

Journal of Rural and Community Development

Western Newfoundland's Anti-Fracking Campaign: Exploring the Rise of Unexpected Community Mobilization

Authors: Angela V. Carter & Leah M. Fusco

Citation:

Carter, A. V., & Fusco, L. M. (2017). Western Newfoundland's anti-fracking campaign: Exploring the rise of unexpected community mobilization. *The Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 12(1), 98-120.



**BRANDON
UNIVERSITY**

Founded 1899

Publisher: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

Editor: Dr. Doug Ramsey

Open Access Policy:

This journal provides open access to all of its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge. Such access is associated with increased readership and increased citation of an author's work.



Western Newfoundland's Anti-Fracking Campaign: Exploring the Rise of Unexpected Community Mobilization

Angela V. Carter¹

Department of Political Science
University of Waterloo
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
avcarter@uwaterloo.ca

Leah M. Fusco

Department of Geography and Planning
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
fuscol@geog.utoronto.ca

Abstract

This article aims to account for the unexpected rise of community mobilization against hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in western Newfoundland, Canada, since 2012. The oil industry is a significant economic driver in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and historically there has been very limited organized local public opposition to oil extraction in the province. Moreover, the western Newfoundland region is characterized by economic hardship and limited experience mobilizing against development projects, factors unlikely to foster mobilization. Yet in 2012, highly organized, dynamic, and broad-ranging opposition to fracking arose in this region, contributing to the provincial government's de facto moratorium on fracking and creation of an external review process, the result of which makes fracking unlikely in the near future. Drawing predominantly on fieldwork and interviews from across the region, we attempt to understand this rise of community mobilization first by referencing McAdam and Boudet's (2012) framework, which explores the key variables of political opportunities, civic capacity, and community context. However, finding that this framework cannot fully account for the rise of mobilization in western Newfoundland, we discuss what we understand as the central factors in this case: the dynamics of local citizens building a globally informed yet locally resonant anti-fracking campaign.

Keywords: hydraulic fracturing (fracking); oil development; community mobilization; Western Newfoundland; Newfoundland and Labrador

1.0 Introduction

Canada's expanding oil and gas sector has increasingly met public concern over the past decade: prominent moments of social contention have arisen across the country against the expansion of Alberta's tar sands industry; pipelines heading

¹ Authors are listed alphabetically by convention; both contributed equally.

west and east from Alberta; fracking in the Yukon, British Columbia, Québec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia; and liquefied natural gas infrastructure in British Columbia. However, organized community opposition to this oil and gas activity has hardly been uniform across the country—indeed, it is noticeably muted in some provinces. Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) is a prominent case in point.² NL has become deeply reliant on the offshore oil sector and while scientists and non-governmental organizations have periodically raised concerns about the environmental impacts of oil development and critiqued the province's environmental regulatory response, these critiques did not lead to local public mobilization against oil extraction.

This changed, however, in the fall of 2012 when organized social opposition arose against a small energy company's proposal to use fracking technology in western Newfoundland. Opposition grew from a few concerned community members in western Newfoundland to multiple organizations across the province that drew on an international network of anti-fracking groups. This local mobilization pressured the provincial government to place a de facto moratorium on fracking and establish an external review of the technology, the results of which have made fracking unlikely in the near future. What explains this unprecedented, well-organized local mobilization against this proposed oil project? Why and how did this mobilization arise?

Our response to this question is broadly informed by social movement literature, which encouraged us to examine how resources, organizations, and the wider political context influenced community mobilization. This work also drew our attention to how the local culture and history impacted anti-fracking contention in western Newfoundland. In this paper, however, we specifically engage with the theoretical and methodological framework recently developed by Doug McAdam and Hilary Schaffer Boudet (2012) to explore conditions under which mobilization against energy projects arise.

We begin by broadly situating McAdam and Boudet's framework within social movement literature and describing our research methods. After providing a brief case context of anti-fracking mobilization in western NL, we attempt to explain the rise of this mobilization. We first examine how this case fits McAdam and Boudet's framework. However, finding that it cannot fully account for the rise of mobilization in western Newfoundland, we conclude by discussing what we consider central in explaining how this mobilization arose: how concerned local citizens overcame a lack of civic capacity and mobilization experience through building a globally informed yet locally driven and relevant anti-fracking campaign.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

Prior to the rise of 1960s protests, social movements were commonly conceptualized and explained on a micro level and were viewed "as *irrational* responses to *malfunctioning* institutions and norms" (Nicholls, 2007, p. 608, original emphasis). Early researchers examined individual psychological factors that motivated people to join collective action. This view reflected the dominant pluralist scholarly perspective of the time, which assumed a fairly even distribution of power and resources throughout society (McAdam, 1982; McAdam & Boudet, 2012).

² Eaton & Kinchy (2016) recently documented this phenomenon in Saskatchewan as well.

Following the 1960s, researchers altered their focus as they attempted to make sense of the remarkable rise of social movement activity in that period (Meyer, 1999). No longer were social movements viewed as the result of irrational individuals; rather, they were understood as rational attempts to intervene in a society rife with inequality (Zirakzadeh, 2006). Because grievances in an unequal society always exist, they alone cannot explain why and how social movements arise. Thus, social movement researchers began to examine the broader social and political structures that influence the formation and growth of social movements against a grievance. Research questions shifted from understanding individuals' motivations to explaining how mobilization was carried out. To understand the actions of individuals, Meyer notes, "we need to assess not only the resources available to groups of challengers, but also the available avenues for making claims" (1999, p. 82).

Resource mobilization (RM) theory emerged as a way to examine how resources—people, time, space, and especially money—and the organization of these resources, shape and facilitate social movement activity (McCarthy & Zald, 2015). Although RM theory focuses predominantly on formal social movement organizations, there are also other important yet less formal mobilizing structures, including "the range of everyday life micromobilization structural social locations...where mobilization may be generated," such as through family, friends, and community organizations (McCarthy, 1996, p. 141). It is through these informal connections that conversations around a kitchen table can develop into broader social movement activity. As McCarthy notes, "local dissent is built up" (McCarthy, 1996, p. 142) through these personal and community networks. To understand the available 'avenues for making claims,' scholars also began looking toward the broader political context and how changes in this context alter opportunities for mobilization. Rather than focussing on organizations and their internal resources, exploring political opportunities involves examining the external context and the opportunities organizations can seize even with few internal resources (Tarrow, 1994).

The emphasis on structural aspects of social movement activity (political opportunities, resources, organizations) eventually came under criticism for overlooking the key role of culture (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999). One attempt to remedy this has been through frame analysis, used to understand how culture and shared meanings impact social movement development. Put simply, frame analysis involves examining how an issue is packaged and presented, and what impacts this has on whether people will agree that a given issue is a problem needing attention. In studying framing, researchers analyze how social movement activists, both consciously and unconsciously, communicate their messages in ways that will resonate with potential supporters. McCarthy, Smith, and Zald (1996) state that movements have to "frame social problems and injustices in a way that convinces a wide and diverse audience of the necessity for and utility of collective attempts to redress them" (p. 291).

While these three approaches have different focuses and have often been used separately, some social movement researchers have acknowledged that they are all needed to sufficiently understand social movements (Meyer, 2002). Notably, McAdam (1982) developed the political process model, which focuses on examining resources and organizations, the "degree of organizational 'readiness'" (p. 40), as well as political opportunities. However, he argues that neither of these

will cause a social movement without the existence of a third factor, what he calls “cognitive liberation,” or “the collective assessment of the prospects for successful insurgency” (p. 40). McAdam (1982) argues that “mediating between opportunity and action are people and the subjective meanings they attach to their situations” (p. 48). In other words, groups of people have to collectively define an issue as a problem and identify an opportunity before a social movement will arise. Structural elements provide the potential for action; however, it is shared meanings and perceptions that determine if people will take action. Despite this early attempt to link together the different strands of social movement work, some scholars have lamented the continued focus on structural elements (i.e., Meyer, 1999).

In their 2012 book, McAdam and Boudet make an important contribution to the debate about structural emphasis and the role of culture in social movement studies, and they attempt to give new life to McAdam’s original tripartite model. McAdam and Boudet argue that by deemphasizing or not addressing the cultural and subjective part of the political process model, “analysts have not so much omitted one of three discrete variables as they have fundamentally abandoned the conjunctural logic that was central to the original perspective” (p. 68). As a corrective to this ‘truncated’ approach, McAdam and Boudet urge social movement researchers to “restore these crucial social/cultural processes to their central place in our models of mobilization” (p. 68) alongside structural elements. Their approach for doing this is to emphasize geographical elements by “bringing communities back in to the study of contention,” for it is “within these locales that shared, emergent understandings shape the prospects for contentious collective action” (p. 68). In other words, they argue that perceptions inform if and how citizens make use of structural opportunities and resources and these perceptions are shaped by local culture and shared meanings.

Thus, McAdam and Boudet’s framework considers the structural elements of the classical social movement agenda, organizational capacity and political opportunities, as well as community context variables. The community context variables are intended to capture the impact of culture and shared meanings on local perceptions of projects and mobilization. They include a community’s experience with economic hardship, opposition to a similar energy project, and existence of a similar industry, factors McAdam and Boudet suggest are an important yet often overlooked part of how projects are locally received.

McAdam and Boudet (2012) operationalized this framework to explain differences in twenty communities’ responses to proposed “environmentally risky energy projects” (p. 2), primarily liquefied natural gas terminals. They created a profile of each community using statistical data and then conducted a review of newspaper coverage and a short stint of fieldwork: five to ten days, involving an average of nine interviews in each case. They then used fuzzy set/qualitative comparative analysis to identify four causal pathways—what they call ‘recipes’—for mobilization and three for non-mobilization (see Figure 1). These involve different combinations of civic capacity, political opportunity, and the three community context variables, illustrating McAdam and Boudet’s ‘conjunctural’ understanding of the causal conditions for public mobilization or non-mobilization.

Figure 1. McAdam and Boudet's Mobilization (M) and Non-Mobilization (NM) Recipes.

M 1	No similar industry + No economic hardship AND Civic capacity + Political opportunity
M 2	No similar industry + No economic hardship AND Civic capacity + Experience with past proposal
M 3	No similar industry + Economic hardship AND Limited civic capacity + Experience with past proposal AND Political opportunity
M 4	Similar industry + Experience with past project + Economic hardship AND Limited civic capacity AND Limited political opportunity
NM 1	Similar industry + No experience with past proposal + Limited civic capacity AND Limited political opportunity
NM 2	Similar industry + Experience with past proposal + No economic hardship
NM 3	No similar industry + No experience with past proposal + Economic hardship AND Limited civic capacity AND Limited political opportunity

McAdam and Boudet's framework and research method form a provocative model for comparative case study analysis of communities' responses to energy projects. Their work has been reviewed and applied in a range of case studies (i.e., Gustafsson, 2015; Widener, 2013) and will no doubt continue to influence new work in the field. The publication of McAdam and Boudet's book was also timely for us as it appeared just as anti-fracking mobilization took shape in western Newfoundland in 2012. Their recipes provided a promising starting place for understanding the unprecedented rise of anti-fracking mobilization in western Newfoundland.

1.2 Methods

This research project grew out of ongoing research and community outreach on the regulation of and community responses to oil development in the province and the western Newfoundland region specifically.³ In September of 2012, we presented research findings focused on explaining the longstanding lack of community mobilization against oil development in NL, something we considered interesting given the rise of Canadian and global opposition to oil and gas developments. However, just two months later, community mobilizing against fracking began in western Newfoundland and motivated this paper.

³ The SSHRC project funding this research supported a workshop on pan-Canadian community resistance to fossil fuel development held in western Newfoundland in April 2012, which involved community organizers and academics from across the country as well as from the western Newfoundland region. The workshop fostered connections between people who would later take on leadership roles in the anti-fracking debate.

For this study, we primarily used qualitative research methods involving fieldwork and substantial time spent in case sites⁴ as well as participant observation at key moments of the debate.⁵ We also reviewed documents relevant to the case, such as the company's project proposal and environmental assessment documents, submissions to the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydraulic Fracturing Review Panel, the panel's final report, and media coverage in regional and provincial newspapers. Through this review, we were able to identify the prominent groups or people intervening in the anti-fracking debate. We conducted thirty-four interviews,⁶ predominantly with representatives of key civil society groups within the western Newfoundland region, but also in St. John's (the provincial capital) and Nova Scotia. We conducted interviews with non-government organizations (n=22),⁷ municipal government officials (n=2), tourism industry representatives (n=3), Indigenous community leaders (n=2), labour organization representatives (n=2), faith group representatives (n=2), and an independent expert (n=1) (see Appendix 1 for more details). In these semi-structured interviews, we gathered an understanding of each interviewee's role in and perception of the mobilization effort as well as their thoughts on the impact or influence of the variables noted by McAdam and Boudet. We also asked open-ended questions about other key aspects that might have fostered or inhibited mobilization. In addition to this qualitative research, following McAdam and Boudet's lead, we developed a community profile of western Newfoundland using similar socio-economic data for the region. Further, our understanding of this case was informed by reviews of literature on global debates on fracking, as discussed in Carter and Eaton (2016).

In section 3.2 we assess how McAdam and Boudet's combinations of causal conditions feature in western Newfoundland and to what degree they can be used to understand the rise of anti-fracking mobilization. First, however, we provide a brief description of the western Newfoundland region and trace the rise of anti-fracking community mobilization there.

⁴ Fusco made three field site visits to western Newfoundland over the 2012-2015 period while also observing activism unfolding in St. John's over this time. Carter lived in the western Newfoundland region from 2008-2012 and participated in community events and research (Bourgault, Cyr, Dumont and Carter 2014) on offshore oil development off the coast of western Newfoundland at the Old Harry site.

⁵ Fusco attended public consultations held by the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydraulic Fracturing Review Panel and observed meetings between the panel and relevant groups in the region. Carter submitted comments to the panel during the review process.

⁶ In accordance with ethical approvals received for this study and following Canada's "Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans," names of interviewees are withheld. We assign an interviewee code (more details are provided in the appendix).

⁷ These included leaders or prominent members from many of the organizations involved in the anti-fracking mobilization: Bay St. George Sustainability Network, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), Council of Canadians (Atlantic Office and St. John's Chapter), East Coast Fracking Awareness Group, Friends of Gros Morne, Grenfell Campus Students Union, Gros Morne Coastal Alliance, Port aux Port/Bay St. George Fracking Awareness Group, Social Justice Co-op, and the Western Environment Centre.

2.0 Case Context: Anti-Fracking Mobilization in Western Newfoundland

NL's first major oilfield was discovered approximately 300 kilometers off the east coast of the island of Newfoundland in 1979 and began producing oil in 1997. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of that discovery: it represented nothing less than the province's one chance to break from its "long heritage of dependency and economic underdevelopment" (House, 1985, p. 2) and transform from 'have-not' to 'have' status. The promise of oil was particularly important to the province given the cod fishery collapse and the federal government's 1992 ground fisheries moratorium, a massive socio-economic crisis, particularly in rural communities. Today, NL is the third largest oil producing province in Canada. It has produced over 1.5 billion barrels of oil and approximately 15% of the country's crude oil. Until the recent oil price crash, this production drove unprecedented economic growth in the province, accounted for the lion's share of exports, and provided as much as 30% of total provincial revenues. Unsurprisingly, the provincial government has actively welcomed and fostered oil activity.

Although there was research and public debate on the oil industry's potentially negative socio-economic and environmental effects, with emphasis on the fishing industry in the early years of the sector (ie. Canning & Fish, Food and Allied Workers, 1980; Gardner, 1985; Grinnell, 1981; House, 1986; Ottenheimer, 1993; Riddervold, 1986), since this time, opposition to oil development has been noticeably quiet. Scientists have raised concerns about the environmental impacts of oil development and the province's regulatory response (e.g., Fraser & Ellis, 2008, 2009; Montevecchi & Burke, 2005; Weiss & Ryan, 2003; summarized in Carter, 2011), but these critiques did not lead to local mobilization against oil extraction (Fusco, 2008).⁸

This changed, however, when an oil company proposed to use fracking technology along the west coast of the island of Newfoundland, a rural region of the province primarily economically dependent on the fisheries and tourism.⁹ In January 2013, Shoal Point Energy, a small independent Canadian petroleum exploration and development company, submitted a short amendment to a 2007 environmental assessment to drill off the Port au Port Peninsula in western Newfoundland. The original environmental assessment was for conventional drilling but the amendment revealed the company's interest in conducting exploratory fracking in Shoal Point to assess the potential to extract tight oil. Shortly thereafter, Shoal Point Energy (with its partner Black Spruce Exploration) also submitted a project description for a new project that would use fracking in other locations. It proposed drilling at least two onshore-to-offshore wells near Lark Harbour (in the Bay of

⁸ An exploratory oil drilling project for western Newfoundland's offshore, at the Old Harry site, is currently under review. There has been public opposition to this proposal, but it has predominantly been led by groups from other provinces bordering the Gulf of St. Lawrence (see Stoddart & Graham, 2014 for analysis of this conflict).

⁹ The tourism industry in the Gros Morne area was estimated at over \$145 million in 2009. In 2007, approximately 160,000 tourists came to the area; by 2016, over 200,000 visitors came to Gros Morne National Park (CPAWS 2012, 18; Brake & Addo, 2014, 28; Tourism Synergy Ltd. & Broad Reach Strategies 2016, ii). The value of the commercial fisheries (not counting the subsistence or recreational fishery) was estimated at over \$19 million over the 2000–2007 period for the Bay St. George - Port au Port and Bay of Islands regions (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2011, p. 64).

Islands) and Sally's Cove (a community situated alongside Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site). In November 2012, in advance of submitting these EAs, Shoal Point Energy held public community meetings to discuss its fracking proposal. It was at these meetings that many community members first learned of plans to frack in or near their communities.

Figure 2. Map of Western Newfoundland Region.



Source: ArcGIS Online.

In the fall of 2012, concerned citizens began meeting informally, “around the kitchen table” (interviewee 5), to discuss how they might respond to Shoal Point Energy’s proposal. These conversations evolved into the formation of the Gros Morne Coastal Alliance and the Port au Port / Bay St George Fracking Awareness Group (hereafter referred to as the Port au Port group). Interviewees stressed the very grassroots nature of this early organizing, with many noting that it was their first experience of community activism. While many mobilization leaders had longstanding interest in environmental issues and early experiences with camping or subsistence hunting or fishing that heightened their respect for the environment, for most, this had never translated into environmental activism. For this reason, one interviewee explained that concerned citizens had to ask themselves very basic questions at the beginning of the mobilization: “So it was like, well, okay, do you take a stand? How do you take a stand? How do you meet? What group is going to organize it?” (interviewee 27). These groups began small, researching and educating themselves; however, soon they felt compelled to share their findings more broadly and began planning for a public meeting to get the broader community involved.

In April 2013, the Port au Port group organized a public forum on fracking that drew hundreds of people from across the western Newfoundland region and marked a milestone in the anti-fracking debate. One person called it the “ignition” for “getting public support” for local anti-fracking groups (interviewee 10). The forum involved representatives from the Government of NL and the St. Lawrence Coalition, a group established in Québec to work towards a moratorium against oil

development in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The forum demonstrated the government's position that the existing regulatory regime was adequate, but also that government officials lacked knowledge about the risks of fracking. An interviewee who helped organize the event noted that one government official arrived with an air of "we are here to bring you the facts," explaining that "This is not going to be ruled by emotion ... At that point, I told him he didn't know his facts." This person observed that "You could see that there was a huge shift in trust" during the forum as participants raised concerns about fracking while government officials showed themselves to be "really uninformed" (interviewee 10). Another organizer noted that government officials arrived at the forum "hoping to frack in April. And they talked like they were going to," but the public contention expressed at the forum effectively "slowed things down" (interviewee 4). The regional mobilization effort grew as a result of this event.

With momentum building against fracking in western Newfoundland and support starting to come from people and organizations throughout the province, leaders of the three main groups working on fracking—Western Environment Centre [WEC] from Corner Brook, the Port au Port Group, and the Gros Morne Co-operating Association—came together in June 2013 to establish the Newfoundland and Labrador Fracking Awareness Network (NLFAN). NLFAN served as an umbrella organization where groups with different approaches to political engagement and strategy could share information and work toward a unified goal. As one interviewee explained, "we had a group like the Port au Port [group] which was a lot more aggressive in their approach and the WEC that was softer in its approach....If we had a network, each group could still act on their own" (interviewee 8). NLFAN cast a wide net, setting out to "welcome every single group into our network" (interviewee 9). Organizers felt it was important to show that more than just environmentalists were speaking out against fracking. The formation of NLFAN demonstrated that support was geographically diverse: organizations from throughout the province joined, including an east coast fracking awareness group that had formed in St. John's. NLFAN facilitated the development of a shared goal among its members: in July 2013, NLFAN asked government for a 'pause' on fracking until an independent review of the process was completed.

Organizers in western Newfoundland also fostered connections with key individuals and groups outside the province. They connected with Indigenous leaders of landmark protests against fracking in New Brunswick as well as with the Atlantic Office of the Council of Canadians in Nova Scotia and the Save Our Seas and Shores coalition working across the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Although leadership and decision making always remained in western Newfoundland, these regional ties provided crucial support to local organizers. For instance, local groups drew on the experiences of groups in Nova Scotia that had recently been involved in the fracking review there. One representative of a group in Nova Scotia that had worked on anti-fracking efforts stated that "Connecting people and the stories and experiences was something I was able to definitely do because of being involved in all of those fights" (interviewee 22). Local mobilization leaders also built a cross-Canada network to draw on that included groups like the Sierra Club and Ecojustice. This network expanded to include organizations around the world. One obvious instance of this was the work of groups in the Gros Morne area partnering with the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) to organize the 'Save Gros Morne National Park,' a nation-wide campaign to protect the park from

industrialization through the creation of a buffer zone around the park. Groups in western Newfoundland then reached even farther, initially through Facebook, to anti-fracking groups in New York, California, Paris, and beyond. One interviewee referred to this as the local movement's "big network that spans the world" (interviewee 1).

Anti-fracking groups in NL used an impressive range of methods to communicate their concerns to the public and policymakers and to encourage people to participate. These included traditional media (call-in radio shows, press releases, interviews with television, radio, and print media, and letters to the editor) as well as social media. Groups leading the mobilization also sought to create a strong physical presence in the region. For example, the Port au Port group used anti-fracking signs at strategic moments and locations to demonstrate broad support for the campaign, such as along the route the review panelists would be driving during their visits. One organizer joked about attempting to drill signs "all over the west coast" and "into every spruce tree between [the Port au Port Peninsula] and Deer Lake airport" (interviewee 10).

In addition, groups boosted general interest in the anti-fracking movement by organizing a number of public events. For instance, inspired by other groups in Atlantic Canada, the Port au Port group organized the Walk the Block demonstration in Stephenville in September 2013 to draw attention to the number of people that had been 'activated' against fracking. "We felt we needed to get them out there" into the streets, one organizer explained (interviewee 11). Local groups also coordinated efforts to bring Jessica Ernst, an outspoken anti-fracking advocate from Alberta, to western Newfoundland in September 2013. One of the event organizers explained that "We felt if we got a high-profile person to come in to tell their story that we would win the masses." This event was immensely successful. Ernst spoke compellingly about her personal experiences with fracking to a crowd of approximately 400 people from across the region. Organizers commented on how remarkable it was to attract this many citizens to a public talk in the fall, "on a sunny Sunday afternoon when they could have been golfing or moose hunting. Blue Rodeo got just 250," this person quipped (interviewee 11). Meanwhile, Mi'kmaq community members also organized events, such as the water ceremony at Stephenville Beach in October 2015, which was held in conjunction with similar events across the Gulf of St. Lawrence. These ceremonies emphasized the value of water and the risks posed to it by fracking. One of the ceremony organizers explained that these events were intended to convey that "without water there is no life ... we pray that people protect the environment and keep the water safe for our next seven generations" (interviewee 27).¹⁰ Mobilization leaders were also holding smaller informational meetings about fracking across the region. One person travelled throughout the province and gave over forty presentations to groups, town councils, elementary schools, elected officials, chambers of commerce, and the general public.

Organizers also engaged international institutions, or "organizations of influence" (interviewee 6). For instance, one local leader joined CPAWS in writing to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, responsible for global World Heritage Sites) to warn the UN about the proposal to

¹⁰ Simon (2016) provides a detailed account of the 'spiritual/religious dimensions,' particular relating to water, of anti-fracking mobilizations in New Brunswick.

frack just outside Gros Morne National Park, at the time the only natural world heritage site in NL. Meanwhile, provincial Sisters of Mercy, in collaboration with their international counterparts, sent an urgent letter of appeal to the UN as well as to representatives in the Canadian and NL governments about fracking's impacts on human rights and the environment.

Beyond the consistent media engagement, physical presence at public events, and the international outreach efforts, the anti-fracking mobilization effort was also very personal. Through person-to-person conversations, which drew on close community connections (at the barber shop, on the ski trail, at garages), mobilization leaders spread the word about the risks of fracking, convinced fellow community members to attend meetings, and encouraged people to write submissions to the review panel. One interviewee recalled that in advance of public events in Port au Port, organizers "would line up in front of the grocery store and hand out information about the event, shake hands, look people in the eye and say, 'are you coming?'" Mobilization organizers knew the people in their community, "knew them for decades," (interviewee 8) and could encourage fellow citizens to participate through those channels.

Government officials undertook a number of unprecedented policy steps in response to this mobilization. In November 2013, responding to NLFAN's recommendation for a pause on fracking and an independent review, the NL provincial Minister of Natural Resources announced that the province would not accept applications for fracking onshore or onshore-to-offshore until it conducted an internal study of the impacts of fracking, reviewed existing regulations, and consulted with the public. This became known as a provincial moratorium on fracking. NLFAN continued to pressure the government for an independent review, something the government also agreed was necessary when it deemed its internal review inadequate in the fall of 2014. The Minister of Natural Resources announced the creation of the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydraulic Fracturing Review Panel in October 2014, and over the course of nearly a year and a half the appointed panelists reviewed research on fracking, accepted public comments, and conducted meetings and public consultations in western Newfoundland. This public consultation process focused the attention of anti-fracking groups who committed to "flood[ing] the panel with submissions," encouraging "anyone who could pick up a pen" to contribute (interviewee 10). One person explained that even though he viewed the process as illegitimate, "we wanted as many submissions to go in as possible as a demonstration" of the significant public concern about fracking (interviewee 18).

The panel released its results in May 2016. While it did not recommend a permanent ban on fracking, local groups interpreted the report as a victory as the panel recommended many time consuming and resource-intensive conditions be met, such as a health impact assessment, prior to the government considering future fracking project proposals. Furthermore, the report stressed the importance of the provincial government obtaining communities' social license prior to approving fracking, which is unlikely given the strength of the local mobilization against fracking. What explains the rise of this unprecedented moment of dynamic activism in western Newfoundland?

3.0 Analysis

In this section, we first examine how this case fits within McAdam and Boudet's framework, assessing if the causal recipes they found account for the rise of community mobilization against fracking in western Newfoundland. Finding that McAdam and Boudet's pathways do not fully apply in this case, we then discuss what we take as some of the central elements that fostered mobilization in western Newfoundland but that were not captured by McAdam and Boudet's framework.

3.1 Applying McAdam and Boudet's Framework

McAdam and Boudet (2012) identify five variables central to explaining community mobilization or non-mobilization in response to a proposed energy project. These include the traditional structural factors of organizational capacity and political opportunities, joined with three community context variables: a community's experience of economic hardship, opposing a similar project, and living with a similar industry. These are meant to provide "a static, comparative portrait" (p. 69) of the context into which projects are proposed, one that McAdam and Boudet expect will shape how communities perceive projects. Using McAdam and Boudet's measures, we assess how these factors feature in our case.

3.1.1 Political opportunity. McAdam and Boudet measure political opportunity by considering (a) electoral vulnerability, or whether decision makers are elected—if so, they are more open to public pressure and accountability; (b) whether an election is imminent—if so, decision makers are more apt to at least give the appearance of being responsive to the public, therefore those contesting a project can make the issue a campaign issue; and (c) the jurisdiction of elected officials—citizens are assumed to have more impact on municipal decision makers as opposed to federal ones, who have a much broader electorate. Using these measures, we find mixed or moderate political opportunities.

First, the electoral vulnerability of decision makers in this case varied. When Shoal Point Energy submitted its environmental assessment amendment and subsequent fracking project description, it did so to the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board, an unelected joint federal-provincial body with regulatory authority over offshore oil activity. However, because the company proposed to conduct onshore to offshore drilling, two provincial government departments also became involved, Natural Resources and Environment, placing authority for a decision on this particular fracking proposal at least in part with elected provincial officials. As the debate advanced and the review panel was established, regulatory authority on whether fracking could proceed in NL was assigned to the provincial Minister of Natural Resources.

Second, an election was on the horizon during the mobilization against fracking because of the province's fixed-date election system. The lead-up to the fall 2015 election was a tumultuous time in NL politics that provided many openings for community groups to express concern about fracking. Notably, there were several by-elections in which a wave of former Progressive Conservative seats were won by the Liberal Party, including two districts in the western region. The provincial election was indeed a political opportunity that was used by local anti-fracking groups to press their issue. For example, the Port au Port group formally requested that prior to the Stephenville by-election, candidates provide their position on fracking in writing so that it could be publicized to inform voters' choices.

Finally, in reference to McAdam and Boudet's third measure of political opportunities, local actors were not particularly advantaged or disadvantaged by the jurisdiction of the elected officials who would make the decision about fracking. The decision about whether fracking would proceed was to be made by provincial officials and not by local elected officials (over which the local citizenry might have more sway) or federal elected officials (who respond to a much broader electorate). Therefore, considering McAdam and Boudet's markers of political opportunities in this case, we find them to be moderate given the both unelected and elected decision makers, the proximity to provincial elections, and the jurisdiction of the decision makers.

3.1.2 Civic or organizational capacity. McAdam and Boudet define civic capacity as a community's ability to organize mobilization by drawing on the strength of existing ties between people, which they measure in terms of the number of nonprofits per capita, voter turnout, and percentage of people with a college education (university in the Canadian context). Communities with comparatively more nonprofits, higher voter turnout, and more educated citizens are assumed to have more capacity to mobilize against proposed projects.

The number of nonprofits in this case region was slightly below the provincial average: 5.6 nonprofit organizations per one thousand people, compared to 5.9 across the province.¹¹ Voter turnout in the electoral districts associated with this region in the previous provincial election (2011) was on average 59%, on par with the provincial average turnout of 58%. However, there was variation across the districts, notably with the districts closest to where fracking was proposed: Port au Port and St. George's-Stephenville East had among the lowest turnout rates in the western region (53% and 54% respectively).¹² Finally, there was great variation in university education rates in the region. Data on people age 25 to 65 with a bachelor's degree or higher indicate that the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour region's rate of 14.4% aligns closely with the provincial average of 16.4%. However, at 9.2%, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques region had a markedly lower rate of university degree holders. Data on the percentage of people aged 25 to 65 without a high school diploma also shows a clear split across this region: Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour matched provincial rates, 20.6% and 20.3% respectively, whereas 31.8% of people aged 25 to 65 in the Stephenville-Port aux Basques had not completed high school.¹³

Given the comparable density of nonprofits, slightly lower than average voter turnout, and lower formal education levels, particularly in the areas closest to the fracking proposal, we judge civic capacity as assessed using McAdam and Boudet's measures to be moderate.

3.1.3 Similar industry. McAdam and Boudet's (2012) findings indicate that communities with a given industry already operating in their region are less likely to mobilize if another similar project is proposed. McAdam and Boudet argue that the "presence of a similar industry, particularly one that has operated without incident, creates a certain level of comfort and acceptance" (p. 51). This is not the

¹¹ Data from Community Sector Council of NL's directory of community sector organizations.

¹² Data from the Government of NL's Office of the Chief Electoral Officer's 2012 report, "Report on the Provincial General Election: October 11, 2011."

¹³ Data from the Government of NL's "Community Accounts" project profiles, by Rural Secretariat Region, based on 2011 Census data.

case in western Newfoundland: while one well has been fracked in the region (albeit with limited public knowledge)¹⁴ and exploratory oil drilling has occurred sporadically, there was no fracking underway in western Newfoundland when Shoal Point Energy proposed to use the technology in 2012.¹⁵

3.1.4 Economic hardship. McAdam and Boudet's analysis indicates that communities facing economic hardship, measured in terms of comparatively high unemployment and low median incomes, are more accepting of higher risk projects. McAdam and Boudet assume that communities in difficult economic circumstances are expected to want the economic benefits promised from a new energy development. On the other hand, they assume that more economically secure communities are more likely to resist risky new projects.

Economic data on median after tax family income, prevalence of low income rates, and rates of individuals receiving income supports depict economic hardship in the area, particularly in the communities nearest to areas slated for fracking. While the median after tax income in Corner Brook and Kippens, \$57,042 and \$59,381 respectively, was above the provincial median of \$50,911, levels for other communities in the region were much lower. The median after tax income was just \$41,523 in Rocky Harbour (82% of the provincial median), and \$43,902 in Lark Harbour (86% of the provincial median).¹⁶ Furthermore, the prevalence of low incomes was particularly striking. Provincially, the low income rate was 18%, yet some communities in western Newfoundland had low income rates twice as high: 36% in Lark Harbour, 38% in Stephenville Crossing, 40% in Cape St. George, and 41% Norris Point.¹⁷ Regarding the prevalence of individuals receiving income supports, rates in the Corner Brook–Rocky Harbour region mirrored provincial rates of around 8%. However, the Stephenville–Port aux Basques region had a much higher rate at 14.4%. This region also had a higher rate of individuals collecting unemployment, 22.9% in contrast to the 16.3% provincial rate.¹⁸ Given these data, we assess the region as experiencing economic hardship.

3.1.5 Experience opposing a past proposal. McAdam and Boudet (2012) suggest that if a community has opposed a similar industry or project within the last five years, they are apt to do so again. Community members are likely to draw on previous oppositional mobilization experience to oppose newly proposed projects. While the western Newfoundland region has a long history of extractive development, primarily forestry and mining, these projects have seldom generated public mobilization comparable to the organized opposition to fracking.

¹⁴ One well was fracked in Flat Bay in 2004 (see Smith, 2016; Vulcan Minerals Inc., 2004).

¹⁵ However there has been sporadic conventional oil exploration and drilling in the region. From 1986 to 1991, sixty-four conventional oil wells were drilled in western Newfoundland, producing very small amounts of oil. An additional forty wells have been drilled since 1994 (Hicks & Owen, 2014, pp. 1, 15), including two exploratory wells drilled in 2010 as part of Nalcor's (the province's energy corporation) exploration program, undertaken with private partners in Parsons Pond. To date, there has been no commercial oil development in western Newfoundland.

¹⁶ 2011 data from Statistics Canada's National Household Survey (NHS).

¹⁷ 2011 data from Statistics Canada's NHS.

¹⁸ Data from the Government of NL's 'Community Accounts' project profiles, based on 2011 Census data.

To summarize, analyzing this case using McAdam and Boudet's framework, we interpret the western Newfoundland region as having economic hardship, no similar energy industry, and no experience with a past proposal. The role of political opportunity and civic capacity is less clear: we interpret both as moderate. How do these conditions compare with McAdam and Boudet's mobilization or non-mobilization pathways? This case seems to align most closely with their third combination of causal conditions, one that involves no similar industry, no experience with past proposal, economic hardship, alongside limited civic capacity and political opportunity. However, this recipe would suggest *non*-mobilization (NM3, in Figure 1). Thus, staying close to the causal conditions emphasized by McAdam and Boudet, we would expect very limited or no mobilization in this case. And yet, mobilization—highly organized, unprecedented, and politically effective mobilization—obviously did arise. What was central to understanding anti-fracking mobilization in western Newfoundland that was not fully captured by McAdam and Boudet's variables?

3.2 A Globally Informed, Locally Resonant Approach

Because most people in the western Newfoundland region had limited experience with both fracking and activism, early leaders felt they needed to reach out to people in other places who had first-hand experience with the effects of fracking and participating in community activism. They drew on the knowledge and experience of external groups and actors from across the province, the Atlantic Provinces, Canada, and internationally. Not only did activists bring information back to their communities, but they also brought other individuals, such as Jessica Ernst, with fracking experience to share information directly with local people and help them visualize what the industry could mean for western Newfoundland. Through networking with anti-fracking activists in other locations, local organizers learned potential strategies and tactics to use in their campaign. For instance, the Walk the Block public demonstrations and water ceremonies were held after, or alongside, similar events in other Atlantic provinces. Tapping into these anti-fracking networks provided support through the sharing of knowledge and ideas and also helped develop a "camaraderie" (interviewee 11) such that organizers in western Newfoundland feel less isolated in their struggle.

Organizers drew on the information gleaned from their expanding fracking network to shape their local messages in ways that would best resonate with community members. As one mobilization organizer commented, groups leading the mobilization "tried to identify things that would hit close to home" (interviewee 8) when they communicated with the public. In other words, organizers sorted through the many issues and concerns raised worldwide about fracking to determine which to focus on locally. Perhaps the most prominent example of this is how organizers emphasized concerns about the impact of fracking on water. Messages concerning water were particularly convincing in western Newfoundland given the long struggle of some towns to access water. Many older residents remember the difficulties associated with having unreliable access to water. As one interviewee explained, older people in the community have been down that road with carrying buckets of water from the well, and having to hook up a horse to go get your drinking water.... For the people here, the water was everything. And when you have a situation coming up where that is possibly going to be put in jeopardy, nobody, *nobody*, wants to go back to 1930s or 1940s Newfoundland (interviewee 23).

Maintaining access to a reliable source of water is a continuing issue for communities in the region, as evidenced by the regular boil water advisories and municipalities' need to shut off water supplies during the summer months in some areas to regain adequate pressure. As interviewee 23 noted, "we know what it's like to have to go with no water, just for a day or two. It's quite easy then for the residents of the community to say, 'wow, imagine if there was none. Then what would we do?'" People in the region were already sensitive to water issues even before fracking was proposed. Organizers drew on this shared history and experience, focussing on how fracking could further deteriorate the already precarious water situation. They kept the conversation focused on how fracking might impact daily life, stating, for instance, that "everybody needs a cup of tea and they need water to make that cup of tea" (interviewee 9). By framing fracking as a threat to this basic need, the risk of fracking could be intimately understood by local people. In fact, interviewees noted that threats posed by fracking to water were among the central ideas that motivated disparate groups to participate in mobilization and stirred first-time activists to join the mobilization effort.

The strategic embedding of external ideas about fracking into the local context is also shown through the issues mobilization leaders chose to *avoid* or underplay when attempting to build the mobilization. For instance, the impact of fracking on climate change was never addressed in any sustained way by mobilization leaders. Although many of the organizers were concerned about climate change, some noted they felt it was not an issue that would resonate with the wider public and thus would not have been an effective message to use to build opposition to fracking. The issue of climate change was deemed by organizers as far less tangible, and therefore less persuasive, than the issue of drinking water. As one interviewee explained, climate change is "important, but abstract" (interviewee 14). Another commented that "Climate change is such a massive endeavor we felt we couldn't take it on....We were thinking of how to mobilize in the most direct way" (interviewee 7).

Similarly, organizers did not make connections between fracking proposed on the west coast and the province's offshore oil industry. Organizers immediately recognized that given the province's economic history as a 'have-not' province and its current dependence on both the NL and Alberta oil industries, the anti-fracking mobilization would not gain traction or be considered credible to political decision makers if they spoke out against the oil industry in general. As explained by one interviewee, many people in western Newfoundland "identify with" NL's offshore oil industry or have worked in Alberta's tar sands. Therefore, the mobilization did not confront the oil sector generally. Instead, it "was a fracking specific fight" (interviewee 8). Organizers stressed how fracking is *different* from other oil industry activities, with new and distinctive risks. Focusing solely on fracking without drawing parallels to the broader fossil fuel economy allowed mobilization leaders to develop a broader network against fracking in the province, leaving space for supporters of NL's oil industry to join the anti-fracking campaign. In this way, contrary to anti-fracking mobilization in other regions (Neville & Weinthal, 2016), local mobilization organizers in western Newfoundland were reluctant to 'scale-up' activism to engage with the more global issues of climate change and the environmental costs of oil extraction.

Organizers chose focal messages carefully, conscious of the history and shared experiences of people in the communities surrounding potential fracking sites.

However, they had to counter prevailing notions of economic hardship that would make the pro-fracking economic argument appealing. Interviewees acknowledged western Newfoundland's experience of long-term economic hardship, noting high unemployment and depopulation, particularly among young people. Interviewees noted the "desperation" and the need for "economic relief" (interviewee 26) as well as the great "fear of the future" (interviewee 13) felt by people in the region, which was based on a deep sense of economic uncertainty. Local mobilization organizers also explained that the economic situation of the region was a "major trump card played by government and industry," who implied that "if you were in any way against oil development then you were somehow against giving people the opportunity for employment" (interviewee 5). Unsurprisingly, oil company representatives' response to initial concerns raised by community members about the project was to emphasize "jobs, jobs, jobs" (interviewee 7). Black Spruce Exploration Corp. described the project as an "immense opportunity" that "the people of Western Newfoundland deserve" (2013, p. 2) and emphasized how fracking could help bring people home to work in their communities.

McAdam and Boudet (2012) assume that communities experiencing strained economic circumstances, such as high unemployment and comparatively low median incomes, will be more accepting of higher risk projects. However, in western Newfoundland, despite Shoal Point Energy's attempt to frame fracking as a job creator that would bring people home to work, this logic was reversed. When anti-fracking groups in western Newfoundland learned about the economic costs and realities of fracking from their external network, they effectively communicated that information to the public in a targeted way. Fracking was re-interpreted by community members as potentially exacerbating existing economic hardship rather than alleviating it. With evidence in hand from other communities' experiences with fracking, organizers continuously emphasized how fracking could undermine the already precarious economic base of the region, specifically the tourism and fisheries sectors.

An important undercurrent of community conversations on the economic impacts of fracking involved connecting the potential fracking industry with the collective memory of other industrial or military projects that had similarly raised local expectations of economic development but then "left a whole lot of mess behind" (interviewee 26). Interviewees noted examples of contaminated sites left behind from the closed American air force base, shuttered newsprint mill, and abandoned leaking well at Shoal Point. They often remarked that this old conventional oil well had been leaking for years yet it was never dealt with by the provincial government, a fact that added to organizers' concerns about the adequacy of provincial regulation. One interviewee summarized the feelings of some western Newfoundland residents, stating that they had already been "burned" repeatedly by industry promising economic development but then leaving communities with long-term environmental degradation (interviewee 13) and few of the expected economic benefits. Organizers could draw on this history of extraction and development gone wrong in the region to encourage a more critical view of the proposal to frack and its purported economic benefits.

Thanks to this sustained effort by mobilization leaders to shift the economic debate, the region's economic hardship was not easily used as an argument to support fracking. Layered on top of messages related to negative impacts on daily life, particularly access to water, mobilization leaders fostered a shift in thinking.

One interviewee captured this well by explaining, “we need the jobs and people don’t want to see their kids grow up and have to move away to find work. But there’s that balance. If we want to have a future at all then we’ve got to become more protective.” The debate around fracking “made people realize that even though we are in an economically depressed area we’ve got so much more to lose if we allow these type of practices to happen” (interviewee 26). Put simply by another interviewee, after local anti-fracking groups shared information gleaned from outside connections, “most people really thought [fracking] wasn’t worth the cost” (interviewee 5). Economic hardship was hardly an indicator that mobilization would not take place; it did not result in consent for this environmentally risky energy project. Through the careful work and messaging of anti-fracking organizers, fracking was reinterpreted as a multifaceted risk rather than an economic salvation.

Looking at this case of unlikely mobilization from outside McAdam and Boudet’s framework, our understanding of this case of anti-fracking mobilization in western Newfoundland suggests that community opposition to the project was driven in great part by local people and groups who built civic capacity by tapping into external networks and groups. They gained knowledge and skills and carefully chose how to translate information into messages that would resonate with the particular political-economic history of the region. While McAdam and Boudet certainly pointed in the right direction by recommending a consideration of structural and community context elements, their framework could not capture the importance of broader connections and networks and the interpretative work that overcame even seemingly high obstacles to mobilization. This interpretive work is undoubtedly inspired by external global debates but it is fundamentally local. It has been effective only because people who understand the local context led the mobilization and could frame the risks of fracking in ways that would resonate with the historical and current conditions of the region.

4.0 Conclusion

Motivated by what they perceived as a significant threat to the environment and local way of life, groups in western Newfoundland mounted an unprecedented, highly coordinated campaign against fracking. Local actors built the civic capacity, with information and support from external actors and networks, to engage with political leaders and the public. One organizer explained that the aim of the anti-fracking mobilization was to “poison the well of investors,” to dissuade any company from ever proposing to frack in western Newfoundland (interviewee 10). Given the initial pause on fracking, the establishment of the external review panel, and the outcome of the recent report of the panel, this mobilization has undoubtedly been successful in blocking fracking, at least for a time.

While McAdam and Boudet intended their framework to capture how local history, economy, and culture—put simply, place—shapes social movement activity, it did not fully capture what we learned was fundamental to community mobilizing in this case. The framework accounted for existing static conditions, or the context into which projects were proposed, which were meant to help predict whether mobilization would arise. It could not, however, capture the dynamic capacity of specific actors in specific places to build mobilization in their region despite existing conditions suggesting mobilization would be unlikely. In western Newfoundland, a small group of concerned citizens overcame limited civic and

organizational capacity and seized political opportunities by recognizing their weaknesses and seeking support. Local organizers drew on external networks of activists and anti-fracking groups to help build their local emerging mobilization effort. They were able to use information, strategies, and tactics learned from elsewhere in their campaigns in a highly locally relevant way, thanks to their deep understanding of local culture and place. As Nicholls (2009) suggests, engaging with external networks and finding “distant allies” provides “a distinctive set of resources (emotional, material and symbolic) that are essential for successful mobilisations” (p. 79). These resources complement the existing local resources, strengths, and strong local ties to support community mobilization. This dynamic was obviously at play in our case; indeed, we understand it as the central feature explaining the rise of anti-fracking mobilization in western Newfoundland.

McAdam and Boudet (2012) provide a powerful starting point to understand the western Newfoundland example of community mobilization against a proposed energy project by directing our attention to key structural elements, political opportunities and civic capacity, as well as to the importance of looking at how community conditions shape perceptions of risk and ultimately motivate actors to seize opportunities. Yet McAdam and Boudet (2012) do concede the limits of their methodology, for instance that their measures of key variables miss the full scope of civic capacity and could not account for the influence of external capacity (pp. 79–81). They ultimately draw out several lessons from their study meant to inform future research, including the need to attend closely to the “the multiple ways in which the local context powerfully shapes” (pp. 203–205) contention and to the social processes—the networks, near and far—behind why and how contention develops. At the same time, they stress the need for a renewed commitment to fieldwork to understand both of these issues. This case study, informed by more fieldwork time than McAdam and Boudet could afford given their ambitious sample size, has cast light onto the inherently place and network-based nature of contention against energy projects.

What of the larger impact of this instance of community mobilization? Is there potential for the anti-fracking effort to extend beyond the specific debate in western Newfoundland? Interviewees judged the anti-fracking mobilization to be an unprecedented moment of civic engagement: “I don’t think I’ve ever seen the population of the west coast so mobilized on one issue,” (interviewee 13) one person noted. The mobilization effort has substantially enhanced civic capacity in the region and this new capacity can be drawn on in future debates over the economic future of the region and potentially by groups in other locations seeking external support in their mobilization efforts. Interviewees remarked on how the mobilization effort was a training ground, transforming local citizens who had never been “anywhere close to an activist meeting” (interviewee 8) in 2012 into savvy activists at ease with organizing and participating in effective social contention by 2015. The extensive political learning that took place in this region and the heightened feeling of political efficacy experienced by the leaders and participants in the movement will be transferable to other issues. Indeed, some interviewees mused about re-directing the civic capacity developed in the anti-fracking struggle to other related issues that arise in the region. From here on in, at the very least there will be discerning public scrutiny of proposed energy development projects. As interviewee 10 remarked, “we are going to be demanding EAs, health impact studies.... There will be protests.”

Acknowledgements

We thank the people we interviewed during the study for generously sharing their insights with us and in some cases reviewing drafts of this manuscript. We recognize that participation in research projects like this is yet another demand on local organizations and hope this work fairly represents interviewees' understanding of the debate. We also thank Leigh McDougall for research assistance and Nadine Fladd and John Peters for revision advice. This research was funded by a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada Strategic Research Grant.

References

- Black Spruce Exploration Corp. (2013). *Western Newfoundland update project magazine*, 1(2).
- Bourgault, D., Cyr, F., Dumont, D., & Carter, A. (2014). Numerical simulations of the spread of floating passive tracer released at the Old Harry prospect. *Environmental Research Letters*, 9(5), 1-14.
- Brake, W., & Addo, E. (2014). Tourism and 'fracking' in western Newfoundland: Interests and anxieties of coastal communities and companies in the context of sustainable tourism. *International Journal of Marine Science*, 4(2), 16-41.
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. (CPAWS). (2012). *The state of Canada's parks: 2012 report*. Retrieved July 10, 2016 from http://cpaws.org/uploads/cpaws_parksreport_2012.pdf
- Canning, S., & FFAW. (1980). An assessment of the potential interactions between the fishery and the offshore: Petroleum industry of Newfoundland during the 1980's. Report retrieved from the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Queen Elizabeth Library, Memorial University.
- Carter, A. (2011). *Environmental policy in a petro-state: The resource curse and political ecology in Canada's oil frontier*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Ithaca, Cornell University.
- Carter, A., & Eaton, E. (2016). Subnational responses to fracking in Canada: Explaining Saskatchewan's "wild west" regulatory approach. *Review of Policy Research*, 33(4), 393-419.
- Eaton, E., & Kinchy, A. (2016). Quiet voices in the fracking debate: Ambivalence, nonmobilization, and individual action in two extractive communities (Saskatchewan and Pennsylvania). *Energy Research & Social Science*, 20: 22-30.
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada. (2011). *Social, economic and cultural overview of Western Newfoundland and Southern Labrador*. OHSAR Pub. Ser. Rep. NL Region, No. 0008. Retrieved from <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/343358.pdf>
- Fraser, G., & Ellis, J. (2008). Offshore hydrocarbon and synthetic hydrocarbon spills in eastern Canada: The issue of follow-up and experience. *Journal of Environmental Assessment Policy and Management*, 10(2), 173-187.
- Fraser, G., & Ellis, J. (2009). The Canada-Newfoundland Atlantic Accord Implementation Act: Transparency of the environmental management of the offshore oil and gas industry. *Marine Policy*, 33(2), 312-316.

- Fusco, L. (2008). *The invisible movement: The Newfoundland environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry*. Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag.
- Gardner, M. (1985). *Identification and prediction of interaction between the fisheries and the oil and gas industry of the East Coast of Canada*. (Environmental Studies Revolving Funds Report No. 002). Ottawa.
- Grinnell, H. (1981). *The implications of offshore petroleum development for Atlantic fisheries: A socio-economic overview*. (Canadian Industry Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences No. 24). Ottawa.
- Gustafsson, M. (2015). Historic state-society relations and mobilisations surrounding extractive industries: Lessons from Peru. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 36(3), 313-29.
- Hicks, L., & Owens, J. (2014). The history of petroleum exploration in Newfoundland and Labrador. Retrieved July 5, 2016 from http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/nr/energy/pdf/history_petroleum_exploration_western_nl.pdf
- House, J. (1985). *The challenge of oil: Newfoundland's quest for controlled development*. St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University.
- House, J. (Ed.). (1986). *Fish versus oil: Resources and rural development in North Atlantic Societies*. St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University.
- McAdam, D. (1982). *Political process and the development of black insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- McAdam, D., & Boudet, H. (2012). *Putting social movements in their place: Explaining opposition to energy projects in the United States, 2000-2005*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, J. (1996). Constraints and opportunities in adopting, adapting, and inventing. In D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, & M. Zald (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings* (pp. 141-151). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, J., Smith, J., & Zald, M. (1996). Accessing public, media, electoral, and governmental agendas. In D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, & M. Zald (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framings* (pp. 291-311). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, J., & Zald, M. (2015). Social movement organizations. In J. Goodwin and J. Jasper (Eds.), *The social movements reader: Cases and concepts (3rd Edition)* (pp. 159-174). Oxford, United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing.
- Meyer, D. (1999). Tending the vineyard: Cultivating political process research. *Sociological Forum*, 14(1), 79-92.
- Meyer, D. (2002). Opportunities and identities: Bridge-building in the study of social movements. In D. Meyer, N. Whittier, & B. Robnett (Eds.), *Social movements: Identity, culture, and the state* (pp. 3-21). Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

- Montevecchi, W., & Burke, C. (2005). *Surveys of marine birds and mammals from offshore support vessels and ships of opportunity*. Environmental Studies Research Fund, Energy Board of Canada.
- Neville, K., & Weinthal, E. (2016). Scaling up site disputes: Strategies to redefine 'local' in the fight against fracking. *Environmental Politics*, 25(4), 569-592.
- Nicholls, W. (2007). The geographies of social movements. *Geography Compass*, 1(3), 607-622.
- Nicholls, W. (2009). Place, networks, space: Theorising the geographies of social movements. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 34(1), 78-93.
- Ottenheimer, S. (1993). *Fish and oil don't mix: Power relations at the Bull Arm construction site, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Memorial University. St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.
- Riddervold, K. (1986). *Collaboration or conflict? The fishing- industry's ability to influence the decision making process concerning petroleum activities: A comparison of the Norwegian and Canadian system of environmental impact assessment*. Tromsø, Norway: Institutt for Fiskerifag, Universitetet i Tromsø.
- Simon, D. (2016). Vulnerable waters, anti-fracking solidarities, and blue theologies: Toward a New Brunswick case study between the global and the local. *Journal of New Brunswick Studies*, 7(2), 92-111.
- Smith, J. (2016). When petro-capitalism comes knocking: Community interpretations and responses to the Gros Morne fracking controversy. (Unpublished master's thesis). Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.
- Stoddart, M., & Graham, P. (2014). *The trouble with Old Harry: Environmental movements and the oil-tourism interface in the Gulf of St. Lawrence*. Paper presented at International Sociological Association World Congress, Yokohama, Japan.
- Tarrow, S. (1994). *Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and politics*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Tourism Synergy Ltd., & Broad Reach Strategies. (2016). Gros Morne Regional Sustainable Tourism Plan. Retrieved from <http://grosbornecoop.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/GM-Strategic-Tourism-Plan-Final-Oct-6-2016.pdf>
- Vulcan Minerals Inc. (2004). Flat Bay #1 Well Completion Profile. Retrieved from http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/nr/publications/energy/FWR/vulcan_minerals_flat_bay_completion_1.pdf
- Widener, P. (2013). A protracted age of oil: Pipelines, refineries and quiet conflict. *Local Environment*, 18(7), 834-51.
- Wiese, F., & Ryan, P. (2003). The extent of chronic marine oil pollution in southeastern Newfoundland waters assessed through beached bird surveys 1984-1999. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 46(9), 1090-1101.
- Zirakzadeh, C. (2006). *Social movements in politics: A comparative study*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Appendix

Appendix 1. List of Interviewees.

Interviewee code	Primary constituency	Location
1	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
2	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
3	environmental non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
4	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
5	environmental non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
6	environmental non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
7	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
8	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
9	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
10	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
11	environmental non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
12	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
13	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
14	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
15	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
16	non-governmental organization member	western Newfoundland
17	non-governmental organization member	St. John's, Newfoundland
18	non-governmental organization member	St. John's, Newfoundland
19	non-governmental organization member	St. John's, Newfoundland
20	non-governmental organization member	St. John's, Newfoundland
21	non-governmental organization member	St. John's, Newfoundland
22	non-governmental organization member	Halifax, Nova Scotia
23	municipal government official	western Newfoundland
24	municipal government official	western Newfoundland
25	researcher & independent expert	St. John's, Newfoundland
26	Indigenous community leader	western Newfoundland
27	Indigenous community leader	western Newfoundland
28	faith group member	western Newfoundland
29	faith group member	St. John's, Newfoundland
30	tourism industry representative	western Newfoundland
31	tourism industry representative	western Newfoundland
32	tourism industry representative	western Newfoundland
33	labour organization representative	western Newfoundland
34	labour organization representative	St. John's, Newfoundland