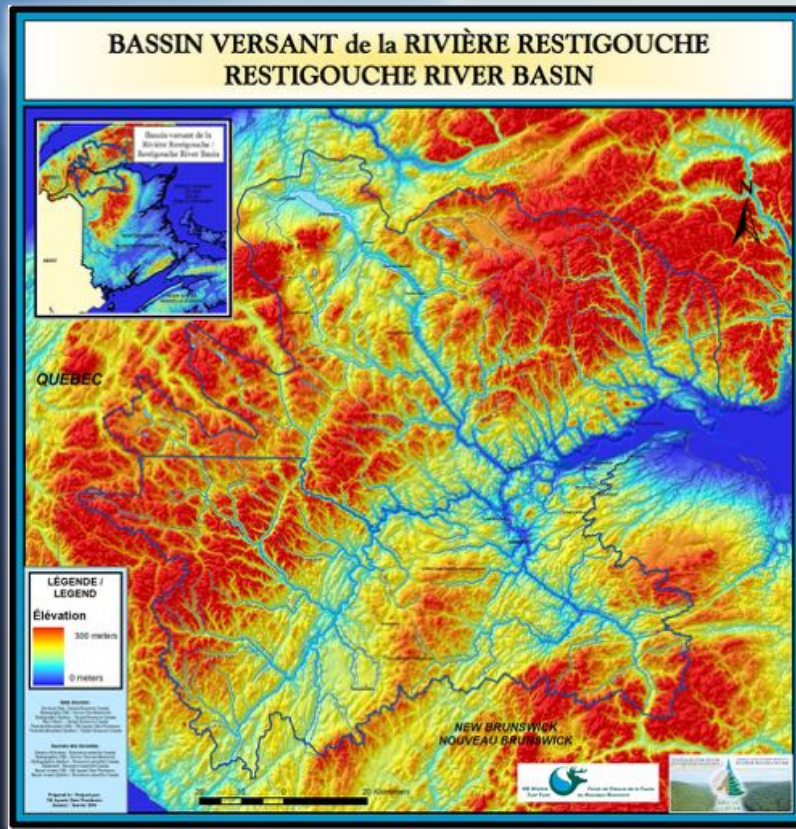


Uncommon Waters

- Communities and Cultures of the Restigouche Watershed, their health and survival, and Conservation of the Atlantic Salmon



The Research -

- Addresses intercultural conflict over a natural resource. Unresolved, the survival of the species, cultures and rural communities are at risk.
- Its importance is based on the fact that conflict over natural resources is a universal indicator in the twenty-first century struggle for cultural, species and rural community survival.

Aboriginal Transformations/ Issues

- Listuguj Atlantic Salmon Fishery
 - From exclusion to exercise of “rights”
 - Cultural survival - Plamu as symbol
 - Species survival - Conservation of Atlantic salmon
 - Governance: Mi'gmaq law - education and enforcement
 - Protocols for relations with stakeholders - Federal and Provincial governments, Camp Owners

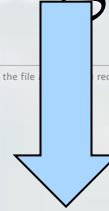
The Research is -

- Interdisciplinary and Qualitative
- Participatory: I belong to one of the three communities and have been directly engaged with the other two.
- Narrative based: Our stories reveal our ethics.
- Critical - Change: For survival of cultures, communities and a species - the Atlantic salmon
- Constructivist: “Telling it like it is!” It is what it is said to be.
- Interpretist: “What’s going on? How might it be explained?”

Where is the Restigouche?



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Mi'kMa'ki: Gespe'gewaq Listuguj - People of the Last Land



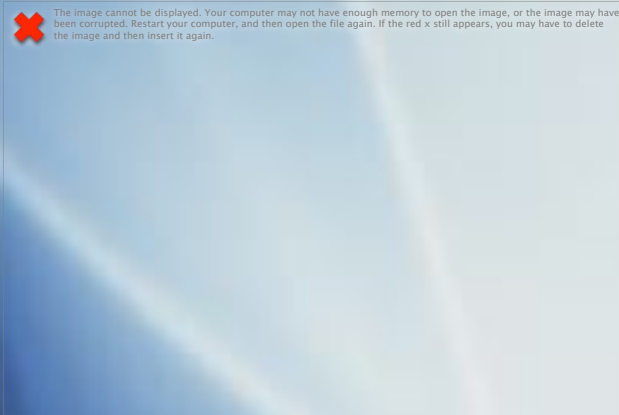
Three Communities -Three Cultures: Their Stories and Their Survival

The People of Listuguj: Mi'gmaq Culture

Non-indigenous residents: Settler
communities and cultures - Quebecois,
Acadian, “English”

Sport Fishers: “Come from away”, camp
owners and guests

Ecologies of the Heart: Mi'gmaq of Listuguj, Settlers, Anglers



- Three Communities and Cultures sharing a common Place and a common Symbolic animal touching their -
 - Emotions
 - Beliefs
 - Identities and
 - Meanings.

Home to the Atlantic Salmon

A world class fishery. Visiting British Photo-Journalist

- The same place,
- The same animal:
 - Different identities
 - Different meanings
 - Different ways of understanding
 - Different practices.
- Three communities and cultures:
 - “We are conflicted and entangled but we need to be untangled and rewoven.”



Salmon: A Common Symbol

a basis for the formation of communities, defining the differences and communicating between communities.



- Is part of “who we are” - forms and defines communities.
- Also differentiates between communities - different practices.
- Symbolic both of conflict and of co-operation.
- Affects Ownership, Livelihood, Economy and Power.

Survival of Atlantic Salmon

- Bad and better seasons...yes, but...
- Commercial fishery closed in 1971.
- Declines in numbers and size of fish seen in the watershed and in rod catches.
- Spawning escapement still well below what is deemed necessary by DFO, Quebec and Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government.

Uncommon Practices:

Mi'gmaq Gillnet Food Fishery

Sport Fishing “Live Release”



- Grounded in and Inform our ways of Understanding:
 - Mi'gmaq EK
 - Western Science
 - Management
 - Agency – Participatory Control

“We are conflicted and entangled...”

- When we choose our narratives (stories), we choose our ethics (practices). Our stories determine our values and our behavior.
- *Hear the story. Accept the story. Understand the story. Deepen the story.*



The Story of 1981

“Incident at Restigouche” by Alanis Obomsawin – NFB

Mig’witetmnew

- *The events of 1981 remain the symbol of our fight with governments for our rights.*

Everyone talked about how important it was and still is. For the Mi’gmaq of Listuguj, it remains the event that marks the beginning of their “Comeback”.

A Narrative Approach

“When we choose our narratives, we choose our ethics.”

David Brooks

- Over sixty interviews with members of all three communities.
- Construction of “Core Narratives”
- “Telling it like it is” – Sharing the narratives.

What the People of Listuguj told me about their neighbours:

- They acknowledged the long history of contact, including inter-marriage and shared schooling, but...
- They reported a history of racially based injustice, including exclusion from the salmon fishery, loss of the use of their land and waters, segregation on and off the reserve, poverty and unemployment based on racial exclusion from job opportunities.
- Nevertheless, they expressed a desire to be in relationship with their neighbours.

What the People of Listuguj told me about Anglers

- The sport fishing “camps” are owned by “millionaires”, who make a lot of money from them.
- Plamu caught and then released die.
- Anglers use and damage a resource that is to us a source of food, wellbeing and cultural survival.
- The fact that in the recent past we were prohibited from fishing, while the sport fishers were enabled, is an injustice.
- Present environmental crisis is their doing.
- There is no relationship between anglers and us.

Conservation of the salmon

- The Listuguj First Nation says:
 - *As long as the waters run, the salmon will return and we will fish for them - women and young people included.*
 - *More needs to be done by governments*
 - *Spring spawners allowed upriver - limits to fishing*
 - *Mi'gmaq Fishing Plan and Law of 1994*
 - *Integrated Mi'gmaq Environmental Knowledge (MEK) and Western Science (Gespe'gewaq Mi'gmaq Resource Council and Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government)*
 - *Cooperation on research between GMRC and RRWMC*
 - *Salmon Summits in 2014 and 2015.*

“Tell it like it is!”

Different Ways of Knowing

Anglers

- History is irrelevant.
- The past is past.
- Our environment is best understood by objectifying it for study, analysis and management.

Listuguj

- We have “memories”, not history.
- The past is always present.
- We are “at one” with the land, animals and others.
- Experiences of exclusion

“Tell it like it is!”

Conflicted Narratives

Listuguj

- A caught and released salmon is a dead salmon.
- Private camps make lots of money.
- Sport fishing damages the salmon resource.
- As long as the waters run, the salmon will return.
- Want to be in relationship.
- Management: whose responsibility?

Anglers and Settlers

- “Live release” is a key to conservation.
- The Listuguj salmon fishery is unregulated.
- With rights come responsibilities for ensuring survival of the salmon.
- Salmon are threatened and may not survive.

The Core Narratives

- Anglers:- *Conservation*
 - Of the Atlantic Salmon of the Restigouche
 - Of our sporting and social traditions
- Settlers:- *Survival*
 - Of our communities and their cultures
 - Of a healthy environment and a rural way of life
 - Of our economy
- Listuguj:- *Revival*
 - Of a healthy community, exercising its rights
 - Through traditional practices, including governance, language, spirituality, Mi'kmaq knowledge and economic development.

A “Wicked Problem”?

- “Wicked problems have cause-effect relationships that are difficult or impossible to define, cannot be framed and solved without creating controversies among stakeholders and require collective action among societal groups with strongly held, conflicting beliefs and values.”
- Are we, in the words of Alistair MacLeod, “Prisoners in the depths of our own languages”?

Changing Practices

A social learning process

- Anglers - From catch and kill to...
- Live Release



Non-indigenous Residents



- From commercial fishery to conservation and reliance upon sport fishery for employment and local spending.
- Tourism

First Nations

- From exclusion by “rules” to assertion of rights and practices, self regulation, traditional and scientific research, leadership in cooperation for conservation.



Building Bridges: “Reweaving” between Communities and Cultures



- Working and learning together leads to greater inclination and ability to act together.
- Social networks - who people know - lead to wanting to do things for each other - building Social Capital.
- Planning, learning, common programs, shared commitment and reciprocity, lead to trust and strengthened leadership groups...

Working, Learning and Surviving Together... Salmon Summits!



- Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government – (LMG) Fisheries
- Gespe'gwaq Mi'gmaq Resource Council (GMRC)
- Restigouche River Watershed Management Council (RRWMC)
- Governments and NGOs



Roles of RRWMC & GMRC



- Being intentional about bridge building by:
 - Existing, meeting, working together to turn weak links into strong ties.
 - Listening “Hear the story. Accept the story. Understand the story. Deepen the story.”
 - A Forum for “untangling” and re-weaving”.

Role of Riparian Owners and Anglers?

- To recognise and respect the other communities and cultures of the watershed, including:
 - Their dependence on and love of the “Place”.
 - Their “right” to determine and live in their own ways.
- To build non-directive, learning, relationships with both Listuguj and non-indigenous residents, through the RRWMC, Salmon Summits and other, informal, initiatives.

Collaborative Roles?

Governments

- Federal – DFO
- Provincial – Quebec
- Provincial – New Brunswick
- Listuguj Mi'gmaq Gov.
- Local Municipalities

NGOs

- RRWMC
- GMRC
- Atalantic Salmon Federation
- NB Salmon Council
- Federation québécoise pour le saumon atlantique
- Affiliates – local groups
- RRCOA

Interpretist:

Data in search of a Theory

- Post-colonial context - Colonised by French, British, Canada (1867) and non-resident riparian owners and leasees. Truth and Reconciliation Report, The “Comeback”, Treaty Peoples to a Treaty Nation?
- Collaborative, networked and partnered governance
- Symbolic interactionism - Meaning making in the context of environment - Dewey
- Social Learning - Creating a new “Community of Practice” for change.
- Creating Social Capital for survival, conservation, and revival.
- Bridging, Bonding and Identity

Thank you, Walalin Plamu!

