient totem poles. which at one time were numerous and distributed throughout the village, have gone - either removed and shipped to museums elsewhere or destroyed by time and weather - and there now exist only a few poles which were recently carved and erected in an attempt to replace the many which have been lost. The people living on the reserve have close connections with the nearby town of Masset, and they spend a great deal of time there working, eating in the restaurants, or shopping in the stores. Their traditional subsistence pursuits have been modified, and while most of the people continue to hunt and fish there is no longer a complete reliance on the environment. The traditional relationships with the land and with each other have been greatly altered by the mass infusion of western culture.

The Haida, however, are struggling to gain independence and maintain their cultural heritage. They are afraid that what is left of their culture will be lost if they do not act now to protect themselves, and in the last three decades or so a new spirit of independence has emerged. The Haida are in the process of rediscovering their rich heritage. and with it they are recovering much of their self-respect. Alcoholism is being combatted, and traditions are being retrieved (Drew, 1982). There is a renewed expression of their traditions by the Haida people, as they are attempting to find a place in today's society which retains the best of the old ways and incorporates positive aspects of the new (Smyly and Smyly, 1973).

> The Haida bottom line is the survival of our culture.[9]

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[8] This statement was made to me by a Haida elder.

[9] This comment and the one following were made by Haida men at the trial.

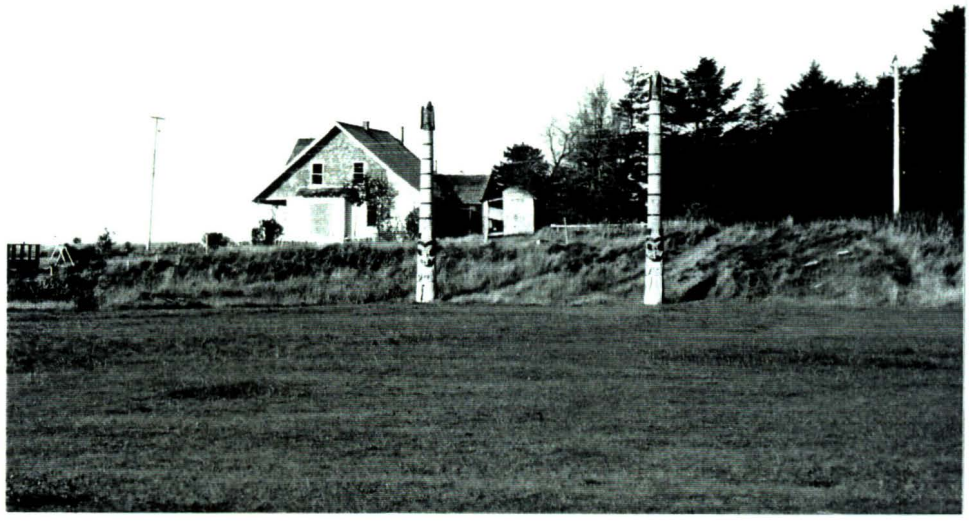

Figure 6 Haida - 1992

> The Haida are being treated with more respect now, because of what we've done for ourselves. Some people still don't want to show us respect, but they realize that they must.

And while there have been many changes in the way of life and the cultural links to the past are not always obvious on the surface, behind the twentieth century technology and the more clear adaptations to "white society", there remains a distinct Haida identity (Blackman, 1981). Family ties and kinship lines remain important, and the Haida tradition of reciprocity (most clearly evidenced by the potlatch) remains. Not only is there a continuation of the tradition of giving feasts and mortuary potlatches, but there is also a great deal of sharing of resources on a daily basis. Also, the Haida peoples' respect for the elders of their community is still apparent, a fact which becomes clear at ceremonial occasions when the tradition of speechmaking is still practiced and the elders are offered an opportunity to speak first. It is true that these traditions have been modified to some extent; for example, the food served at modern potlatches now includes things not available in the past, many Haida people now practice the Christian religion, and the influence of the dominant Canadian society has generally changed many aspects of life in Masset. However, the Haida identity remains very strong.

> The conflict with Bob Wright [the sports fishing conflict, described in chapter four] is not entirely a bad thing. It is encouraging many young people to take

> pride in their culture and heritage, and strengthening their bond to each other and their community. They learned songs to sing while at camp - traditional, Haida songs, which they are now proud to sing.[10]

> We were talking about the culture and the Haida singing ... to myself, I think it's coming back slowly. It's not strong yet, but it's coming back. When we had a potlatch here for the pole raising at Dian, we had dancers from Haidaburg and Masset. They were young kids, they were singing Haida songs and dancing. It was really good. It's good to hear them sing. I enjoyed it. I'm sorry I didn't know how to sing that.

The Land Question and Control of Resources

Like many aboriginal nations throughout the country, central to the attempts of the Haida people to maintain their identity and protect their rights is their land claim. Haida Gwaii is currently the subject of a comprehensive land claim by the Haida people, and the Haida Nation has asserted its ownership and jurisdiction over all the lands and waters surrounding Haida Gwaii.[8] The Council of the Haida Nation (CHN) takes the position that Haida Gwaii should be considered sovereign, and in its terms of reference the CHN declares that it will "strive for the full independence and sovereignty of the Haida Nation" (undated). The Haida people maintain that they have never been conquered, they've never entered into a treaty, and therefore the law of Canada has no jurisdiction over them (Palison, 1991).

> Our history and elders say it is our land and we have responsibilities on that land.[11]

> We know we own the land, and we must protect it.

> As young as we are, we realize what we're losing.

> From us living on these islands for the past 10 000 years, how did we lose ownership in the last two or three hundred years? We never signed an agreement with the federal government or B.C. We never ceded rights to these lands. We never gave authority to the federal or provincial government to set regulations.[12]

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[10] A comment made to me by a Haida woman.

[11] This comment and the two following were made by men at the sports fishing trial.

[12] This statement and the one following were made to me by a Haida elder.

> All this must end. This is our land. They treat us like we're intruders. We're not intruders. We're the owners. That is something people must learn and accept.

The Haida people want recognition of their ownership of Haida Gwaii, as well as the opportunity to develop the islands in a way which will benefit them. Corporations and small businesses, people employed in related industries, the government, and of course the Haida people are all concerned about any development of the island and are competing for its resources. The resource base on Haida Gwaii is indeed great; there is the potential for both logging and mining, and perhaps the most important sector of the area's economy is fishing. According to the Council of the Haida Nation one of the most important issues being faced today is the question of how to establish a mechanism of control and management of the resources so that there will be sustainable yields. As noted by a Haida person who spoke at hearings held to discuss the expansion of sports fishing operations in the Haida Gwaii region (Council of the Haida Nation, 1991):

> That has always been the position that we [the Haida] have taken in our approaches to how to manage resources on these islands. It is not to be completely depleted so that there is no return, no yields. And that's because we have a feeling about what we see as the future of our nation. There is an increasing number of people who are talking about returning to our islands, to their homeland. And our responsibility is to make sure that they have something to return to. It is our responsibility to have something for our grandchildren, and their grandchildren.

The Haida people are frustrated by what they see as the continual decimation of their land by large corporations while the government seems to ignore their voices. Again and again I heard the Haida people complain about the degradation of their land and their fears that if they do not stop the destruction there would be nothing left for the future.

> Now people are walking all over our islands, fishing our waters and exploiting our resources. I don't think many people realize it, but this land still belongs to the Haida people. The government and white man have been exploiting these lands for 100 years, which is unlawful to my people.[13]

> Since the coming of the white people there has been a massive loss of resources. They are now trying to take food out of our mouths by removing the salmon. It is wrong for someone else to enter our waters and take our fish, our livelihood from us.

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[13] This comment and the two following were made to me by Haida elders.

Figure 7 A Haida Canoe Carved in 1991

> We have our pride. And in order to continue to live off of the land in our traditional way we must stop the destruction now.
>
> The Haida know that we now need to protect our resources. Management by the lawful body of Canada is inadequate, and we must fight this if we are going to survive as a people. We can not count on the DFO for our management, or the courts, because the law is not on our side. We recognize a need for law and justice but we must protect ourselves. We recognize a need for order, but the way laws are changed is by people challenging them. If the Haida let the government have its way with management of the land it will be gone. The Lyell Island case is evidence of this. We did the right thing and saved the land from logging to allow it to still exist.[14]
>
> We have been trying to get the government to the negotiating table since the turn of the century, but they continually ignore us and come in and help themselves to resources. It is hard for us to sit back and watch that.
>
> We are protecting what is ours, in respect of our ancestors and generations yet to come.

---

[14] This comment and the three following were made by men who had been arrested for their participation in the sports fishing conflict. I heard these statements at their preliminary trial held in Prince Rupert on October 18, 1991.

> We have our pride. And in order to continue to live off of the land in our traditional way we must stop the destruction now.
>
> Ninety-five percent of B.C. belongs to native Indians. We've never signed it over to the government as far as my people know. So what the government and logging companies have done to our land is theft on a grand scale.[15]
>
> They made use of everything on the land and in the water. They didn't exploit it to the limit. The land was always rich in resources which is diminishing quite rapidly. We lived here 10 or 12 thousand years without wrecking our land, but now just 100 years and our forests are almost gone.
>
> I'm building Haida canoes. When I went to look for logs I saw many areas flattened, lifeless. They'll be like that for centuries. All this great wealth of our land has gone down south, funnelled into big corporations. They never put anything back; just take take take is all they can do. It's time people realize this is Haida land.
>
> This land of ours treated with care can be good for everyone for all time, but the way they exploit it, it will be good for nothing. We must speak up before it is too late.

The traditional use of the fisheries resource, outlined in the following chapter, reflects the intimate relationship the Haida once shared with the land and resources on which they depended. The history of its harvest, and particularly the development of the fishing industry after the arrival of Europeans in substantial numbers, also clearly demonstrate the alienation of the Haida people from their traditional pursuits and their gradual loss of control over a crucial element of their lifestyle. But at the same time, the exclusion of the Haida from decisions regarding the use of the fisheries resource has increased their awareness of the need to demand a role in its management and their desire to control their own lives and futures.

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[15] This comment, as well as the three following, were made to me by Haida elders.

Endnotes

a. In fact, a parliamentary Task Force on Indian Self-Government in its 1983 report recommended that the Department of Indian Affairs be phased out over a five year period to allow aboriginal peoples to become more independent.

b. The task force also noted that the right to self government be recognized, not granted, as it has existed for hundreds of years (Allmand, 1985).

c. As Dunn (1985) states, "the self-reliance of aboriginal people expresses itself in sharing, not in ownership: in cooperation, not in competition: in consensus, not in majority rule: in harmony, not in exploitation: in adaptation, not in domination. Any development must be based on these aboriginal values, or must fail, as they have failed in the past". Thus, aboriginal culture and their views of development overlap.

d. Shortt (1985) illustrates this problem of weighing the economic and social aspects of the resource issue with an example. Shortt describes the wild rice harvest in northwestern Ontario. In the long tradition of the aboriginal people there, the rice harvest is as much a cultural and spiritual celebration of creation as it is an economic pursuit. There is a great deal of pressure on the aboriginal group to mechanize their methods, and their would be an economic advantage to doing so. However, culturally much would be lost. The question, then, is how to decide between the choices, and by what criteria to choose a balance between gains and losses.

e. As Gerber (1989) notes, on an ethnographic map, "people" or "nations" are defined according to regions within which the various communities speak languages or dialects belonging to the same language family. Thus, the Haida have traditionally been defined as a "nation" by anthropologists. However, in more recent years the aboriginal peoples of Canada have given voice to a developed sense of identity, and the concept of "nation" is now used by them to replace the term "bands" as used in the Indian Act. When used in this report, the term nation refers to the second notion.

f. Actually, like most historical "facts", there is still some intrigue about this date. However, 1774 is by far the most commonly cited year of first contact.

g. According to a Declaration of the Council of the Haida Nation (undated), Article 1, The Territories:
Section 1
The homeland and territories of the Haida Nation include the entire Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands) the surrounding waters, airspace and subsurfaces.
The waters include the entire Dixon Entrance, half of the Hecate Straits, halfway to Vancouver Island and westward into the abyssal ocean depths.
Section 2
All natural things within the described territories are a part of Haida heritage and rightful part of Haida properties.
Section 3

All resources renewable or non-renewable within our territories are the rightful inheritance of the Haida Nation.

Part Two

The Research Results

Chapter Three:

Research Findings

INTRODUCTION

The Fisheries Resource in British Columbia

The value of the fisheries to the people of Canada is substantial. Canada has some of the world's most valuable fish stocks, capable of yielding enormous economic and social benefits (Pearse, 1982). Fish exports worth $612 million in 1989 and an additional income of $72 million from foreign sports fishing people in the same year make a valuable contribution to Canadian provincial and national economies (Fisheries Council of B.C. (FCBC) 1990). In British Columbia the fisheries resource is an important sector of the economy; in 1989, 304 million tonnes of fish were harvested, representing an increase from 298 million tonnes in 1988 and 265 million in 1987. B.C. landings represent about 35% of the Canadian total, and virtually all salmon and 65% of herring catches (FCBC, 1990). The fishing industry also represents an important source of employment in British Columbia; in 1989 there were 5 800 licensed fishing vessels and 15 900 active fishing people, translating to about 7 300 person years of employment.

Employment in the fishing industry, however, is an increasingly difficult way of life. Pearse (1982, in his Royal Commission final report) claimed that Canada's Pacific fisheries were at a "crisis point", with the economic circumstances of the commercial fishery "exceptionally bleak", growing concern about what was perceived to be depletion of the fish stocks, and increasing tension between users of the resource.[h] These trends have largely continued, and 1989 was again a difficult year for B.C. fishing people; catch volumes were about the same as the previous year, but values were down seventeen percent, and salmon prices and catch values for other species dropped worldwide. The value of the fish caught in 1989 was $472 million, a decrease from $566 million in 1988. But while catch values were down in 1989, the number of people involved commercial fishing industry remained about the same, causing greater

hardship for fishing people, many of whom depend on the fisheries as their primary occupation and sole source of income (FCBC, 1990).

The conventional fisheries represents a shrinking employment base, as economic pressures and concern about overfishing force many small operators out of the industry. Yet according to the participants of a workshop designed to discuss the B.C. fisheries, "most of North Americas valuable fisheries are located in remote or sparsely populated regions, where economic opportunities are limited and employment opportunities scarce" (Workshop Participants, 1985). Fisheries development provides both the government and those who choose to live in less populated areas with many advantages, as the government gains the opportunity to create productive employment which will contribute to the quality of life in isolated communities, and those living in remote locations benefit from the opportunity to establish fish related enterprises, close to the source of supply. In fact, the competitive advantages that accrue from being close to a ready supply of a variety of species can not be overemphasized and, perhaps of even greater importance, the establishment of fishing enterprises is consistent with the traditions and lifestyles of those living in remote communities (Workshop Participants, 1985). The development of viable, locally based activities should thus be a priority, and the federal and provincial governments should seize the opportunity to use fisheries to promote economic and social development founded on our rich fishery resource (Hindle, 1985).

The Fisheries Resource and Aboriginal Peoples

Perhaps nowhere is the importance of the fisheries resource more clear than in the case of aboriginal communities in British Columbia. The involvement of aboriginal people in fishing actually puts a light demand on the fish resources of the northwest coast; a report to the Native Fishing Association outlining the economic impacts of aboriginal participation in the British Columbia fishing industry (Price Waterhouse, 1989) states that aboriginal people own approximately 17 percent of all limited fishing licences and 8 percent of unlimited licences issued in the province (see Table 1 and Figure 1), the vessels and licences owned by aboriginal people are valued at an estimated 18 percent of the industry total, and fish landings by these vessels are about 22 percent of the value of all B.C. vessels (see Table 2 and Figure 2).

However, aboriginal participation in the fishing industry is associated with issues of profound social, political and economic consequence (Pearse, 1982). Among the economic

development opportunities available to aboriginal nations in B.C. perhaps the greatest potential is in the fishery, based on geography, cultural traditions, and affinity for the resource (Hindle, 1985). Fishing lies at the heart of most aboriginal cultures and economies. The pattern of aboriginal settlement both on the coast and in the interior of British Columbia was and continues to be determined in large measure by the accessibility of fish. This is so not only because fish is used for food purposes; it also plays a vital part in the system of beliefs of aboriginal peoples and in their ceremonies. Furthermore, fish was and is a major commodity of trade among tribal groups and between aboriginal peoples and non-aboriginal peoples. The aboriginal fishery represents a source of food, production for trade and sale, a social activity, and a cultural expression (Pearse, 1982).

Aboriginal peoples throughout North America have successfully competed in all phases of the fishing industry. For example, aboriginal people have owned and operated fishing operations in the North, fish processing operations on the Pacific coast, and they have participated in fish management programs throughout North America (Workshop Participants, 1985). Income associated with fishing is a crucial source of funding for many aboriginal communities, especially those that are spatially isolated with few alternative sources of income available (Native Brotherhood, 1989). During the peak of the fishing season in 1987, aboriginal employment in fish harvesting was estimated at 17 percent of the industry total, or 2 500 people, translating into 1 150 person years of employment with the seasonality of the industry considered (Price Waterhouse, 1989).

Aboriginal people, however, have been increasingly eliminated from participation in the Pacific fisheries since the earliest development of the industry, and there is growing concern that their rights will be continually ignored. In fact, fishing is the only viable economic opportunity in many coastal villages, and it is critically important for the sustainability of aboriginal villages to increase licence ownership for reserve residents. When licences are held by aboriginal people, several economic benefits flow to remote communities often desperate for income. Wages and profits go to the vessel owner and crew and indirectly to the families, and there is also a spinoff benefit for maintenance facilities and processing opportunities (Native Brotherhood, 1989). Aboriginal peoples are also aware of these benefits, and they are increasingly determined to regain some control of the fisheries in their communities and the regions in which they live.

Table 1

Ownership of Commercial Fishing Licenses, 1987

	Total Industry	Native Owned	Native Ownership as a % of Total Industry
Limited Entry Licences:			
Salmon (1)	4,481	862	19
Herring (2)	1,579	375	24
Herring Spawn on kelp	28	18	64
Halibut	433	46	11
Groundfish/Sablefish	188	11	6
Shellfish	329	9	3
Other	1,069	28	3
Total Limited Licenses	8,107	1,349	17
Unlimited Licenses:			
Packing/processing vessels	197	3	1
Other fisheries with vessels	3,352	243	7
Other fisheries without vessels	311	62	20
Total Unlimited Licenses	3,860	308	8

Notes:

(1) Excludes about 75 seine vessels operated by natives. These vessels account for 75 salmon seine licenses and about 35 herring seine licenses. Including these licenses raises native participation rates to 21% for salmon, 26% for herring and 18% for all limited licenses.

(2) Excludes licenses for herring spawn on kelp.

Source: Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Price Waterhouse (1989).

Table 2

British Columbia Fish Landings - 1987

	Industry		Landings By Native Owned Vessels[1]		Native Landings as a % of Total Industry
	Value[1] (million $)	%	Value[2] (million $)	%	
Salmon	212	48	48	56	23
Herring	107	24	29	34	27
Halibut	28	7	3	4	11
Groundfish	58	13	3	4	5
Shellfish and Other	36	8	2	2	6
Total	441	100	85	100	19

Notes:

(1) Excludes landings of about 75 seine vessels which are operated by natives but owned by non-native corporations.

Source: Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Price Waterhouse (1989).

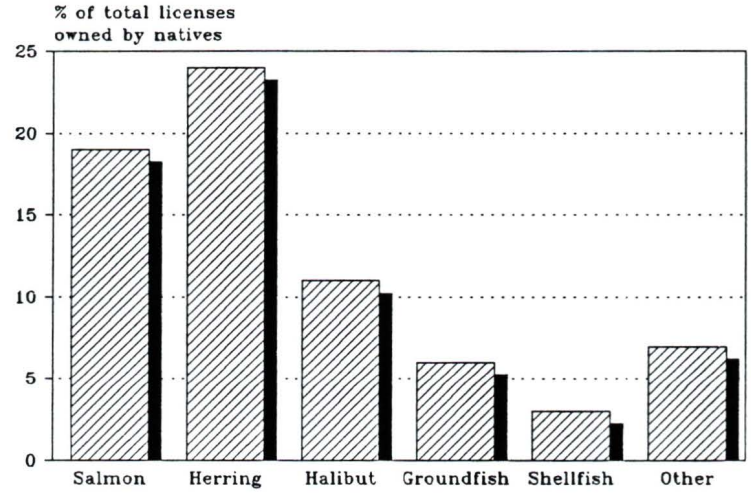

Figure 8 Ownership of Commercial Fishing Licenses, 1987

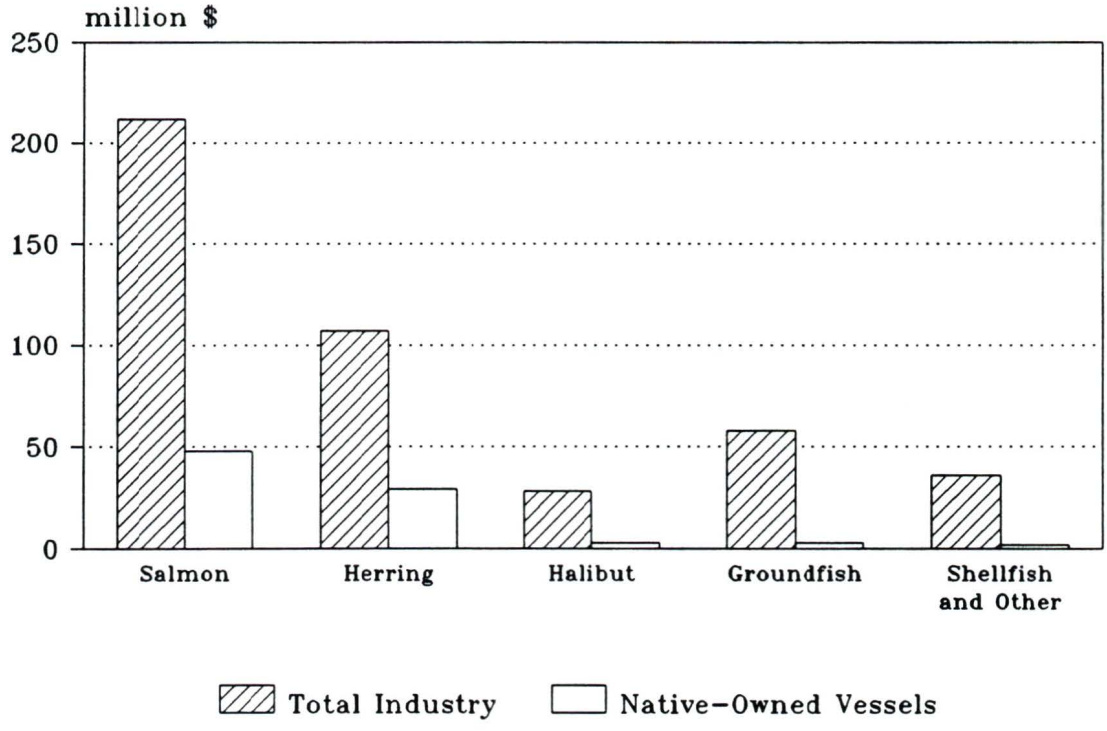

Figure 9 British Columbia Fish Landings, 1987

FISHING AND THE HAIDA PEOPLE

Traditional Use of the Fisheries Resource by Aboriginal Peoples

> "The wonder of it all is that there were so few - a handful of sea-hunters clinging to tiny footholds on the jungle backed beaches. But it was a rich land, above all, a rich sea. Millions of salmon returned each year to the rivers to spawn and die, a sacrifice that assured the survival of their kind, and at the same time gave easy life to the bear, the otter, the eagle, and a host of others, a few of whom were humans. In a few weeks, men [sic] could gather enough salmon to last a year. Shellfish grew thick on the rocks and sandy bottoms; halibut carpeted the shelf floor. ... In the early spring the rivers swarmed with oolichan, the magic fish of the northcoast, ninety percent oil and, to those who knew it well, fragrant, delicious oil to enhance the flavour of dried salmon and halibut, to mix with dried berries, to flavour stews, and, though they did not know this, to provide most of the stored nutrients necessary for life in the too-often sunless seasons. ... If the sea hunt was unsuccessful or smoked fish ran out before the new season arrived, mussels were a dark blue mantle on almost any rock, cockles lay exposed at low tide, abalone and rock oysters could be found with little effort, the pools yielded delicate sea urchins, the octopus could be flushed from his [sic] cave, and clams lay under most beaches. Even today, only a stupid man [sic] could starve on this coast, and today is not as it was" (Reid, 1971).

> "Along the coast of British Columbia the Indians are almost exclusively fishermen [sic] . ... The Haida though cultivating here and there along the shores small potato patches, are essentially fishermen. ... Their villages are invariably situated along the shore, often on bleak, wave lashed parts of the coast, but always in proximity to productive fish banks" (Dawson, 1882).

Few British Columbian aboriginal nations have signed treaties with Canada detailing rights and commitments regarding fishing, yet agreements which were made with aboriginal groups, early negotiations between the government and aboriginal groups, and the commission which set up reserve lands all recognized aboriginal traditions and their right to capture and sell fish (Pinkerton, 1987). The first inspector of fisheries - also an Indian agent - appointed in 1876, recommended that any interference with aboriginal fishing rights would be "imprudent as well as unjust", and he stated that "the exercise of aboriginal fishing rights cannot be legally interfered with" (Anderson, 1878 and 1879, cited in Pinkerton, 1987). In addition, the provincial government convinced early federal officials that aboriginal people in British Columbia did not require reserves as large as those set aside in other provinces as long as the fisheries resource was protected (Pinkerton, 1987).[i] Specifically, representatives of the government of Canada

recognized the importance of fishing to the Haida people in the process of establishing reserves on Haida Gwaii. Meetings between the Haida and the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia took place in 1913. At the time of the commission's appointment, the total number of Haida people living in Haida Gwaii was 597. Twenty five reserves were allotted to them, with an aggregate acreage of 3484.5, or 5.83 acres per person. The Commission's report acknowledged that "this per capita acreage, it may be remarked, is very low", but this was "a circumstance attributable to the fact that these Indians [sic] are primarily fishermen [sic]" and "the principle occupation of the Haida being fishing, for the canneries and for food supply, the majority of their established reserves are fishing stations of small area" (The Royal Commission, 1916). Further, this report - commonly referred to as the McKenna-McBride report, recommended that "the Indian [sic] people should have exclusive rights to the ownership and use of plots of oceans and streams", and for their part aboriginal peoples agreed to the small reserves allocated to them on the understanding that their rights to the fishery were guaranteed (Lane and Lane, 1987).[j]

The Importance of the Fisheries Resource

The assessment of the importance of fishing to aboriginal peoples by the government officials was, in fact, correct. To the aboriginal peoples of the northwest coast the resources of the sea were not only important - they were central to life itself. As McKervill (1967) notes, the people of the northwest coast were, and still are, "the salmon people". While the aboriginal peoples of the region varied in their traditions, their customs and their lifestyles, they did have in common their close relationship with the sea and their dependency on it, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the significance of fish in traditional aboriginal society. The three fundamental aspects of the northwest coast economy were fishing, sea mammal hunting, and shellfish collecting (McMillan, 1988). According to some estimates, fish comprised three-quarters of the diet of coastal aboriginal groups, and up to 700 pounds of fish per capita were consumed each year before contact and colonial settlement (Hewes, 1973, as cited in Pearse, 1982).

> Fish was the people's livelihood; they depended on it. The coho was invaluable to them. Fresh fish, late in the fall, was a treat. They got scared at the end of the season.[16]
>
> Food gathering was done whenever the fish ran, almost year round.[17]
>
> In our home, the main supply of food was the fish. It's the main source of our livelihood.[18]
>
> I've been eating fish ever since I can remember. I was still so small, they used to have to chew the t'salj (dried fish) up for me first before I could eat it.[19]
>
> That was our livelihood. Just fishing.[20]

The fisheries resource was abundant in the time before contact; according to Reid (1971), "the people of the northwest coast were rich. Their sea even richer". Salmon and halibut were usually available, but even when these were in short supply the people of the coast could always turn to groundfish and shellfish to meet their needs (Pearse, 1982). The Haida, themselves, settled along the coast of rich waters, enjoyed an incomparable ecological advantage, with an abundance of marine resources providing reliable sources of food (Stearns, 1981; Drew, 1982).

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[16] This comment was made by a Haida elder who had lived for more than 80 years in Haida Gwaii. This man provided a great deal of information about the Haida traditions and fishing and its importance in the past. Explaining how he knew so much about Haida history, he told how his uncles used to take him fishing and on hunting trips, and how "they used to tell you stories when there was no light but the campfire. And they tell you stories of the past - a long time ago. That would go on until midnight sometimes. When I was young I used to fall asleep, but they'd wake me up and tell me stories again. I think the whole idea was for me to remember all these things. It helped me alot in my time as I grew up". This tradition also enabled him to pass on a wealth of stories and information about the past.

[17] A comment made to me by a Haida elder.

[18] I did not meet the Haida elder who made this comment. However, she was quoted in the article Memories, written by Jenny Nelson and published in Yakoun. River of Life (1990).

[19] Ibid.

[20] This comment was made by a Haida elder in his presentation to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990). The Council of the Haida Nation appointed a six member panel to investigate the impact of the sports fishing industry on Haida Gwaii, and a forum was held January 18-20, 1990 to allow for an exchange of ideas, information and approaches to the development of fisheries management policies. This forum included submissions from fishery participants, federal and provincial agencies, commercial fishing people, and the Haida community and interested local groups.

Fish constituted the major part of the food supply. Well over 150 salmon producing streams have been documented in Haida Gwaii, and there are extensive systems of lakes and fish producing rivers. Five species of salmon - sockeye, coho, spring, dog and pink were available, halibut and black cod could be obtained by deep sea fishing from canoes, and steelhead and cut throat trout could be caught from inland waters. In addition to fish, also harvested were many species of clams, two species of mussels and many types of shellfish, including crabs, abalone, sea urchins and scallops. Herring spawn was also collected and dried and stored.

> Up the coast, there wasn't only spring salmon. They were getting all kinds of halibut, cod fish - plenty of everything.[21]

> The fish was just thick then. You can walk on it it's so thick.[22]

> There was so many fish those days; you couldn't fish them out because there was all kinds of fish.[23]

> The Haida people have depended upon the shellfish fishery for over 4000 years. During periods when the salmon run did not materialize or during times of depression the shellfish harvest sustained the villages and kept the Haida people healthy and strong. The importance of shellfish to the Haida people can be attested by the numbers of clam shells to be found at all the old village sites.[24]

This availability and abundance of fish and seafood accounted for the large populations of aboriginal peoples along the coast, and its importance was reflected in almost every aspect of their lives. As Stewart (1977) notes, "fish, and the salmon in particular, was not only a vital food for sustenance but also a major influence on the lifestyle and well being of Indian people" (p.10). Aboriginal villages were located along the edge of the coast, houses faced the water, and canoes, the central means of transport for a maritime based people, lined the beaches. Techniques for gathering and preserving fish allowed for large communities to form, and the

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[21] A comment made by a Haida elder.

[22] Again, this comment was made by a Haida elder who had lived his entire life in Masset. Describing himself, he said "I'm 85 years old now, so I knew everything that went on in my time. I was born here, in 1906".

[23] Again, this comment was made a part of a submission to the Sports Fishing Commission (1990).

[24] A Haida fishing person noted this fact in a letter he wrote to the DFO in 1985 which he shared with me.

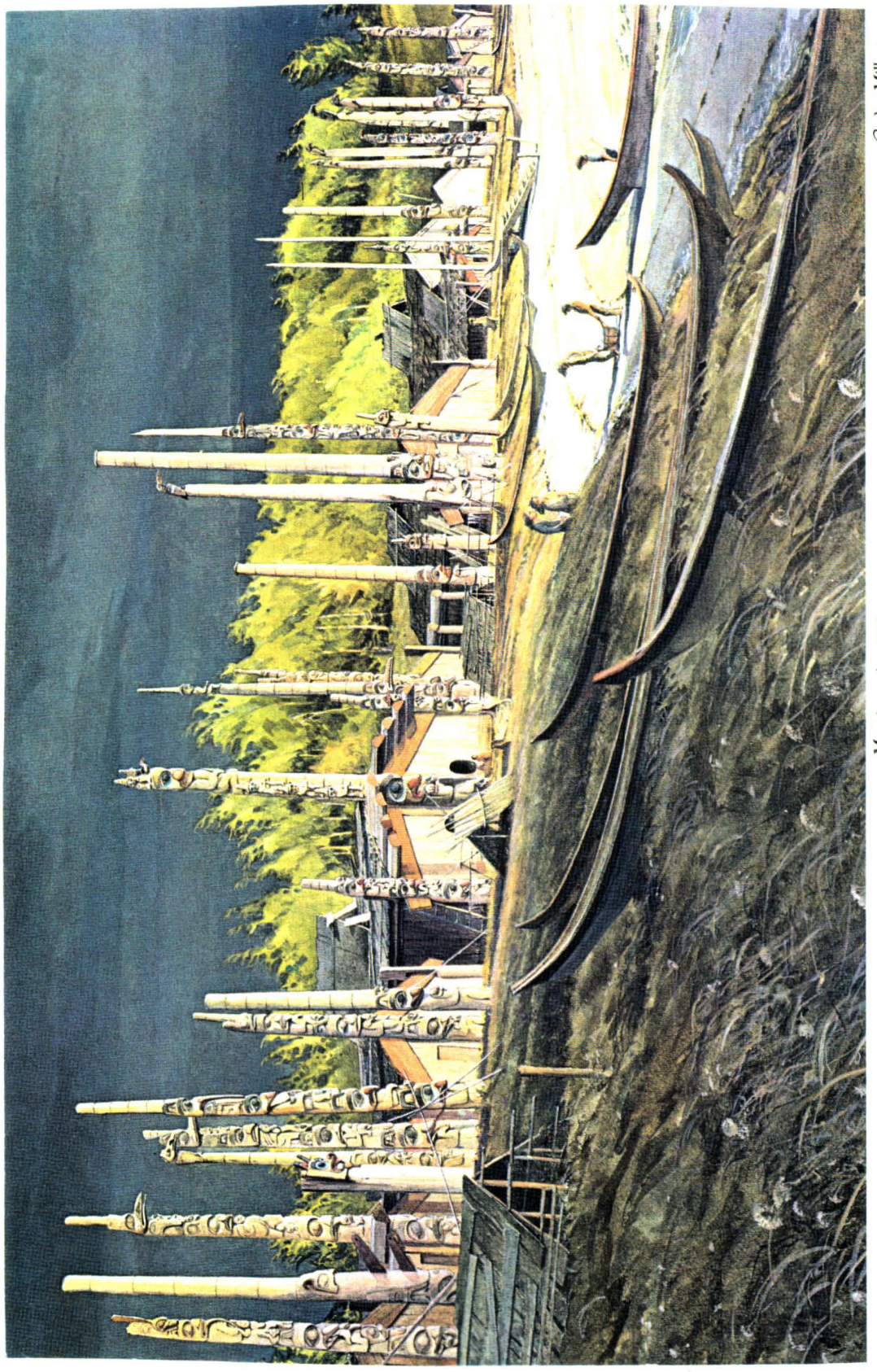

Figure 10 Masset - circa 1876

F.W.E. Enterprises Ltd.

abundance and reliability of fish resources replaced agriculture as the basis for complex societies (McMillan, 1988). According to McKervill (1967), a reasonable estimate of the aboriginal population of what is now B.C. before contact is 80 000, a high population density for North America and representing approximately 40 percent of the total aboriginal population of Canada. McKervill also suggests that the obvious reason for this concentration of people was the accessibility of food.

In Haida Gwaii, the abundance of the resource allowed the development of a relatively dense, somewhat sedentary population, with permanent settlements. Villages were often located near good fishing spots, but the great canoes for which the Haida are famous allowed flexibility in village locations, and the entire coastline of Haida Gwaii was occupied at one time or another.

The North Island region was one of the most important traditional fishing spots. This area is an important salmon migration route, and this fishing spot has been a favourite location of the Haida for centuries. Kiusta, one of the oldest and largest of the traditional village sites, is located in Parry Pass, adjacent to North Island on Graham Island.

> The whole village used to move down to North Island. At least 40 or 50 houses used to be down there. There used to be houses all over the place so there was room for everybody. We used to move from here in the first month of April, and most of them started going home at the end of September, but some families used to stay there later because there was no closed season in those days.[25]

> I fished around north island. My uncles took me out there. North Island fishing started early in the spring. It would go on into the late fall. There's a very late run of chinooks down there; they're black and they're really long and skinny. They get them right off Kiusta there, really late in the fall. They never stay there all the time. They'd move for the sockeye. Sockeye salmon starts around May; the first part of May they start trickling in, then it increases quite a bit.[26]

> The villages on the north island were permanent. People lived there all year round. Most of them were deteriorating by the time I remember. Kiusta was a big village there. There were many groups there.

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[25] Another comment made by a Haida elder during the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

[26] This statement and the following eight comments were all made by Haida elders describing the ways of the past and speaking about fishing traditions.

> We had a summer camp at Langara. As a child I used to go there when my parents gathered food.

But while sedentary villages like the ones at North Island existed, aboriginal peoples also moved with the fish, often making long trips to travel to their traditional fishing grounds. In the spring, summer and fall, entire families moved to where the fish were running where they set up temporary camps and, along with friends and relatives, gathered the fish (Stewart, 1977). The Haida also moved with the rhythm of the seasons, patterning their lives to match the seasonality of the fishing season. From March to November, the Haida dispersed to resource areas where they fished and gathered seaweed and shellfish (Blackman, 1982).[k] Summers, then, found the Haida scattered among a hundred or more temporary camps where food could be found in variety and abundance. Each family group claimed a certain beach where shellfish could be gathered, or a stream where fish could be netted, trapped or speared (Smyly and Smyly, 1973).

> People moved to wherever there was fresh fish. There were villages all over the island. The people didn't have just one house. They'd have houses around North Island and some in Naden Harbour - wherever they could go to have different kinds of fish, they'd build houses there.

> People would be down at Yakoun, then they'd move up to the North Island. Spring salmon and halibut there. There was better fishing in the summer there. Villages couldn't support you all year round so you had to move. The migration of people happened when I was young and before I was born.

And the Haida did not only move to follow the fish for harvesting reasons; constantly moving from one area to another was also one of the ways that the people conserved resources.

> The people pretty well spread out. Like any other thing, when there's a failure of any kind of fish the Haida would never take them. They'd move away. So the fish was never depleted. They knew once they cleaned it out there'd be no more return. That's something they themselves looked after.

> The North Island broke up in the olden days because there weren't enough food, when the tide went out. With people together they were eating it up. Things weren't growing at that time so the people, they said we have to go to Alaska. So that's where they went. There was more food over there. The North Island - there were too many villages on there; it couldn't support the people anymore. That was way, way before my time. Way before the white man came.

Traditionally, aboriginal people depended on the fish catch year round. Preserving the fish guaranteed a reserve of food for the winter, when the fish resource was not readily available and conditions for catching fish were not favourable (Stewart, 1977). There were almost as many ways of butchering and preserving fish as there were methods of catching them, but whatever

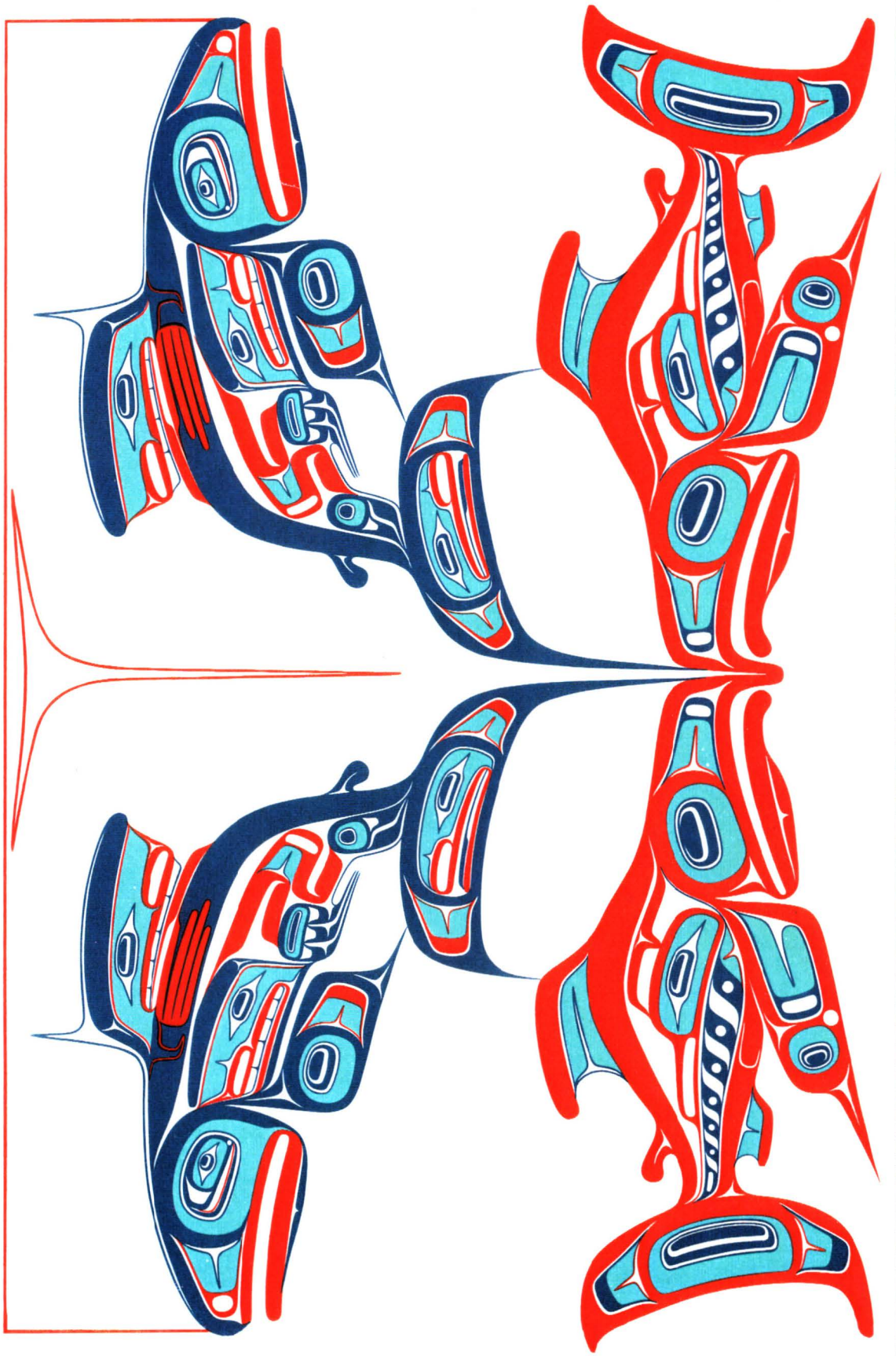

Figure 11 Every Year the Salmon Come Back

Potlatch Arts Ltd.

technique was used the result was dehydration of the fish so that it could be kept over a long period of time.[1] Among almost all aboriginal groups, men were responsible for the catching of the fisheries resource, but credit for the provision of a dependable food supply did not rest solely with them, for it was the women who stored and preserved what was caught. The ability of women to process fish was of considerable importance to the Haida, and a woman adept at slicing and drying fish was greatly admired for her skills. In fact, preservation of fish enabled aboriginal people to thrive along the coast, for the ability to catch a great deal of food at one time would have been of little use without the ability to preserve it for future times of need, and the limitations on the number of salmon a household could store for winter supplies depended less on the amount of fish the men could catch than it did on the ability of the women to clean, slice and dry them (Blackman, 1982). While the men often fished through long nights when the fish were running at their best, women also laboured long hours to clean and cut the fish individually, hang the butchered fish, tend drying racks, watch over fires in the smokehouse, turn the fish at the correct time, and take the fish down when they were properly cured. Women also stacked the dried fish, loaded boxes and baskets, and kept a constant check on stored fish to ensure that it did not spoil (Stewart, 1977).

> People would catch salmon and store it and eat it in the winter. It was real important. Fish was our staple food on this island before the white man came. And the seals. And the whales. They were really important to us.
>
> Everybody used to go fishing and dry and smoke fish. It was one of our food staples - salmon, halibut. We preserved it for the winter.
>
> I grew up by my grandmother. We used to be up at the Yakoun River every spring and summer, drying fish.[27]

The Fisheries Resource and Aboriginal Culture

> Nothing that the Indian of this region eats is regarded by him [sic] as mere food and nothing more. Not a single plant, animal or fish, or other object upon which he [sic] feeds himself, is looked upon in this light, or as something he has secured for himself by his own wit or skill. He [sic] regards it as something which has been voluntarily and compassionately placed in his hands by the good will and consent of the "spirit" of the object itself, or by the intercession and

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[27] This Haida woman was quoted by Nelson (1990).

> magic of his cultural heroes, to be retained and used by him only upon the fulfilment of certain conditions (Tout, 1905).[28]

The accessibility of the rich fisheries resource and the availability of a stable food source year round also allowed aboriginal peoples along the coast to establish a rich and complex culture. For the Haida, too, the fisheries resource sufficiently fulfilled their subsistence needs, allowing the people to develop arts, crafts, and sophisticated social institutions. The great social and cultural importance of the fish was also indicated by the central role it often played in traditions and art (Pearse, 1982). Many myths, songs, and ceremonies were based on some aspect of the sea or rivers, the underwater world or characteristics of the fish (Stewart, 1977), and creatures of the sea were commonly used as family crests, carved into bowls, painted on possessions, tattooed on the body, and incorporated into the very pattern of life.

Also, as McKervill (1967) notes, the history of the northcoast aboriginal peoples is firmly planted on the rugged shores of what is now British Columbia, and as such their relationship to the fish is "historical, cultural, and spiritual. It is intimate, far from the crass commercialism of the white man" (p. 147). To aboriginal peoples of the northwest coast, all living things were endowed with a conscious spirit and could present themselves in abundance or not at all (Stewart, 1977). Throughout the region, then, ceremonies served to affirm the peoples' relationship with the fish, which was believed to be a supernatural being with eternal life which lived in a large house far under the Pacific Ocean (Gerber, 1989). It was believed that in the spring the beings put on a salmon disguise and offered themselves to humans as food. However, they would return to the fishing sites only if they were treated with proper respect. The spirit of the creature to be harvested was appealed to in some way, perhaps through a simple prayer or in a more complex ceremony, to show humility and gratitude on the part of the human. The first salmon caught each year or the opening of the season in general was particularly honoured by aboriginal groups along the coast. These ceremonies were occasions of joy and renewal, and a reminder of the cyclical pattern in nature and the interdependence of all things (Stewart, 1977).

Among the Haida, the first salmon of the season was also celebrated; a Boy Shaman would carry the first salmon to shore, where it would be cleaned, then brought back to the river

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[28] Charles Hill Tout was a researcher of aboriginal people who wrote in the early 1900's. This passage was cited in Stewart (1977).

resource and distribution of the fish were regulated through the societal structure. Property rights to fish were generally vested in a kin-based pattern of inheritance, with certain groups within aboriginal communities owning the most advantageous fishing sites. The head of each group had first rights of access, and had the power to regulate the access of other people to the resource, ideally ensuring equity as well as conservation. These rights, however, were accompanied by an obligation to distribute fish at ceremonial feasts, or potlatches, and an individual's personal status was largely a function of the redistribution of resources through these gatherings (Pinkerton, 1987). The Haida held their potlatches in the winter months, when they remained in the permanent villages and were not as involved in the harvest of the resources (Blackman, 1989).

> Potlatches were called for by the higher ups. It's a big thing. Sometimes they lasted two days. It took a long time. People didn't celebrate the salmon season. When they left here in the olden days they worried about packing, and getting down there. They thought highly of the salmon, and all the food - sockeye, halibut, spring salmon ... They did have celebrations in the winter time. Then they made crests and totem poles. The religion also showed that the people appreciate what they have gotten from the earth.[29]

> When we were first put on Haida Gwaii, our home, we weren't put here alone. We were put here with the great swimmers, the salmon; with the forests, the oceans, the birds. And we were given instructions to live with respect for the equality of all of us, and to give thanks for what we took, and to restore the balance.[30]

> Don't make fun of a dead fish, kick it around. A fish can't be laughed at.[31]

> The fish and the people were all part of a societal structure. The regulations were based on respect - respect that came from depending on those fish. Even though there weren't specific ceremonies or anything like that, respect was shown and thanks was given to the powers that brought them in the winter ceremonies. It wasn't that they were neglecting them; it's just that that was the time to fish, and the time to celebrate was in the winter. It was all tied in with the whole societal structure. But it was also very rigid and effective.[32]

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[29] A comment made by a Haida elder.

[30] This comment was made by a Haida in an interview for an article by Anne Mayhew regarding the possibility of mining near the Yakoun River. The article was published in Beautiful British Columbia Magazine, Fall 1990.

[31] This quote from a Haida elder is also found in Mayhew (1990).

[32] This comment was made by a younger Haida person, explaining what he understood to be

Indeed, the Haida people maintain that they managed the fish long before contact, largely through informal but effective management strategies. Since fish were the primary means of survival, aboriginal people viewed with reverence the runs and catches of salmon and other fish (Pearse, 1982). In general, like most people whose lives depend on a resource and who live in such close proximity to their surroundings, the Haida learned not to waste any of the fish, or indeed any other resources, and their great knowledge of the fish and their habits allowed them to develop very successful management schemes.[m]

> The Haidas - the whole people used to know where the fish used to hatch, when they swim away from there, and they come back to the same place. That's what the old people used to say. They knew what they were talking about.[33]

> The Haida used to regulate how the fish were used. They became aware that stocks were becoming low by experience. Then they'd move to some other place. I don't remember people abusing it. It never got depleted. Everybody appreciated it very much. It was valued for food purposes. Everyone could fish; it was open to everybody. There was no ownership to it; it was the Haida that owned it. I never heard anybody claim it.[34]

> Your fish and clams and all the food you could get - you could never buy it in the old days. So you never waste it; you never waste even a little bit of it. You never throw it away - you got to give it to someone else, all the time. It was more cooperative.

> And they were always telling each other not to waste. That was the main thing. Although everybody knew it they'd continue telling one another just to remind each other not to waste. If you've got too much fish, don't waste it.

> The Haida were competent fishermen [sic]. And they knew never to waste. The Haida tradition was to take what you can use and never more, and if you do and you find that you have too much you must give it away. Always take only what you need.[35]

Haida tradition based on what elders had passed on through stories and teachings.

[33] This comment was again made during the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

[34] The next three comments were made by Haida elders.

[35] This comment and the next were made to me in a conversation I had with a Haida man at lunch one day. He no longer fishes regularly now, but he explained that "I was a fisherman for 42 years, since I was six years old. I will always be a fisherman, and you can never know what it is to be a fisherman unless you live it. I lived through storms, and I almost died twice. Once I came home after a storm and my family said "oh, you're alive". That was my life. My father

> In the older days there was no specific quota system because one wasn't necessary. There was no commercial fishing at that time, and fish were plentiful. As long as the Haida people used it our fishery never diminished.

The Haida not only used the fish they caught for food; it was also crucial in their trading with other tribes along the northwest coast. Aboriginal social systems in British Columbia drew no distinction between food fishing and commercial fishing, and the sale or trade of fish was an integral part of aboriginal life throughout British Columbia (Storrow and Morellato, 1990). Properly dried and smoked, a catch could be kept up to two years and could be used as currency for bartering in the vigorous trade along the coast (McKervill, 1967). Fish was traded between tribes, and during the early years of contact with European arrivals, the aboriginal system of fish exchange remained intact and was simply extended to include Hudson's Bay posts and forts (Pinkerton, 1987). In fact, early forts, trading posts, and industrial sites were strategically located so that they were near aboriginal communities because they depended on aboriginal groups as suppliers of fish and other commodities, and aboriginal people were encouraged to barter food stuffs for manufactured goods (Pearse, 1982; Pinkerton, 1987). Indeed, according to McKervill (1967) in the early years of settlement along the northwest coast about one-third of the Hudson's Bay Company's annual expense in western trade went for purchasing salmon or other fish, or for paying aboriginal people for their services as fishing people.

> The salmon caught up at North Island was partly for food and partly for sale.[36]

> Before my time, fish were traded, especially halibut. Dried halibut - the Haida were famous for that, over the whole coast. That's quite a delicacy, even now. We trade for maybe oolichan grease, or smoked oolichans - stuff that we don't get here much. We'd trade back and forth. All the species were traded with the mainland. They had to bargain for everything. Salmon was something that all the tribes got in abundance; it was traded but everybody had it also. But the halibut - that was something that they didn't get much of over there. And the seaweed on the island here were the best. They got seaweed over there, but not the same that we have here. North Island has the best seaweed, so these seaweeds were dried and they were traded over there.

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was a fisherman, and so was my grandfather."

[36] This and the following comment were made by Haida elders.

> I remember the big boxes of dried fish our mom and dad used to bring down. They used to trade it for things like grease and soapberries with our brothers and sisters in the mainland.[37]

Traditional Fishing Methods

> "There is little in the art of fishing we can teach these Indians" (Niblack, 1885).[38]

In spite of the abundance of fish, however, aboriginal peoples had to demonstrate a great deal of knowledge, skill, and dedication to harvest the resource, and they devised a variety of methods, adapting their technology to the different species sought and the physical setting (Pearse, 1982). According to McMillan (1988), compared to other fishing and hunting cultures, the aboriginal peoples of the northwest coast developed the most advanced technology for securing and preserving fish. They had, after all, been fishing for almost 8000 years, had made intensive use of fish for approximately 4000 years, and had made use of preservation methods for at least 2000 years. Stewart (1977), in her study of the fishing gear and techniques employed by various northwest coast aboriginal groups, "marvelled at the years of accumulated experience required to produce a hook, spear, net or trap that was exactly right for the fish and the environment in which it was taken", and she was "impressed by the skill of the fisherman [sic] in using his [sic] gear".[n]

Aboriginal people were expert fishers with lines, and over thousands of years of depending on the fisheries resource for survival, aboriginal peoples designed and perfected fish hooks and their accessories - baits, lures, sinkers, floats, and lines - for fish of various sizes, habitats, characteristics and behaviour (Stewart, 1977). Hooks were fashioned from bone, hardwood or sometimes stone, and their manufacture demonstrated a wide range of ideas and techniques (Drew, 1982). The hooks were attached to lines made from a variety of materials.

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[37] Again, I did not speak to the Haida elder who recalled these things; her words were recorded by Nelson (1990).

[38] Albert Niblack wrote a report for the U.S. National Museum after a survey of northern British Columbia in 1884. He was cited in Stewart, (1977). Stewart notes many instances when early European visitors to the northwest coast commented on the skill of the aboriginal fishing people, who often supplied the newcomers with fish when their own attempts to fish had failed.

Bull kelp was ideally suited and most commonly used, the solid part of the stem being soaked, stretched and twisted for strength, and then knotted together to provide a long length, but cedar bark or nettle fibre were also used to make fishing lines along the coast. Sinkers were fashioned from small pebbles and hefty rocks, and then used for a number of purposes. With hook and line, sinkers could weigh a net down and hold it taut, they could be used as anchors to maintain an item of fishing gear in position under water, or in clusters sinkers were used to anchor a canoe and its crew. Lures were developed and used in ways which reflected close observation and intimate knowledge of marine life. Willow slivers carved in a fish shape were effective lures, uncarved willow in long strings attached to nets attracted fish by glimmering in the water, and pieces of abalone glittered in the sunlight, catching the attention of passing fish. Floats, used to hold up and mark lines and hooks and to support the edges of fishing nets, were frequently carved from wood to represent a variety of creatures, reflecting the characteristic practice of aboriginal people of making even simple utilitarian objects items of beauty (Stewart, 1977).

In addition to line fishing, other methods were also developed to efficiently collect fish from different environments and in almost any conditions. Spears and harpoons were commonly used; the people learned to thrust the spear with enough power to impale the fish but not to break the gear if they missed, and they learned to judge the depth of water and the speed of swimming with remarkable skill (Stewart, 1977). Spears and harpoons were generally used in rivers, with different types designed for different river conditions, but they were also used in bays and inlets, and areas not easily accessible by canoe. In earlier times, before herring runs were depleted by overfishing, people harvested herring by running a rake through the schools of fish to impale them. This method was used extensively along the coast; with long shafts of wood with hardwood or bone teeth set into one end, the men would sweep the rake through the water while the women paddled the canoes in the opposite direction to increase the force of the rake through the water. Early observers record with astonishment how quickly those adept at this type of fishing could fill their canoes (McMillan, 1988).

> We have only one river on this end of the island that the chinooks go in. That's the Yakoun. On the right hand side going up, the side the chinooks go up, people controlled that side of the river. They were famous for spearing the chinooks. It was very important to the people and the people around them. The water's so black you wonder how they would see the fish to use spears. These guys never missed with their spears.[39]

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[39] This and the following comment were made by a Haida elder describing traditional fishing

> Hand trolling for herring - that was something. All you'd use was a stick. They had a long stick with lots of little things sticking out on it, and you'd go over it slow until you saw them down there. Then the needles got them.

Of course, nets were also used, and as with the other techniques aboriginal people developed a great many different types and styles for harvesting fish (Gerber, 1989). Many of the nets were attached to a frame so that they could be used to scoop out fish grouped into schools or in a trap or dam, gill nets and seine nets were used, with sinkers and floats keeping them in position, and nets were also dragged behind canoes to harvest schools of fish. A material commonly used to produce the nets was stinging nettle, which could be cut, split, dried, peeled, beaten, shredded and spun into a twine of great strength (Stewart, 1977). Nets were generally made by hand, with the size of the mesh formed according to the species of fish to be caught. In addition to nets, traps and weirs, perhaps the most productive of any of the fishing devices, were also developed and used all along the coast when fish runs were at their peak (Gerber, 1989). Weirs - fences through which the water flows - were built either across a shallow river or angled to guide fish into traps. The traps were either removable types, made with sticks and lashing and basket like, or were structures built right into the river bed. Variations of traps depended on the species of fish being harvested, the type of environment, the building materials available, and the culture of the people. According to Stewart (1977), the variety of traps and weirs again demonstrates aboriginal peoples' detailed observation of marine life, and the ingenuity they demonstrated in harvesting the resources available to them.

According to the Haida tradition, uncles would teach their nephews the fishing traditions based on their years of fishing experience and the knowledge which had been passed to them from generations before.

> My uncles taught me to do things the Haida way. I was the nephew, so they took turns taking me out fishing. I was five years old. They talked about fishing all the time by me so I could pick it up. The fathers would also teach you, but not as much as the uncles would. They teach you hunting, and how to survive. That's what they teach mostly - how to survive. That was the main thing.[40]

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methods.

[40] Another comment made by a Haida elder, who described himself by saying "I was born a fisherman. It's what I've done all my life".

> I think I was about 5 when I first started to fish for salmon with my uncle. Later on, two or three years afterward, I went crab fishing and trapping alot. They took us to do that to learn. They'd take me out for a week.[41]

> After that our uncles showed us quite a bit. They used to take us up rivers, showing us how to use the net and how to pull the fish out of the net. Dog salmon, sockeye, coho. We never had the experience of catching a spring until later on as we got quite a bit older - 14 or 15. But we'd go up rivers all the time and get sockeye and coho. As we learned more and more about it we'd go up to the rivers on our own.[42]

But while nephews were taught the fishing techniques, in the traditional system both husband as captor and wife as processor had use rights over the fish (Pinkerton, 1987). As previously mentioned, the men generally caught the fish, but the women butchered and preserved them,[o] and both Haida men and women were active in the trade of fish and were regarded as owners of the processed resource.[p] Clam digging and the use of the "digging stick" for the collection of most shellfish was largely a woman's activity (Blackman, 1982). Villages built upon layers of huge shell middens - piles of crushed clam and mussel shells - are ample testimony to their industry (McMillan, 1988). And while collecting shellfish and cooking were sometimes performed by either or both sexes, both of these activities were again largely performed by women.

But all of this was to change for the Haida, and indeed for all aboriginal peoples along the northwest coast. For centuries, they had fished for food and for trade among themselves. After contact, however, the population of what is now British Columbia grew steadily, putting great pressure on the fisheries resource. According to McKervill (1967, p 27):

> Gone were the quiet days. Now the great schools of salmon, which for countless generations had survived against the vicissitudes of nature and the persistent but economical fishing of the Indians [sic] - were to be subjected to the tactics of money makers who plundered the stocks with little regard for the future, not necessarily because they did not care about the future (though obviously many did not) but because they believed the fantastic runs to be inexhaustible.

The fishing industry began, drastically changing the way of life for aboriginal peoples.

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[41] Ibid.

[42] In a conversation I had with Haida men who now own boats and are in the fishing industry, they demonstrated to me that the Haida tradition of uncles teaching their nephews continues today.

Early Participation in the Fishing Industry

The Haida were involved in the commercial fishery from the outset of the industry's development. They fished for canneries in the infancy of the industry, before other people came to take part (McKervill, 1967). When the modern fishery developed in the last century, aboriginal peoples adapted to the new technology much more readily than they had to other industries (Pearse, 1982). Many aboriginal people made the transition to a competitive industry and went on to become among the finest fishing people on the coast. Within a few generations, many learned to accommodate themselves to the new world of money, machines, licensing, property and regulations (McKervill, 1967). In fact, through all of the dislocation and adjustments caused by the imposition of non-aboriginal society, involvement in the fishery was essential for the retention of aboriginal identity and self-respect (Pearse, 1982). Participation in the fishing industry allowed aboriginal people to continue to live and work by the sea, and the work was more compatible with their traditional way of life than were other industries.

> The commercial fishing used to be really important. That was the only way to get money, to buy flour and sugar. It was about the only source of income.[43]

> I'm 77 years old now, and I was around five years old when they got gas boats. There were close to 70 gas boats, that trolled up there. They were there to fish chinook for the commercial fisheries. They did that for many years. Later on years the boats got kind of scarce.

> I started commercial fishing on my own when I was about 27 or 28 years old. That's when I first got myself a row boat and we'd go hand trolling. The hand trollers down there, around North Island, they used to always come up to 200 boats. That was when I was around 14 or 15. If the fish was running good, it took about 1 week to load them up. Sometimes the hand trollers alone would load the packer up. My biggest day was 200 pounds. Some other guys, they were getting 3 or 4 hundred a day.

> There's good halibut by the North Island. They were thick there. We used to pull the halibut by hand when we used the small boats. Alot of us had small jigger boats - like 14 footers. Then we got bigger boats. We fished alot of small boats and we did real well - all of us did. We'd go fishing at Yakoun Point. Once one guy stayed out there until after dark and he had 800 pounds on that little boat. It was unbelievable.

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[43] This and the following six comments were made by Haida elders describing the past.

> They'd sell fish they caught at North Island. They'd sell everything. They sold the halibut and got 2 cents a pound. But they quit buying halibut when the big boats started catching it, too. We sold the fish right at North Island. There were packers there.

When fish processing became industrialized and canning operations on the Pacific coast increased, the canning operators relied on aboriginal fishing people and shoreworkers as a seasonally available labour force for the plants, which were often located in isolated sites along the coast (Pinkerton, 1987). In particular, the cannery operations relied most heavily on aboriginal women as a source of labour. As in the past, the men continued to be primarily responsible for the catch of the product, and the women did most of the processing. The Haida also worked in the canneries all summer, following their tradition of moving in the summer months, this time to travel up and down the coast and over to Alaska to work in the canneries there (Blackman, 1982). Later, the first fish processing plant was established on Haida Gwaii in the 1870s, and continued to be a minor industry for years. The development of cold storage and processing plants began in earnest in the early 1900s and continued well into the middle of the twentieth century (McKay, 1953).

> And later on we started canning it; we were more modern. Canning started when I was pretty small, around the thirties.

> There were independent packers in those days. There was cold storage in Rupert. I don't know what company owned it, but they had boats there. There were lots of independent packers. When the fish was running good the fish packers would come here.

Boat Building

In addition to fishing, the Haida also have a very rich tradition of boat building. The Haida generally used yellow cedar or fir to build boats by hand, with techniques and knowledge passed down through generations of elders. There was no charge to the fishing people for the boats or to the companies they delivered their fish to; all that was required was the building materials (Native Voice, 1980). Between 1929 and 1952, seventeen boats were built in Masset, all without government assistance.

> My uncle built a schooner here, when I was real small. Eventually they put an engine on it and it fished North Island.[44]
>
> Each family built their own boats through hard work.[45]

Aboriginal peoples worked hard, but as the numbers of participants in the industry grew and pressure on the resource increased, aboriginal peoples were gradually displaced from the fishing industry.

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[44] A comment made by a Haida elder.

[45] This comment was made to me by a Haida elder, who told me that his experience in fishing and that of his father was substantial; "I used to fish with my dad. He was born a fisherman. He used to work at a cannery at Naden Harbour later. My dad was born to fish".

> Once the Indians [sic] of the coast knew no want. Their camps and villages were planted on the fertile waterways that brought food to their feasting bowls. Then came the white man buying fish and blankets and beads, plundering the runs and teaching the natives to do the same, destroying wherever he went. When it was almost too late we decided that regulations ought to be imposed to conserve the salmon. The Indian was to be allowed his ancestral rights to fish for food. But gradually, insidiously, the spectre of White law encroached upon these rights. ... In a sense all of this was necessary, for in some regions whole runs of salmon have been obliterated as a result of indiscriminate fishing. Nevertheless, is seems unfair that the coastal Indian, who has little or no opportunity of entry into other industries, and who still depends in large measure upon the salmon for his [sic] winter food supply should have to bear the privation which results from the white man's invasion of the coast (McKervill, 1967, p. 145).

Commercial Fishing

The need to control the expansion of fishing has been recognized by some observers of the industry for centuries (Pearse, 1982) and in 1877, in response to increases in the commercial fishing and canning industries, Parliament enacted the Fisheries Act. No specific mention of aboriginal participation in the commercial fishery was included, but these regulations clearly affected aboriginal communities since all net salmon fishing on the fresh waters on B.C. was effectively prohibited. The federal fisheries authorities did give directions soon after the release of the regulations that "the Indian population should not be interfered with, save in cases of abuse, while fishing in their customary way" (Storrow and Morellato, 1990). But aboriginal fishing rights were interfered with from that early date. When commercial fishing began in British Columbia, the canneries tended to take the earlier salmon runs, leaving the later, less commercially valued fish to the aboriginal people, who prized these for drying (Pinkerton, 1987). Also, as commercial canning operations expanded from nine canneries in 1880 to sixty-four in 1900, the canning operators increasingly sought fish stocks and fishing sites on which aboriginal people depended, and fisheries inspectors and government agents generally showed more sensitivity to the pressure from cannery operators than they did to aboriginal fishing rights or the cultural importance of fishing to aboriginal peoples (Pinkerton, 1987).

The continual expansion of the fishing industry eventually imposed many difficulties on all users of the resource and it began to threaten the fish stocks of the northwest coast. In 1968 the Minister of Fisheries announced an innovative program to control the salmon fleet through

a system of restrictive licensing of vessels (Pearse, 1982). This program, named the Davis Plan for the minister at the time, was designed to prevent further fleet expansion and to subsequently reduce its size. Prior to this entry limitation in the salmon fishery, only one licence was required to engage in commercial fishing on the west coast, and this licence entitled an operator to fish all species (DFO, 1990). With the Davis Plan and the introduction of a salmon licence, all non-salmon fishing people were limited to fishing all species except salmon, while the salmon licence holder still maintained the privilege to fish for any other species as well. The Davis Plan included four phases: i) freezing the number of vessels by licensing only those which could demonstrate a significant dependence on the salmon resource; ii) reducing the fleet through the purchase and retirement of excess vessels; iii) imposing vessel standards and implementing provisions dealing with product quality; and iv) to deal with the fleet's structure (this final phase was never pursued), reducing some of the restrictions on the reduced fleet. Although initially successful in reducing the size of the fleet and improving the quality and efficiency, this system of restrictive licensing did not reduce the capacity of the fisheries. Investment in fishing continued and the fleet, already too large, continued to grow (Pearse, 1982). Despite its failure, however, as concern developed about overfishing of other species, the basic form of the Davis Plan was eventually extended to other fisheries on the northwest coast, and today restrictive licences exist for a number of other fisheries. (See appendix 3 for a guide to existing fishing licence categories).

Food Fishing

Until the late nineteenth century, there was no distinction between food fishing and commercial fishing, and no restrictions on aboriginal fishing of either use of the fisheries resource existed. When the Fisheries Act was introduced in 1877, the issue of aboriginal food fishing was addressed for the first time, their use of the resource was acknowledged, and licences were issued to aboriginal people which would allow them to catch fish for their own sustenance. Special recognition was continually given to aboriginal food fishing over the ensuing decades, but aboriginal fishing rights were still interfered with. In fact, soon after the Fisheries Act, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) implemented schedules for openings of small streams,[q] and fishing was further restricted when fisheries policy changed in 1888 with the enactment of regulations which dealt specifically with the Indian fishery. At that time, new

regulations were introduced which prescribed that Indians could only fish for food purposes by "means other than with drift nets or spearing", and the "sale, barter or traffic" of fish was prohibited, as the act was amended to read:

> Fishing by means of nets or any other fishing apparatus whatever for any kind of fishing without licence from the Ministry of Marine and Fisheries is prohibited in any of the waters of the province of British Columbia, (a) provided always that Indians may, at any time, with the permission of the Inspector of Fisheries, catch fish for the purpose of providing food for themselves and their families, for no other purpose, but no Indian shall spear, trap or pen fish on their spawning grounds, nor catch them during the close season or in any place leased or set apart from the natural or artificial propagation of fish, or any other place otherwise specifically reserved..." (cited in Storrow and Morellato, 1990).

The licence requirement was also reinforced by regulations enacted in 1910 which provided that the fisheries authorities could fix the area and time of fishing activities as well as the gear to be used. In 1917, rules were again imposed which further restricted aboriginal fishing, including a clause against aboriginal people found selling fish and a provision which made it an offence to buy fish caught under a food permit (Storrow and Morellato, 1990). Permits are still required for aboriginal food fishing, and the barter or sale of fish by aboriginal peoples is prohibited unless sanctioned by commercial licences (Storrow and Morellato, 1990). Licences now specify the area, the gear, and the time of fishing and, beginning in 1981, new regulations require some permits to specify the species and quantity of fish which can be taken.

The development of federal regulations of both food and commercial fishing marks a distinct departure from the traditional use of the fisheries resource by aboriginal peoples. The restrictions corresponded with the growth of the commercial fishing industry, and aboriginal customs and use were not the criteria used to draw the distinction between aboriginal food fishing and fishing for commercial purposes (Storrow and Morellato, 1990). Also, the system as it exists offers little if any security to aboriginal peoples over their claim to fishing resources, and the increasingly stringent regulations of fisheries during the course of the last century has been regarded by aboriginal people as an unfair interference with their aboriginal rights, their cultural traditions and their livelihood (Storrow and Morellato, 1990). According to McKay (1977, p. 4-45), "if one considers the status of [aboriginal peoples] in the salmon fishery in its pre-commercial period, it is not difficult to understand why fisheries' regulations, which curtailed their freedom, were not well received". Current department policy is often perceived by

aboriginal people as a denial of their historical heritage in the fisheries. Further, the regulatory system, which functions primarily in the absence of aboriginal consultation or consent, denotes the conferral of a privilege rather than the affirmation of a traditional right to fish.

Results of the Regulations and Fisheries Policy

The increasing regulation of the fishing industry, despite efforts to prevent it, has tended to eliminate aboriginal people from the commercial fishing industry in B.C. As McKervill (1967) notes, in 1883 there were 3084 fishing people in British Columbia, almost all of them aboriginal people; by 1962 the number of fishing people had increased to over 16 000 with a little over 2 300 being aboriginal. One of the reasons that there are not as many aboriginal people in the industry today is that they have been regulated out of the industry over time and, as a result of licensing and financing policies, aboriginal peoples have experienced a declining involvement in some fisheries, they have been completely shut out of others, and aboriginal crew employment has declined (Native Brotherhood, 1989). During the 1920's and 1930's, aboriginal fishing people were displaced by a trend toward larger, costlier vessels owned by large companies (Pearse, 1982). According to Storrow (1990), "native peoples were the biggest movers and shakers in the province of B.C. initially in the fishing industry, and now they certainly aren't".

This is undeniably true for the Haida people. Once heavily involved in the fishing industry, they have now been almost entirely eliminated from the trade. Boat building, once common, became impractical in the 1960's and 1970's because of the economics of fishing and financing (Stearns, 1981). Further, the Haida boats which were built in the 1930's and 1940's were almost all lost in the following two or three decades. To a large extent, the Haida people blame the loss of their boats on exploitation by large companies. According to a report in Native Voice (1980), the owners of the Haida boats were convinced by an executive of Nelson Brothers Fishing Company to fish for his company. Later, in 1953 - 1954, the management of the Port Edward Cannery gained possession of the seine boats owned by Haida people by simply firing the captain, who was the owner of the vessel, and taking over the boat. There was no monetary compensation to the vessel owners, and "it was a terrible loss to the Haida fishermen [sic] as with the Haida village. At this stage their pride and dignity were taken away from them" (Native Voice, 1980). The loss of the seine boats put 100 fishing people out of the fishing industry and as a result they had to travel to Alaska to participate in the fishing industry; today, the boats that

were lost are selling for $275 000 and up, and the boat builders never received any compensation for the vessels (Native Voice, 1980).

One of the most common ways that the Haida lost their vessels was through problems with credit and lending agencies. In the early years of the fishing industry, the Haida were new to the system of interest rates and financing, and the individuals I spoke with suggested that the people were taken advantage of because of their lack of experience.

> In the 1950's, Haida people could not vote, and they couldn't hire legal council. The fishermen [sic] were generally uneducated, and it was relatively easy to take their boats. There were 28 seine boats in this village, but now there are none left.[46]

> In the 1950's, all of the Haida built boats were lost. Things were not explained to the Haida; they were given loans, but they didn't understand interest rates and they lost everything.[47]

> Everybody owned seine boats back then. They were selling fish to the canneries. They let the fishermen [sic] charge up bills when they were buying parts for boats, and the loans became worth more than the boats. The boats weren't worth that much, and the companies took our boats because they couldn't pay their bills. That happened with trollers, too. Everyone had built their own boats. My grandfather had 2 or 3 boats and they were all taken away. Now it is too expensive to build boats and we can't afford licences anyway. So few people are getting into the industry now. That's the way they eliminated them all. Now B.C. Packers owns all the boats we had. They took the licences off our boats and built huge boats. So even our boats are gone now. And it is too hard to get into that industry again. My dad had his own boat, too, but the company took that over because of all his bills. Now he says he won't be back in the industry unless he wins the 649.[48]

> There are very few boats left that the Haida control. There's a few seiners. Forty years ago there were about 70 little boats. At one time I counted about 26 or 27 seiners. Most of them were built here on the island in 1856 to 1958. They're still

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[46] A comment made in a conversation I had with a Haida fishing person.

[47] A comment made by a Haida who had lived in Masset her entire life and had witnessed the period when the Haida boats were being lost.

[48] This comment was made by a man I spoke to about the fishing tradition. He is not involved in commercial fishing, but his father and grandfather were, and he still food fishes when he has the time.

> around, but they belong to other people. But they were all built here. There were lots of seine boats in the olden days.[49]
>
> In the 1960's and 1970's there were alot of seine boats owned by the Haidas, then BC Packers took them all. My dad owned one, and he lost it. There were alot of boats built here by the Haida. They're still around, owned by other people now. The boat my dad owned now belongs to a guy in Rupert. He changed the name of the boat, because he figured the family would want to keep it. I don't think we'll ever own the same boat, because its expensive nowadays.

Some Haida, like other aboriginal peoples throughout British Columbia, were also forced out of the fishing industry because of developments in the fish processing sector. As McKay (1977) outlines, at one time there were numerous canneries located in remote regions of the B.C. coast, but closures of these small facilities began in the early 1940's because of the processing companies' attempts to recognize economies of scale through consolidation in major areas. In some of the communities where the processing plants had existed, people had rented small salmon gillnet vessels from the companies, and cannery closures displaced these people from participation in the fishing industry as many individuals were unable to raise the necessary capital to purchase the vessels. Also, many company owned rental boats were retired in 1971 and 1972 so that large, efficient boats could be introduced. Similarly, in years of poor fish runs the processing companies tightened up on loans to fishing people, and some individuals who were heavily indebted to the companies found the necessary operating capital to be unavailable. These individuals again had little recourse but to retire their vessels from the fishery (McKay, 1977).

There were also many other ways the Haida were eliminated from fishing and their boats were lost. One problem was the imposition of rigorous inspection standards (McKay, 1977). Many aboriginal vessels were in poor repair, and when criteria for vessel conditions were established it was not economically worthwhile to upgrade the vessel to meet the quality standard, resulting in a number of boats being sold for the value of the licence (Native Brotherhood, 1989). Also, it was (and is) particularly difficult for reserve residents to make it through difficult times in the fishery because there is no other source of income in remote areas to supplement the income for loan payments. As a result, there was a further loss of licences or vessels, either through voluntary or forced sales (a trend which continues today) (Native Brotherhood, 1989).

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[49] This comment and the one following were made by Haida elders.

In fact, many people also suggested to me that Haida boat owners were actually cheated out of much of what was their's.

> I heard that they took goods from Port Edward fish plant and various stores there, charged it to Haida people and took it to a logging camp, putting extra bills on Haida boats.[50]
>
> My dad used to be one of the best fishermen [sic] on the coast. He had the highest catch on the west coast for many years. And they still managed to juggle the figures for their favour. We had no recourse because we were too trusting and the laws never worked in our favour. They work for big corporations.
>
> They put used engines on Haida boats, charged them for new ones, and put the new ones on white men's boats. I heard that from a friend.
>
> This involves quite a few hundreds of thousands of dollars and alot of hard work. You start off in good faith, they wound up ripping us off of everything. So our people didn't want to build boats anymore.

Whatever the reason for the loss of boats from Haida control, the consequence of losing a vessel for an aboriginal person was (and is) significant. Without a vessel, the individual owner is precluded from participating in any fishery. For example, in 1974 the roe herring fishery became viable, but it was almost impossible for an individual to get involved and obtain a licence without a vessel. Again, in the 1970's other fisheries were being restricted and the lack of a vessel prevented many people from meeting the production requirement for receipt of a licence, there was little incentive to fight for a licence because without a boat the award of a licence had little value, and many people have been excluded from a number of fisheries since (Native Brotherhood, 1989).

The implementation of the Davis Plan also eliminated aboriginal people from fishing, and many people lost their licences when licence limitations came into effect. Aboriginal fishing people previously participated in many fisheries in far greater numbers than today, but many are now dispossessed of their licences (Native Brotherhood, 1989). There is a general consensus that aboriginal involvement in the fishing industry has been seriously eroded since the Davis Plan; participation in the commercial salmon fishery, for example, has declined from the operation of an estimated high of 30 - 35 percent of the fleet before licence limitation to the present operation

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[50] This and the following three comments were made by Haida elders.

Figure 13 Haida Boats Today

of about 20 percent of the salmon fleet (DFO, 1990; Cruikshank, 1991). After 1969, many processing companies were "morally suaded" to divest themselves of salmon vessels at a pace consistent with the general decline in the salmon fleet in order to maintain a consistent company owned share; but as many of the company boats were operated by aboriginal people, the effect of this fleet reduction was particularly felt by them (McKay, 1977). The Davis Plan and the introduction of the concept of licence limitations also created other problems, for "Indians [sic], particularly those in remote villages, did not understand the value of having a licence" (Native Brotherhood, 1989). In addition, the limited entry program increased the competitiveness of the fishing industry and inflated the operating and maintenance costs of fishing vessels (McKay, 1977). The result was that individuals were easy prey to economic forces and people willing to exploit them, and the sale of licences to non-aboriginal peoples during times of economic stress, retirement or other special circumstances was very common (Native Brotherhood, 1989).[r]

The extension of the Davis Plan to other fisheries has continued this trend of involuntary displacement. For example, the halibut fishery was limited in 1979 by the creation of the category L licence. At that time the Canadian quota was at an all time low and the high

production fleet from Alaska was returning to Canadian waters after being prohibited from fishing in American waters, and so arbitrary catch requirements were set as qualification for obtaining a restricted licence (set at 3000 pounds in 1977 or 1978). As a result, however, the following groups were faced with hardships: i) those who participated in the halibut fishery heavily before 1977 or 1978 but not as heavily in those years; ii) those who caught less than 3000 pounds although the catch was a significant percentage of their income; iii) those who caught 3000 pounds but did not sell it all commercially, and therefore were not within the guidelines. According to the Native Brotherhood (1989), "Indians [sic], particularly in remote areas, were closed out of the fishery by arbitrary regulations that did not recognize the reliance on halibut for a significant portion of their income". Also, there was an appeal system, but no effort was made to encourage unsophisticated parties in remote locations to apply, and aboriginal fishing people had little success with the appeal process. The halibut fishery has improved dramatically over the past eight years and revenue has increased by a factor of 10, but few aboriginal people have profited from this increase (Native Brotherhood, 1989). Similarly, when the A licence had several categories of fisheries removed, several fishing people were excluded from fisheries such as halibut, blackcod and geoduck (Native Brotherhood, 1989).

The Haida, then, argue that the limited entry policy has excluded many people from their communities from local fisheries, allowing the allocation or transfer of their licences to non-local fishing people. As Pinkerton (1989) notes, these objections parallel widespread agreement that the limited entry program tends to create an elite body of licence holders who may speculate in licences or otherwise capitalize the value of the licence, making it beyond the means of ordinary fishing people.

> The licensing system, which was instigated under the Davis Plan, has virtually eliminated our people from the fishery. At one time a native person could go in a small boat and catch and sell sufficient fish to maintain a livelihood. That right was taken away from him [sic] by the licensing plan and became a privilege, sold by the governments to those who knew how to survive in the white man's system.[51]
>
> Over the years, the "A" licence has been curtailed to such an extent that the "A" licence holder can no longer make a living.

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[51] This comment, and the one following, were made by a Haida fishing person in a letter he wrote to the DFO in 1985.

Before there were no licences. All the companies would come in and they'd sell to co-ops. In the sixties somewhere licences started coming in - B licence was a certain footage, and there was no A licence or B licence - you could fish salmon or halibut or anything you want as long as you had a B licence. I remember my uncle having a B licence, and then all of a sudden there was an A licence, and with an A licence you could fish crab and salmon, that was it. Then the L licence came into effect. The A licence at that time, you could fish halibut too. With B licence you could do anything. Then it started to get stickier and stickier. Then A licence you could catch crabs in bycatch. But then that was eliminated just a few years ago. 1979 - the L licence came into effect. That's when my uncle lost his, and alot of other people.[52]

In the 40's and 50's, you didn't need a license then. It was just companies that had never felt you managed. Everyone was new in the system of them buying fish, and buying it from you, and they were using people by making them charge up so much that they couldn't get out of debt, and once they got into debt they were booted out of the industry. Their way of scheming to buy up the licences - that's how it worked over the years, and that's how it still works today.

I lost my licence when I didn't fish it for a year. The halibut licence and the A licence too. I lost them both the same year. At that time, if you didn't fish it for a year you lost it. It's a little different now. Now there's all kinds of rules. I can

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[52] This comment, as well as the next three, were made during a meeting I held with several Haida fishing people. The group included men who had been in the fishing industry for a few years and men who were just getting started with their own boats. In terms of their experience and feelings about fishing, however, they described it as the only way of life they had ever wanted to live. They told me "that was our dream ever since we were little kids. Fishing together, we would go out on the raft, and we'd sit on the beach after and say some day we're going to be fishing and own our own boats. As we were watching boats go by, that's how we would talk - "one of these days we're going to get a boat, too". I always thought it was a fantasy, never going to come true. In terms of their experience with the fisheries resource the men told me that "we have been fishing since we were old enough to get on a boat. Since we were about five years old we have been setting nets outside our houses, and as we got older we began to go food fishing on our own. A couple of years later we started rowing across the rivers, getting our own food, and almost sinking on the way back. Skiffs no bigger than this table, I guess. Eight foot skiffs we used to have. We used to do alot of things. Alot of rowing. At that time there were outboards around, but we were too young to operate them. Nobody trusted us back then. All this stuff we used to sneak around to do. Row across to the other side of the inlet, setting up the skein, sometimes stealing somebody else's fishing gear. We'd catch dog fish, and slit them open to watch the young ones swim away, because they had yolks in them attached to the belly of the dogfish. Or else we'd cut the tails off to see if they could swim".
The man who made this comment also told me "there are only two people in the village with an A licence. I'm the only owner of an L licence. Now we're getting back into the mosquito fleet because of alot of work. There are six N licences, but the NNFC [Northern Native Fishing Association] owns them. There aren't any actual licence holders here other than myself ... I'm the last one."

> own a licence, but I don't have to fish it, I can lease it. In them days I guess they never heard of leasing.
>
> There were quite a bit of mosquito boats down here. Like this beach, right along the whole village would be full of little boats. Alot of guys would go out and do their halibut or crab or salmon. They were all eliminated.
>
> All those seine licences were so valuable and all white people have them. We're kept out of the industry.[53]

Aboriginal people were also eliminated from some sectors of the fishing industry when technology changed. McKervill (1967) notes that "gone is the lonely hand-liner", with simple equipment; trolling is now done with sophisticated vessels and expensive gear. Similarly, gillnetting has advanced from one or two people throwing a net over the stern, to an industry with nylon nets worth thousands of dollars run off the drums of high powered boats. To compete in the modern industry, a person needs a variety of equipment requiring great capital investment. This increase in expense has created problems for many fishing people.

Abalone, for example, used to be an extremely important resource in British Columbia, and particularly in Haida Gwaii where there is unusually productive abalone habitat. In the 1940's and 1950's over eighty percent of the abalone licences were issued to aboriginals. In the 1970's, however, the fishery underwent intense commercialization with new diving technologies, and aboriginal people no longer participated in this industry because the new technology was so different from traditional methods. Further, with the new technology, the resource was heavily over-utilized, and a licence limitation was imposed in 1976. But with little aboriginal participation in the fishery, of the twenty-seven licences issued none went to a Haida fishing person (indeed, not one was issued to any aboriginal person). As a result of the decreasing abundance of abalone and an increase in restrictions, the abalone catch from Haida Gwaii alone decreased from one and a quarter million pounds between 1976 and 1978 to just 400 000 pounds in the following six years in total (Richardson and Green, 1989). Today, the Haida people want to get back into the harvest of abalone, but resource stocks are still at an all time low and there is no indication that they will expand (Native Brotherhood, 1989). Thus, the Haida have been alienated from the resource, they must travel far from home to harvest it if they are able to at all, and their access to the resource, an aboriginal right, has been almost eliminated. Similarly,

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[53] This comment was made to me by a Haida elder.

geoducks and horseclams were harvested by aboriginal peoples both before and after the imposition of the Davis Plan, and harvesting was by traditional methods. The commercial geoduck industry developed rapidly in the 1970's with the application of diving technology, and there are fifty-five licences now held - all by non-aboriginal people - because the commercial diving technology was not available to aboriginal people at the time of qualification for the limited licences (Native Brotherhood, 1989).

ATTEMPTS TO RE-ENTER THE FISHING INDUSTRY

There are still many obstacles to aboriginal participation in the fishery and to greater independence. Within the aboriginal community there is a general lack of opportunities, a lack of experience in forming business enterprises, and a distrust built up after many years of frustration (Workshop Participants, 1985). More crucial impediments to aboriginal involvement, however, are associated with government regulations and bureaucratic attitudes that limit individual initiative (Workshop Participants, 1985). The Indian Act, which prohibits aboriginal peoples from using reserve land for collateral for starting businesses, coupled with what is seen as inflexibility on the part of government officials, often prevents aboriginal people from obtaining the necessary financing or capital to enter the fishing industry.[8] According to Pinkerton (1987), "because they are legally wards of the state without the right to offer reserve land as collateral, Indian fishers have not had the same access to capital as many non-Indians, and have thus developed special relations of dependency with fish-processing companies" (p.249).

> When licensing limitations came in about twenty some years ago, it was referred to as the Davis Plan, and it transferred the right to go fishing onto the monetary system. While this may not affect many people, it effected native people living on the reserves very badly because they are not on the monetary system. They have no collateral, they have no banks on reserves, and consequently, we were wiped out. This becomes an obvious thing when you're around reserves, but the government never acknowledged it.[54]

> We have no collateral being on a reserve. Our houses are all on the reserve, our cars, and everything else. Whatever we own. So there's no collateral. And it's way way harder for us to go to a bank, credit union, whatever, and say I want a loan. They just laugh at you and close the door again. So they form these

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[54] A comment made to me by a Haida fishing person who has been in the industry for many years.

> outfits over in Rupert - Tillicum, NFA, Tricor, and Haida Gwaii Economic Development Fund. All these outfits are to make it easier for us to get funding or loans or whatever you want to call it. But these outfits charge really high interest rates.[55]
>
> There's outfits in Rupert like banks. I was one of the first ones to get a boat through one of them. On a trial system we were going to work. Their interest rates started at 14.5% when I got it. It was really hard to keep up the payments, and I don't get any grace in case I have a bad year.
>
> These guys ... they never had the treat of the Haida tradition of handing stuff down. My uncle handed down the licences to me - I never had the problem of buying licences to start out with. That was my downpayment. I could use what he gave me and use it as collateral because it didn't have anything to do with the reserve. But these guys had no such thing as collateral. All they had was what they earned as a downpayment. That's the biggest thing - collateral.

There has been some attempt to protect aboriginal fishing rights, including programs such as the Indian Fisherman's Assistance Program (1968 - 1973 and 1973 - 1977), the Indian Fisherman's Emergency Assistance Program (1981), the Northern Native Fishing Corporation (founded in 1982), and the Native Fishing Association (established in 1986).[t] But programs to assist aboriginal people to acquire their own vessels have existed only in the past few decades and their success has been limited, usually helping only those who are well established (Pinkerton, 1987). The government funds which are available are often provided in isolation from some of the realities of the industry, and are subject to so many restrictions that the initiatives have little chance of success (Workshop Participants, 1985). Special licences have been established as a way to keep fishing licences in the hands of aboriginal people. Under the present scheme, however, aboriginal commercial fishing regulations deal only with the salmon and herring fisheries, and there are no special licences for aboriginal people in any other fishery (Native Brotherhood, 1989).[u]

For the salmon fishery, there is a reduced-fee category A licence (commonly called an AI licence). A program was initiated in 1971, when licence fees were raised to fund a program of buying back vessels, with the original intention of giving relief to aboriginal people from high fishing fees. Under the plan, aboriginal fishing people could change A licences to AI licences, pay reduced fees for them, but the licence holders could then not join the buy back program. The owner could later upgrade the licence to an A by paying back past saved fees, so the

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[55] This and the following comments were made during my meeting with Haida fishing person.

program did not initially guarantee that category AI licences would stay with aboriginal peoples; but in June, 1980 the DFO announced a moratorium on upgrading AI licences, and now if a vessel with an AI licence is sold to a non-aboriginal person, the licence is cancelled. The DFO claims that this policy was introduced in response to recommendations of aboriginal organizations, and in fact some groups have tried to protect and increase the number of aboriginal licenses by trying to promote the policy. However, some individuals maintain that they would not have purchased a reduced fee licence without the option of upgrading (Cruikshank, 1991).

The problem is that the program's control mechanisms are punitive and they cause financial hardship for individuals. Logically, reduced fee licences should be more valuable because the fishing rights are identical but the annual fee is substantially less. However, reduced fee licences are presently worth less than full fee licences because financing is difficult for native people to obtain (Native Brotherhood, 1989). Those who reduced to an AI licence before 1980 got trapped, since the licence holders are restricted to an aboriginal-only marketplace with an inadequate funding base. Thus, selling is difficult and vessel prices lower (Native Brotherhood, 1989). Funding agencies also do not recognize AI licences as good security because of the restricted market should the tender have to realize on its security, and so aboriginal fishing people with these licences can not get financing (Native Brotherhood, 1989).

> The Native Fishing Association (NFA) - the reason they make you change your licence into an AI is they don't want the licence to go to a non-native. So they'll fund you and give you a loan to buy that boat and licence, so they can change it into an AI. What they want - as many as they can AI licences on native boats. I guess what they're trying to do is eliminate a few ordinary A licences to keep in each village. That's how it works. It keeps more natives in the fishing industry rather than trying to make a quick profit off a licence. [56]

> The NFA gets funding from the government. In order to get a grant from the NFA you have to turn your licence into an AI from an ordinary A licence, which is worth alot more than an AI. So I had to trade mine in and turn it into an AI and I can't sell it to another person other than a native. It's worth something in the range of $200 - 300 less all the time, compared to an ordinary A. The way I look at it is, that grant that alot of these people get is just the NFA buying the license. I think the maximum amount was $25000 or something like that. It didn't matter what size your boat was. They just bought my ordinary A licence

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[56] This comment and the next six were made in the meeting I held with the Haida fishing people.

> and gave me an AI plus $22000. But that way I couldn't spend it like I wanted; I couldn't buy electronics, I couldn't buy a new motor. I had to put it back into the boat, as a boat payment. That's where my loan got knocked down so fast.

Some Haida people are not convinced that the special licence category is effective, and they still feel that corruption and abuse of the system are continuing.

> But it doesn't stand legal we were told. There's no such thing as an AI licence. Because say I went in so deep with BC Packers - BC Packers would say that's it, we're going to take your licence. And I don't know how they do it, but they go and they seize the vessel, and seize the licence and everything, and they end up fishing the licence. They'll give it to another individual. I don't know how they do it legally because they don't give it to another native. There's a few that have been taken away up here in my time and sold - AI licences - by BC Packers to non-natives.

In the herring fishery, a reduced-fee category H licence (HI licences) also exists. In this case, there is a reduced fee for the licence when the operator of the licence is an aboriginal person (not the owner). Thus, a herring licence is personal (as opposed to a salmon licence, which is attached to the vessel), and so there is no control over ownership. Because of this fact, the only difference between an H and HI licence is that an aboriginal person must accompany an HI licence on a fishing vessel. According to the Native Brotherhood (1989), this category has been totally ineffective; herring licences usually end up being sold outside of the Indian fleet.

It is also very difficult for the Haida to get back into the fishing industry because as time goes on small fishing operators are being forced out of the industry and it is increasingly being controlled by large corporations. These few companies own huge boats and control the industry at both the upstream and downstream ends, from catching to packing. Indeed, in most parts of North America the fishing industry is dominated by large corporations, some with strong international links. Any individual or group wanting to enter into this industry must accept a high initial investment, enormous risks and a low probability of success (Workshop Participants, 1985).[v] The Haida people I spoke with commented again and again on the difficulty of entering the fishing industry.

> It's almost impossible if you're just getting started. To get a licence it's another $70 000. That's a pretty big investment if you can't even keep up the payments on one.[57]

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[57] This and the next three comments were made in my meeting with the Haida fishing people.

> Usually expenses run between about $15 and $20 thousand a year, just to get out there and start again. If you want to upkeep your boat - keep it well maintained. That's part of why you lose boats.
>
> Last year I made it through the season. The last delivery and my last trip to tie up the floats for the winter my motor packed it in. So I ended up having to get a loan for a new motor, that's why it brought it up to $17 000 a year - an extra $7 000 just for a loan on a motor. That's one of the reasons you lose a boat, when you've got an older one. You gotta look into high repairs. Now I never even got started yet - I've still got a cabin to go through, a fish hatch to go through - that's going to run into $15 or $20 thousand, again even before I start. There's quite a bit of work you have to do to a boat. And everything costs so much. Every year's there's something unexpected. When you least expect it, expect it. My motor's 24 years old now. In the next year or two it might conk out. So you always have to have money aside. Then a poor year like this year - there'll be alot of guys in trouble, not just here but all up and down the coast.
>
> Seeing others trying to pay $10 000 and $15 000, that's quite a bit of money to come out of your pocket. Starting off, that costs alot of money even for a little boat.
>
> I wouldn't even attempt to get into that industry now.[58]

Pearse (1982) suggests that "present policies are obviously unsatisfactory in many respects, and most groups stress the urgent need for reform". The Haida people also expressed concern that the system established by the DFO is forcing people out of the fishing industry by limiting what they fish and how much they can take to too great an extent.

> We will be practically legislated out of participation if we follow fisheries guidelines.[59]
>
> I went fishing alot when I was young. Rules are a bit different now. The DFO changed all kinds of rules with the licensing system. Nobody could hardly make money from it anymore unless there's a big run of fish and high prices.[60]
>
> When I got into the industry the salmon season was six months. Now it's middle of June to middle of September. Seining is down to 12 hours a week. So it's a total of 48 hours for a salmon season. We've got so many southern boats coming

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[58] This comment was made to me by a Haida man not in the fishing industry, whose father had lost his boat.

[59] A comment made by a Haida fishing person I met at lunch one day.

[60] A comment made to me by a Haida elder.

> in and taking the quota. They're only allowed 5000 springs, and you get 30 seiners out there and they catch the quota in one day and they're shut down.[61]
>
> With the quota system they're bringing down now for halibut, they're trying to do the same thing as in 1979 - trying to eliminate you from the fishing industry to try to narrow it down to a couple of hundred halibut boats on the BC Coast. That's another attempt to eliminate the smaller guy again.
>
> They forced the quota system down our throats and said "that's it; if you don't like it, don't fish".
>
> There's alot of ways they try to eliminate Joe Blow fisherman [sic]. They're talking about individual licences for salmon now. That's going to eliminate alot of people.
>
> Before, people used to stay in the fishing industry because they could catch more fish and fish all the species, and now they're dwindled down to one species it's almost impossible. I find it almost impossible to make it.
>
> The mosquito fleet - they get the licences for so many years, and then in that time they're supposed to make enough money to buy their own - invest in their own boat and licence. That just came into effect last year.And nobody could make enough on a small boat to invest in a bigger boat and licences. That was a stupid thing they pulled last year. I'm just getting into it and I'm going to enjoy it and get to a point when I really like it and they're going to pull the licence away from me and say "you've had your time with your licence". If they pull it away from me in three years, and I just started teaching my kid, then I'll be throwing my boat away again, and I'll have to look for something else. But it's pretty hard now.
> It's hard to get into a bigger boat, especially when you've got a family and bills. If my motor breaks down half way through the season, I've got no one to turn to to buy me a motor. If I do it through a company where I sell my fish, then I'll owe them, and I'll just make enough to pay my motor off, that's it. I'll never get ahead, and I've only got so many years to try to make enough money to buy my own boat and that's pretty hard.

Also, some fishing people expressed the opinion that corrupt means are still being used to eliminate aboriginal people from the fishing industry and keep those who have been forced out from reentering.

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[61] This comment and the following five were made during my meeting with the Haida fishing people.

> The Haida are being forced out of the fishing industry, and every effort is being made to keep them out, even if the means are crooked and exploitative.[62]

> In 1980, a program was attempted by the government to increase native participation in the fishing industry. The government began to buy boats from large corporations to sell to native fishermen [sic], and they also gave a grant to the Native Fishing Association to allocate money to native fishermen to buy them. But the boats they were selling were in such disrepair that they couldn't be used without a great deal of work, and the money the native people borrowed from the NFA wasn't enough to cover those expenses. As a result, the native fishermen were forced to borrow more money from the companies at ridiculous interest rates, and eventually the fishermen lost the boats to the companies, who then resold them to the government for the same program.[63]

> When halibut quotas came in and halibut fishermen [sic] found themselves in difficult circumstances, companies wrote to these fishermen, threatening to repossess their homes, cars, and anything else they owned. In reality, they had no authority to do so, but the fishermen did not understand the process and they got scared, and they sold their boats to the large companies.[64]

Whatever the reasons, it is very difficult for any Haida to reenter the fishing industry and few remain in the fish harvesting sector. Today, no Haida has a license to commercially fish for halibut, in spite of the fact that the Haida communities are located right beside the most productive halibut fishing grounds in British Columbia, and very few Haida have licenses which allow them to take part in the lucrative salmon fishery around the coasts of their homeland.

> What was once [a Haida person's] right, his [sic] culture, and his sustenance was sold out from under him and the result is that, today, very few people on the Queen Charlotte Islands are able to make a living in the fishery.[65]

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[62] This comment was made to me by a non-native fishing person from Masset.

[63] This comment was made to me by another non-native fishing person from Masset.

[64] Ibid.

[65] A comment made by a Haida fishing person in a letter he wrote to the DFO in 1985, which he shared with me.

Impacts of Changes in the Fishing Industry

The imposition of regulatory control over aboriginal fishing has had a fundamental impact on the culture, welfare and economy of aboriginal peoples in British Columbia, and "because fishing is fundamental to aboriginal culture, the regulation of aboriginal fishing amounts to the regulation of aboriginal societies" (Storrow and Morellato, 1990). According to the Royal Commission on Pacific Fishing (1982), the erosion of aboriginal involvement in the fishing industry has "had a devastating impact on dozens of Indian [sic] communities that offered no other employment opportunities and where unemployment was already chronic" (p. 152). And the exclusion of aboriginal peoples from the commercial harvest of many fish species means that few benefits from the resource return to the community. In Haida Gwaii, for example, between 1977 and 1978, approximately $2 million worth of abalone were collected from the area without any benefits accruing to any individuals or the communities, and between 1979 and 1985 a further one half million dollars worth was taken without any benefits to the Haida people (Richardson and Green, 1989).

As Pinkerton (1989) notes, fishing people in general object to being thought of as a mobile labour force which can pull up roots and move freely to other jobs far from their communities, as if they did not have a history, culture or commitment to the local area. Further, for most of the twentieth century, government policies have had the effect of encouraging aboriginal peoples to remain on reserves, where the possibility of earning an adequate living from fishing remains more precarious each season but where there are few other opportunities (McKervill, 1967). The relative immobility of aboriginal peoples makes them heavily dependent on unemployment insurance and welfare payments when local economic opportunities fail, and this inflicts high costs on the communities in the form of dependency, demoralization and social and personal breakdowns. Further, it has been noted in many instances that one of the primary factors which correlates with low self-esteem, alcoholism, and other social problems is a person's sense of loss of control of his or her personal life and a disruption in the daily practices which make up the familiar patterns of life (Pinkerton, 1989).

Fishing people have been dispossessed of their ability to provide for themselves, having been forced out of the most important employment sector, with their potential to take part decreasing each year. Also, elimination from the fishing industry has caused more economic and social problems than those normally attributed to unemployment; the loss of vessels has also

limited the ability to food fish and the traditional transportation links to other communities, and they have generally been culturally displaced.

This is certainly true for the Haida people. According to the President of the Council of the Haida Nation (Richardson and Green, 1989), since the late 1960s, limiting the number of fisheries people who can participate in the various directed fisheries has had a devastating impact on his people, and the experience represents a threat to their culture. The loss of their fishing vessels and licences has left a sense of loss, which has also resulted in bitterness and anger.

> It used to be a really enjoyable thing when we were kids. There used to be so many mosquito boats we used to walk along the beach and watch everybody unload, and the beach would be white with halibut. Now there's just nothing.[66]
>
> Without guaranteed access to resource harvesting the native person cannot survive and without resources there is no capacity for self government. There is a great need at this time for resources and both the federal and provincial governments are falling far short of their responsibilities.[67]
>
> Few of our people earn a living in the fishing industry and more and more fish are being allocated away from us. We have lost the right to be self-sufficient with the ensuing loss of self-esteem which contributes to all the social problems we have.[68]
>
> We simply cannot afford to produce fish for our families, we cannot farm land which has been taken from us and we cannot gain access to our timber under the present B.C. Government's Tree Farm Licence tenure.
>
> I designed a boat when I was 17 years old. I just don't want to do it anymore because people are stealing everything from us.[69]

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[66] This comment was made to me during my meeting with the Haida fishing people, one of whom also said "My uncle's been in fishing all his life, and his father was a fisherman, and I guess his father was a fisherman. My family is pretty well known as having been fishermen all their lives. I think I'm the last one that's a fisherman now as a boat owner. There's others in my family here who fish, but they're just deckhands. Alot of them are retired, or just quit, or lost their licenses, through DFO standards".

[67] This comment was made by a Haida fishing person in a letter he wrote to the DFO in 1985.

[68] This comment and the following one were made by Haida fishing people in presentations to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

[69] This comment and the two following were made to me by Haida elders.

> As I was growing up my people worked hard every day from sun up to sun down on those boats. I don't think there's any way of saying how hard we worked. You can't really know unless you've experienced it. Back breaking work, building boats and fishing them. Most of these people have passed on now, but I don't want what happened to them to be forgotten.
>
> They stole our boats, our livelihood, our pride, and means of making money. This has been bothering me from the day that it happened.

Aboriginal Peoples and Fishing Today

Aboriginal peoples, however, continue to "look to fish, whether they be salmon, bottom fish or crustaceans, as both a symbol of what has been lost and hope for the future" (Hindle, 1985). According to Pearse (1982), aboriginal people consistently maintain that because the fishing industry represents a unique opportunity for them, and because it is a central component of their traditions and lifestyle, the continual decline of their participation in the fishing industry must be reversed.

> Fishing is how we made our living, how our families made money. We were independent people. We didn't depend on the government for anything when we had our fleet here. When we built our boats we did it through hard work and dedication. We worked all year building our nets, keeping our boats in shape to fish. We were on par or better than anyone on the coast. We were good fishermen [sic]. We worked hard. We caught more fish than anyone else on the coast. We were competent fishermen. We did well on salmon, halibut, herring. We need our licences and boats back.
>
> The economy of Masset remains heavily dependant on the commercial fishery, with many of those who are employed owning or working on boats, and a "ripple effect" makes fishing important to the entire community.[70]
>
> Ours is a small fishing village and if we have a poor salmon year the whole community suffers. The DFO must recognize the importance of "small, inefficient" boats to coastal communities and do everything in their power to ensure that they continue to exist.[71]

Indeed, in spite of the difficulties experienced in the past, fishing remains a central aspect of life for the Haida people.

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[70] This comment was made by a Haida in her submission to the Sports Fishing Commission (1990).

[71] This statement was made in a letter written by a Haida fishing person to the DFO in 1985.

> The entire island has been logged, the cedar has been removed, and the fishing is all that the Haida have left.[72]

> Fishing is the life here. This is our winter supply. That's what we live on in the winter time, food fishing. And it's not only our life, it's the commercial fishermen [sic] too.[73]

Many still depend heavily on fish for food. Traditional methods of processing and preserving fish are still practised, and, with recent renewed interest in traditional culture, the use of fish in ceremonies has also been increasing (Pearse, 1982). Today, fish are caught and prepared in ways similar to those of the past. Nets are made of new materials, and canning is more prevalent than the traditional full smoking and drying (smokehouses are still used for partial smoking), the salmon are still treated with respect, and people still take what they can use in the upcoming year and no more (Mayhew, 1990). Food fishing certainly remains an important part of life in Haida, with increasing numbers of people food fishing and bringing back fish for the elders who are unable to food fish themselves. The elders indicate that they are pleased that the traditions are being carried on by younger generations, but they also express concern about interference with their right to food fish.

> I used to do alot of food fishing up on the Yakoun River. I was a young kid when I first started going up there with my mother and dad. My dad taught me alot about food fishing - how to hang a net, when is the good time to set the net.

> In the 70's and that, there weren't very many people who went food fishing anymore. There were only certain families who went up there every spring. But today there is alot of families who go up there now. Last time I was up there was around 1985. There was maybe about ten nets. People are starting to realize that they do need to go food fishing to have fish in the freezer or to can it, because it's so expensive nowadays to eat from the stores. So I guess they figured it's time to go out and get some, instead of buying it. When people talk of taking food right out of our mouths that's true. People are living off the land now.

> Most people do food fishing - sockeye, dogs, spring - almost anything they can get. It is important to us. When you go up there for food, it's for food.[74]

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[72] A comment made to me by a Haida during a discussion about the trial of the men charged because of the sports fishing protest.

[73] The Haida man who said this to me was not involved in the fishing industry, but his father had owned a boat and he had a tradition of fishing in his family. The following two comments were also made by this man.

[74] A comment made to me by another Haida man who was not involved now in the fishing

> It's so important to us that we have this winter food.[75]

> When we were young we didn't have time to go to the Yakoun to fish; we got no time. My husband was trolling all the time. He brought me spring salmon from trolling and we canned that. When we got old, that's when we started canning fish up the Yakoun. We built our cabin and smokehouse at the Yakoun in the forties, I guess. That's when we first started going there. We got ten cases of number 2 cans to start canning with. I sliced and dried real lots of sockeye, maybe more than 300. That year we filled a thousand cans, too.[76]

> Ever since I've been able to row, I've been going up the Yakoun River with my mother. We used to row all day long. We used to just enjoy ourselves. And so many sockeye in the net every tide. If there was too much for us to handle, we gave it away to other families. I'm just glad my grandchildren and my sons are taking over now. They do their part. So we may look forward to the month of May because of fresh sockeye.[77]

> They fished for trout and other things. That was a rich river at that time. But today white people don't allow them to get it at anytime. Just certain times they give them, and it's too short.[78]

The Haida people are also concerned about drops in fish stocks, in general, and what they view as a depletion of their resource.

> Today, you start fooling around with nature, that's when the fish start going down. Nature I don't think anybody can fool around with. You get in trouble like that.[79]

> We know that the risk of harm to the salmon and those who depend on the salmon's generosity is great. We hear that dark times may follow the wake of

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industry, but this man had been for many years and his father had also been a fishing person.

[75] This Haida woman was quoted in Nelson (1990).

[76] I did not speak with the Haida elder who spoke these words; she was cited in Blackman (1982).

[77] Again, this comment was not made to me, but this Haida woman was interviewed by Nelson (1990).

[78] Ibid.

[79] A Haida elder made this comment in his submission to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

Figure 14 A Haida Food Fishing

unrestricted appetites.[80]

At one time there were lots of coho. You can't catch any now. With six lines out you can't catch 100 a day.[81]

New guys ... they never had the experience we did. We'd catch 150, 120 coho a day, and this is fishing 2 lines. We'd come in loaded all the time. This year the best day was 44 coho for 2 boats in 10 hours of trolling. You're lucky if you caught one spring. I've noticed a big drop in stocks.

When my uncle went fishing before me, he'd come in all the time loaded with halibut, loaded with coho. They used to be able to fish anything they wanted.

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[80] This comment was made by another Haida at the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

[81] This comment and the next two were made to me during the meeting I held with the Haida men presently involved in the fishing industry.

> The chinook concerns everybody. If they catch too much they'll never return to the streams that they came from.[82]

The DFO is primarily responsible for resource management, but it has also come to be concerned with ensuring a level of aboriginal participation in the industry. The DFO has stated that it recognizes aboriginal fishing rights and accords those fishing rights priority, subject only to the paramount needs of resource conservation. However, "it is readily apparent from past performance of the Department that it has been incapable of managing policies designed to ensure Indian participation" (Native Brotherhood, 1989). The DFO is simultaneously trying to reduce the overall size of the fishing fleet while trying to increase aboriginal participation, and control of programs would be more effective by aboriginal organizations which have a vested interest in them (Native Brotherhood, 1989). Also, the policy of giving priority to aboriginal rights applies only to food fishing, and even this has not always held true in practice. Logistical problems with the management of the fishery dictate that the food fishery, because it is last in the "harvesting chain", is often more tightly regulated than the commercial or recreational fishery (McKay, 1977). The final report of the Pearse Commission (1982) states that "inevitably, the commercial and sports fisheries sometimes take too many fish to provide sufficient stock for both needed escapement and the Indian fisheries, and by the time this is known the only way to maintain the stocks is to constrain Indian fishing".

The needs of competing interests are of great concern to the Haida people, and many Haida I spoke with suggested that there are too many "outsiders" fishing in their territory, resulting in a depletion of the fish stocks. Since the beginning of the 20th century, fears have been voiced concerning the size and numbers of fish catches in the Haida Gwaii region. The Queen Charlotte News of March 27, 1909, for example, devotes four columns to a discussion of the "threatened extinction" of the halibut and a need for more adequate fishery patrols to prevent heavy poaching from outside fishing vessels (McKay, 1953). It has also been demonstrated that today the aboriginal fleet is less mobile than the general fishing fleet, and there is a danger that non-aboriginal fishing vessels will move into coastal areas where fish stocks are high and displace the local fishing people (McKay, 1977). McKay's study (1977) shows that Haida vessels generally fish in local waters, and the author suggests that declining salmon stocks

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[82] This comment and the following two were made by Haida elders.

and increased fishing efforts by non-local fishing vessels were two factors which could result in further displacement of aboriginal fishing people.

> There used to be alot of fish in the olden days. But now they're taking too much fish on the outside here. The trollers took alot. And now we've got more problems with sports fishermen [sic]. They will wipe them out. Down the straights there, around Vancouver and those parts, they're all fished out pretty well now. There's too many of them.
>
> Until all those outside people came with their boats. We can't call it our fishing grounds anymore. Everybody else is fishing what used to be our harvest. It has to change back into ours again.
>
> We have 203 000 spring salmon to catch. This past summer, half the fleet from Vancouver came up - there were about 700 boats in the fishing area. Start dividing that up. The average catch is about 20 springs a day. Multiply that by 500 boats - 10 000 pieces a day. It doesn't take long to reach quota.[83]
>
> In the South they have 360 000 pieces, and we have 203 000 pieces, and they come up here and fish as much as they can, then they'll wipe out our quota, then they'll all take off and catch all they can down there. So they're doubling their production compared with us. We don't go any further than the Queen Charlotte Islands. So we're deprived of what's originally ours. Just Queen Charlotte guys should be able to fish the Queen Charlotte's. It's only fair that we do.

But the Haida are determined to remain in the fishing industry and, in fact, regain control of the important resource.

> There must be some way of getting boats and licences so we can use our own resources and fish. The government owes us that and the companies that stole it from us owe us that. Boats are important to my people. And the salmon. It's ours forever.
>
> We're starting to get our mosquito fleet going now. There's six licences in the village now, and we're hoping to get more.

Indeed, aboriginal people can adapt and perform well in the commercial fisheries because of their familiarity with the fish and the activities associated with fishing. They also have stronger motivation, greater skill and more experience to support their participation in the fishing industry when compared with other fields. In contrast, development programs based on commerce and tourism and related activities are more alien to aboriginal cultures and traditions, and attempts to develop these programs have been largely ineffective (Pearse, 1982). The

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[83] This and the following three comments were made to me by Haida fishing people.

commercial fishing industry, then, continues to represent the most promising means of employing aboriginal people along the coast, and it is also important that this is a right the aboriginal people themselves claim. According to Pearse (1982), "the fisheries must be regarded as an obvious base for policies aimed at Indian social and economic development".

Fisheries Management

In order for aboriginal people to increase their participation in the fishing industry, however, changes in the current system will have to take place to remove existing obstacles to aboriginal development. There is a need, first of all, to end the paternalistic relationship which has existed between government and aboriginal people for so long, and to increase self-sufficiency. The participants of a workshop designed to discuss aboriginal involvement in the fishing industry (Workshop Participants, 1985) expressed a desire for some government assistance but a minimum of government intervention; this means that the government should work to create an atmosphere conducive to success and provide assistance which will encourage individual initiative. The approach advocated by the workshop participants involved small initial businesses, considered particularly appropriate for west coast aboriginal peoples "who, with traditional ties to the resource, and generally close proximity to the fishing grounds, could enjoy a distinct competitive advantage in producing Indian-recognized fish products for the domestic market". This would allow for gradual expansion into the industry, practical experience for aboriginal people, and would encourage innovation without the need for long term government assistance (Workshop Participants, 1985).

There is general agreement that the number of aboriginal licence holders needs to be increased (Pearse, 1982; Workshop Participants, 1985). The methods proposed to allow this include increasing the availability of funds for aboriginal people to finance their initiatives, the establishment of new institutions to encourage new business investment and facilitate training, or, according to a Native Brotherhood proposal (1989), separately defined aboriginal licences in each category. The Brotherhood's proposal also includes a plan for financing which would involve a large capital fund being made available both for the acquisition of licences and as a source of capital financing for aboriginal peoples selling their fishing assets within the aboriginal community. The purpose of the capital fund would be to assume the role of financing aboriginal people within the fishery. The loan would be repaid and the funds would therefore be available for reinvestment. The effect would be an eventual increase in aboriginal fishing people with minimal impact on the remainder of the fishery (i.e. no increase in the overall number of licences). Also, if aboriginal people could buy the licences currently held by other aboriginals the value of Indian licences would be maintained.

Also central to the goal of aboriginal self-sufficiency is the early settlement of land claims. According to the participants of the 1985 workshop, if aboriginal peoples are to share fully in the opportunities available in the fisheries in the future, it is essential to determine the portion of the fisheries resource available to them before alternatives are lost. In addition, "settlements of fisheries based claims on the Pacific coast would establish a framework for similar settlements in other parts of Canada, and also would provide Natives [sic] and others with a better understanding of the economic development opportunities that are available." (Workshop Participants, 1985). Claims settlements are not only important to aboriginal peoples, but also to non-aboriginals and industry in general; uncertainty as to when and how settlements might be reached inhibits private sector investment, delays aboriginal related development, causes uneasiness among fisheries' managers, and generates anxiety among the general population. Claims settlements are also important to the ability of aboriginal peoples for financing future developments. Aboriginal investment initiatives are often frustrated by the inability to acquire sufficient financing, and settlements would provide opportunities for overcoming this problem. It would provide collateral for financing - a basis for independence and self-sufficiency.

Settling the land question alone, however, is not a sufficient measure to ensure aboriginal peoples' rights to the fishery will be protected. As Berkes (1989) outlines, the first Canadian comprehensive claims agreement officially recognized Cree traditional, informal management systems, but did not guarantee them free access to the fish. The Cree continue to struggle against the degradation of their fish stocks due to either fishing by other user groups or the destruction of habitat by non-compatible development. Government funding to adequately investigate these problems is not available, thus impeding the full exercise of Cree management rights recognized in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Perhaps the most effective means of promoting successful development of the fishing industry with the involvement of aboriginal people would be a combination of land claims settlements and an incorporation of the concept of co-management into fisheries policy. As Kearney (1989) notes, the term co-management has been employed in a number of circumstances and has come to signify different notions of fisheries management. These meanings associated with the term can be assigned to three general categories: i) a consultative process in which fishing people and other interested groups provide systematic advice to the government, which remains the sole decision maker; ii) the implementation and enforcement by fishing people of government policies and regulations which are widely accepted as beneficial to fishing people;

and iii) a comprehensive participation by fishing people in fisheries decision making at the levels of policy formulation, acceptance, and implementation. It is the third of these definitions which is the most comprehensive and represents the most self-determining approach, and most authors promoting co-management as a policy alternative refer to this type of arrangement.

According to Hindle (1985), through co-management and better stock utilization, programs can be developed to enhance the fisheries resource for the benefit of all Canadians. It is perhaps more important to maintain trust and co-operation in the harvest of the fisheries resource than any other, because the stocks are so vulnerable to over-exploitation, and the large areas in which fish migrate are almost impossible to centrally control. In order to develop and take advantage of opportunities, however, there needs to be increased consultation on policy development. Pinkerton (1989) notes that there is a renewed interest in the concept of resource-dependent regions and communities achieving greater control over their own development. In Canada, there has been special attention to aboriginal communities both because of their extreme dependence on the natural resource base and because of aboriginal peoples' vigorous political development. And one of the most important expressions of the movement toward greater self-reliance in the field of resource management is fisheries co-management.

This view is shared by a number of other people, including those who research fisheries management and those involved in the industry. The participants of a workshop designed to discuss aboriginal involvement in the fishing industry supported greater autonomy for aboriginal peoples, higher levels of involvement by aboriginal fishing people, and greater input into fisheries management (Workshop Participants, 1985). Pearse (1982) also recommended the institution of policies which would involve aboriginal people in the management of fisheries through the negotiation of "Indian fishery agreements", but this has not been done. Typically, fishing people are demanding a greater voice in management decisions because they have lost faith in the government's ability to solve resource problems and protect their interests (Pinkerton, 1989).

Greater involvement in management development is also supported by many aboriginal nations themselves. The Native Brotherhood has indicated its support for the concept of co-management, and it has called for an increase in aboriginal involvement both in terms of licence holders and policy advisors (Native Brotherhood, 1989). According to Storrow and Morellato (1990), "the current aboriginal view extends beyond the need for a greater share of fish stock to an active role in fisheries management", and "the existence of established fisheries use and management practices among aboriginal peoples prior to European contact forms the basis for the

assertion that native authority over the resource should be recognized and restored". The Musque'em Band, for example, wants to be instrumental in any management of the fisheries resource in their area, and they are on record with the DFO regarding that desire. They want to reintroduce the traditional manner in which they managed the resource, but they want to do it cooperatively and they have begun a management plan with other aboriginal nations of southern Vancouver Island to do so (Grant, 1991). The Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en Tribal Council has also been conducting a "Fish Management Study" in an attempt to generate data and management expertise for their area superior to that of the DFO, and they expect to co-manage, with the federal government, the fish stocks in the rivers in their region and to take a greater proportion of the fish stocks (Morrell, 1989). They base their argument on the widely accepted view among fisheries researchers that stock-by-stock management of harvest is the most successful way to prevent the elimination of fish stocks. The Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en people propose to use the traditional system as the basis for local economic development, in which the tribal council may provide marketing services to assist in establishing processing activities in the area, and a commercial operation will be based largely on the traditional property rights system which dictates rights to harvest and obligations to share the benefits from the fishery (Pinkerton, 1987). Indeed, Pinkerton (1989) notes that local people can often determine the simplest, most appropriate, and most efficient management plans which ensure conservation of the resource because there are cultural mechanisms available to them not accessible by the government.

The Haida also assert their right to manage the fisheries, and they argue that as part of their right to gather and use salmon, there must be a right to look after them and regulate their use. The Haida also indicate a strong belief that this right is particularly relevant because DFO management has been and continues to be inadequate.[w]

> They take recommendations from native groups too lightly. Now the Haida are paying the consequences.[84]

> The abalone fisheries on the coast has been closed. The DFO says this is for conservation purposes. The Haida have said for years that they were overfishing abalone.[x] Now we as native peoples are not allowed to collect abalone.

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[84] This comment and the one following were made to me during a casual conservation with Haida fishing people at lunch one day.

> Fish stocks are being allocated to other user groups without input from the Haida people. A strong voice must be heard from these islands to ensure a proper place in the control of our resources.[85]

> We've tried at every opportunity to talk to the DFO about the overfishing of the abalone, but we were ignored, and now the abalone are gone.[86]

> The Haida know that we now need to protect our resources. Management by the lawful body of Canada is inadequate, and we must fight this if we are going to survive as a people. We can not count on the DFO for our management, or the courts, because the law is not on our side. We recognize a need for law and justice but we must protect ourselves. We recognize a need for order, but the way laws are changed is by people challenging them. Things are more complicated than whether the Haida are challenging order. If the Haida let the government have its way with management of the land it will be gone.

In addition, a representative of the Council of the Haida Nation has indicated that their involvement in the management of the fisheries (and the other resources of Haida Gwaii) is not only a right, but that co-management also offers the best hope for maintenance of the environment. In a submission to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990), he said:

> We need to work together to resolve these issues. It is not enough to say that the government has its own plan and we have another plan. There will need to be some collaboration to make sure we have a workable solution. If we can't do that, then we have failed the future.

Similarly, the President of the Council of the Haida Nation, Miles Richardson, has stated that "we have learned ... that we will have no more resources unless we continue to exercise our responsibility for their stewardship", and "co-management between the Haida Nation and Canada offers a positive opportunity to do this" (Richardson and Green, 1989). However, Richardson also notes that "this is a long term solution", and in the meantime, the resource base may be seriously depleted. Faced with this dilemma, the Haida Nation decided that "we should pursue interim strategies to promote better management of the fishery resources and urgently needed development of our communities" (Richardson and Green, 1989). This, the Haida believe, is their right.

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[85] A comment made by a Haida fishing person during his presentation to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

[86] This comment was made by a Haida person during the court case regarding the protest at Langara Island, October 18, 1991.

The Conflict Regarding Sports Fishing

There is perhaps no better illustration of the Haida people's belief in their right and obligation to manage the fisheries resource than the recent conflict regarding the expansion of sports fishing enterprises. There is now a dispute between the traditional users of the fisheries resource and a growing number of commercial recreational operators (or sports fishing operators) establishing businesses on and around Haida Gwaii. Attracted to the relatively remote, pristine area, these operators are increasing in both absolute numbers and in the size of their businesses, and there is concern among both the Haida people and the more traditional commercial fishing people that the sports fishing businesses will effect the fisheries resource. As a result, the Haida Nation which is attempting to gain control of the resource, as they claim is their aboriginal and occupancy right, bringing them into conflict with the recreational fishing operators and the government.

The commercial recreational fisheries on Haida Gwaii expanded tremendously since 1985, and remained virtually unregulated until 1990. The Haida actively pursued a fishery co-management agreement with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) for many years, and submitted a strategy for management to the DFO in 1984-85. The approach outlined in this proposal involved the establishment of a Haida Fisheries Commission which would gradually acquire greater responsibility for the fisheries industry on Haida Gwaii. The DFO responded that it needed to develop consistent policy on co-management before initiating any such project (Ministerial Briefing Note, 1990). As a result of the inaction, the Haida began to implement some facets of their strategy independent of the DFO, challenging the federal government's right to control the area. In 1990, the Council of the Haida Nation (CHN) initiated a management program for the Duu Guusd area, which includes Kiis Gwaii (Langara Island) and Naden Harbour. This program required all commercial recreational operators in that region of the islands to register with the Haida and to contribute fees to maintain a Watchman Program to monitor recreational fish catches. The Haida later announced their plan to expand the 1990 program, and the 1991 and 1992 Management Plans for the Commercial Recreational Fishery of Haida Gwaii (April, 1991) are island-wide proposals, involving target ceilings on fishing in high use areas throughout the islands. The key elements of the plans include a continuation of the Watchman Program to monitor fish takes and to facilitate on-shore activities such as village tours and information programs, an adoption of a code of conduct to regulate human activities such as

food gathering, encounters with wildlife and waste disposal, a Coordinated Safety and Rescue Program run through registered operators, and the establishment of registration criteria to set standards regarding fuel storage, disposal of human and solid waste, and support for the other programs.

The 1991 and 1992 plans also include an Advisory Program which allow registered operators to participate with the CHN to review management plans and provide input into pertinent resource development decisions (1991 Management Plan, April 1991). The DFO has advised the Haida that authority to control the sports fishing industry rests with the federal government, but the Haida continued to monitor the fishery in 1991 and early 1992 through their Watchman Program. As a result, the disagreement between some commercial recreational operators and the Haida has continued, and both the RCMP and some commercial fishing organizations have expressed concerns over the conflict (Ministry of Agriculture and Fishing Briefing Note, 1991). In terms of the sports fishing conflict in Haida Gwaii, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans asserts that it has the authority to determine chinook allocations, manage the fishery and thus resolve user group conflicts. However, the CHN has indicted its belief that this authority has not been adequately exercised, and the conflict continues (Sports Fishing Commission, 1990).

In fact, during the summer of 1991, the Haida staged a protest in the Langara Island region, attempting to disrupt the sports fishing operations by preventing landings by the planes carrying supplies and guests into the area and by educating sports fishing people about their management ideas and the refusal of some operators to cooperate. The Oak Bay Marine Group, owners of the largest sports fishing operation in the area, had a court order issued to prevent the continuation of these activities, which the Haida ignored. The Council of the Haida Nation maintains that disruption of fishing in the Langara Island region represents an infringement upon the rights of the Haida people to harvest a resource that they have used for as long as they can remember (Sports Fishing Commission, 1990). And according to the people involved in the protest and those supporting their actions, the protest is not about the Haida's refusal to obey the courts, but rather it is about their right to control what they firmly believe to be their resources, and their requests to be involved in the management of the fisheries.

We are protecting what is ours, in respect of our ancestors and generations yet to come.[87]

Figure 15 The Protestors Preparing for Court

Before the Haida management plan, management was totally inadequate.

[In terms of the sports fishing operators interfering with Haida fishing], we could call it interference for the reason that we could be fished out. All those things out there in the ocean that we use to live on - they're all going to disappear. Abalone. Lichons. There's no end to the seafood that's on the rocks that we eat. The abalone is awfully scarce now. But they're still taking the abalone, and abalone don't grow that rapidly. The only reason the crab fishery is holding out is there's not too many boats. But it will soon be down. It don't grow that fast.

[87] This comment and the one following were made by Haida people during the court case regarding the sports fishing conflict at Langara Island held October 18, 1991 in Prince Rupert which I attended.

> They're starting to fish crab out at Naden harbour for their customers. They rent a helicopter and go over there and get crabs and bring them back to camp.[88]
>
> The men who go to court have to speak well, explaining that the Haida have a long history of using the fisheries resource, that it is their culture and tradition, and that they have a right to use it and manage it now.
>
> Out at Naden Harbour they've got every species in there, like shellfish. Oysters they used to have in there too. They're all gone now. The whiteman cleaned them out. They have clams - everything in there. And that's another area that sports fishermen [sic] are into.[89]
>
> There were eight villages around Langara Island. What's happened with the fisheries there, they said they were going to cut back over the last few years, but the sports fishing lodges now start up mid-may and they go to the end of September.[90]
>
> It is well within the rights of our nation to regulate the resources within our territories.[91]

Like most struggles between aboriginal nations and government agencies, the sports fishing conflict is not simply about resources and economics; cultural and social issues are also of great importance. Much of the sports fishing industry development is taking place near, and in some cases in, Duu Guusd Tribal Park. This park is located in the northwest region of Graham Island, and the designation of the area as a park is largely culturally based. There are a number of reasons why the area is culturally sensitive. According to Haida belief, during the ancient floods which engulfed most of Haida Gwaii, the people of the islands found sanctuary on the hills in the area, and there they awaited the receding tide and a return to their normal way of life. According to a Haida person in a submission at the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990):

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[88] This and the following comment were made by a Haida elder while he was discussing how he feels about the protest the younger men were involved in by Langara Island. He supported their actions.

[89] Another Haida elder said this, also expressing his concerns about the growth of the sports fishing operations and his support for the protest.

[90] Ibid.

[91] A comment made by a Haida in a submission to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings.

> Today, as waves of appetite greedily wash over our land, we see the value of the sanctuary as a place to await the eventual and inevitable return to a more balanced and familiar way of life.

Also, in the region there are a number of traditional villages important to the Haida heritage. The most recognized of these is Kiusta, an important archaeological and cultural site. The village is estimated to be approximately 10 000 years old, and the Haida are very concerned about guests and staff from the sports fishing lodges destroying an important part of their history.

> As for Kiusta there, because the village is so old there, we have a triple pole standing there, and we got some poles that are on the ground, and what they're afraid of is that the guests or whoever goes there will start taking stuff off for memories. They don't want that because it's really the only village left. People can't go there unless they go through the Band office. They've got to get permission to go out there. I think what the band office wants is somebody to go with them to keep an eye on them and make sure they don't do anything. 1970 - that triple pole there, somebody tried to carve their initials on it. That's when they decided to get the watchmen in there. We watched the village and made sure people payed. The payment is for the running of the watchman program. It's $15 to go to Kiusta.[92]

Also, in the Duu Guusd Tribal Park, the Masset people maintain a Rediscovery Program for young people. This program, located primarily in the area along the coast extending from Kiusta to the Taalungslung Bay, is intended to be a sanctuary for children from all cultures and communities.

> This is our Haida school. Some of these children come to us through the courts; others come from places of great sadness and anger. They deserve the privacy and healing care of Taalungslung.[93]

The Haida people express great concern that this program is being interfered with by sports fishing operations in the area. The operators are aware of the existence of the Rediscovery Program and they have been advised not to trespass in the region, but the Haida people suggested to me that their requests have been largely ignored. Also, there is a concern that the availability of alcohol at the lodges threatens the alcohol and drug free activities of the Rediscovery Program. With the sports fishing operators apparently unable to control their guests or staff, the task of

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[92] I was told this by a Haida who works in the Haida Gwaii Watchman Program.

[93] A comment made in a submission to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

regulating the area has been left to the already busy Haida Gwaii Rediscovery Staff or the Haida Watchmen.

> The time and costs of patrolling trespassers ought not to be borne by Rediscovery as Duu Guusd guardians on behalf of the Nation. [94]

> Out at Rediscovery, the boats used to go out to Lepis Bay all the time. People were always walking on the beach and they want to go over and see who they are and what they're doing. That really did bugger up Rediscovery for awhile.[95]

Many Haida people also express great concern about the environmental effects of the sports fishing operations in the area, citing fears about garbage disposal as well as impacts on bird and wildlife species.

> What will be the effects of air traffic and boat traffic on the birds and sea life in the area? I feel that the answers will be very negative, as they have been everywhere else in the world where too many people have been allowed to trample uncontrolled.[96]

And finally, the Haida people suggested that they would like the local sports fishing operations to contribute more to the local community. Indeed, participation by aboriginal people in the sports fishing industry in British Columbia is relatively small; there are very few aboriginal owned or operated operations, and aboriginal employment in the sector is estimated to be about 50 jobs and an even smaller number of person years (compared with 2 500 direct person years of employment attributed to the sports fishing sector throughout B.C.) (Price Waterhouse, 1989).[y] Like the development of most industries in the past, it seems to the Haida people that the existence of the sports fishing industry in the region results in many costs but few benefits for their community.

> These operators will generate in the region of $20 million for themselves on the north end of the islands this year, and yet just about all of this will end up in

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[94] Another comment made during the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

[95] A comment made to me by a Haida who had worked as a Haida Gwaii Watchman for a number of years and had witnessed the changes in the Langara Island region. Commenting on the situation he said "I've been out there since they started up; since the Langara Lodge got there, and the Charlotte Princess, and the North Island Lodge. I've been out there every summer, and I see what goes on. It's nice to have a couple of lodges - you know, sports fishermen [sic], but not as much as we got out there now, because it's not going to be very good in a couple of years, if we say o.k., come up and take our fish."

[96] A comment made during the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings (1990).

> southern B.C. or out of the country. As far as I can see, there are virtually no benefits to this island from this new invasion, and very many disadvantages. We are all being used.[97]

CONCLUSION

The conflict between the Haida people, the sports fishing lodge operators and the government, then, is really just part of a larger issue: a demand by the Haida people for increased control of the resources of their land and a recognition of their rights. The Haida people feel that they have been the traditional users of the fisheries resource for centuries, that it is central to their culture and to their heritage, and that they have always maintained the resource in the past. Their gradual elimination from the fishing industry has been largely the result of ineffective, discriminatory policies and, in some cases, simple exploitation. The Haida people, like many aboriginal nations throughout the province, now want not only to increase their participation in the fishing industry; growing concern about the apparent depletion of fish stocks and what are believed to be inadequate fisheries policies has convinced aboriginal people that they must now demand a greater voice in the management of the resource. The Haida people have expressed a willingness to cooperate with the government, but because they feel that their views are being ignored the Haida people are actively pursuing their own objectives. As Richardson and Green (1989) state, the Haida people are engaged in:

> a struggle which is both 200 years old and just beginning - a struggle to maintain and enhance the productivity of our marine resources **and** to ensure that our culture can survive and flourish, based on our continuing stewardship of these resources including commercial and subsistence utilization" p. 250.

The importance of the fisheries resource to the Haida people should not be underestimated, and increased participation in the fishing industry would have a tremendous impact on the development of the community. And the issue of fisheries management in the Haida Gwaii region represents an important opportunity for the government to recognize a central aspect of the Haida's history and lifestyle, and to begin to work with an aboriginal nation with

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[97] This and the following comment were made in a submission to the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings by a non-aboriginal person who has been a resident of Haida Gwaii for 25 years and makes his living in the fishing industry.

respect and appreciation. As a Haida participant in the Sports Fishing Commission Hearings notes:

> Two hundred years ago the first of the British ships came. Although not the first or last foreigners, they brought the greatest elements of change. On the precise place where our ancestors and the arrivals first met 200 years ago in the northern waters of Duu Guusd Tribal Park, Haidas and Canadians are again faced with a new beginning.

Figure 16 A Troller

Endnotes

h. Pearse (1982) and the Commission on Pacific Fisheries Policy was charged with the task of finding ways to improve the conditions of the region's fisheries. The final report was published in 1982, and it included a substantial section dealing with aboriginal fishing.

i. Aboriginal people, for their part, agreed to the small reserves allocated to them on the understanding that their fishing rights and access to the resource were guaranteed.

j. In addition, the Haida, at the time of the commission hearings, also did not petition for additional lands because they feared that application for additional reserves might prejudice any possible action in connection with their identification with the movement for recognition of aboriginal title.

k. Blackman (1982), in her life history of a Haida woman, notes that the participant's family, like other Masset Haida, moved about frequently, remaining in Masset only in the late fall and winter months. At the end of February, the family moved to Kung, the site of an old village in Naden Harbour, where they camped for a month or more to dry halibut. At the beginning of April, they returned briefly to Masset before they left for Yatz, a former seal hunters' camp, where they fished for halibut. Again, they would then return to Masset briefly before going back to Yatz to pick dried seaweed. In late summer the family purchased and traded for fall salmon, and then finally went upriver to Ain and Yakoun to the fish camps to slice, smoke and later can, dog salmon and sockeye.

l. For an excellent description of methods for preserving fish, see Stewart (1977). She gives a detailed account of how fish were dried and smoked, or preserved through sun and wind drying, and she describes the traditional methods for preserving a number of fish species.

m. Pinkerton (1989) in fact suggests that pre-industrial and informal territorial systems worked particularly well in terms of resource management, with allocation done internally among group members according to clearly understood rules. This type of system alleviated the problem of competition and promoted fishing by the most economical means possible.

n. Stewart (1977) has produced an excellent description of traditional fishing methods in much more detail than I provide here.

o. According to Blackman (1982), one of the reasons for this incidence of sexual division of labour was based upon the taboos associated with menstruation; tools for fishing were in fact kept outside of the house, because menstruating women were believed to have powers capable of causing considerable damage, and it was thought to be unlucky if a woman even looked upon the fishing gear let alone went fishing.

p. In fact, an early European visitor to Haida Gwaii commented that "the women in trade, as well in everything else which came within our knowledge, appeared to govern the men; as no one dared to conclude a bargain without first asking his wife's consent" (Howay, 1941, as cited in Blackman, 1982).

q. Aboriginal groups generally accepted these closures because they were well aware of the need for closures for conservation and they did not entail any great sacrifice (Pinkerton, 1987).

r. In fact, the DFO recognized the potential for the Salmon Licensing Control Program as an additional cause of reduced participation of aboriginal peoples in the fishing industry. Consequently, the B.C. Fisherman's Assistance Program (IFAP) was implemented in 1968 with the stated purpose of making a worthwhile contribution to the economic well being of aboriginal peoples. The focus of the program was to arrest the rate of decline in the number of fishing vessels owned and operated by aboriginal people as compared to the fleet as a whole, and to improve the standard and quality of the existing aboriginal fleet in terms of capital value.

s. Again, the DFO recognized this problem in the implementation of the IFAP. Because aboriginal peoples are generally unable to obtain credit from usual lending institutions, loans were provided under this program for the purchase of new or used vessels, for the conversion, refurbishment or modification of vessels, and for the purchase of gear. This program had some success, but it was largely limited to a segment of the population, as the program was directed specifically toward fishing people of proven ability - individuals who owned or operated vessels or people who had fished as crew members on other vessels. For further details of this program, see McKay (1977).

t. It is also important to note that the DFO claims that a number of initiatives have been attempted to assist aboriginal people attempting to participate in the industry. For example, in 1969 and 1970, when an aboriginal person requested a category B rather than a category A licence because of the difference in the fees, the Department of Indian Affairs was notified and in many cases a payment of the A category fee was arranged. Also, there are special fees for aboriginal individuals or bands in the roe herring fishery and the spawn-on kelp licence categories. And in 1986, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provided funding to the Native Fishing Association to assist individual members of the Gitksan Tribal Council Bands to purchase 54 salmon licensed vessels from the former Cassier Packing fleet. The special provisions for aboriginal people established by the government are outlined in the DFO Commercial Fishing Licensing Policy Discussion Paper (1990).

u. The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia submitted a proposal for changes to aboriginal licensing policy to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in July, 1989, which called for the creation of separate defined aboriginal licence categories for all fisheries. The basis of their suggestion is the desire for increased ownership of vessels by aboriginal people. The proposal also calls for

the creation of an Indian Licensing Advisory Board, and for increased funding to be provided to the Native Fishing Association to provide loans to aboriginal people wanting to enter the fishing industry. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has stated that it supports the proposal, although it has not received the government funding required to make it operational (DFO, 1990). Cruikshank (1991) recommends that the Native Brotherhood proposal for funding be implemented and that special categories be continued. However, Cruikshank also recognizes that some of the aboriginal people he spoke with while preparing his report "despise the reduced fee licence as an exemplification of the form of federal government paternalism that destroys self-esteem and, inadvertently, singles out Native fishermen [sic] and relegates them to the status of second-class citizens", and the author suggests that the policy of reduced fee licenses be eliminated (p. 82).

v. In fact, because fishing is a risky business and the industry experiences extreme highs and lows, it is particularly important for government officials responsible for determining which aboriginal enterprises to support to realize that some failures in the fishing industry does not indicate that aboriginal fishing enterprises cannot succeed (Workshop Summary, 1985).

w. A Haida fisherman I spoke with indicated to me a number of problems with DFO management. He suggested that their policies are not consistently maintained, that they give in to pressure, and that they are deceptive and not accountable. He said "then the department of fisheries ran this non-retention by the seine fisheries. In area one - the area we're talking about - they put a ceiling of 5000 chinook for the seining fleet there. This was a good management plan, and accepted by all the fishermen and fisheries, and this went on for a few years. In Boulder Bay on the west side of the Charlottes, there's another Bay that they could target on chinook, and a ceiling of 5000 was put on there. They caught the ceiling in 12 hours, of 4400, and then they chose to open the season for two more days in area one with a non-retention, which is virtually a non-existent policy or program to save chinook. Something like 160 boats took part. Now 27 boats took part in the first 12 hours and caught 4400 chinook. How many chinook would 160 boats take in 48 hours? Well, it's astronomical. And one of the boats I know didn't throw his chinook overboard. So he had 15000 pounds of chinook in two days, and they usually equate chinook out at 20 pounds averages, so that comes out to 750 pieces. Multiply that by 160 units, and you're looking at a huge destruction of our resource. It doesn't matter how you do it. In Boulder Bay they continued the fishery for 7 days. In that area, one of the local seine boats in Skidegate was able to catch the ceiling by himself in different years, in 2 consecutive years. That gives you an idea how to extrapolate the number of chinook wasted. So I sent the material to the public advocacies office, and they went to the DFO to find out who issued the order, and they wouldn't release it, so they've gone into the public information act and endorsed it, and again were unable to get it so they went to the minister of free information. They're still working on it. These are some of the things that are going on."

x. In fact, in a letter written by a Haida fisherman to the DFO in 1985, he stated that the DFO must review abalone stock abundance, review growth rates, and consider curtailing the commercial harvest until further study demonstrated sufficient abundance of stocks to allow continued Haida use. Now, of course, the fishery has had to be closed.

y. The Price Waterhouse report (1989) cites several reasons for the relatively small involvement of aboriginal people in the sportsfishing sector; they have traditionally concentrated efforts on increasing their participation in the commercial fishing industry, and the initial capital costs of building lodges and establishing charter services is also prohibitive. Of the numerous operations on the B.C. Coast, only three are owned or operated by aboriginal groups - one by the Squamish Band, one by the Nanoose Band, and one by the Beecher Bay Band - all existing in Southwester B.C. The Campbell River Indian Band Development Corporation is also developing a marina project.

Chapter Four:

Conclusions

Summary of Findings

My aim throughout the research process was to promote an understanding of the Haida people and their perspectives. The direct action they are now taking can really be understood only in the context of the past centuries of exploitation and injustice, a history which is often ignored in current situations. The Haida once maintained a flourishing society, not only fulfilling their subsistence needs but allowing for the development of a rich and creative culture. Part of this heritage included an intimate relationship with the land and resources upon which they depended. The intertwining of their identity and system of beliefs with their environment made their later alienation from it more devastating, for it represented not only a loss of an economic necessity but also of a central aspect of their way of life.

What is also very important to remember in this scenario is that the Haida did not voluntarily change their customs or gradually develop their society to reflect different circumstances. Instead, they were decimated by the arrival of outsiders, who eventually came to control almost all aspects of their lives. Regulations that were part of a system which was completely unknown to them and which was never fully explained, resulted in the suspension of rights which had always belonged to the Haida.

The fisheries resource, central in the diet, economy, culture, and art of the Haida people, has been gradually usurped by other interests. The Haida were largely eliminated from the fishing industry through the introduction of the limited licensing system, through the increase in expense to maintain and run a boat, and through exploitation and corrupt measures in the early development of the industry. Today, it is extremely difficult for the Haida to reenter the fishing industry, as the capital investment required is beyond the reach of most, and the reserve system operates such that no property owned by a resident of a reserve can be used as collateral for borrowing funds. Some measures have been taken to protect aboriginal fishing people and provide them the money required to buy and operate a boat, but the success of these initiatives

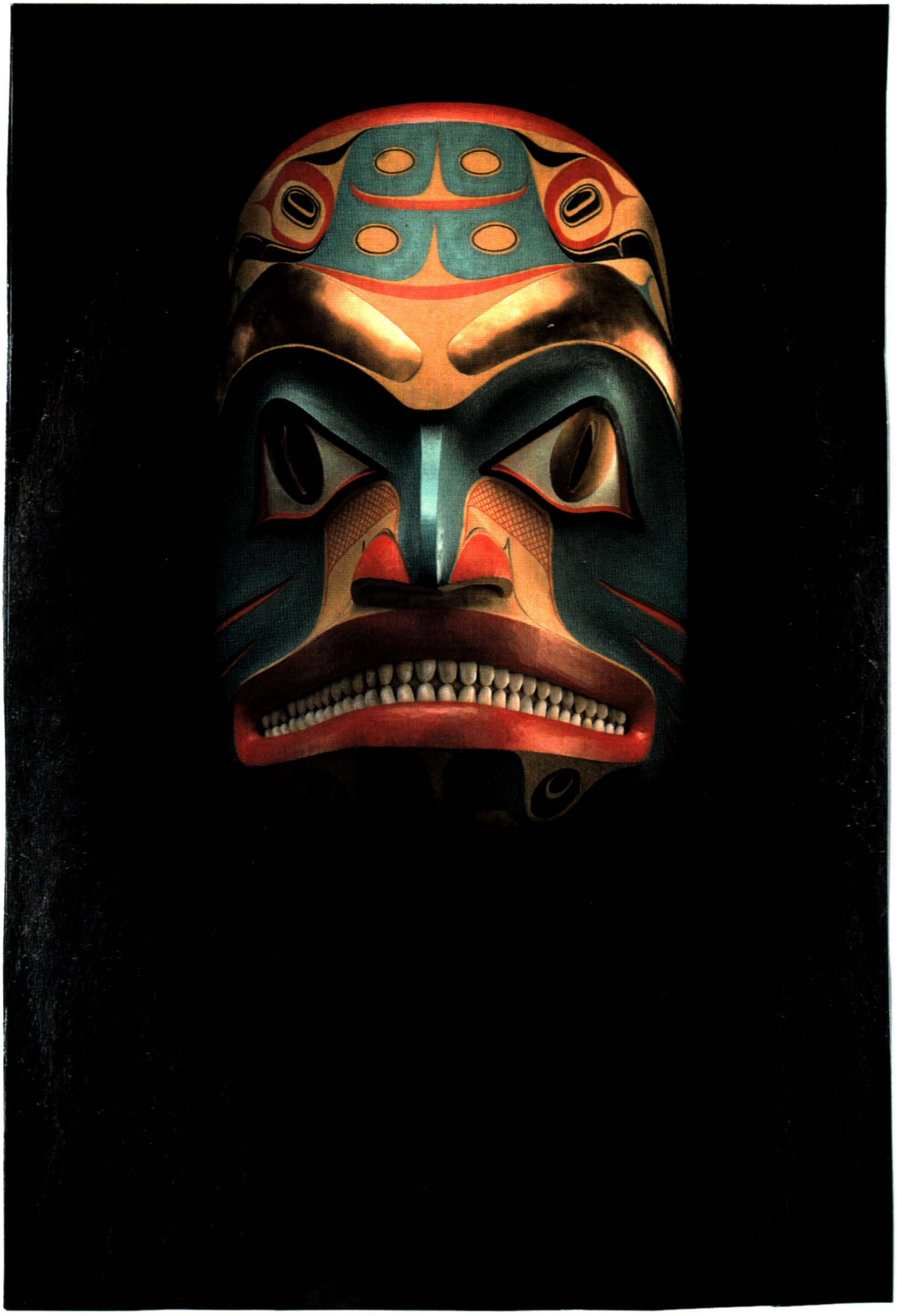

Figure 17 Robert Davidson's "Dogfish Mother" Garfinkle Publications

has been quite limited and the majority of the Haida people are still not able to participate in the commercial harvest of the fisheries resource.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this history, and the impacts have been devastating. Unemployment, already a serious problem in the community of Haida, has increased, and all of the social problems associated with unemployment - including alcoholism, violence and loss of self-esteem - are evident in Haida. Also, the people are angry and bitter about this situation, and attempts to establish a positive relationship between the Haida and the rest of Canada will be continually frustrated by what the Haida clearly view as injustices in the management of the fishing industry.

Evaluation of the Research

The grounding of this research in feminist theory, however, demands that presenting this interpretation of the Haida's history is not enough. Instead, action research - reunifying life and thought, action and knowledge, change and research - implies that as important as the development of this understanding is its use (Mies, 1991). This research must now be integrated into the emancipatory process, and an important consideration is how this insight is now going to be channelled back into the social context. A crucial role of the researcher is active participation in the dissemination of the results, and this work will not only be available in the academic community, but it will also be given to the Haida for their use. We have already supplied the Council of the Haida Nation lawyers with the findings, the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia has been offered a copy of these results, and other organizations working for the benefit of aboriginal peoples will also have access to the final reports. The findings outlined here will also be sent to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans when the Haida present papers and arguments in the future.

According to Jayaratne and Stewart (1991), when interpreting the results, researchers must ask what they might imply for the people's lives, and then suggest political strategies for change. In attempting a political analysis of findings, researchers can indicate possible policy changes. In the case of this research, I believe that an understanding of Haida position must be promoted, so that people are aware of the reasons for the Haida's actions and demands. The Haida need support from outside the community, and public pressure on the government can result in change. The Haida are aware of this fact, and the success of their struggle to have

South Moresby declared a National Park was in part attributable to the demands of people from across the country that the government protect the islands from development. The dissemination of information regarding their current disputes may again help convince people of the legitimacy of the Haida people's current actions.

Also, I think that it is very important to promote the concept of comprehensive co-management. Settling the land question is a necessary first step in this process, as questions of ownership must be addressed before any further development limits future options for those who eventually come to control the land. However, even if the land issue is resolved, the question of management will remain, and it is to everyone's benefit that cooperative systems that truly involve a variety of interest groups be established. Aboriginal peoples have for too long been ignored in the planning and policy implementation processes, and they must have a voice in any future decisions. This voice, it is important to note, must be heard at all levels of decision making, including policy development, implementation, and evaluation. If a cooperative management system is to succeed, aboriginal peoples must be involved in more than a consultative capacity; they must have an active, powerful role in a truly participatory process.

Similarly, aboriginal peoples, like other marginalized groups, must also be involved in the conduct of research which will have impacts on their lives. In this regard, I feel that this study has been highly successful. The Haida were central in the development of this work, helping to establish the issue to be considered, the techniques which were used for data collection, the analysis of the findings, and the dissemination of the results. Not only did this reflect a more comprehensive reality than would result from a researcher working more independently, but I also feel that this work has benefited from a variety of opinions and ideas, based on a much broader experience base than I alone could provide. I believe that the methods used were appropriate for the types of questions asked and the information required, which is generally descriptive and personal. Qualitative techniques promote understanding, which was my aim. And while it could be argued that I spent a relatively short period of time in Haida Gwaii, because the Haida themselves have already responded to the research results and have evaluated my findings, I am quite confident that they accurately reflect the Haida perspective of the situation. The Haida affirmed that my interpretations were reasonable, that my rendition of the facts was accurate, and that they felt nothing substantial had been overlooked. The Haida have indicated a satisfaction with the research process, and I was told by many people that they

appreciated the opportunity to be involved to the extent that they were and the chance to express themselves so fully.

Also, while the response from the research participants was generally favourable, the process was also very important for me. Jayaratne and Stewart (1991) suggest that it is important to make the research endeavour exciting, relevant and a profitable experience for the researcher. These criteria certainly apply to this thesis. Through this work I developed not only a greater understanding of the Haida people and their history, but I also gained insight into the position of aboriginal people in Canada by experiencing it so closely. Stereotypes were quickly dispelled through my exposure to an aboriginal reserve first hand, and my belief that Haida, just like any other community, is composed of many different individuals, was reinforced.

The Haida also taught me to remember the past but to look to the future. It would be easy for them to become trapped in bitterness about their history and the years of exploitation they have suffered. I expected to find this the case. Instead, I left Haida Gwaii with a sense of hope. When the date for their court case in Prince Rupert was nearing, several of the men who had been arrested for their involvement in the protest over sports fishing told me "it doesn't matter what the outcome is this time. If Bob Wright is back, we'll be back. We'll be there until Oak Bay either joins us or leaves". Patience is on the side of the Haida, who have been waiting for decades for justice.

This is not to say, however, that the Haida are willing to sit quietly and wait for recognition from a society which has for so long ignored their rights. As they have demonstrated through their actions in regard to what they view as an intrusion into their waters and a denial of their right to control their resources, the Haida are determined to gain for themselves what they have been denied - the power to direct their own futures. Their efforts in this regard are becoming more and more assertive, and as their frustration grows so does their willingness to take aggressive action. As I was reminded during my stay with the Haida people, they are not asking to be "given" anything; the Haida people are simply demanding recognition of what has always been theirs - their land and waters, and control over their own lives.

Figure 18 Bill Reid's "The Raven and the First People". A MOA Production

APPENDIX 1

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Information to be gathered from the CHN executive:

1. How important is the fishing resource to the people of Haida Gwaii? to its economy?
2. How many Haida fishing boats are there? How many Haida fishing people? What proportion of the population depends directly on the fishing industry? indirectly?
3. What has been the trend in Haida participation in the fishing industry? recently? during the past several years? historically?
4. What does the CHN hope will be the trend in the coming years?
5. How have changes in the use of the fisheries resource effected life on Haida Gwaii? Have there been any impacts associated with changes in the fishing industry in the Langara Island area? Which of these have been most significant?

I will also ask the CHN members for any statistics available regarding: population growth rates, income levels, education levels, housing availability ... standard quality of life measures.

Information to be gathered from Haida fishing people:

1. What is your participation in the fishing industry?
2. Has the nature of your involvement changed? in what ways? resulting in what effects for you / your family?
3. How do you feel the fishing industry in general has changed? recently? during the past several years? historically?
4. What do you feel have been the effects of these changes for the Haida people?

Information to be gathered from Haida elders:

1. How important has the fisheries resource traditionally been to the Haida people?

2. same as three and four above.

APPENDIX 2

A GUIDE TO FISHING LICENCE CATEGORIES[98]

According to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (1990), a "commercial fishing licence" refers to a document issued:

i) to a person authorizing that person to engage in a fishery for a named species of fish, using a specified vessel and specified gear, and other conditions which may be needed for proper management; or

ii) to a commercial fishing vessel, specifying the category of commercial fishing that the vessel is authorized to engage in, the species of fish that may be caught and the gear to be used in accordance with the terms of that document.

As the DFO itself notes, the current categorization of licences is complex, and the alphabetic designations of particular licence categories have become dated and are now limited in their usefulness to identify particular fisheries or the species being fished (DFO, 1990). Or, as Cruikshank states in his report[99], "thinking back to 1969, could anyone have imagined the alphabetic confusion that was to evolve from those simple A B C designations?" (p. 10).

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[98] The information contained within this appendix is almost all from The Department of Fisheries and Oceans' Pacific Coast Commercial Fishing Licensing Policy Discussion Paper, 1990. See that document for further dentils regarding licensing and specific requirements for each category.

[99] Cruikshank, Don. (1991). A Commission of Inquiry into Licensing and Related Policies of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The Fisherman's Report. Victoria: T.D. Mock and Associates.

The following is a list and brief explanation of the categories used for licensing commercial fisheries:

Salmon: Categories A, AI, B and N Licences

Salmon A category licenses were the first issued under the Davis Plan in 1969 to vessels which had a recorded catch of 10 000 pounds or more of pink or chum salmon or the equivalent. When applying for an A licence, the owner of a vessel geared for trolling must choose whether to fish inside or outside the Strait of Georgia, but there are no area restrictions applied to vessels using only gillnet or seine gear. Where a vessel has combination gear, there are some limited area restrictions which apply.

Category AI licences are available for aboriginal fishing people. In this case, a reduced fee is payed annually, but the vessel to which an AI licence is issued may only be sold to another aboriginal person.

Category B salmon licenses were first issued in 1967 or 1968 to commercial fishing vessels that had a recorded catch of less than 10 000 pounds of pink or chum salmon. It was argued that these vessels traditionally participated in the salmon fishery only during peak runs, and that their exclusion from the fishery would detrimentally affect the owner's long term income and vessel values. In 1970, a phase-out period for these licences was announced, and there is currently only one B licence still being issued by the Minister.

Category N salmon licenses were created in 1983 when B.C. Packers Ltd. sold 243 vessels and 252 licenses to the Northern Native Fishing Corporation (NNFC). The NNFC retains the licence privilege, although vessels may be sold to individual aboriginal fishing people. Thus, category N licenses are personal licenses held by the NNFC. They are issued upon the relinquishment or retirement of a category A salmon licence by the NNFC for each N licence issued.

General Species: Category C Licences

The category C licence was introduced when limited entry began in the salmon fishery in 1969 and it originally authorized commercial fishing for all non-salmon species. This licence category became subject to entry limitation itself in 1977. The C category licence permits fishing

for a number of species of fish using various types of gear for which no other category of licence is required.

Abalone: Category E Licences

In 1975 and 1976, the number of vessels participating in the abalone fishery increased dramatically. As a result, a limited entry scheme for abalone licensing was initiated in 1977, with licences available to those individuals who: i) had made a recorded catch of abalone in any year preceding 1977 of a value greater than $2 000; and ii) produced documents showing that the earnings from the abalone catch represented more than 50 percent of total earnings. Abalone licences are personal and non-transferable, and individual quotas have been introduced into the fishery.

Geoduck and Horse Clam: Category G Licences

The harvest of geoduck and horse clams was regulated through a permit system pursuant to the British Columbia Fishery Regulations until an increase in vessels landing this catch increased to a point requiring a limited entry program. A licence category was then introduced in 1983. After that time, licences were issued to vessels where the owner: i) could produce authorization from the Pacific Region Director General of Fisheries and Oceans to harvest geoduck and horse clams by means of diving from a commercial fishing vessel; and ii) had marketed a minimum of 13 500 kg of both species in any combination during the year of 1978 or during the period commencing January 1, 1979 and ending December 31, 1980. Licences now restrict the quantity of geoduck that may be caught through individual quotas, as well as the area in which the licence is designated to fish.

Roe Herring: Category H and HI Licences

The roe herring licence has been issued as a limited category licence since 1974, when licences were issued by persons owning substantial or all shares of a gillnet or seine geared roe herring fishing vessel. The criteria for obtaining this licence was participation in the 1972 and 1973 roe herring fishery, and individuals were eligible to apply for one licence for each vessel

fished during those years. Roe herring licences are personal licences issued to both individuals and companies, and as a result they may be leased to other operators. Category H licences are issued annually with restrictions as to the use of either seine or gillnet gear, and to the area in which the licence can be fished.

Reduced fee roe herring licences also exist for aboriginal fishing people, and if a holder of a reduced fee roe herring licence does not reapply for an annual licence renewal the licence will then be issued to another aboriginal person.

Spawn-on-Kelp: Category J Licences

Category J licences have been issued to individuals or aboriginal bands as a limited licence since 1975, and among the criteria used to determine entry into the fishery were whether the applicant was an aboriginal person or group, their previous experience in ponding herring, and the place of residence of the applicant. Licence holders are required to operate the licence, gear requirements may be applied, and restrictions may be included with respect to the construction, type and number of enclosures used, and with respect to the type, marking and dimensions of containers used to pack the product. The date of harvest and area of operation of the catcher vessel and ponding are also specified. Each licence also restricts the maximum weight of spawn-on-kelp which may be taken and processed.

In 1989, an additional 10 licences were issued to aboriginal bands only, with the requirement that an equivalent herring roe fishery licence be retired first in order to ensure a sustainable level of herring roe harvest.

Sablefish (Black Cod): Category K Licences

The black cod fishery became limited in 1981 after an increase in vessels fishing the species threatened to disrupt the fishery. These licences were issued to commercial fishing vessels if: i) the owner could produce records demonstrating that the vessels was used to catch black cod in 1978 or 1979, and that it fulfilled the catch requirement; or ii) the owner could produce records demonstrating that in 1978 or 1979 expenditures had been made for equipment for freezing or catching black cod amounting to a minimum requirement. The licences are now subject to an annual quota.

Halibut: Category L Licences

This fishery has been subject to licence limitation since 1979, when vessels with a recorded catch of 1360 kg of halibut during 1977 or 1978 were issued licences. An additional 10 special halibut licences were issues to aboriginal people who rented vessels owned by large companies and who depended on halibut for a large portion of their income. There is an annual quota set for each licence, and vessels without a category L licence are not permitted to retain incidentally caught halibut.

Crabs: Category R Licences

This licence category has been issued to commercial fishing vessels since the start of 1990, prior to which time crabs were fished under the authority of a number of vessel licences. In 1991, this licence category became limited, and eligibility for entry was based on a 6804 kg cumulative recorded landing over the three year period from 1978 to 1989, and the ownership of a 1990 R licence. Crab licences are restricted in terms of the gear used and the area fished during each year.

Shrimp Trawl: Category S Licences

The licence limitation program for shrimp trawl fishing was initiated in 1977 in response to a rapid expansion of the fishery and stock declines. There are no area or quota restrictions which apply to licences issued in this category.

Groundfish Trawl: Category T Licences

The limited entry program for groundfish trawl fishing has existed since 1976 following an increase in the trawl fleet and a collapse of the groundfish markets. A review of the fleet resulted in the announcement of a licence limitation restricting entry to vessels with a recorded catch of groundfish by trawl gear in 1973, 1974 or 1975.

Special Fisheries: Category Z

(Green Sea Urchin: Category ZA Licences; Red Sea Urchin: Category ZC Licences; Sea Cucumber: Category ZD Licences; Squid Species: Category ZE Licences; Zooplankton: Category ZF Licences; Shrimp Trap (Prawns): Category ZH Licences; Rockfish: Category ZN Licences)

The category Z fishing licence was first issued in 1983 for named species of fish and specified types of gear. Each licence may be used for fishing with or without a vessel, but area restrictions may be specified. Eligibility is based on a number of criteria specific for each species fished.

Special Licences also exist for packing, processing and export of fisheries resources.

AFTERWORD

THE RAVEN AND THE FIRST HUMANS

Resources of the sea are an essential aspect of much of the Haida oral histories. In fact, it was from a clam shell that the first humans emerged to inhabit Haida Gwaii. The story as it is presented here was retold by Haida carver Bill Reid.

The great flood which had covered the earth for so long had at last receded and even the thin strip of sand stretching north from Naikun, which we now call Rose Spit, lay dry. The Raven had flown there to gorge himself upon the delicacies left by the falling water, and so for a change wasn't hungry. But his other appetites, lust, curiosity, the unquenchable desire to interfere and change things, to play tricks on the world and its creatures, these remained unsatisfied.

He had recently stolen the light from the old man who had kept it hidden in a box in his house in the middle of darkness, and scattered it throughout the sky where it spattered across the night and dazzled the day with a single bright shining. Under it now, the long beach that curved between the spit where he stood and Tao Hill lay quiet and deserted, and to the Raven, infinitely boring. He walked along the sand, his shiny head cocked, his sharp eyes and ears alert for any unusual sight or sound. In frustration he called petulantly to the empty sky and to his delight heard an answering cry, though from his great height it was no more than an obscure muffled squeak.

At first he saw nothing, but as he looked again a flash of white caught his eye, and there right at his feet, half buried in the sand, was a gigantic clamshell. He looked more closely and saw that the shell was full of little creatures cowering in terror in his enormous shadow.

Well, here was a diversion, something to break the monotony of his day. But it wasn't much fun as long as the silly things stayed in their shell. And they certainly weren't going to come out in their present terrified state. So he leaned his great head close and with the smooth trickster's tongue that had got him into and out of so many misadventures during his troubled and troublesome existence, he coaxed and cajoled and coerced them to come out and play in his wonderful new shiny world. As you know, the Raven speaks in two voices, one harsh and strident; the other, which he used now, a seductive bell-like croon, certainly one of the most

beautiful sounds in the world. So it wasn't long until the first one, and then another of the little shell dwellers emerged. Some of them immediately scurried back when they saw the immensity of the sea and the overwhelming blackness of the Raven. But eventually curiosity overcame caution and they all clambered out. Very curious creatures they were; two legged like the Raven, but there the resemblance ended. No glossy feathers, no thrusting beak, but pale skin, naked except for the long black hair on their round, flat-featured heads; instead of strong wings, thin stick-like appendages that waved and fluttered constantly - the original Haidas, the first humans.

For a long time the Raven amused himself with his new playthings, watching them as they explored their suddenly expanded world, sometimes helping each other in new discoveries, as often squabbling over some novelty they found on the beach. He taught them clever tricks at which they were very adept.

But the Raven's attention span was very brief and soon he was again bored in spite of the strange antics of his little companions. For one thing, he noticed they were all males. And no matter how hard he looked, he failed to find any females to make his games with the Haida more interesting.

Suddenly, he had an idea and lost no time in putting it into practice. He picked up the men, one by one, and in spite of their struggles and cries of fright, put them on his broad back where they hid themselves among his feathers. When he had picked up the last one, the Raven spread his wings and flew rapidly to North Island and landed on a beach near a high rock which at low tide was covered with big red chitons. He shook himself gently and the men slid down his back to the sand. He left them there and flew to the rock, and with his strong beak pried a chiton from its surface. Now if any of you have ever examined the underside of a chiton, you may begin to get an idea of what the Raven had in his devious, libidinous mind. He threw back his head and flung the chiton at the nearest of the men. His aim was a unerring as only that of a great magician's can be, and the chiton found its mark in the delicate groin area of the shell-born creature, where it attached itself firmly. As rapidly as spray falls on the shore after the breaking of a wave, the Raven showered the rest of the group with chitons, each inexorably flying to its own target.

Nothing remotely like this had ever happened to the men during their long childhood in the clamshell. They were astounded, embarrassed, confused by a rush of new sensations, emotional and physical. They became more and more agitated, uncertain whether it was pain or pleasure or both they were experiencing. They threw themselves on the beach and suddenly a

great storm seemed to break over them, followed just as suddenly by an intense calm. One by one, the chitons dropped off. The men staggered to their feet and began slowly to walk down the beach, followed by the raucous laughter of the Raven which re-echoed all the way to the great island of the north we now call Prince of Wales.

They eventually disappeared behind the nearest headland and passed out of the games of the Raven and the story of mankind. Whether they found their way back to their shell or lived out their lives elsewhere, or perished in the strange environment in which they found themselves, nobody remembers or cares. They had played their parts and gone their way.

Meanwhile, the chitons had been making their way back to the rock where they attached themselves as before. But they too had been changed. As high tide followed low, and the great storms of winter gave way to the softer rains and warm sun of spring, the chitons grew and grew, many times larger than their kind had ever been before. It seemed as though their jointed shells were about to fly apart from the enormous pressure inside them. And one day a huge wave swept over the rock and tore them from their footholds and carried them to the beach. As the water receded, the warm sun dried the sand, and soon there was a great stirring among the chitons. From each emerged a brown-skinned, black-haired human, and this time there were both males and females, and the Raven could begin his greatest game, one that still goes on.

No timid shell dwellers these, children of the wild coast, born between the sea and the land, to challenge the strength of the stormy North Pacific and wrest from it a rich livelihood. Their descendants would build on its beaches the strong, beautiful homes of the Haidas and embellish them with the powerful heraldic carvings that told of the legendary beginnings of the great families, all the heroes and heroines, the gallant beasts and monsters that shaped their world and their destinies. For many, many generations they grew and flourished, built and created, fought and destroyed, lived according to the changing seasons and the unchanging rituals of their rich and complex lives.

It's nearly over now. Most of the villages are abandoned and in ruins. The people who remain are changed. The sea has lost much of its richness and great areas of the land itself lie in waste. Perhaps it's time that the Raven or someone found a way to start again.

This version of the story has been reproduced by the UBC Museum of Anthropology. See Museum Note No. 8.

ADDENDUM

Since the writing of this thesis, there have been two major developments in the management of the fisheries of Haida Gwaii. After two summers of protest over the sports fishing operators in their waters and twelve arrests, the Haida have finally reached some agreement with both the federal and provincial government regarding management of the fisheries resource.

The first development is the agreement reached between the government of the province of British Columbia and the Council of the Haida Nation.[1] In July, 1992 the government and the Haida Nation signed an interim measures agreement to provide more effective management of the recreational fishing industry of Haida Gwaii through the implementation of the CHN 1992 Management Plan and the development of a framework and process to address management issues beyond the 1992 season. According to this arrangement, both parties agree that there is a need for further regulation in the interests of conservation and in order to protect Haida Gwaii ecosystems and fisheries resources. Both groups also agree to work cooperatively to implement a strategy to encourage voluntary registration with the CHN's 1992 Management Plan, and the government endorses the Haida Gwaii Watchman Program. The government is committed to working with the CHN to explore options for effective long term management of the recreational fishing industry, which will include: i) consideration of mechanisms for joint stewardship; ii) an evaluation of licensing or registration requirements to limit levels of recreational fishing accommodation and fishing activity in areas designated in the 1992 Management Plan; and iii) a consideration of enforcement provisions to ensure compliance with licensing or registration requirements. The province also agrees to provide or assist the Council of the Haida Nation to secure funding for the implementation of the 1992 Management Plan to a maximum of $280 000, and to maintain the moratorium on the issuance of Crown Land leases for the purposes of establishing a recreational fishing business during 1992.

The Haida have also reached an agreement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to join in talks regarding possibilities for joint management of the fishery in the ocean waters

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1 Interim Measures Agreement: A Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Stewardship Between the Government of the Province of British Columbia and the Council of the Haida Nation. Unpublished.

surrounding Haida Gwaii. This agreement is still in the early stages, and few details have been worked out. Although not as well developed as the agreement with the province, however, the Haida people I have spoken with since the signing of these agreements are very positive about both. The Haida hope that they represent a new future for dealing with non-aboriginal society, and they feel that their views are finally being taken seriously.

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