

# What of the place in place-based development?

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Identity, territory and place: Exploring regional governance of the Gander River, central Newfoundland

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*Salmon Brook Falls* (J. Daniels)

*The Works, near river mouth* (J. Daniels)



(Map Credit: C. Conway)

# The Gander River

- Guiding, fishing, hunting, logging, dev't of Nfld. railway (Glenwood)
- “Highway” between Gander Bay and Glenwood
- Angling and commercial outfitting



# The Gander River

- Integrated Non- Status & status Mi'kmaq and non Aboriginal communities
  - Formation of landless band: Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation (Sept. 2011)



# Research Approach

- Postcolonial and Indigenous methodologies
  - **24 Semi-structured and unstructured interviews:**
    - Regional planner (1); DFO (2); Dept. NR (1); Private business sector (3); Municipal/Local Service District councillors (2); Mik'maq Band members (3); FNI-River Guardians (3); Gander Bay and Glenwood Band chiefs (2); Local residents (3); Gander River Mgmt Assoc. Board (3); Gander Chamber of Com. (1);
  - **participant observation**
  - **research diary**
  - **Review of PB dev't, resource geographies, place & identity lit.**

# Place-based Development

- Reaction to more conventional forms of development
- Territorial approach to planning and development
- Associated with 'bottom-up' or grass-roots modes of governance
- What place? Whose place?

# Questions

- *Is your home where you live? (i.e. do you consider the place you are living as home?)*
- *What is your history with the river?*
- *In what ways has this environment affected your personal identity, livelihood and /or sense of wellbeing?*
- *What are the top 3 strengths or unique aspects of the region?*
- *What are the future opportunities and challenges for you/your organization in the Gander River Watershed?*

# Understanding place

- Multiple meanings of place as a key component in understanding place politics (incl. natural resources)
- Geography- people's interactions and experience in the world
- Place vs. space
- Bio-physical element of place- key in territory-people's lifeway(s)
- Place cannot be limited to spatial locality

...multiple places



# ...multiple places



- the resource (river and salmon) to be managed and regulated
- One of the area's biggest assets
- Place for local economic ventures (both "above board" and "underground") and development
- Source of program funding

# ...multiple places

- “the run”
- family lived, worked, traveled and played here
  - “Riverman”, river child
- Link to town- GB
- “Irving meetings” and Kitchen chats
- “Where I do what I love”
- Less travelled than before; cleaner than in the past



# Region and Identity

- Who bounds the region?  
For what purpose?
- Who perpetuates regional identity?
- Identity as *All My Relations- Msit Nogma*
- Shared identities around river



*Gander River Boats, Appleton* (J. Daniels)

*Forth Pond, Main Stem* (J. Daniels)



# Making places become



*Counting fish, Salmon Brook Falls* (J. Daniels)

- Places have complex histories and geographies
- People's relationships (with people and environment) are diverse
- Revealing place in our place-based research;
  - opening places up and moving PB dev't beyond a reaction to conventional forms of dev't and mgmt

# Thank you!

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- CRRF and NAF



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A Critical Review of Theory,  
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Un examen critique du théorie, de  
pratique et des potentiels