UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

CATCHING HOPE

SHIFTING IDENTITY: AN ADHDER STUDY OF

THE BOTTOM END FISHING COMMUNITY

AND THE IMPACT OF BREXIT

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Preface

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the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Works.

This research and writing are solely the work of Tabitha Peterken

and this study has been ethically approved.

Abstract

This study is an account of destabilising identity during a time of Brexit, the severing of the UK from the European Union and its regulations, having global and personal ramifications. For me and for the fishermen of my study, the essence of the past few years has been a delicate balance of information gathering and relationships.

Balancing a discussion of national politics, the reality of economic hardship and the onset of destabilised identity, this PhD merges and twists through personal narrative and quantitative analysis. The subjects demand for several distinct processes of approaching the topic both objectively and subjectively, obliged me to combine methodologies. I had to fuse focused thinking with fact-based results and the qualitative narrative of my informants, individuals operating through the crisis of adversity whilst attempting to manage a newly shifting identity. I had to recognise and manage the awareness that I was collaborating with real people in challenging times. I want this work to stand as dedication to those with ADHD or Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and a celebratory memorial to the observable resilience of the fishers and their community of the Bottom End. I present this study to raise awareness of the consequential connections between complex external events and individuals in their community, and the impact that has on all of us. I hope to have achieved a small part of that aim.

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Acknowledgements

I am not a woman of too much sentiment, and so there are only a few words to say, but those words are written with a profound sincerity.

Thank you to my wonderfully weird family. You are my clay, and I do love you.

To, Dr Simon Heywood, Dr Moy McCrory, thank you for making this possible.

And to those who have helped in seemingly small ways, with tea and cake and the occasional kick up the backside, thank you – you kept me going. For those who assisted with experience and knowledge, again thank you, this would not be the same without you.

Kevin Wallace, Editor extraordinaire, thank you.

For Scarborough, the long line of Messruthers, and the Bottomenders.

And,

Titivillus, my old nemesis, I see you.

This study, under advice, has used Microsoft Office Word and it’s Harvard referencing system. This version of referencing Harvard does use ampersands, and ‘pp’.

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Glossary of Language

Some of the words used in this thesis, and grammatical phrases, particularly in quotes, are intentionally 'misspelled' throughout the document to maintain the authenticity of the vernacular and colloquial, and the sound of the spoken language, below are some common examples.

An' – Short for 'and'.

Bob – One Shilling of imperial currency. English Imperial used Pounds, Shillings and Pence. A bob, or shilling, was worth one-twentieth of a pound, or 12 pennies.
The UK changed to a decimal system in 1971 but was still using shilling coins as five pence pieces into the early 1980s.

Cant, or Carn't – Can not

Double negatives – For example, 'I don't want nothing' instead of 'I don't want anything', or 'There int none' which is 'There is not none' (There isn't anything).

Ehy up – Still used to say hello, commonly followed by, 'how do?'

Flithers – Limpets.

How do? – How are you?

Owt or Nowt − Anything and Nothing

Ont – On the

Queenies – Scallops which are either pronounced as 's-coll-ups' or 'skall-ups'.

Right − Instead of very, 'he's right proud' instead of 'he's very proud'.

Singular for plural – 'I was going home' instead of 'I were going home' Or 'he were coming back', instead of 'he was coming back'.

Summat – Something

Skeining − Pronounced Sk-ai-ning, with a flat 'a' sound but written with an 'e'.

T – The or to. Contraction, often connected onto another word, i.e.: ‘he were on’t boat’ instead of ‘he was on the boat’. It can be used to mean ‘the’ or ‘to’ or ‘to the’, for example, ‘he’s of t’pub’ instead of ‘he is off to the pub.’ It can also be a stand-alone word/sound.

Tanner – Six pence in old money.

Tek − Take

This that and tuther – This, that and the other. Usually meant to mean ‘everything’ or ‘anything’ or ‘all sorts of things’ that someone is moaning about. For example, ‘They all say this that and tuther but you get a faithful crew, they’ll stop there.’ Means that the crew may say all sorts of things and have a bit of a moan, but if they believe in you, they will be faithful and loyal to you and your boat.

Ton round – Turn around.

Ten foot thick − Rather than ‘ten feet thick’, no plural forms for units of measurement (weight, distance, or height) i.e.: ‘he were twenty foot away!’ or ‘two ton of cod’.

Us – Often replaces my, or our, and pronounced with a hard Z, sound.

Werse – Worse.

Were − Instead of was – ‘it were alright’ instead of ‘it was alright’.

While – Often replaces until, ‘we won’t get back while teatime’.

Y – Y is often cojoined to another word, i.e.: ‘y’won’t’ or used as a stand-alone word. It is pronounced y as in yuk and is used to mean either ‘you’ or ‘your’.

Y’waint ail nowt − You will not suffer anything: i.e.: if you eat this you will be well and you will not get ill.

Glossary of Fishing Terms

Coble

Small wooden fishing vessel. Flat-bottomed, high sides and almost as pointed at the front as the back. These were the traditional boats, usually crewed by three or four people, using hand-pulled lines to catch white fish or salmon, or setting pots to catch lobster.

Deckie Learners, Deckies or Deckhands

The lowest status on a fishing boat is the deckie learner. They get the least share of the profits but are taught as apprentices to the more experienced men. The next stage is to be a deckie, once you have learnt all the jobs from how to fish, splice rope and mend nets.

Decommissioning

A scheme to reduce the capacity of the European fishing fleet by paying fishermen to rescind their licenses and crush their fishing boats.

Discards

Fish caught in nets, brought up but rejected by being thrown overboard for being too small or over quota.

Flithers and Flithering

The local word for a limpet, a creature that is essentially a streamline shaped shell containing a mollusc foot that clings to the rock while the limpet eats algae. They grip the rock with surprising force; it is very difficult to remove them. However, when the

fishers could not find mussels then they would use limpets to bait lines. Flithering is the process of shucking them from their shells to use for this purpose.

Keel

A small trawler, bigger than a coble, often wooden but clad in steel.

Pot Men

Fishermen who use lobster pots to catch crabs and lobster. The pots are large baskets, woven with rope which many of the older fishermen make and sell. There are no restrictions on lobster and crab fishing.

Quota

This is the amount by weight of fish a fisherman is permitted to catch. There are different levels for different fish species, some are very tightly controlled. These are called 'choke' species.

Skeining

The process of opening a mussel and scooping out the contents with a knife. A highly skilled action. Locally skeining usually refers to mussels but 'shucking' is also occasionally used.

Trawler

Bigger still, steel hull for commercial beam trawling mainly catching fish. Many of these boats have now been refitted to catch queenies (scallops) or be used as pot boats to catch lobsters and crab.

Interviewees and Key Terminology

Tom Rowley and Lindy Rowley (OBE)

Lindy Rowley was not born in the Bottom End but has lived there for over fifty years so, as she jokes, she's 'almost a local'. Lindy kept everything together and running smoothly when Tom was out at sea, bringing up two children and working several jobs. She is a founding member of 'The Scarborough Maritime History Centre' (SMHC) and accompanies her husband giving talks to schools and collages about fishing. She was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to her community in preserving the history of fishing in Scarborough.

Fisherman Tom Rowley was born and lived in the Bottom End. He is a third generation Scarborough fisherman, if not a fourth or fifth. Everyone seems to know Tom. He worked as a fisherman, and then when he retired, he worked on the pleasure boat 'The Regal Lady', first as an engineer, then as the captain. He became affectionately and universally known as Captain Tom indeed he still gets post addressed simply to 'Captain Tom, Scarborough' and it gets delivered. Tom had to give up his life at sea because of ill health some years ago, but he still lives in his little house a stone's throw away from the foreshore in the heart of the Bottom End. He is well known for his practical jokes and sense of fun.

David Normandale

Fisherman, Skipper, owner, and volunteer at the SMHC. David was born and lives in the Bottom End of Scarborough and followed his father into the family business of fishing.

Fred Normandale

David Normandale's cousin, Fred also followed into the family business of fishing having a successful career as a skipper, owner and co-owner of many boats. He has

written five books about his time at sea and is always happy to talk about his occupation and passion for being out on a boat.

George Sowray and Catherine Wheat

Brother and sister, numbers one and seven of nine born in Scarborough in 1939 and 1949 respectively, to parents Mary Messruther and George Sowray (snr). They have both always lived in Scarborough. George was born in the Bottom End where he remembers living for a few years before the family moved out just after World War Two to the new estate of Barrowcliffe where he lived for decades before moving out to a supported bungalow. George is my uncle and Catherine my mother.

The Bridlington Fishers

Philip Ibbotson and Sue Ibbotson

Fishermen Philip at the age of fifteen was dragged out of bed by his father and thrown on the boat to go fishing; he wanted to be a boat builder. Despite the initial reluctance, Philip together with his father and his three brothers was part of one of Bridlington's most successful boats. When his father retired his older brother Pete took over as skipper and Philip admitted he 'sacked himself' several times to go and work on other boats usually boats from Scarborough. He's spent several years doing this and as such has a deep affection for the harbour and the fishermen of the Bottom End.

Sue hasn't worked in the fishing industry preferring to work in different jobs. She kept the family running smoothly and brought up the children when Philip was away at sea often for a week at a time.

Jim Buckingham, Robert 'Rolly' Rollisson, Neil; at al.

The ‘Brid’ lads. A group of Bridlington fishermen who I met one morning to talk about fishing. They were warm, engaging and happy to talk to me about want it meant to fish and their hopes for the industry in the future.

Robert ‘Rolly’ Rollisson, is the oldest fisherman at ninety-two years old at the time of the interview. He started going out on fishing boats when he was six before being taken out of school when he was fourteen to work on his father’s boat. The other men all look out for him and refer to him as a ‘national treasure’ for his long memory, his innovations for Bridlington harbour and its fishing industry, and for his work for the community which has raised thousands of pounds, all of which saw him awarded the British Empire Medal.

Jim Buckingham officially started fishing when he was fifteen on a variety of family-owned boats, then rising to be skipper and owner of his own trawler, mainly working out of Bridlington harbour. Jim then ‘retired’ from fishing to work as a mediator brokering suitable solutions between the local fishermen and the oil companies.

Social Media

I also had lots of conversations over Facebook and through email with dozens of fisher folk about superstitions, life and fishing in general, mainly because the pandemic stopped us from meeting in person for an interview.

INTRODUCTION

On 23 June 2016 the UK held a referendum on whether it should Remain inside or Leave the European Union, with fishermen leading the Brexit charge.

In 2016 I had an Autistic breakdown; I just didn't know it at the time.

This thesis examines identity in a changing environment. For the fishermen, voting for Brexit was seen as a reclaiming the UK from the hands of foreign powers, to 'stand on our own two feet' and not be 'told what to do' by those who are not British. Personally, the realisation that I was hiding behind masks to get through life led to the acceptance that I needed to go through a diagnostic process to understand why I am who I am. We were searching for our identities, the fishers for the culture and pride they thought they had lost, and me to change the one I had in an attempt to reclaim what I should have been.

This study is centred in community studies but blends methodology, theories and sources from geography, sociology, anthropology, ethnography and creative writing. It is in academic conversation with other community study works, following the interview tradition starting with Venerable Bede, *The History of the English Church and People*, who sort the facts, through to the more modern acceptance that these narratives are part fact, part confessional, part storytelling (Perks & Thomson, 2016, p. 135). Other studies have included, Willmot and Young's *Family and Kinship in East London* (Willmot & Young, 1957), a groundbreaking anthropological study examining the poor working-class district of Bethnal Green in East London recoding kingships, extended family relationships and the effects of being moved to Greenleigh, a suburban housing estate; to Jeremy Tunstall's community study of Hull, *The Fisherman* (1969), ethnographer and broadcaster Stud Terkel and his work with communities and local individuals of the USA (1970), David Clark *Between*

Pulpit and Pew (1982) Staithes, and Lisa McKenzie's *Getting By* (2015) a portrait of survival in St Ann's, Nottingham.

This thesis uses ethnographic methodology by interviewing fishermen about their fathers and grandfathers, where they lived and how they remember them as people; I also asked about their lives and lived experiences of their area of Scarborough, locally referred to as the Bottom End, and their knowledge of the fishing industry. Their stories transcribed and supporting data and public records were analysed to present a multi-layered picture of the people and their place, both geographically and psychologically to uncover a distinct Bottom End identity. This study aimed to discover the who the Bottomenders were, and why they needed to protect this distinct identity and culture.

The strong identity the Bottomenders of my study had with their place, reflected Edward Relph's (2008) theories of place/placelessness and insideness/outsideness. The Bottomenders loved and felt a symbiosis with their geographical place both on land and on their patch of sea. For hundreds of years the Bottom End developed around fishermen and the fishing industry. However, when interviewed, they said their industry and community were in flux and that they were feeling under threat and that the community was in critical decline. This study aimed to record and understand how this identity became so ingrained, how it was protected in the past through socio-cultural practices and sociolinguistic boundaries, and how the Bottomenders thought achieving Brexit would be the ultimate act of protection.

This thesis aimed to go behind the headlines that at the time were claiming the Leave vote had been won by racists or the lower educated poor (Editorial, The Gaurdian, 2016), to uncover the background for the fishermen's choice to vote for

the UK exit from the European Union. This study also aims to analyse the rhetoric and emotions around the referendum and how that transformed into action.

The campaign to end the UK's membership of the European Union had been held in 2016, two years before the official start of this project, but Leave supporters were getting restless and highly critical at the lack of progress. The fishermen of this study were chosen because they had started their careers before the UK joined Europe and worked through the time of increased trading cooperation and, eventually official membership of the EU. They began their careers in the traditional wooden coble boats that were familiar along the coast for generations, often working with their fathers or family friends before moving to trawlers. Once the younger generation took to working from trawlers, these became the dominant boats in the harbour, almost wiping out any need for cobles. The men I interviewed mostly stayed local, often day fishing not far away from the coast between North Shields and the Humber and were as classed inshore trawlers. However, this method of fishing is in such decline that the harbours of Scarborough and Bridlington, once dominated by beam trawling methods of fishing are now almost exclusively shellfish and lobster pot boats. The fishermen of these small harbours of Scarborough and Bridlington had experienced significant and obvious changes to their lifestyle, community and industry, unlike the generations before, but there is little literature documenting the ongoing struggle and transition of the industry. This vanguard study hopes to redress that balance and begin a much-needed conversation.

Consequently, this study adds to the literature written about communities which voted for Brexit but details more meticulous reasoning than earlier studies.

This research uses an ethnographic framework, combining statistical and data analysis to ensure a comprehensive account of the fishers' reasoning and

documented similarities with McKenzie's *The Class Politics of Prejudice: Brexit and the Land of No Hope*, (2017). Both studies have determined that the Brexit result was a consequence of people feeling 'locked out' from where they lived.

There are substantial differences between this study and McKenzie, however, furthering the understanding of the working-class vote for Brexit. The fishermen interviewed were highly political and politically active throughout their careers whereas McKenzie's subjects were ambiguous about politics until the referendum. This research documents how this established political activism helped the fishers to determine their course of action.

The timing of this thesis influenced its direction and subsequent analytical and narrative structure. I conducted the investigation at a pivotal and unique point in the UK's history, and a defining moment in my own personal life. I knew I was experiencing some kind of breakdown, but it was not the usual kind, I did not know what was happening to me; I was unnerved and destabilised.

However, no fast car, no excessive drinking, and certainly no cougar behaviour for me; instead of standing about while everything burned, I decided I needed to do 'something'. True to form, I jettisoned my personal problems and decided to throw myself into work, slap a metaphorical sticking plaster over my own worries and issues and carry on. So, I did the sensible thing and enrolled on a PhD program; I took on the huge task of becoming a doctor of words, anything but confront the ensuing chaos. Of course, that was the opposite of what happened. As I started to ask others who they were and what they stood for I was forced to ask those questions of myself.

This thesis threads personal narrative and analysis to understand who I was and the effect that was having on me as well as those I interacted with and

interviewed as insider informants. It is a unique account of a person grappling with the disintegration of her personality and behaviour, and a record of how it was rebuilt stronger and more capable of facing each new challenge. I already understood the structural pressures of being a working-class woman, but this was not the only part of my identity that was restricting or threatening how I am perceived. This study records one middle-aged woman's fight to comprehend and reclaim part of her personality and identity, however socially unacceptable a diagnosis of Autism/ADHD can be at times.

The study will discuss a selection of the literature used in this study in the Literature Review section. Chapter Two, Methodology, explains which theories and authors were pertinent to each section of the study, fishing, sense of place, othered, and how these categories were used to inform this thesis. I will review the ethics of ethnographic research and analyse interviewing styles, which combine to present a foundational framework for the study. Chapter Three contains the main themes of Bottom End, Brexit, ADHD and Gender Roles, these sections form a knowledge base to use in the understanding of the next three chapters. Chapter Four, Time and Place, establishes the Bottom End as home, providing a discussion of personal identity in a tight-knit community and how that group was self-perpetuating through stories and myths that helped create a sense of community. It includes the fishermen's work and life stories, the significance their boats and the use and misuse of alcohol. This section also document*s* how this boundaried community experienced and responded to the encroachment of the outside world.

Chapter Five, Suspicion and Superstition, details the sociolinguistic practices which formed another boundary for the Bottom End, but one that, according to my research is rapidly diminishing. Chapter Six, Pressure, discusses the elements

raised throughout the work which formed the identity of the Bottomenders and the fishers and details how this provided a pathway to Brexit. There is also an analysis of vernacular and colloquial language, perceived racism, and the hope the fisherman's Brexit was expected to provide.

Chapter One

LITERATURE REVIEW

Philip Ibbotson: There were seventy trawlers here.

TP: And what are they now, two you say?

PI: There int none.

This thesis used a multi-discipline approach crossing boundaries of sociology, human geography, creative writing and community studies. The main themes of this study are identity, sense of place/belonging, gender roles, ADHD/Othered and Brexit. To analyse these themes, I evaluated relevant literature to identify areas of similarity and contrast.

Unlike the well documented larger ports Hull and Grimsby, the views of the fishermen of the smaller harbours along the North Yorkshire coast have not been documented. The fishermen of the smaller harbours of Scarborough and Bridlington have seen many changes over the course of their careers, and with it a change to their identity. This study is focused on Scarborough's fishing quarter, known as the Bottom End, for its analysis of community cohesion and operation. However, as many fishermen crewed on the boast and worked out of the harbour of Bridlington, a small port further down the coast, I interviewed some Bridlington based fishermen for their views on the fishing industry.

This research was conducted in the aftermath of the UK's vote to Leave or Remain inside the European Union, the fishermen were keen to talk about why they voted for Brexit. The fishers identified with their geographical area, community and industry, but over the stretch of their career these elements had all changed leading to a destabilisation of their identity. Brexit is an emerging topic, and this thesis contributes to the academic discussion.

This study also documents the effect of studying identity when one's identity is falling apart. As a reaction to interviewing the Bottomenders, I started to explore my own uniqueness and the reasons why I think and react the way I do. This study documents the practical and personal effects of a late-diagnosis of Autism-ADHD on a working-class middle-aged woman. This exploration took this thesis down a personal narrative of discovery, but one that mirrors and refracts the crisis of identity engulfing the fishermen.

Fishing

For a detailed perspective from a Bottom End fisher, I read Fred Normandale's self-published books (Normandale, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2010, 2021). Having also interviewed Normandale, I concentrated on different voices within the Bottom End community. Many of the men and women had never been interviewed before and so gave fresh information and didn't know what to expect from an interview session. As there was little written about the Bottom End or Scarborough fishing during the time of my interviewees careers I turned to Jeremy Tunstall's, *The Fisherman* (1969) Hull fishing, and David Clark's, *Between Pulpit and Pew* (1982) Staithes a small fishing village. Noted was a more recent study by Ruth Williams, that found similar life patterns and close community in Scottish communities, *Changing Constructions of Identity: Fisher Households and Industry Restructuring*, (2008).

Clark used an embedded ethnographic approach to record Staithes' changing fishing community and their shifting sense of place. Staithes is a very small village along the north coast and reflects what was to happen to the bigger port of Scarborough a few years later. Clark details the distinct geography of the fishing area, different dialect and pronunciation, as well as the erosion of the fishing community as members moved out to the new, modern council houses built on the

other side of town, breaking ties with their traditional lifestyle. He also details the decline of fishing, from one hundred and twenty smacks and cobles in 1885 to only four by the end of the Second World War (Clark, 1982, p. 22). This led to the increasingly insular nature of Staithes fishing community, becoming more protective as the industry and their place on land changed. Fishermen no longer lived in the fishing quarter, contributing to the dissolution of the closed fishing community. The Staithes fishers that remained then felt the need to protect themselves, repelling strangers. All this is mirrored in the history and development of Scarborough's Bottom End.

Clark was interviewing and observing in the early 1980s, before the regulations from the EU, such as quotas and decommissioning had begun to affect the fishermen. This study then tracks the progression of how these schemes contributed to the continued decline of fishing along the smaller harbours of the east coast.

Tunstall reviewed Hull's life and practices of deep-sea fishermen belonging to the port of Hull and Grimsby. It is a detailed account of wages, work life and rules governing the boat and the social structures of life on land. Tunstall recorded the anti-European feeling amongst the fishermen, which he traced back to the actions of the UK government before, during, and after the First World War. He details the harsh conditions, poor housing, shorter life expectancy and working-class affiliation of the men (Tunstall, 1969, p. Intro).

Tunstall was researching and writing in the mid-1960s, when this study's participants were just starting their careers. Although the communities of Hull and Scarborough have different fishing styles, The Fisherman provided some details of universal practices, for example the share system of wages.

However, there were aspects of Tunstall's study that did not correspond with my findings. A limitation to his study is that he does not record the views of any woman, not even the fishermen's wives. He also writes with a distinctive slant, describing a boy's motivation for going to sea as to get away from the women.

> In turn the overcrowding in such families probably tends to motivate boys towards fishing, which gets them away from the crowded bedrooms and the back-room packed with chattering women. [sic]
>
> (Tunstall, 1969, p. 93)

And why the men drink so much.

> The fishermen's wife organises her life around the task of bringing up her children − and this inevitably becomes in many ways more important than her other main task of looking after her husband during the ninety days or so each year when he is ashore.
>
> (Tunstall, 1969, p. 162)

This research differs considerably from Tunstall as the men and women actively described a partnership within which they worked. The men spoke with a high regard for their wife's contribution and that they 'worked as a team'. Corresponding with Tunstall, I noted a few of my fishermen had divorced, however, I also noted several had long marriages.

Tunstall describes the social and personal lives of Hull fishermen which differed to the observation of this study. One explanation could be the changing attitudes from the elder generation to the young men starting their careers in the 1960s. It may also be a localised culture difference between a city port such as Hull/Grimsby and the smaller ports.

Tunstall's book was published over fifty years before I started formally interviewing from 2018 onwards. When he was observing the fishing industry along the Yorkshire coast it was still thriving, but since then it has suffered a significant decline, especially during the careers of my interviewees; I felt the effects of this rapid change. Membership of the EU and Common Fisheries Policy and societal changes needed to be recorded as a step forward from Tunstall and Clark.

Sense of Place

For the theoretical framework, I used the key literature of geographer Edward Relph's *Place and Placelessness* (2008), who's theories of insideness/outsideness I used to explain how the Bottomenders felt about their place. Place and Placelessness was originally published in 1976 and is Relph's response to a lack of discussion of place and how humans experience a sense of place. Relph began to question the geographical places we take for granted and their impact upon us, with feelings of insideness or outsideness. According to Seamon and Sowers, this idea of 'insideness/outsideness' and 'existential insideness/outsideness' was revolutionary thinking at the time (2008, p. 45).

While Relph's theory provided a valuable framework to understand the Bottomenders relationship to their place and the space they inhabit, he has been criticised by geographers such as Tim Cresswell (2004) and Gillain Rose (2007). They accuse humanist geographers of searching for an essence, a universal experience, and 'in this search for 'essence' 'difference' has no place' (Cresswell, 2004, p. 25). They underline social factors, such as class, gender and race which are 'forces that affect and manipulate our everyday lives' (Cresswell, 2004, p. 27).

Cresswell clarifies, via the examples of a graffiti artist in New York, peace campers of Greenham Common and New Age Travellers in the British countryside,

that if you do something unexpected according to the rules of that place, then you ‘transgress’ and are out of ‘your place’. Transgression, acting out of place and the consequences of such actions were elements which this study registered, along with the need of the communities or society to respond and regain order to the expected pattern. To understand this ‘pollution behaviour’ in relation to the fishermen’s antagonism towards the EU and subsequent desire to remove it from their lives I used Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, (2002).

Gillian Rose (2007), also criticised Relph for not mentioning the impact of social structures used to control women, and how this affects the spaces where women genuinely feel comfortable or are socially permitted. This theory was applied to the role of women, and gender roles for the women of the Bottom End, and for me in relation to ADHD/Autism diagnosis.

Relph does not mention that gender or class difference may have an impact on a person’s relationship to place, in fact Seamon and Sowers (2008) comment that there was a quest by humanist geographers to remove all social and historical context to enable a relationship with place.

To counteract this criticism, I have used Relph, Cresswell and Rose to understand my interviewees sense of place and what may impact upon their experiences.

Community

To understand working-class community cohesion and the effect of outside influences, Lisa McKenzie’s *Getting By: Estate, Class and Culture in Austerity Britain* (2015), and Lisa McKenzie’s *The Class Politics of Prejudice: The Land of No Hope* (2017), and Owen Jones’ *Chavs; The Demonization of the Working-class* (2012) were consulted.

Jones interviewed leading Conservatives party members and ex Members of Parliament, to explain their attitudes, beliefs, values and what they wanted to achieve by austerity, and its effect on working-class communities: they freely admit their deconstruction. This political, and cultural attack on working-class areas, stripping out and re-shaping of communities led to the people living in them feeling left behind and rejected, setting the scene for the Brexit vote many years later. This was confirmed by Lisa McKenzie who details the changing nature of council estates, from being a home for workers to been seen as 'the enemy within'.

> Instead of being the backbone of Britain, we were becoming 'the enemy within'. Working-class communities in the UK have been destroyed since 1985.
>
> (McKenzie, 2015, p. 2)

McKenzie (2015), uses the framework of Bourdieu in her ethnographic studies to understand and explain the construction and lifestyle of working-class communities, looking at them from an inside-out perspective. McKenzie's research was conducted over several years from 2004 until publication noting the prejudice residents face, how they respond to those challenges and contextualising their behaviour due to socially constructed limitations.

McKenzie recorded that the residents of St. Ann's often do not often leave its boundaries, experiencing comfort and protection from an outside hostile world. This study concurs with this finding and observes in the fishing quarters of Scarborough, the residents live their whole lives there and find its boundaries reassuring and safe. To those outside the community, this refusal to leave is seen as a character fault, showing a lack of drive or ambition to better oneself. In her lecture at the University of Limerick, McKenzie commented that the message most people were 'bombarded'

with was that ‘people need to learn, get out, be moving and global, wanting the two square miles where you live to be better, isn’t good enough anymore, it’s not ambitious’ (Critical Perspectives on Youth, Community and Urban Regeneration, 2015). For McKenzie, there is better explanation, if you feel a belonging, as many residents do to their communities, but outside these boundaries you are seen as lower or wrong, then why would you want to leave?

To further extend the current literature on working-class community and changing identity in modern Britain, this research adds the voices of the Bottomenders. The skippers of this study did ascribe to working-class identification but with middle-class money to spend, thus enabling a unique take on working life. McKenzie (2017) specifically, studied communities in London and Nottinghamshire to ask specifically about working-class people’s opinions of Brexit. She notes that people felt ‘locked out’ of their areas and were battling to access housing, work and cultural opportunities. My participants also recognised feelings of being locked out of their community. They were feeling displaced, but their concern was for their sons and grandsons, as they simply could not see a place for them within either the fishing community or the Bottom End.

This research is in academic dialogue with McKenzie’s studies but furthers this body of research to note the political activism of the fishermen. Unlike McKenzie’s participants who were never political until the Brexit vote, many in my study group were highly political before the referendum. Some of the skippers had been politically active with one acting a Vice-Chairman, then Chairman of the Fishermen’s Federation, and able to speak directly with government ministers. Yet they still felt just as ignored and ‘locked out’ as those in McKenzie’s study that had no political appetite.

This thesis, using the same ethnographic methodology as McKenzie, contributes to and furthers the current literature of community studies and working-class communities. It also contributes to the growing literature written about Brexit adding the unique and in-depth analysis of this community's reason for voting to leave the EU.

ADHD 'Othered' Literature

During this study I experienced an autistic breakdown, although I didn't know what it was at the time. My identity was under threat, and I was falling apart. I needed to understand why I felt othered, what that other was and how I could move forward with that knowledge. To do this I used diagnostic criteria as a methodology and a phenomenological and positionality perspective to understand the influences and bias placed on a study of oneself.

It was not until I read Joanna Limburg's *Letters to My Weird Sisters* (2021) that I finally accepted how I was like my children, and that maybe I was neurodivergent. This led to reading Fran Lock's *White/Other* (2022). Lock has an energy of quiet rage and anger, written from the perspective of being 'othered' by everyone else. She writes from her working-class viewpoint, being thought of as poor, rough, as '*other'*, constantly having to justify her time and place.

> poor time inoculates against ambition. i could only pretend to be them, to anticipate and mimic, however imperfectly, and thus erase myself, my reason, my meaning and my purpose. "otherness" is enacted in the very moment it is wiped out. [sic]
>
> (Lock, 2022, pp. 19-20) (no capitalisation used by Lock)

My study is a unique evaluation of the position of being working-class, an academic, a woman and neurodivergent. It adds to a growing body of work which highlights the struggles and joys of Autism/ADHD.

As this is an element of the research and is personal to me, it is based around 'soft data' of subjective memories and experiences, rather than the hard data of transcripts or questionnaires. This makes it subjective, and open to criticism for not being 'objective'. However, by adopting positionality, I have produced an empathetic and authentic piece of work.

Application

This study adopted an ethnographic methodology in connection with other studies of communities such as McKenzie and Skeggs. The literature discussed presented working-class communities and how social structures shape attitudes, beliefs and values. This study adds to this with a dynamic portrait of the fishermen and Bottomenders and how social structures affect their sense of identity. Relph's theoretical framework provided a basis for understanding the feelings of insideness and outsideness, which this study adapted to understand how people felt when their inside place was threatened. Recording how the fishers and I reacted to a threat to our identity and our place within society, this research provided a full picture of what led to our decisions. The fishermen to Brexit and me to diagnosis.

Chapter Two

METHODOLOGY

> You're Columbus, you're setting out onto the unknown sea. There are no maps because no one has been there before. You're an explorer, a discoverer. It's exciting − and it's scary, it frightens you. It frightens the person you're going to interview. Remember that….in the one-to-one interview you start level in the unconfidence [sic], in not knowing where you are going.
>
> Studs Terkel. (Perks & Thomson, 2016, p. 147)

This thesis was built around interviewing people. Interviewing is very difficult. Talking is not. The slim distinction between the two makes the difference between a great interview that gets the subject talking about what you need to hear and a poor one where neither is satisfied. This project needed to have a good knowledge of interview techniques and styles, and a sound ethical foundation, especially around situational ethics. As I was visiting people's homes or talking to them in public places, I needed to be aware of any potential problems and potential solutions when on the hoof.

Ethics

By the mid-twentieth century, ethnographers began to question the studies of the nineteenth century which gave the researcher absolute authority and rarely considered the opinion of the observed. A sharp change in attitude was brought about after the Nuremberg Doctor's Trials in 1947, which led to The Nuremberg Code being produced in response to the human experiments carried out by Nazi physicians on incarcerated people. It laid down the fundamental rights of research participants and the responsibilities of investigators to gain consent from volunteers and those subjects to know the risks involved in any research (Ghooi, 2011).

Participants must be adequately protected, and participants can end their involvement at any time (Jarmusik, 2019).

Current research ethics are formally governed by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), which is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), which brings together the UK's seven research councils to promote good practice within UK research (ESRC, 2019). Universities have ethical committees to regulate, promote good practice and minimise risks to participants and researchers.

Study participants may also encounter difficulties as through the discourse of an interview, participants may admit to illegal activity; this information, if handled incorrectly, could have consequences for the. Researchers must consider all scenarios and be able to protect their participants accordingly through the lifetime of the study. Anonymity is also a consideration, Alan Morris, *A Practical Introduction to In-Depth Interviewing* (2015), says anonymising participants is essential,

> Confidentiality and anonymity are fundamental components of ethical research. […] it is essential that the interviewees not be identified. [sic]
> (Morris, 2015, p. 21)

As my study was within such a closed community where they all knew one another, it would be very difficult to anonymise successfully, as participants' stories would be easy to identify by the small, tight-knit community who have spent their lives listening to each other's distinctive way of talking. I went through the study and its potential uses with the interviewees, and screened some of the comments which I thought may be a potential risk. These and these have been anonymised, not only in name but by changing colloquialisms and identifying phrases to standard English. Some information given was also left out as although it gave clear insights into some aspects of a closed community and its darker side, I believed the person would be

too easily identified, another family was mentioned negatively, and the ramifications could be severe.

Alongside the practical application of the formal regulations, are a set of informal or situational ethics which cover everyday interactions and situations between researchers and the communities they study. Situational ethical considerations, according to Hammersley and Atkinson *Ethnography, Principle in Practice* (2002), cannot be learned exclusively from academic reading, but practice.

> […] ethnographic research is awareness of the fact that such research cannot be programmed, that its practice is replete with the unexpected. (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2002, p. 23)

A researcher, therefore, should be flexible in their approach and be able to develop and change their expectations as the study progresses to gain the best results. By rephrasing questions or changing the limitations of the study parameters, new questions and investigations can be developed, or as they quote Merton (1959), 'finding the right question to ask is more difficult than answering it' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2002, p. 31). For example, when asking the men for their occupational recollections and opinions, they also wanted to discuss how the atmosphere of fishing had changed from the 1980s onwards and how this led them to believe Brexit would be a good thing for fishing. Fishing regulation and how it impacted the fishermen and their vote for Britain's exit from the EU then formed part of this thesis. It was the right time to do so, and so I followed this line of information and questioning.

Situational ethics also include an awareness of one's personality, traits and experiences and how this affects the study and participants. Ethnographers have realised that rather than being dispassionate, by bringing their background, personal

experiences and personality into the interview, they can record a fuller and perhaps more accurate picture. If a researcher can be authentic and open, then a comfortable rapport can enable rich data to be collected. If the researcher has no personable connection and is seen as aloof, the study group may not fully cooperate. I was aware of this with my study group especially when choosing an interview style which would feel responsive and non-threatening to enable my interviewees to be comfortable and relaxed during each session.

In-depth interviewing and observations are central to social research but produce dilemmas when the study group's beliefs and reasoning are alien. Social researchers can adopt the position of cultural relativism, which is acknowledging that the study group have different beliefs which can be recorded and understood as valid from their perspective. In some cases, cultural relativism and the inability to criticize a practice on cultural grounds can be problematic but for this study the overall theory worked. At the time of interviewing Brexit was an issue that evoked strong and robust responses, the country felt divided and to be on the 'wrong' side, in a part of town that didn't belong to me could have been problematic. I am a Remainer whereas my subjects all wanted to 'Leave' the EU, known as Brexiteers, so this issue had to be handled delicately. My response was to maintain a position of neutrality without expressing my opinion. I sensed a declaration on my part could have initiated hostility and the participants would have 'clamped up'; the interview would have been over with no worth to the material collected. I believe it is more interesting to ask why someone may hold an opposing opinion rather than allowing the conversation to descend into a who's right**,** who's wrong debate. I consider this study to be richer, and my understanding fuller by painting a picture of what led to the fishermen's support for Brexit rather than bland recording of the fact. Gathering

background information and asking why enabled a deeper reading of the circumstances and reasoning for their opinions rather than I, or any other academic or journalist could collect by jumping to conclusions. I wanted my participants to tell me, I wanted their voices to be heard over my own.

Methods

As this study centred on interviews to gain information a comprehensive approach to interview strategies was needed. I looked at three different approaches: the relaxed style of Studs Terkel, the semi-structured interview favoured by Alan Morris and the formal detailed method preferred by Valarie Yow.

Studs Terkel is a social researcher, radio interviewer and author, who was recorded in conversation with Tony Parker, (Perks & Thomson, 2016, pp. 147-152). Terkel describes his three-point process, starting with trying to relax and 'win over' the interviewee. Part of his technique is to fumble with his equipment, he says he never wants to learn to use a tape recorder because 'who would be frightened of a little old guy who wants to tape-record a conversation with you − and he can't even work his tape recorder' (Perks & Thomson, 2016, p. 148). By asking for help Terkel also makes it a 'them and us' type situation; it gives the impression that this is a conversation of equals, not a police interrogation. I found this advice for establishing rapport a valuable tool.

Terkel starts interviews with a lead-in question, something non-threatening and open-ended, something like:

> 'Tell me where I am and who I'm talking to?' That's quite a good one, because it lets me follow up. When they've said where we are 'and you're talking to John Doe,' I say, 'And who is John Doe?' And they start telling you, well then you are on your way.

(Perks & Thomson, 2016, p. 147)

This approach can be heard in Terkel's field interviews, recordings, and radio interviews. In, *Interviewing Local Residents, Part 5* (Network, 1970), a project exploring the thoughts of residents in the people's park area Chicago, after a brief introduction to where they are and who is with him Terkel simply asks, 'your reflections?' This begins the conversation unassumingly**,** in a low-key manner allowing the respondent to relax.

In part six of this series of recorded interviews, he starts by asking, 'some of your thoughts?' (Network, 1970). This provides a productive opening as both subjects begin to freely discuss their experiences and opinions. This non-confrontational opening style worked for Terkel, as he successfully spent sixty years walking up to people and asking them questions. Even his radio interviews have a non-confrontational disarming directness. Although a radio interview is a different type of interview, radio is a very different medium as the person is usually famous and there to talk about something specific, and they may already have been interviewed on several occasions; this relaxed style opens the conversation to reveal the person underneath. In interviewing Barbara Cartland, Terkel gives a very brief description of her career and that she has lived through some momentous times. On this occasion, he mentions the Great Depression and then goes straight to Cartland with, 'the Great Depressions of the 20s and 30s, your recollections of that period?'; she talks and does not stop, revealing far more about herself than the words she says (Network, 1970).

Terkel's second point is to 'Listen … Listen … Listen … Listen. And if you do people will talk.' Terkel recognises the importance of a shrug or silence; any non-verbal communication is as valuable as the spoken words, so he urges caution.

Never rush people, ‘handle them carefully, they’re holding out to you fragile things.’ He asserts that there are only two main lines of questioning, ‘tell me about the river of life?’ and then listen. This is fundamental to his technique, to ask a seemingly simple question, then listen and appreciate the answers, both verbal and non-verbal*,* to not hassle a person onward but to let them speak in their own time, as these silences and answers can be truly appreciated when the interview is played back. Terkel also requires the interviewer not to push the person down a certain pre-supposed line of talking. Interview subjects can be worried about giving an interview and ‘saying the right thing’, so do not push. An interviewer must not look for ‘an abstraction of the truth, because it doesn’t exist … (look) for the truth for them’. He cautions to look out for a smile or a laugh or a pause, ‘who are they talking to − you − themselves, to the past, the future.’ All these things are telling and important to the social researcher, ‘people aren’t always direct’, and it is these indirect ques that for Terkel is the answer that is often ‘more informative than the straight answer’ (Perks & Thomson, 2016, pp. 148-150).

Within his second point, he stresses the importance of not writing questions down because it is ‘false’ and ‘unnatural’ to a conversation. He also advises avoiding why and how questions when someone is in flow, they are too harsh and can jolt the interviewee. Terkel recommends a gentler approach, perhaps ‘what happened then?’ as the interview must not sound like an ‘inquisition’ as it must be an ‘exploration’ (Perks & Thomson, 2016, p. 149). In his interview with Barbara Cartland Terkel only interrupts to clarify a point, for example Cartland refers to ‘1926’, and when able he asks ‘1926, was the year’… ‘was the general strike’ interjects Cartland He pauses to allow Cartland to take over again, revealing more of her character than his. She also mentions ‘we were told to keep things going, so we did.’ Terkel follows up with, ‘So

how did you keep things going?' and again Cartland expands her point fully. Terkel is providing pinpoints for his American audience who may not have been aware of English politics of the time, but he is letting Cartland tell her story in her own distinctive way (Network, 1970).

Terkel urges researchers to ask the subject beforehand if there is something they would like to discuss, as by doing this the interviewer may uncover wonderful things they never knew were there. People sometimes do not realise what is in them until they have said it out loud; this is unexpected and often wonderful for Terkel, or as he says, 'it's like being a gold prospector. You find this precious metal in people when you least expect it.' He simplifies this second stage as using a 'skeletal framework but be ready to improvise within that' (Perks & Thomson, 2016, pp. 151-152).

The third piece of advice from Terkel is honesty in interviewing and honesty when editing a story. He suggests you can rewrite, re-order or re-arrange to 'get the story flowing' but must never be dishonest, 'be skilful and respectful ... but the one thing you can't do is invent'. Terkel warns of the urge to get rid of the easy things, for example, the ums' and 'errs' from an interview, or of a person repeating themselves. to cut these out, but it is in those verbal ticks that a person's character comes through, or as Terkel says, ' […] if you take them out, you lose the reality of the speech pattern of that person' (Perks & Thomson, 2016, p. 152).

For further interview advice I looked at social researcher Alan Morris who adopts a semi-structured in-depth interview technique. This is also a relaxed style of interview but one that enables the interviewer to cover the subjects they want, rather than having the conversation meander. This method is the most common and

acceptable quantitative method for social researchers. Morris writes much skill and technique can be taught in order to perform better interviews (Morris, 2015, p. 79).

He advises that during a semi-structured interview, the ‘interviewer has topics that they want to cover’ but there ‘is plenty of scope for digression.’ The interviewee may ‘ramble’ but can be gently kept on a topic or probed to cover all main areas of interest. This questioning gives the interviewer a chance to ask further questions as to why the interviewee answered the way they did or to clarify a point (Morris, 2015, p. 10). Alternatives to a semi structured approach are narrative interviews which involves little interruption from the interviewer as the participant tells their story in a chronological order in their own way. Narrative interview and the semi structured approach overlap for a life history interview, as it can allow the interviewee ‘the space to tell their life story and key events are focused on’. It is, after all, their story and ‘what they focus on is left to the interviewee’ (Morris, 2015, p. 12). However, it also allows the interviewer to occasionally guide and ask follow-up questions.

However, as Morris notes, the life story interview relies on a great deal of trust between the interviewer and the subject. One is expected to treat the information sensitively, and the other is ‘expected to give a comprehensive and honest account of their lives’ (Morris, 2015, p. 12).

Non-verbal responses proved invaluable, adding great weight to what my interviewees said. Observation within the whole of this project has proved vital to my understanding of the fishermen and their opinions. In some interviews, the person was so angry and exasperated the words came out in stits and starts or were accompanied by a look or gesture which told me more than their words alone. I observed and registered the emotions surrounding the person, a look, a hand gesture: as I have knowledge of this communities’ expressions I interpreted their

actions. These non-verbal ticks and exasperations gave me a greater understanding of the words they said and a more in-depth understanding of their situation.

However, Morris also advises some caution for this flexible method of collecting data. He warns that the person being interviewed could present 'inaccurate information'. This could be a deliberate lie or an innocent misremembering, so further research on facts and events is needed, to explore the context of the event in question.

A disadvantage of this type of interview is the sample of those interviewed is sometimes from a very narrow section; in my study, this is limited to elder fishermen and their families. Therefore, this information could not be used to 'generalise a population' it is specific, however, that was the intention of the study (Morris, 2015, p. 7).

The last style I looked at was from social researcher Valerie Yow whose book, *Interviewing Techniques and Strategies*, (2016) advocates a detailed twenty-one-point formal plan to conduct her interviews, following this with a checklist of twenty positive points to note and twenty negative points to avoid. I will discuss a few points that I considered for this thesis.

Yow emphasises that you must explain how a recording works, that every noise will be picked up and insist in a 'firm serious tone' if you need to change the location for somewhere quieter (Yow, 2016, pp. 104-105). She needs a space to be quiet to get a better recording with fewer distractions or noises that may inhibit the sound quality. Hammersley and Atkinson (2002) partly agrees that where the interview takes place is as important as who you are interviewing and who the interviewer is, it is not always under the ethnographer's control. Hammersley and Atkinson do agree with Yow that the number of distractions in a place can cause you

to not have the interviewee’s full attention, if this is so then the interview is of little use (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2002, pp. 147-148).

In one particular interview, I needed to talk to a couple who wanted to be interviewed in a pub; this is where they felt most comfortable, so I agreed. It was a relatively quiet pub except for a randomly squawking parrot. This gave the interview richness, and revealed more about the couple than they could tell me. I made a deliberate choice to interview in what were, for my interviewees, comfortable spaces. Within this environment the couple were uninhibited, their responses complex and revealing, providing valuable information that I would not have been privy to otherwise. This approach may not work for other groups of people, for example if interviewing a scientist, a spit and sawdust pub may be uncomfortable but a sterile room with desk and chair would be totally acceptable. Flexibility, and knowledge of your group is key.

Yow also insists that interviews must be conducted separately to get a person to speak freely and not be constrained by the other. She gives the example of two work colleagues who really ‘sparked’ off each other, however, when they were asked personal questions, their answers became ‘truncated’. The narrators became the ‘us’ against the interviewers who weren’t part of their clique, and the quality of the interview deteriorated. It is only on occasion that Yow believes a second person can be a reassuring presence, so unless the nature of the project demands double interviews, then avoid it at all costs (Yow, 2016, pp. 154-155). I understand this advice, and in an ideal world, it makes sense, but if it is a case of getting an interview or not, then I believe any approach must be flexible, and the parameters of the interview changed to accommodate. Several of my interviews were with multiple people but I asked about their working life; if I had needed deeply personal questions

to be answered, I would have arranged a second single interview. However, it did make transcribing more difficult, as I had to recognise the voices to attribute the words. I also think some of the joint interviews had a different dimension, the relationship between the couples and between friends shone through, and this helped me see the strength of the relationships of this community. The women remembered detail, and the men remembered the laughs. There was joy in these relationships, and that knowledge was invaluable to the path the project took.

Lindy Rowley stated that people always wanted to talk to the men and never the women; the men had exciting jobs at sea, and the women were seen as unexciting housewives. Lindy is a founding member of Scarborough's Maritime Heritage Centre established with the express wish to save the local culture and work practices of fishing and the lives of the Bottomenders. Nonetheless, when she and her fisherman husband, Tom, went to schools, libraries and private groups to give talks about the fishing industry, people always asked about the men's day but never asked about the women. I felt by asking to talk to the men I had fallen into this trap too. Although several of my interviews were with both husband and wife and other men and women of the town, I came to understand how important. Perhaps, I would not have seen this had I not interviewed them together.

Within my practice, I found Yow's advice around a 'diminishing rapport' very useful, not as a way of retrieving a connection but on how not to destroy it in the first place. Yow emphasises the importance of listening to your interviewee, of not blunting their information with your need to extract information, of how that could lead to distrust and a terrible interview. Yow suggests that this is usually because the interviewer, by not listening intently has shown little interest in what has been said. She gives the example of a couple who were talking about a road trip where they

encountered a huge tornado that ripped their car into the air and flipped it onto its roof next to a swamp; dramatic stuff, but the interviewer asks, 'were you going north or south on highway 67?' (Yow, 2016, p. 160). One can assume this interview was not successful.

Fishermen and Bottomenders are not known for an instant outward acceptance of people and view strangers with suspicion, especially academics. However, looking back over my transcripts, I find real value and that all-important rapport in my interviews, I was interested in my people; I didn't have to fake it, and they responded positively. I didn't know too much about fishing when I started this project, so when I asked my fishers questions it was a genuine request for information. Knowing my community as I do, if I'd have come across like I already knew everything, I would have got that look that says, 'aye well you dain't need me t'tell you then'; the interviewees would have clamped up and the interview would have gone nowhere, as the local saying goes, 'nobody likes a smart Alec'. So, for example I had been told about decommissioning; the crushing of boats and rescinding of fishing licences, by one fisherman, but another asked me at his interview if I knew anything, I honestly said I knew a little, but quickly asked 'but what was it for you?' Everyone's experiences are different; whether I previously heard similar stories is irrelevant, I needed to hear their personal experience.

> [The researcher] must position themselves so that the members of the community feel comfortable teaching them.
>
> Being a know it all, or if you are perceived as already knowing something then the participant will not feel comfortable telling you, as they would be embarrassed to be lecturing you on a subject you already know about. But with this the researcher misses vital information, even if a story is told to

> you several times, every time every person will tell it slightly differently. This has value, to both cement the story as being within the culture and important, but also the variation and permutations are personally expressing cultural ownership for that participant.
> (LeCompte & Schensul, 2015, p. 120)

Although, on occasion, I jumped in with a follow-up question a little too quickly, Morris admits in his practice, too, that this is a common occurrence. He cautions that one must let the person meander and learn patience (Morris, 2015, p. 84). I think this is a skill learnt over a considerable time, and only by doing and making a few mistakes can one improve.

Another interesting point by Yow was that one must control one's reactions, as non-verbal communication, or a seemingly disapproving or condescending tone from the interviewer can destroy a conversation (Yow, 2016, p. 161).

As an artist working with nudes, I have extensive experience at my disposal of how to put a person at their ease and not appear shocked. Within the interview, especially within the parameters of this study, what I feel on the matter, or my political opinions are irrelevant; my job is to understand why my interviewees are saying or behaving as they are. What is important to them is to ask why they hold this opinion; in short, I am there to listen, not judge. As an example, very early in an interview, I asked a fisherman 'what types of fish did you catch?' He answered, 'anything with an eye and an arsehole.' He delivered this in a way that was intended to shock me. My own Scarborough accent is almost gone, and I'm a woman from a middle-class university wandering about a Bottomender's pub unaccompanied. He was sussing me out. I wasn't shocked; I betrayed not a flicker. The interview settled down after that, and he warmed to me with the answers fuller and more honest.

Application

I was advised to undertake a preliminary study to gain insight into the direction and difficulties the main thesis may develop and to produce a strategy to counteract any potential problems. The pre-study contained three interviews and several informal conversations, which were later incorporated into the main work. Tested within this pre-study were the ethical considerations needed throughout every stage of the project and which interview technique was appropriate or if a combination of styles were needed. The first interview was with Liz Hall, who mainly wanted to give me three sets of slides that belonged to her late father, William Rippon, who was a merchant seaman, Master Mariner and teacher at Scarborough's Graham Sea Training school[1] sometimes referred to as Graham School (there is another Graham school in Scarborough), Sea Training, or the Navigational school (SMHC, n.d.). All the Scarborough fishermen attended this seafaring school learn navigation and seamanship, so this initially interested me. With follow-up research after the interview and asking the fishermen themselves, it transpired that they attended just after William Rippon left, I suspect, however, he taught their fathers. William Rippon also worked on a hospital ship during the war and recorded his experiences in a journal and recorded them onto a tape, which I transcribed. William Rippon was a man who was in the merchant navy during the war and describes the conditions

[1] Officially this was called Graham Sea Training. The school building, Paradise House, was donated by Mayor Mr C. C. Graham in1918 for the naval education of local boys. By 1944 it had been integrated into the school system and the education provided became more mainstream but still had a distinct navigational slant when my subject group went there in the 1950-60s. In 1925 it acquired a boat and called her the Maisie Graham, named after Major Graham's daughter. This name has passed along to several boats.
The first Masie Graham was an oak schooner built in 1897 by F W Wencke, Bremerhaven, Germany. After the Great War she was bought by the Royal National Mission for Deep Sea Fishermen. In 1925 she was bought by Mr Graham and given to the school sailing locally and as far as Scandinavia with a crew of boys between 11-16 years old. In 1938 Prince Louis of Battenburg pressed for the boat to be given to Gordonstoun private school for the training and pleasure of its pupils and renamed Prince Louis (Mearns, 2017).

when transporting soldiers, so many men per boat, but if you were transporting Asian or black soldiers the figure increased, a point of discrimination he noted. Ripon was also at the ceremony of Indian Independence and went through the Burmese forest; he gave vivid descriptions of disembarking at the ruined docks of Rangoon, dodging snipers in the forest, and his first sight of the temples.

> We walked along the main street with the Shwedagon pagoda clearly visible over-looking the town. It had escaped looting and the gold encased bell-shaped towers, clearly undamaged, and shining in the sun, beautiful building.

William Rippon had collected three sets of slides which his daughter Liz gave to me. She wanted them to be used and then given to the relevant maritime heritage museums. The relevant Scarborough slides were documented and given to Scarborough's Maritime Heritage Centre, and the Hull appropriate once will be given over in due course.

Initial Way 'In'

I initially reached out to the gatekeepers of the community, whom I identified as the founders of the Scarborough Maritime Heritage Museum. With their intervention I secured the opening round of interviews. To ensure I wasn't just speaking to carefully selected people I looked for other access points into the fishing community, mainly via social media, where there are several active community groups.

From these initial interviews, I used a snowball method to gather contacts, but by using a multi-pronged approach I sought to gain access to different friendship groups and opinions. I found the fishermen I met to be surprisingly similar in their outlook and life pattern, for example: the younger men who started fishing in the late

1970s had a strikingly similar life path to ninety-six-year-old Rolly Rollisson who started in late 1940s.

Strategy in Practice

From 2018−2020 I was able to conduct fourteen interviews; I focused on ten people, four of whom only interacted in a group setting. These interviews were conducted in long form, between one to four hours of duration and as such demanded quite a commitment from the participants. Interviews lasted for as long as needed with cups of tea bought for the interviewees as a thank you, no other payment was offered nor expected.

For smaller, targeted information gathering, I had many conversations through social media (all screenshot saved). A total of forty-six people contributed in this way with superstitions and practices, and background information about 1970s Scarborough and the Bottom End. I also had detailed online conversations about fishing and the local lifeboats of Scarborough and Bridlington with two other fishermen. When the UK first went into lockdown due to the Covid epidemic in 2020 this, prevented any movement, so I sent a questionnaire and conducted a virtual follow up meeting with one of the fishermen.

I decided that when interviewing for this study, I would rather get the interview even if I could not hear every word or use the soundtrack for broadcast (a later possibility). I agree with Terkel that the background sound can tell the listener a lot about the person, and it can give an additional level of clues to the listener about that person and their life. On reflection, although my recordings were not carried out in the quietest of places, they have a poetic and creative quality about them, and have proved invaluable to me and the study. I interviewed in a café and a pub, public places and spaces that for the interviewee were special and comforting. These

spaces added to my knowledge of that person and my understanding of who they were and what was important to them. Fishermen seem to have been as much in the pub as they were in their boats, so to be invited into their favourite pub, into their world, was for me, an honour. The positive in this were relaxed interviewees who remained focused on the conversations. I was permitted a glimpse into someone's life, and I feel privileged to have witnessed these interactions.

I usually call my interview style a 'Miss Marple Approach'. I am a middle-aged, cardigan wearing, ordinary woman; in short, I am not a threat. I do not look like the police or the taxman. I present myself as just a bit of a dizzy, inoffensive lady − I am more Miss Marple and like the Agatha Christie detective, who people dismiss as old and not important, people tell me things. However, she is, and I am sharp, with excellent observational skills. I think this is what Terkel describes when he talks of being the old guy getting flustered about his equipment; he comes across as nonthreatening and a bit dizzy, instantly putting people as ease, or rather implicitly suggesting that they are not in any danger from him.

I chose to follow Terkel and not write any questions down to allow the flow of conversation rather than use a survey-style 'questionnaire approach'. Listening again to my recordings, not every question was phrased correctly, and not every follow-up question was asked in the right way, but interviewing skills develop with time and experience. I also used the sandwich approach to questioning, (often called in political circles a 'shit sandwich'). Typically used in political circles, the idea is to deliver good news first, then the bad news and end with good news again. I asked any questions I thought would be difficult in the middle of interviews, so I could end on something amusing or happy memories. I did this to ensure the interview

questions started and ended positively, so the participant was not left feeling negative or feeling that they had had a difficult experience talking to me.

I was flexible with my questions and approach and found that Terkel was perhaps the biggest influence. I did not lose rapport with anyone and remained engaged with what they were telling me; I believe I remained true to the information and honest to the people of my study and have recorded their words in the spirit intended.

I did listen to previous interviews my subjects had given to other people on radio or watched You-Tube videos of them talking and read their self-published books.

I understood that ethnographic research must be flexible, and I wanted to research all methods and styles, but at that moment of the interview when on the hoof, I needed to choose the correct style of question and how to phrase it. According to Hammersley and Atkinson ethnographic research is ‘replete with the unexpected’ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2002, p. 23). More than this, all research is a practical activity requiring the exercise of judgement in context; it is not a matter of simply following methodological rules.

Future studies may take an even more relaxed approach as I thought a few times I was directing the interview rather than allowing it to flow; I believe if I allowed more freedom to the interviewee, I may stumble on unanticipated places which could hold unexpected results, and ending up in surprising conversational places interests me greatly. I have found many working-class people, if they believe and trust you to be very open, and every story comes with side stories or background information. I think if I had allowed the conversation to meander more frequently, I may have

ended up with a richer transcript, certainly unpredictable stories which for me, bring interesting results. As Lisa McKenzie observes,

> Anyone who has ever done qualitative research will know it is very difficult to get a succinct answer from a working-class respondent. It is much easier and more interesting to listen to 'their story' from the very beginning and see where it goes.
>
> (McKenzie, 2015, p. 6)

Recording the Interviews

I recorded the interviews via two Dictaphones, with my phone's recorder as a standby. I kept these recordings digitally for transcription and future listening. All participants were aware they were being recorded, and one person did indicate on a further meeting that he wanted his comments on that occasion to be off the record.

I also chose to transcribe the interviews myself as when disseminating quotes, I instinctively knew who they belong to and where in the text that quote can be found. The act of transcription is not easy for me, but it necessary for the task. I did have one interview professionally transcribed, but as I had not physically typed it out it did not stay in my memory very well. Like many people the action repeating and hearing every word several times solidifies not only the knowledge but also the pauses, the tambor and beat of speech which does help me understand my interviewees better. Without this, my knowledge didn't feel at the same depth as I wanted it to be.

Although I did not transcribe live in interview, I did take plain paper with me and noted certain phrases, dates or just doodled a little. I remember via visual stimuli, so these doodles, odd patterns or small notes served as a holding cell for my recollections. As soon as possible after the interview I wrote down my impression of

the interview, and any non-verbal communication. By personally transcribing I could visualise how the words were said and the facial expressions or hand gestures which further cemented my understanding of the interview. These non-verbal cues or exasperations were noted and proved invaluable to the depth of the study.

I decided to keep the colloquial words and phrases of these North Yorkshire men and women but needed to find a way of recording these as speech without alienating the reader. I transcribed most interviews as phonic notation to retain the colour and timbre of speech but did curb some contractions with conventional English, to make it readable to those unfamiliar with the Yorkshire dialect. I was aiming for a balance between how things are pronounced and ease of reading. Certain words and phrases needed more consideration, for example: many in Scarborough when they could not do something will say, 'cunt do it', which for some readers may appear unintentionally offensive.

Another linguistic conundrum was the definite article reduction of 'the' to 't'. I was born in Scarborough I know 't' is itself a unique word and I did not want to drop this from the speech patterns of my interviewees. I also used spellings that had been used before, for example Skeining (as in opening a mussel, sometimes called shuking) is pronounced Sk-ai-ning, with a flat 'a' sound but written with an 'e'. Although this annoys me as in my vernacular it should be an 'a', I will agree to an accepted spelling over my own preference. Scallops are either pronounced as 's-coll-ups' or 'skall-ups', but I have written the traditional word scallops. To help a short glossary of Yorkshire phrase and dialect has been included at the start of this thesis.

Visual Elicitation

Many of my interviewees chose to bring useful materials, to the interview, books, photographs and newspaper clippings. These tangible, visual materials provided a

platform for further discussion and were tools to enable the interviewee to become more expansive exploration of multiple topics. One man showed me photos of his time as a fisherman in Africa and New Zealand which provided a foundation for a discussion of the difference and similarities of international fishing techniques. One man lent me his father's harbour book, and a scrapbook of all the newspaper cuttings of his boat. Many showed me pictures of their one beloved boat, the one that they would have kept, or still have as they cannot bring themselves to scrap even if they do not use her now. These are the 'heart-boats' that in Tom Rowley's words he would have 'sailed to the ends of the earth in'. Many of the men had commissioned expensive models to be made of their favourite boats. One man had the name of his 'heart-boat' impressed into the leather of his belt so the memory of her was close for him.

One interviewee lent me a photograph album from the 1900s filled with, black and white photographs of Scarborough, the construction of the oriental themed Peasholm Park and the dedication of the war memorial on Oliver's Mount. These images were committed to a detailed inventory list, copies were taken either physically and stored securely in a locked drawer or digitally in a secure computer file for further reference during the completion of this thesis.

As well as being utterly fascinating, this showed to me what was important to the respondent. They were indeed 'holding out to you fragile things' (Perks & Thomson, 2016, p. 149).

Coding

My understanding of the transcripts, and the physicality of the text helped when I codified the audio into written documents for analysis. Using a highlighted colour system, I identified subject matters across all the interviews, further to this I lifted

related sections placing them into one separate document on a single subject. For example, I created a document collating all the opinions of decommissioning – an EU scheme to break up fishing vessels and rescind fishing licences. This formed a representation of their opinions, within this coloured strata differences could be recorded. Different documents were created to enable thematic analysis, for example, of experiences growing up, fishing life or the EU. Within these single topic documents, I tagged groups of words used to describe certain actions or events; from this I could ascertain the mood of the fishers. For example, when encountering officials out at sea the men said they were left feeling 'guilty for fishing' and felt 'hunted' down as if they were 'thieves' stealing the fish from the sea. Being able to collect and identify words and phrases from the transcribed text and conversations enabled a thorough representation of the mood and opinions of the people interviewed.

Subjectivity and Reliability

Using an ethnographic methodology has both advantages and disadvantages in terms of objectivity, positionality and reliability of both researcher, interviewee and study structure.

Due to the participatory nature of interviewing ethnography critics argue that the researcher is fundamentally bias undermining the study's findings. However, positionality, which refer to an acknowledgement and critical reflection of the researchers' background, beliefs and values, can according to Tambun enhance the authenticity of the study (Tambun, 2023). By acknowledging their own identity, experiences and values a researcher can be transparent and actively work to understand how their preconceptions influence their interpretations, dynamically working to ensure their findings are grounded in their subject's reality not their own.

Anthropology uses a framework of four aspects to check the data gathered: the guarantor, the data itself, cross-checking, and the methodology used (Tambun, 2023). The guarantor is the researcher, who acts as a cornerstone for the validity of the data. The statements, ‘I was there, I witnessed it, I experienced it’, are assertions of authenticity showing the researcher has engaged via direct involvement with the subject. This must be balanced with positionality and acknowledgement of their identity to ensure a robust defence of the data.

Throughout this study I have understood and voiced my position in relation to the subject group and acknowledged where I understand my bias, or values may have coloured how I interpret the data. I acknowledge in the writing of this study I have anonymised where I felt necessary and excluded some information, I deemed not relevant or potentially problematic. Transcriptions were taken verbatim, and photos, slides, photocopies, books and newspaper clippings catalogued in a digital and physical inventory.

However, Robert Pool cautions that not all data is ‘hard’ data and can be stored and collection ‘soft’ data needs to be seen as just as valid. They go onto clarify that ‘hard’ data is the transcripts, notes, questionnaires, artefacts, pictures etc, things that can be replicated, these can often be stored digitally. Soft data are the memories and the impression the researcher made of the respondent or the surroundings, these are subjective and cannot be replicated or reproduced. According to Pool, ‘some consider it their prime data, while for others it is extraneous and not considered data’ (Pool, 2017). He argues that ethnography methods are a fusion of the two types of data and that excluding one degrades the overall study conclusions.

> Even if it were desirable to exclude such informal information from the interpretation, it would not be feasible because the very experience of

> immersion during extensive fieldwork necessarily colours any interpretation of the more formal data. I am talking here not only of the role of information gathered during informal conversations, or casually overheard or observed, but also of the transformative nature of fieldwork itself: the ethnographer who emerges after such fieldwork is sometimes no longer quite the same person who embarked on it. In other words, part of the 'data' is embodied in the researcher.
>
> (Pool, 2017)

This thesis sofa data collected in my analysis of the information, especially when talking about decommissioning and Brexit, the subjects that were particularly emotive to the fishermen. Often, they could not speak, but gestured, the emotion demonstrated, and other non-verbal communication was noted, used and relied on for this study.

However, Pool notes that though it may be essential to include soft data even though it is futile to validate it, however ethnographers must be scrutinised, 'perhaps more than other researchers – need to be held to some kind of accountability, particularly because of the nature of their data' (Pool, 2017).

This accountability he argues is from the field notes, transcripts and collected soft data notes which give credibility to the conclusions of the study. Tambun also suggest that cross referencing is also a method of establishing legitimacy. To validate information, other sources, where they are available can be cross referenced and evaluated to understand if certain events occurred and what other sources have said about the event. This added with the recoded information enables a fuller picture and can validate source information.

Phillip Ibbotson told me a story of ‘Sooty’ Gates, when his boat was perceived as haunted, and the crew were not happy working onboard. For verification I was supplied with a newspaper clipping detailing the story. He also mentioned, as some other fishermen did, the finding of drugs out at sea. These too were articled in the local newspaper, as were accidents and sea. The stories I was being told by the respondents, can now be accurately dated and verified, giving the fishers credibility with other stories they tell.

Theories

As the Bottomenders displayed a profound love for their place, the theories of Edward Relph became a suitable way to explain this attachment. In *Place and Placelessness*, (2008) originally published in 1976, Relph bases his conclusions of place and the importance of it to the people who live in places from a phenomenological standpoint. Phenomenology came to prominence in the early twentieth century with works notably by Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger (Woodruff Smith, 2013). It is a way of looking at the structures of consciousness around a person and explaining it from their point of view, how they experience the world around them.

> Literally, phenomenology is the study of “phenomena”: appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first-person point of view. [sic]
>
> (Woodruff Smith, 2013)

Phenomenology encapsulates not only sensory qualities of experience but also the meaning we place on things, the significance of objects or events and the

significance of geographical places to people who live or visit there. It also covers the flow of time as felt, and the self as we experience these things in our world as we live (Woodruff Smith, 2013).

Relph on page one of *Place and Placelessness,* quotes Hugh Prince (1961) to describe his geographical phenomenological standpoint, ‘a knowledge of places is an indispensable link in the chain of knowledge.’ He goes on to describe that to be human we must know and understand our place, which must be filled with significance for us to belong to it and it to us.

> That geography is initially a profound and immediate experience of the world that is filled with meaning, and as such is the very basis of human existence.
>
> (Relph, 2008, p. 5)

It is with this outlook Relph categorises the world in terms of human experience, either to feel inside a place or outside it. The strongest belonging is ‘existential insideness,’ a deep unconscious absorption into a place; that settled and safe feeling you may get when you are home.

The opposite of these feelings of comfort and safety is ‘outsideness’ or ‘existential outsideness’ which is a feeling of alienation when within a community or place, a feeling of separation; that feeling of not wholly fitting in. For Relph, both these states can occur for a person with life experiences in a tension of varying intensities of inside and outsideness. Different places or different individuals or groups experience life with different meanings, feelings and actions, making up places of either insideness or outsideness.

Relph goes on to suggest that place can be experienced in either an authentic or inauthentic way. Authenticity is:

> […] a direct and genuine experience of the entire complex of the identity of places—not mediated and distorted through a series of quite arbitrary social and intellectual fashions about how that experience should be, nor following stereotyped conventions.
>
> (Relph, 2008, p. 64)

Authenticity can be experienced by people in any environment, from the fish warehouses of Scarborough Pier or the streets of San Francisco; it is the genuine conscious or unconscious way in which people belong to that place which makes the experience authentic.

Inauthenticity, or 'placelessness' as Relph terms it, is a uniformity of expectations, being told what is acceptable, a standardisation, or homogeny of experiences. Relph concludes that this is the result of 'kitsch', which he describes as an uncritical acceptance of mass values imposed upon communities. Relph singles out mass communication/media, global finance and big business for this uncritical acceptance of the mass culture of kitsch. Big businesses spend a lot of time and effort telling consumers what they need and want so that the world over, we all need and want the same thing. However, it is not the consumer's need, rather it is the businesses' need to sell that drives the world and its financial systems. We, the people, become products of or consumers of our world rather than individual human beings with different wants, needs and relationships to place. This is the inauthenticity of placelessness:

> The casual replacement of the diverse and significant places of the world with anonymous spaces and exchangeable environments.
>
> (Relph, 2008, p. 143)

These ideas appeared to be reflected in how the fishers perceived the EU and how they saw their lives and traditions being cast aside. It was my internal reflection upon these ideas and perceptions that prompted this thesis to be written from the fishers' and Bottomenders' point of view. It is an account of how the people inside this bubble of awareness view what is happening to them, rather than a conventional ethnography which may contain more statistics and records of the births and deaths of a place. I wrote with this phenomenological framework in mind to explain the relationship between geography and the people of the fishing harbours and the Bottom End community.

All these elements added to a flexible and multi-faceted methodological approach formed to bring out the best of the interviewees and enable the rich data collected to be disseminated accurately. The use of appropriate and practicable theories to fully understand the attitudes and beliefs of people, rather than have the information fit a preconceived theory, has allowed the thesis to grow in an organic manner.

Chapter Three

THEMES

The Bottom End

Top of the World

> Like y'say, you're at sea, with men; an' you land your fish an' you go int pub, with men, and that's it. Apart from your family.
>
> You'd go int pub and wives would be sat there talking about kids, an' husband's he'd be stood at bar talking about fishing, an' that was it. That was the life. That's all they knew.
>
> *Lindy Rowley MBE, Founder Scarborough Heritage Centre, & Fishermen's Wife*

Scarborough has a lot of history; there has been people there for over three thousand years with, according to pottery and remains, a more permanent settlement starting in the iron-age around 800BC (Local Histories, 2021). The Romans built a wooden tower to watch the sea for foreign raiders, their look-out part of a huge chain of defence and warning beacons all along the coast.

The Vikings came next, with one giving the town its name, Thorgils Skarthi who settled here in c965-966AD (Mike, 2023). The word 'Scarborough' grew out of the name Skarthi − a Norse nickname for 'hare-lipped', known today as cleft-lip, and Old English 'borg' meaning 'fortified place'. Another explanation is that it is Anglo-Saxon in origin meaning 'the hill with the fort' (English Heritage, 2024). Skarðaborg or Scarthaborg began with the building of a chapel near the old Roman ruins, a township grew up sheltered by the headland (This chapel is now the site of St. Mary's Church). The Viking chapel was promptly burnt to the ground and local Scarthaborgians slaughtered by another raiding foreigner Harald Hardrada the Norwegian King in 1066.

The castle and chapel were built again in the 1130s by William le Gros, Count of Albemarle, possibly during the Anarchy of 1135-53. The Anarchy was a bitter civil war that tore the country apart, born out of a crisis of succession upon the death of Henry I; his daughter Empress Matilda had a strong claim but her cousin, Steven also had a claim. Under King Henry II (Matilda's son) the castle was re-built in stone, fortified and garrisoned to protect the North from rebellion. The Keep still stands, prominent on the Scarborough skyline.

Fig1 Scarborough Castle Keep.

The castle stayed in the favour of royals under King John (119-1216) who, spending more time than any other royal, lavishing two thousand, two hundred and ninety-one pounds, (over three million, eight hundred and eight five thousand pounds today), repairing and improving the place (Bank of England, 2024). King Edward I, stayed in the keep, and Edward II's favourite, Piers Gaveston, resided for a time before being executed by the Earl of Warwick. King Richard III stayed in Scarborough before

losing his crown, and then a few sieges later the Civil War (1642-51) came to Scarborough. The castle was held first by the royalists, then parliamentarians, then back to the royals again before a bitter siege and relentless bombardment surrendered it permanently to parliament.

After this the castle became a prison. The founder of the Society of Friends or Quakers, George Fox was held here from 1665-66, and despite Quakers being known for their tolerance and eternal optimism he complained the conditions were 'appalling'.

Fig 2, Looking over the Bottom End form the Castle, showing St. Mary's Church and the large white house, the old Graham Sea Training School on Paradise.

However, under the castle and its changing fortunes, sheltered by the headland was Scarborough, a fishing village. For the most part, many of the men would have fished part time and then worked the fields the other half of the year. However, how people fished changed alongside the industrial revolution on land and the seafaring revolution at sea. During the middle ages the British population ate more river fish, but as sea fishing became safer with the invention of better-designed boats, steam power to sail anywhere anytime and the discovery of deep fishing grounds, as well

as better transport networks in the late 1800s able to get products to market quicker, it took over as the dominant fish source (Roberts, 2008, p. 18). Fishing soon became an increasingly full-time occupation and during the late 1700s all through the 1800s the sea was seen as another frontier to conquer and be master over, and some men were making lots of money.

This all came to a stop during World War I as the town faced bombardment, with Leonard Ellis being the first civilian of the war to be killed on British soil just outside the Chemist shop where he worked, on South Cliff at 8am, 16 December, 1914 (Wilkinson, 2019). The town and fishing briefly recovered after the Great War. During the Second World War, the castle, St. Mary’s church and much of the town was hit during bombing raids, while fishing boats were sunk by German U-boats, devastating the town’s economy and its people (SMHC, n.d.). A slow recovery followed with another brief spell of optimism, or last gasp of hope during the 1980s, before once again the town and fishing began to decline due to overfishing, subsequent quotas and climate change.

From the high prestige and favour of royalty to the lows of a squalid prison and rubble of war, Scarborough has seen its fortunes change many times.

The actor and comedian Rik Mayall filmed a TV play, *Dancing Queen* (1993), in Scarborough, which upon watching took me right back to when I was growing up there. From the train carriage with compartments, just like in Agatha Christie films, to the moment he runs screaming from the train station, it was the Scarborough the teenage me remembers.

I recall the glass wall of the station café with the orange neon ‘buffet’ sign, the taxi rank and the brightly painted boards covering something dilapidated, the temporary loos, I think.

It was a memory's walk back along the south side and the ghost train that Helena Bonham-Carter rides on, and the price list saying only 70p. That freaky black and white clown in a box, who played music, no idea what he was actually for. Shots of the harbour with boats, lots of them compared to now, and the dirty-coloured sand on the beach.

I googled old cinefilm and promotional videos of Scarborough, to the town of yesteryear. I started with a film shot in August 1939, the month and year my eldest uncle was born (Levesley, 2011). It is bracing weather, of course, but what struck me was the absence of neon lights; everyone was on the beach, rock pools on the south side. The Spa buildings and the little holiday chalets behind a giant round pool built up like a small amphitheatre and a fountain in the middle. Hundreds of people were watching a diving and acrobatic show, all very Laurel and Hardy slapstick, the crowd laughing. I am not sure, but I think that has been concreted over now and is a bus turning circle. Everywhere looked so much greener, plants, bushes, sand and sea rather than amusements and tarmac. Then I started watching films recorded in the 1960s, when my interview group were starting their careers – dozens and dozens of fishing boats were sheltering in the harbour and the fish market was thriving. Everyone wearing a handmade woolly jumper or, if they were younger, a cardigan and a knitted bonnet tightly knotted under their chin (Vesey, 2023).

This was the Bottom End for the fishers I interviewed, a dynamic harbour industry, a place of family and familiarity, of kids – (bairns as the locals would say) playing everywhere. All the fisher families still living in the same streets as their forebears. This little square of Scarborough had a continuum of busyness to it.

The Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre (SMHC) has pages of similar reminiscences, one such is by Dennis Allen, who has traced his family tree back ten

generations. All Bottomenders, all connected with the fishing industry and as such interconnected with other fishing families, just like my Messruther family (Dennis, n.d.). There are other family histories too, the 'Cammish, Jenkinson and Sheader Families' section details how many of the same family lived on the same street, or close by. Families with ten children, the kids sleeping all together 'toe to toe' or top and tail in large double beds, all contained in two-bedroom terrace houses with an outside loo and a shared standpipe as a water source in the yard.

The cobbled streets of the Bottom End have been there for generations and used by generations of the same family name, there is or was an air of longevity about the place. This gives it a beauty in quite a different way from the rest of Scarborough and the parts tourists see, with its complicated pattern of narrow streets and back alleys, some ancient cobblestone and some dead ends. 'The Bolts' is a series of flagged, thin, low passages running parallel to parts of Sandside, so narrow that if you tried to walk two abreast, you'd 'polish the walls' (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.). There were no benches and no views along the Bolts, just the odd Tudor framed house remains to imagine what this street would have looked like five or six hundred years ago.

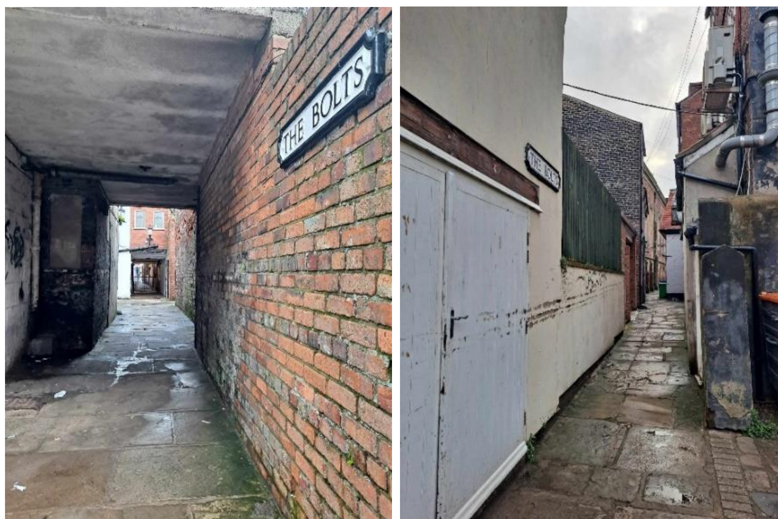

Fig3, Fig4, The Bolts.

There was also a place at the end of the East Pier where the wall dipped down called Donkin's Bite. The fishers would run a line from here to the Toll house and uses this distance as a measure for their lines. At the end of the East Pier there was a hollow in the pavement stones, and it is there that when the fishermen had gone to sea, the fishwives would urinate to bring their menfolk good luck and a safe return. (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.).

Fig5, The Toll House.

It is all redeveloped now, so there is no longer a Donkin's Bite or pavement hollow, but also happily no longer a custom. It seems that this geographical location, so close to the harbour and sea, was not only a good place to serve the purpose of fishing but, protected by the castle headland the structures within also provided a good place for the fishermen and their families to live. The dips in the wall, the length to the Toll House, the small yard on Sandside front still barriered off to store the crab pots, this area was all dedicated to and built around fishing and the fishermen. They were not only the centre of the social world that grew up, but also the reason the architecture is or was built like it is.

The Bottom End not only socially looks away from the rest of the town, but its buildings also mostly look away from the land and towards the harbour and the sea which is its focus and purpose.

Fig 6, Old Town map from1480s (SMHC, n.d.).

If you look at the map (fig 6) and more so walking around the area, you can see that everything looks towards the sea. The great slopping cobbled street of Castlegate running from below the castle down towards Sandside − David Normandale told me when he was at school there was a regular competition in which the boys had to race whilst carrying an old rowing boat up this hill.

> **DN:** The boats, they had two rowing boats, and we'd pull em out, probably about this time of year, and school would pull them up Castlegate. Oh yes. Half the school would have one boat and we used to race − race up Castlegate. You were running, yeah.
>
> **TP:** The big wooden...?

DN: Oh aye, yeah, they carry twelve, fourteen people in 'em. These were big, black rowing boats they were, ex-navy ones.

Fig 7, Top of Castlegate hill, where it meets Paradise and the old Graham Training School.

Even the roads run parallel to the shoreline with houses that look over at the sea, rowed along the cliff terraced along the cliff in contour lines, mirroring the seagulls nesting on the headland cliff-shelves with their tails to the wind. Many of the skippers and old captains lived on Castlegate, which is grander than St Mary's Street off Church Steps, but leaving a house on either street will have you down at the harbour within minutes.

Fig 8, Bethal Place, about 70cm wide and dropping to the Foreshore.

I would argue that this placement and atmosphere to the Bottom End is an existential space where places such as homes and buildings flow from a central space, everything leads from and to the sea and harbour. Relph explains that 'existential spaces can be therefore understood as centres of meaning or focuses of intention and purpose' (Relph, 2008, p. 22). The harbour and ancillary buildings are centres of meaning and focus for the fishers, they are built of stone and dressed brickwork and are more regularly maintained and replaced than some of the smaller terraced cottages where people live. The offices and fish market buildings are Victorian red brick, practical but also slightly more elaborate than they needed to be, huge stone steps, balconies and covered walkways. Money and time have been spent on these ancillary buildings. Whereas the cottages are uniform and utilitarian cramped brick terraced houses. Before the redevelopment there were many yards with stark brick tenements housing entire families in small, cramped rooms.

Scarborough's harbour wall is made from imposing stone, the East Pier forms an impressive curve, almost mirroring the churches of the area with their pale sandstone exteriors and sweeping gothic arches rising into the sky above. The

curves of the East and West Piers form protective arms reaching out to the sea. The harbour was not thrown up in a rush, but time, money and commitment have been used to construct it for future generations to use. This was also true in the past, with Scarborough's harbour having a long history of impressive and expensive repairs and rebuilds. King Henry III in 1225 gifted forty oaks from his woods to be used in building a harbour, in 1564 Queen Elizabeth I gave five hundred pounds, one hundred tons of timber and six tons of iron to rebuild, and two hundred years later in 1732 George II offered £12,000 to build a harbour fit for the three hundred sailing ships attached to it (discoveryorskshirecoast.com, n.d.).

Fig 9, View of the harbour from the castle.

The harbour and piers embrace the boats and men. They told me of the joy and relief they felt when coming around the harbour wall, to be able to shelter in its arms from the wild undercurrents and destructive power of the North Sea. It is their sanctuary, as it was for their ancestors.

Scarborough has a natural harbour cradled by the castle headland but expanded by the curves of the built harbour walls, forming a place which is of great importance and significance for the fishers, in some respects one could argue it is a

sacred place. A sacred space, according to Pressbook's Human Geography Lab Manual is:

> […] if the people view the location worthy of respect and dedication and believed to be holy. This causes people to care for and protect sacred spaces, where people may also make pilgrimages to worship and celebrate.
>
> (Human Geography Lab Manual, n.d.)

Encyclopedia.com, defines a scared space as:

> […] a defined place, a space distinguished from other spaces. The ritual that a people either practice at a place or direct toward it marks its sacredness and differentiates it from other defined spaces.
>
> (encyclopedia.com, 2019)

The Encyclopedia.com continues to quote Jonathan Z. Smith in calling sacred spaces a 'focusing lens':

> […] a sacred space focuses attention on the forms, objects, and action in it and reveals them as bearers of religious meaning. These symbols describe the fundamental constituents of reality as a religious community perceives them, defines a life in accordance with that view, and provides a means of access between the human word and divine realities.
>
> (encyclopedia.com, 2019)

Many hours are spent taking care of the buildings, boats and areas where many rituals are performed. For example, the men spoke about the correct way to brush the deck, place the fish hatches, or a skipper's superstitious customs before, during or after a journey. Another example is, in exchange for a good catch a skipper may throw coins into the sea at the start of his journey. Or if the boat was having a really

unlucky spell of no fish, the men may say it was because of the Sea Witches clinging on to the rim, to dispel this bad luck a burning flame was passed around the boat to burn them off. Using these descriptions, I suggest that the harbour, fish market buildings and the boats themselves are regarded as sacred spaces for the fishing community with many of the houses and domestic places aligned to worship the sea.

A sacred space as a focusing lens of meaning for the people who live there precisely describes the relationship they have with the harbour and ultimately the sea. There is not only focus, care for and purpose on the harbour and sea from the community within the Bottom End, but there are a plethora of superstitions, circumlocution and folk magic practices that have grown around the everyday lives of the inhabitants and become entrenched into residents' lives. There are still the echoes of the sacred in the Bottom End and the fishers' lives.

The Bottom End displays its own folk religious symbols by way of anchors and nets set by doors, certain clothes being worn to go to the harbour, and the obligatory proudly worn gansy[2], which denotes a fisherman, someone special within this community. They perform daily visits to their centre of significance − the harbour and their boats, along with the rituals and sayings when preparing to go to sea, like a priest preparing for a service, the muttered prayers, ritual genuflection and the timing and placement of incense, bells and candles. Both spaces have an order of service, a way to do things right, and a certain way to sweep the deck to set the scene for a productive day. Then there are the warning stories told by the old to the young in place of instructive parables and lessons from the lectionary.

[2] A jumper knitted with a certain pattern associated with a town or the owner's family pattern. It is believed that if a man was lost at sea and a body washed ashore, they would be able to identify who it was by the gansy it was wearing.

Fig10, Fig11, Fig12, Symbols denoting fishermen's houses.

Is fishing a religion? In many respects, there are strong shades of the ritual and reverences to the places special to fishing and fishermen. Tom Rowley and a few of the other fishermen told me the story of why haddock has a dark patch of skin on their sides. It is said this is where Jesus on lifting one from the water, forever marked the fish as special; the fishers handle these blessed fish with reverence every day. The fishermen live and breathe their work, it is certainly more of a calling than a job, and the call of the sea perhaps addictive. Possibly fishing is more a cult than a mainstream religion; it makes sense to those on the inside but appears bizarre to those looking in.

Then there are the old names written on the walls: Castlegate, Longwestgate, Sandgate, 'gate' being old Yorkshire for road. Other names such as: Back Steps, Paradise, Dog and Duck Steps and Tuthill all have a rich local history. Dog and Duck steps was in 1725 known as Castle Lane. There are a few similar local stories as to how its name changed, one story suggests that there was a person called Duck who was known as 'Doggy Duck' because he kept a noisy dog. The other is that Duck was a pub landlord who kept the Spotted Dog Inn. I knew a Duck family, so this seems reasonable to me (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.). There were

other family names in the streets of the old town, though many of them gone old maps show a Barber Lane or Flesher Row, now called Merchants Row. The Undercliff lanes included, Cooper’s Lane, Gibson’s Lane, Kirkby’s Lane, Pattison’s Lane, Paycock’s Lane, Smith’s Lane, Sandall’s Lane, Shilbottle Lane, Parkin’s Lane, Porrit’s Lane, Simpson's Lane, Tindall’s Lane and Salmon Steps. The Parkin’s were sailmakers, the Porritts and Tindalls were ship builders; before it was called Porritt’s Lane it was named Coulson’s Lane, and they also happened to be shipbuilders.

Then ‘yards’, or surrounding grassy areas, started to pop up with names such as Adamson’s Yard, Clarkson’s Yard, Coate’s Yard, Coulson’s Yard, Dawson’s yard, Nesfield’s yard, Oxley’s yard, Smith’s Yard, Wharton’s Yard, and Wyrill’s Yard which all denoted family names.

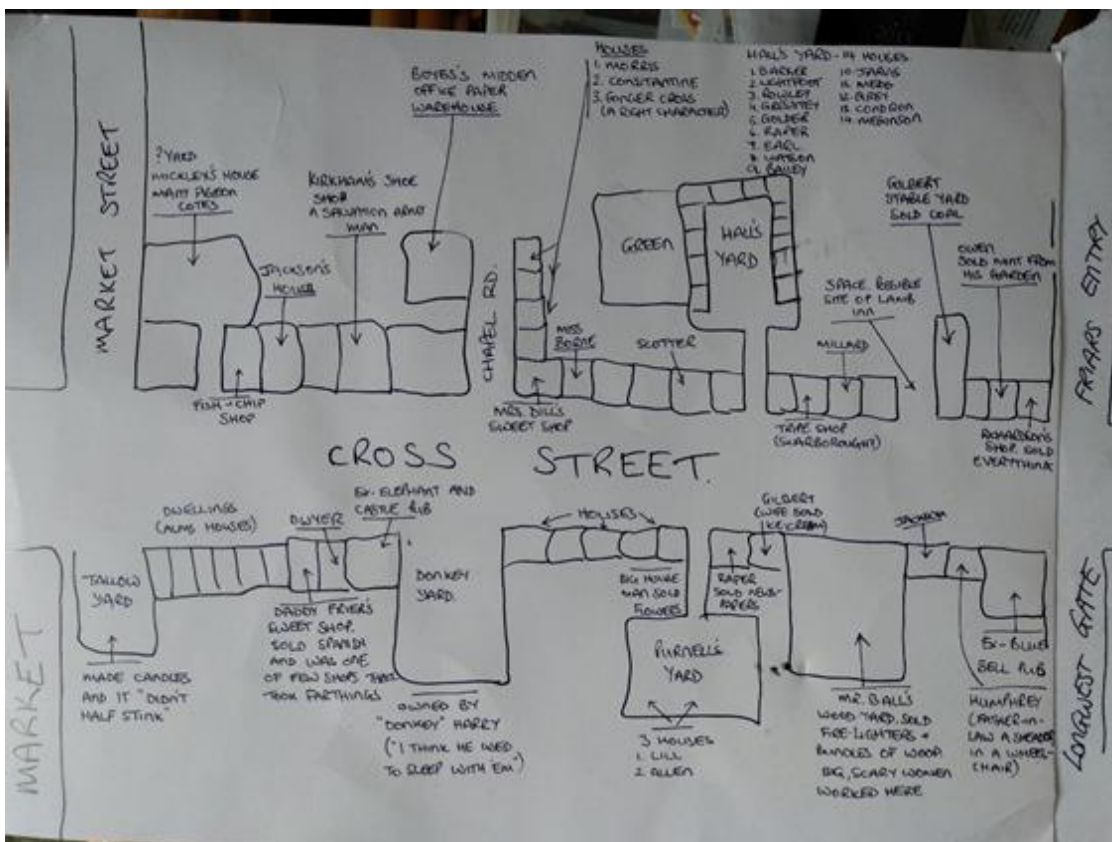

Fig13, Reproduce by kind permission of George Sheader. This map is how his mother Doreen Sheader remembered Cross Street when she was a little girl in the late 1920s before the area was redeveloped and most of the yards demolished.

Long Greese Steps connects the Bottom End to the harbourside with Burr Bank at the top; ‘Greese’ is Old Norse for steps, so Long Step Steps (geograph.org.uk, 2013). They are still there, only now they are not wooden or shoe-worn stone but concrete with metal railings that look the same as many sets of step look, except to those who know. I’ve heard the phrase ‘playing ova the oggy’ or ‘the ogg’ several times, it is a local word for the harbour. Local words, local names, local meanings.

Fig14, Porritts Lane now reduced to one house.

Fig15, Fig16, Dog and Duck Lane and Steps.

Fig17, Salmon Steps.

Compare these to the names of some of the newer tourist places and we see that the names of the old town reflect the working people of the Bottom End, the ones who built Scarborough into a thriving fishing harbour. For example, The Esplanade is exactly what it says, it is a long wide path you walk down by the sea, Esplanade Gardens, a long wide path with a curated garden. Prince of Wales Terrace, Victoria Road, Royal Albert Drive or Peasholm. apart from being names going back to their construction in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, are not as personal; everywhere appears to have a Victoria Road, or an Albert something or other to indicate that they were built during Queen Victoria's reign.

However, I have concluded that not many places have a Porrit's street, or a Donkin, or a Dog and Duck steps; they are named after local families and local people with at some point a local story attached, although now mainly lost to time. There is a long history to the Bottom End, thousands of years of people living just under the castle, and that is reflected in the names of the streets and the buildings. You can tell where the old fishermen or fishing families lived because their houses are decorated with nets, old anchors, or replica small boats, like cyphers to a code.

These symbols and names written on the walls make up stories which in turn make up the history and myths of the Bottom End, giving it a distinct identity separate from Scarborough.

In his essay, *The Sense of Place*, (1984), Seamus Heaney discusses the 'dinnseanchas'[3], the medieval blend of poetry, prose and oral history which explains the origins of places names in Ireland by linking them to Irish mythology. Stories are tied to places and place names tied to the stories, so by understanding the meaning behind place names one can understand where that place fits into the local and sometimes national myths. The Bottom End has a Dinnseanchas like feel about it, old maps stuffed with names that had local meanings for the families and culture of that place.

However, the more removed from these local people and their stories or removed from the mythology or genealogy of the area, the more we need to research if we want to read the history that surrounds us. Applying this argument to Scarborough, not only have many become so removed from the history of the Bottom End, but many moved away, or were removed. Many streets, snickets and ginnels have been lost to redevelopment, and so those names have disappeared, and consequently, the Bottomenders have lost some of their unique local history and the myths that accompany the places. You can no longer read the walls and street names and understand the story behind. You cannot stand on a cobbled corner and feel part of the Bottom End's dinnseanchas, no longer surrounded by the names of your ancestors and remember why they are celebrated.

Does this contribute, perhaps in a small way, to another layer of disenfranchisement for the residents of the Bottom End, another layer contributing to

[3] Dinnseanchas – often pronounced 'dean-sha' but my Irish speaking friend tells me it is 'din-shak-ka'.

their feelings of being locked out of their area and place? Stories anchor us into a place like a boat safe in the harbour tied to familiarity and protection. Without the ability to see family names on walls, to read the stories or to understand the symbols displayed on houses then we become disjoined. If the story of where you come from is missing or taken from you, and you no longer possess the ability to read the symbols that are left, is this another layer of placelessness? If as a Bottomender you feel can no longer recognise the street names as local families and the story of why they are commemorated, do you feel excluded from the very place that you should so completely belong?

The area has changed. Lindy Rowley told me that when her children were young in the early 1970s you could leave the house without locking it. Or if you needed to go somewhere she said if the kids were playing in the yard, she could just shout to her neighbour to keep an eye on them when she left. She knew everyone on the street, she was surrounded by a support network of impromptu babysitters, someone to help you out or just someone to talk to. She said that is not the way it is now. Families and friends have moved away and locking the door is now recommended.

But why does this matter? What makes the Bottomenders, and the fishermen in particular care so much and feel so deeply, if everywhere has changed?

For some, the seafront is a life-long fascination. Many of the men from a very young age were drawn to the harbour, a significant focus of their young and older lives. Some loved school and pursued a standard education but spent their spare time down at the docks, watching the action along the fish pier, others, like my uncle, skipped school altogether to spend days down on the harbour and sealine.

PI: I were never at school.

SI: If they wanted Phil, they'd find him down the harbour.

TP: It was always your first love then?

PI: Oh, aye yeah.

[…]

SI: Well, look where he is now, down ont harbour!

PI: I never left it.

SI: But he knows every nook and cranny of that harbour.

PI: Every rock, and everybody. Or I used to do.

Philip Ibbotson, fisherman and wife Sue Ibbotson

Relph suggests that sacred spaces are 'that of archaic religious experience' (Relph, 2008, p. 15); an ancient religious experience that is now waning as the community of the Bottom End changes and the harbour loses its power of focus and attraction. The new fishermen, the pot-men, pass by without a thought to the old rituals, their work is not catching whitefish and beam-trawling. They are potmen, tossing hundreds of pots into the sea to catch crab and lobster. The fishers I interviewed are no longer part of the hustle and life of the harbour because their generation has retired, boats reduced, and the folk who do work down the harbour do not live in the Bottom End, as reported by Tom Rowley and Fred Normandale, who quipped, 'they've all got cars now'.

Many of the old fishermen still have the daily ritual of visiting the harbour, to watch, and smell and remember, making the experience reflective, or maybe a little sad that their knowledge and experience is no longer needed. This feeling of outsideness when once they were the centre of the insideness of a place, stings. The ties of work, geography and myth bind the fishers to the Bottom End, which makes part of their identity when these binds are weakened, they are locked out.

They no longer have a connection, whereas once when they were younger, they were the connection.

> You knew everybody in the harbour, all knew em, all help each other. If you broke down at sea, somebody would come to pick you up and tow you in, never had to call the Lifeboat, or anything like that. It was a big family, helped each other out and now, I go down there now, and I don't know a soul. Not one person.
>
> David Normandale, fishermen, skipper

The significance of the Bottom End and its focus on the harbour has diminished, Bottom End fisher families have gone, replaced with others who do not share that same attachment to the sea and the fisher lifestyle, and were not part of the stories.

Fig18, Scarborough Harbour.

I sat at the bottom of St Mary's Church yard, on the little stone bench at the top of the wonky cobbled steps which take you straight on to the harbourside; the sun was warm but the air cold. Through the passageway opening I could see tourists and

dogs walking past, a glimpse and smell of the sea, and I noticed two things. One was a crow and a seagull in a stand-off for supremacy of the old brick wall weathered till ginger-bright and crumbly. They hopped closer to each other, trying to appear bigger and more of a threat than they were, but far enough away to keep out of beak striking distance. They danced along and away; one flew down to the grass but quickly returned to resume bird negotiations, then the other would do the same. And from a coal-black alleyway entrance a young man phased into the shadows, just visible to my field of vison. I watched as another approached, trying to be stealthy and unseen they shook hands in that tell-tale way of exchanging small packages and money. In the short time I was there I saw two deals, and something shifted, I no longer was enjoying the sunshine on the steps of the oldest Church in Scarborough. I was 'in danger'. I left the birds to their posturing and moved on.

These feelings of diminishing community and not being part of your own community were also reported by Lisa McKenzie in *The Class Politics of Prejudice: Brexit and the Land of Hope and No Glory* (2017), who found that the working-class people she interviewed largely felt 'locked out' of the areas they had lived in all their lives. They felt others, outsiders were taking over and pushing them out. This was reflected by my interviewees, once the men were the advisors, elders to the younger skippers, and now they felt un-placed, that sense of placelessness as described by Relph had changed, they felt not needed, as though time has passed them by. The area once full of working families is now home to those who do not work in the fishing industry, or maybe do not work at all and the older fisher families do not seem to fit in with the new inhabitants of the Bottom End.

Fig19, From the stone bench looking down Church Steps and St Mary's Street.

BREXIT

(the introduction)

In the 2016 referendum on UK membership of the European Union, British fishermen were among the most vocal and consistent supporters of the Leave campaign, with 92% of fishermen voting for Britain's-Exit, or Brexit (McAngus, 2016). North Yorkshire and Humberside are the UK's second largest fish and fish processing areas which account for 11% of the fishing industry with 6,500 employees (Ares, et al., 2017). Despite the fishing and fish processing industry only accounting for a tiny 0.12% of all the UK economic output, the industry took centre stage in the media and national debates. An overwhelming 60% of the total population of the North East Coast voted for Brexit and out of the European Union (BBC, 2016) despite the EU giving the area

an average of £1.5 billion in ‘structural funds’ per year in the period between 2014-2020 (O'Donoghue, 2022).

To use an oft-quoted phrase in this debate, why did the turkeys vote for Christmas? (Read, 2019) (White, 2019).

Why did the majority of working-class communities in the UK vote to Leave the European Union, when it is precisely the many poorer areas that benefit from billions of pounds in EU grants, and the media even cautioned that ‘the wise vote is for Remain’ (Editorial, The Gaurdian, 2016).

Many studies have concluded that the Leave vote won because it was supported by the less educated, who lived and worked in poorer areas or were inherently racist (Bergmann, 2018) (d'Ancona, 2018) (Patel & Connelly, 2019) (Poutvaara & Steinhardt, 2018) (Stone, 2017) (Swami, et al., 2017) (Shackle, 2016) (Younge, 2016). Spurred on by the political actors of the Leave campaign to rid the country of immigrants and take back control of our country (Editorial, The Gaurdian, 2016).

This study conducted in-depth interviews with a group of Yorkshire Coast fishermen who fished before and during the UK’s membership of the Common Fisheries Policy (CPF) and the European Union. This thesis details the factors that lead to a working-class fishing community deciding to vote to Leave the EU. Through interviews and supporting material this study uncovers the delicate relationship and identity of the fishermen, exploring their reasoning, rather than a reductionist approach of it simply being a poor, racist matter.

Brexit is the consequence of the actions and beliefs that have been braided together for the past hundred years to form a mythology of Euroscepticism. Starting with the perceived experiences that foreign fish and fishermen were given priority

over the British in the years between the world wars, to the belief that some EU member countries have not played by the rules and are therefore seen as disadvantaging the British fishermen.

It is also a consequence of an identity in crisis, both for the men but also the fishing industry. Cohen and Relph suggest the mass industrialisation, mass culture, the spread of urbanisation, centralisation of markets and information will cause communities to feel under threat, ‘each is a multi-pronged assault on social encapsulation, and one which results in an apparent homogenization of social forms’ (Cohen, 1985, p. 48). However, Cohen cautions,

> […] the vested interests of national media, national political parties, marketing specialists may well lead them to demean and denigrate sub-national boundaries. But this homogenization may be merely superficial, a similarity of surface, a veneer which masks real and significant differences at a deeper level.
>
> (Cohen, 1985, p. 48)

And communities who feel under threat fight back.

It is that steam of annoyance building under the veneer, grievances that the fishers have felt have not been address properly, a sleeping giant that exploded into being during the Brexit debate. However, it is the promises of politicians and political actors, their words and phrases that persuaded and cajoled voters into putting a cross in the leave box.

Initially I wanted to ask the fishermen about their lives and community in the Bottom End; what they wanted to talk about was how their fishing life was infused with EU regulations the impact of this on their mental health and the promise of Brexit. They talked with fondness about the Bottom End community they were born

into. Tom Rowley pointed out of his front room window to the house over the road saying, ‘I was born there’ and then turned to look out of the other window, ‘and I grew up there.’ The participants were actually telling me a story of identity, of when they knew who they were, and expected that would be the identity of their sons and grandsons, as had been for generations before. They were telling me of the moment when they could feel their identity bending, of being squashed and reshaped, and when they tried to explain this to the ones above: the harbour governors and government ministers, they believed no-one was listening. They told a story of screaming into the void.

In 2016, UK Prime Minister David Cameron announced a referendum on Remaining or Leaving the European Union. Suddenly the fishers had politicians and political actors, not only listening to them but offering them a solution. Brexit: Vote Leave and your world order, your community, your industry and more importantly your identity, will be restored. Vote Leave, and all the regulation that had been strangling your industry will be relaxed or removed, you will be free to fish, and the world will be set back to before the joining of the Common Fisheries Policy, when everything was described as ‘hunky-dory.’

The golden age has been running since the 1700s, the period of industrialisation in the UK, the sea was another frontier to conquer and be master over, and some men were making their fortunes. Sea fishing had become an increasingly full-time occupation with the invention of better-designed boats, steam power to sail anywhere anytime and the discovery of deep fishing grounds, as well as better transport networks to get products to market. Despite this increasing industrialisation there was very little regulation.

It wasn’t until the late 1970s and early 1980s that the European Union and the Common Fisheries Policy (the UK joined in 1972) started to introduce measures to control fish stock and reverse declining populations. The impact of these actions can be judged in one of two ways: the first question, as the fish populations have been plundered up to the point that whatever action was taken it would need to be drastic and it was going to hurt, but would it ever be enough? (Possibly a question for a marine biologist).

The second, is to look at how these regulations impacted the smaller traditional fishing boats and the fishermen, and by introducing these regulations to try to save the industry, did it actually kill it?

A History of Regulation and Resistance

During the mid-1800s several meetings were recorded in Scarborough and Filey in which the fishers came across as prickly, insubordinate, and refused any type of reform. At the time the trawling industry was expanding rapidly with many high-profile accidents and crew welfare cases and the government had proposed an Act which would force skippers to sit a basic exam to prove competence.

> The chairmen began the meeting saying, ‘The Act appeared to be one of those meddlesome pieces of legislation that was of no benefit to anyone, except those who would receive large salaries for the work of worrying a lot of hard-working fishermen’. A resolution was passed stating ‘That the interference of the Board of Trade with the liberty and freedom of the people ought to be put a stop to’.
>
> (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.) (Spelling corrected)

The Act was passed into law, nevertheless, the article from the Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre also dryly notes:

> The fishing industry was clearly in need of further regulation, but it was full of people unwilling to submit to rules and regulations. Many of the fishermen clearly wanted further regulations but only as they applied to other people. [sic]
>
> (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.)

After a series of violent protests and demonstrations, in 1863 a Royal Commission was set up to investigate if trawling was detrimental to the seabed and other types of traditional fishing. It was chaired by Thomas Huxley, a follower of Charles Darwin (Schwartz, n.d.). Traditional coblemen had claimed that the trawl beam racked over the sea floor destroying mussel beds, plants, coral and the breeding grounds of fish. They also claimed that overfishing from this method of catching fish in large nets was destroying the size and quality of fish causing a decline. The Royal Commission was to be the definitive voice of the argument, touring the country to interview fishermen and trawlermen to establish if further legislation was needed and to investigate if any method of fishing was detrimental to fish stocks or the marine environment (Roberts, 2008, pp. 139-141).

Many of the fishermen interviewed in Filey on October 1st, 1863, were old men who had started fishing when they were as young as 10 years old. They were experienced and knowledgeable people who all condemned trawling for damaging fish stocks and making the fish caught inedible, or at least of lesser quality. Most appeared to think that trawling would be the death of fishing (Roberts, 2008, pp. 145-170). One man who was interviewed had worked on a trawler out of Scarborough who told of the wasteful nature of trawl fishing. *Filey − A Yorkshire Fishing Town*, by Irene E Allen and Andrew A Todd, (1987) recounts the Royal Commission’s visit.

> We used to trawl for about six hours north or south, and when we took our net, we had a great deal of young fish, spawn, and such like. After we had taken out of it what we required we used to take a shovel and shovel the rest overboard.
>
> John Jenkinson (b1791-d1872)
>
> Quoted by Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre's website from (Allen & Todd, 1987)
>
> (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.)

A survey of language from these commissions by Robert M Schwartz concluded that,

> All in all, the witnesses from English and Welsh fisheries expressed more concern about declining fish stocks than Huxley believed would be true.
>
> (Schwartz, n.d.)

Despite this testimony the Commission decided that trawling was not detrimental to the environment, did no harm to fish stocks and should be encouraged to feed the growing nation.

> We advise that all Acts of Parliament which profess to regulate, or restrict, the modes of fishing in the open sea be repealed; and that unrestricted freedom of fishing be permitted.
>
> (Roberts, 2008, p. 144)

The Commission's also stated in a paragraph that now seems ominously predictive but at the time they meant that trawling cannot be bad because nothing bad is happening, and even if it does nature will soon replenish, and we can carry on as before.

> If trawling ground be over-fished, the trawlers themselves will be first persons to feel the evil effects of their own acts. Fish will become scarcer, and the produce of a day's work will diminish until it is no longer

> remunerative. When this takes place (and it will take place long before the extinction of the fish) trawling in this locality will cease, and the fish will be left undisturbed, until their great power of multiplication have made good their losses, and the ground again becomes profitable for the trawler…
> (Roberts, 2008, pp. 143-144)

But the disquiet continued until another Royal Commission was set up in 1883, which despite more witness testimony again found that trawling was not at fault and could continue unabated. During an International Sea Fishing Exhibition, London, 1883, Huxley used his inaugural address he reestablished his and the Commissions position.

> I believe, then, that the cod fishery, the herring fishery, the pilchard fishery, the mackerel fishery, and probably all the great sea fisheries, are inexhaustible; that is to say, that nothing we do seriously affects the number of the fish. And any attempt to regulate these fisheries seems consequently, from the nature of the case, to be useless. [sic]
> (Schwartz, n.d.)

Over one hundred years later when it became evident fish stocks were in trouble the Common Fisheries Policy and the EU started to regulate the industry heavily. After being so lightly controlled the trawlermen were the ones who now felt that they were not being listened to by the authorities.

> I used to be Chairman, then the President of the National Fishermen's Federation and you could go and you be talking to our ministers, (…) he'd say, 'we're going to Brussels to do the fish quotas, give me your top one, two, three, requirements that you need, you might have a shopping list but

I'll get you your priorities' an' then he'd go and then he'd come back,

(effeminate voice) 'I've got the best possible deal I could'.

Bollocks, he got what they gave him.

Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

This exchange was delivered with blunt annoyance and sums up the anger and frustration the fishermen still feel at still not been listen to; ignored by those who are meant to be representing them, not only do they not listen but they are also weak and ineffective at standing up for the men's interests. This frustration has been building since regulations started to 'bite', when asked why they do not listen to the men who are out on the water every day, the reply is 'twas ever thus', and 'we've not got letters after our names, so we don't count.'

Philip Ibbotson also tells of his father, Robert 'Bob' Ibbotson a Harbour Governor for Bridlington, taking time off to go to London for the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation's conference, 'but, naaar, not listening. They won't listen.' Philip said the only time anyone did listen is when they barricaded a harbour in protest, stretching a metal chain between boats until someone came out to talk. Direct action[4].

Using this lens of men frustrated at their authority figures who they perceive as not listening, the destabilising effect of their changing community and hazing of their once clear identity, the trajectory leads to the direct action of Brexit. This study details how the fishermen saw their Bottom End, why it was so special and how they had protected it in the past. It also details how Brexit become the solution.

[4] It was unclear what they were protesting about, or when this occurred as the conversation was animated.

ADHD

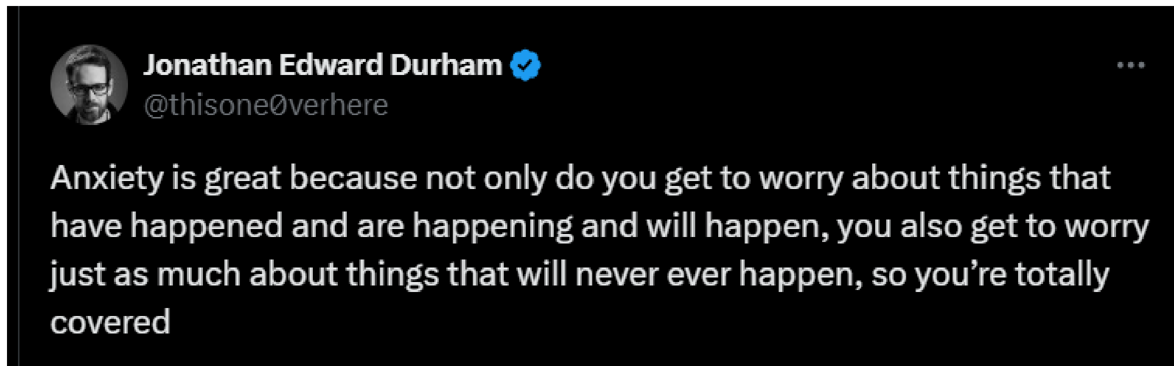

Fig20

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, which in layman's terms is essentially, you cannot concentrate, and you bounce. The bouncing bit has become well known but misunderstood. What people find appealing about the bouncing is the energy, the 'mad'-ness, 'look at me I'm mad I am'-ness. Wouldn't we all like more energy to manage an increasingly hectic life. But what is not talked about is the uncontrollability of that energy, and the life-long struggle to wrangle the self into an order that will not create situations or trouble. The scatter ability of the ADHD brain to simultaneously concentrate and manage to do several things at once but also at times be so overwhelmed that we get a kind of brain freeze. Your brain screams at you to do whatever is demanded at that moment, but even when concentrating hard, you cannot move your own body – executive dysfunction.

One of my sons when small could hold up to four different conversations at once. Fortunately, it was possible to keep track of the wall of information and pick out the different bricks that formed the questions and subject matter and answer in the same manner. Or its the almost uncontrollable urge to follow whatever appears to be more interesting; we call it 'the shiny, shiny', like a deranged magpie we skip after the sparkly new, interesting thing. We make great and thorough researchers, leave

no stone unturned, no avenues of possibility missed, at least when we are interested in something.

It is also the constant purring of our brains; mine constantly tells me stories. Stories of what I should have done, what I need to do and what I could be doing, at times it is a constant barrage. Sometimes though when we, me and my brain, are out walking it tells me stories of the land, makes up tales of the trees or the sea or the creatures that once upon a time may have lived there, imagination and creativity running the show; that is a wonderful thing.

Only you cannot shut it off. The jabbering is at full volume and constant, I've heard it likened to being in a room with a hundred TVs all on different stations, volumes turned up to maximum. To be inside the ADHD brain when talking to someone, is like being at a nightclub. The music is loud, strobes are making everything flicker, people are jiggling about with distracting movement, and someone right at the back behind the DJ booth is whispering to you, and you are supposed to be able to hear and understand, and still provide a coherent answer.

It is constant. Many find the only way to turn down the volume is with drugs. Occasionally a doctor will prescribe melatonin, but in the UK this is rare. It still seems to be considered something unnecessary by most doctors and psychologists. With this kind of resistance, many ADHDers self-medicate to try to stop the noise and get some peace through illegal drugs or alcohol. This brings many into conflict with the police. Research by Cassidy et al, discovered that,

> 66% of patients with autism had thought about committing suicide and of these, 35% had planned or attempted suicide ... compared with only 17% of the general population and 59% of patients with psychosis.

Masking or camouflaging leads to feelings of not fitting in with society, termed thwarted belongingness which increases the thoughts of suicide (Cassidy, et al., 2022, p. 1) Cassidy et all concluded that,

> […] autism and autistic traits are over-represented in those who died by suicide in England; 41.4% of those who died had evidence of elevated autistic traits. (Cassidy, et al., 2022, p. 7)

One of the authors Simon Baron-Cohen warned, ‘Autistic people on average die twenty years earlier than non-autistic people, and two big causes of this are suicide and epilepsy’[sic] (Cassidy & Baron-Cohen, 2022). The reality of ADHD is that it is extremely difficult to live with.

To add to this inside brain fuzz, the outside world is constantly heard at the same level regardless of distance or tone. In a room full of people, I can hear very clearly all the conversations around me at the same volume as the person standing next to me. It is a cacophonous confusion, an aural assault of noise.

The flip side of energy, which is never addressed is the fatigue. When tiredness hits you, you fall into a dead man’s sleep. One of my sons currently has thirty-two alarms, some buzz, others music, vibrations so loud they shake the sides of the house, alarms that turn on lights and flash; he still manages to be late. Fatigue does not cover the feeling; I’m struggling to think of an adequate description. After hours of being awake sometimes till four in the morning, of waking in the night several times when you finally lie down, shut your eyes and become immobile; then running on empty for a few days more, that feeling of exhaustion is all consuming. It is a death of energy. Life is a swing of highs and lows, bringing with it depression and self-esteem issues. ADHDers can also be ‘combative’ when woken early and do not feel awake till after dinner (neurohealth, 2024).

Combative, that's a lovely polite word for it.

Fig21, Via Jenn has ADHD.

ADHDers is a term many who live with the condition use to describe themselves. It is a more user-friendly term and less medicalised than saying you are a person with ADHD, or you are an ADHD sufferer. Drs Halliwell and Ratey have suggested the use of the acronym VAST (Variable Attention Stimulus Trait) to further de-medicalise. They believe this term focuses on the benefits of an ADHD brain. ADHD can negatively impact a person's life and cause 'rejection sensitivity dysphoria', a term coined by Dr William Dodson which refers to the extreme emotional sensitivity of 'guilt, shame, and rejection' experienced by ADHDers. They also argue that those with ADHD/VAST 'are accustomed to receiving negative feedback in their personal, academic, and professional lives' which creates negative feelings that 'spiral into rejection sensitive dysphoria.'

However, they argue that with positive encouragement the VAST brain is supercharged at the same intensity but with positive emotions.

> You can hyperfocus and then you can't focus. You are distractible, but you're also curious. So, if individuals with VAST tend to succumb to perceived rejection, they can just as easily thrive with perceived recognition, an experience we call "recognition responsive euphoria." [sic]
> (Hallowell & Ratey, 2024)

To be taught to think in the positive and have the positives recognised would provide a foundation of confidence with which to great the world. Nevertheless, ADHD is characterised by inattention and hyperactivity, the negative side of VAST, and officially there are six areas that mark you out as 'inattentive'.

- Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, at work, or with other activities.
- Often has trouble holding attention on tasks or play activities.
- Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.
- Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (e.g., loses focus, sidetracked).
- Often has trouble organising tasks and activities.
- Often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to do tasks that require mental effort over a long period of time (such as schoolwork or homework).
- Often loses things necessary for tasks and activities (e.g. school materials, pencils, books, tools, wallets, keys, paperwork, eyeglasses, mobile telephones).
- Is often easily distracted.
- Is often forgetful in daily activities.

(adhduk, n.d.)

I have a problem with this language: ‘careless mistakes’, which implies it is deliberately done because I could not care less. I would not make them if I knew about them, my brain is working too fast for my hands and we often, as I do, have dyslexia and dyspraxia to cope with. I care very much about mistakes, my ability to correct them or avoid them is where I lack. ‘Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly’; I’ve got a lot of stuff going on in this brain, so say something interesting or get to the back of the queue, as we might say in Yorkshire. ‘Reluctant to do tasks that require mental effort over a long period of time’, no, not reluctant to exert mental effort − we tire easily because of all the stuff going on, we need breaks, and we need to be kept motivated. An ADHD brain’s natural response to being unstimulated is to go to sleep. Literally, you are boring me so much my brain shuts down because it thinks nothing is happening (neurohealth, 2024). So, let’s reframe; will have overriding reactions to low levels of outside stimuli.

‘Loses things’, yeah, Ok I’ll take that, I put things down or *safe* and then immediately forget. I am sure this is part of many people’s experiences but not to the extent that you are constantly looking for something. I do all the usual things, put things back in a regular place, retrace steps to find things, so forth. But it is often not enough. Like many I have a visual memory, I use a series of mental flash cards to reverse-think where I might have left something. Only, there will be a blank. A total absence of memory activity. It is like an endless desert in there, just miles of indeterminable beige, no helpful picture of where I put the thing. In another instance, if I plan a journey (this is essential, so is reconnaissance of route, practice route, timing) there will be images of the junctions and what I must do, but also nice tress, a sign, what animals are in the fields, or even whether I saw someone who looked striking at a bus stop. A comprehensive picture map, but more often, there will be a

big blank at an important stage of the journey, and I'll get lost. Then I'll have a panic attack.

'Easily distracted' − Oooh shiny, shiny[5]

I have learnt to cope by simultaneously working on several pieces at once. If I'm painting, I'll have two canvases, two pottery pieces, or if I'm writing I'll have two different pieces with contrasting styles. Or more likely I'll be working in all these mediums at once, just to keep focused on the task. It takes years to learn this skill.

I am also autistic, which officially means I have 'persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts' (National Autistic Society, n.d.). I like to have the rules described to me properly and I need instructions clearly explained from the start so I can follow them. I do like things to be accurate, having a set structure can be a comfort. Creating routine and order is important or I cannot think of anything else, and I cease to function. I always reduce the files and tabs on the laptop before folding it shut, if I am eating with my fingers; a croissant, a sandwich or cake, it will be placed back on the plate in the exact same spot between mouthfuls and my fingers wiped free of crumbs before the next mouthful. I have certain cutlery I eat certain foods with, if they are not available then I feel jittery inside.

I also go over scenarios in my head for years and years. I still get upset and berate myself for things that happened over thirty years ago. This is not a decision I make; I do not willingly want this wall of endless criticism, this disapproving voice in my head, it is uncontrolled.

[5] Just as an aside and for insight, I really wanted to write this section, I really did but I butterflied about; I walked around about eight times, doom scrolled for more hours than I will admit, played a couple of games, fussed all four dogs' multiple times, I got sidetracked for many hours by interesting data when researching and I wasn't even halfway through. It is not that I wanted to not do it, I just find it very difficult to concentrate for extended periods without 'diversions.'

The assumption I do get quite angry at and yet is frequently advocated by clinicians, that is: autistics cannot or do not feel emotions, that we are emotionless creatures. This is, in my experience of many autistic people, untrue, unhelpful and sometimes derogatory. I and many others feel your emotions far too much, we feel our emotions far too much; what we cannot do is properly express this in a socially acceptable way or time frame.

And I mask. Especially in social situations I put on a face and must intensely concentrate on the other person's face, gestures and speech and actively mirror it to get the right reaction. A bit like a psychopath I suppose, but they, the truly mentally disturbed and potentially dangerous, have flawless reactions, managing to fool most people, whereas autistics, with our clumsy fumbling through the most benign of social exchanges, do not. We are doing the same thing, masking, but they get it right and maintain the appearance of successful conversation, we do not. Except when I have a social script; an expected plan of conversation, or set questions to accomplish a task, which makes the interaction easier, and dare I say pleasant.

When you are met with a barrage of emotion from someone else it feels like you are drowning in a colour that is not your own. For me, it is akin to being an attendee at the Indian colour festival of Holi, with someone exploding a colour bomb in your face. This can paralyse our responses, so we do not show anything on our faces, we put on the mask, and appear to you, the non-autistic person, like we are either not listening or are simply uncaring. The truth is we do care, but we just need to go away, decompress from this emotional information and try to form some response to you. We need time in a dark room away from any other humans and the interaction they need to respond to and repair the devastation other people's emotional assault causes. It is similar with our own emotions.

But this can also be a beautiful thing. When I was pregnant with my children, I believed I could feel their emotions. There is not a great amount of research of pregnant autistic women's experience of pregnancy, but most cite elevated reactions to sensory stimuli (Vandenburg, 2024). I already experience colour reactions in my mind, for example when reading a story, the colours will reflect how interesting it is for me. In the second and third trimesters I experienced my children feeling safe and content, or apprehensive, both with a different shade of colour. That is to clarify, my children filled my emotional brain with a colour that was not mine, it was distinctly a different person's feeling, as I was feeling something else when their flood of colour crashed into my head.

When I tell people this, they dismiss it, I must be mad they would suggest. When I was trying to tell the midwives the baby was upset, they did not believe me until they had strapped baby heart monitors to my belly which showed them, he was feeling stressed. In my experience neurotypical people (NT) find it difficult to believe that one can disseminate emotional information with such intricacy or intensity. And so, such beauty is dismissed, for as to be autistic for most NTs and clinicians is to be lacking emotions, not have them as a superpower.

The ADHD hyperactivity check list is as follows:

- Often fidgets with or taps hands or feet, or squirms in seat.
- Often leaves seat in situations when remaining seated is expected.
- Often runs about or climbs in situations where it is not appropriate (adolescents or adults may be limited to feeling restless).
- Often unable to play or take part in leisure activities quietly.
- Is often 'on the go' acting as if 'driven by a motor'.
- Often talks excessively.

- Often blurts out an answer before a question has been completed.
- Often has trouble waiting their turn.
- Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games).

(adhduk, n.d.)

I used to like climbing trees but 'unable to play or take part in leisure activities quietly' – where's the fun in that? Apart from reading, which *must* be in silence, surely everyone has an urge to make happy noises for fun. I mean, my diagnosis is referred to as Au-ADHD (Autistic-ADHD), and if you are not howling that first syllable then, what is wrong with you? You cannot give people with that little more joie de vivre a word like that and not expect them to play with it. 'Talks excessively' – I'm told I talk fast too, and yes, I can interrupt, get on with it then, I think*,* why go so slow? I've already worked out what you are saying, there is the answer, now let's move on the fun stuff. However, I have learnt to always wait my turn, rules are rules, but that's the autism.

The DSM-5 or The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, is an American diagnostic database. According to the American Psychiatry Association (APA) who in 1995 began recruiting leading clinicians to compile the criteria for mental health diagnosis:

> Through this wide scale collaboration, the DSM-5 development process has involved not only psychiatrists, but also experts with backgrounds in psychology, social work, psychiatric nursing, paediatrics', and neurology. Participants in this effort represent 16 countries. All are leaders in their fields and are participating on a voluntary basis. [sic]
>
> (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

This criterion is used globally for the identification of autism spectrum disorder/condition, both terms are frequently used (ASD or ASC) and concentrates on social skills and occupational dysfunction. There is also the ICD-10, the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Edition, which has a variety of autism profiles, that is: places on the spectrum. They call them 'pervasive developmental disorders' − pervasive being the key identifier. The behaviours must invade and be persistent in every aspect of life.

> A group of disorders characterized by qualitative abnormalities in reciprocal social interactions and in patterns of communication, and by a restricted, stereotyped, repetitive repertoire of interests and activities. These qualitative abnormalities are a pervasive feature of the individual's functioning in all situations.
>
> (National Autistic Society, n.d.)

An abnormality

In criminology there is a checklist for potential criminal behaviour, marking the personality traits of low self-control, aggression behaviour and cognitive distortion that are major factors in 'underlying criminal behaviour' (Rahim Kamaluddin, et al., 2015). When we note the overlapping symptoms with ADHD, the problems with self-control which their meta-analysis considers to be the overriding factor in criminal behaviour, we see a similarity of diagnostic criteria.

I visited an English category B prison to talk to the men about a rehabilitation program they had joined, and we talked about neurodiversity, as many were diagnosed or self-identifying. I mentioned a study by User Voice (2023) which estimated that the neurodiverse prison population may be as high as 50% but the outside population only 15%. They immediately challenged this, their estimate, from

their experience of multiple prisons and many years, the figure would be much closer to 80%.

The User Voice study interviewed one hundred and four prisoners and additionally surveyed two hundred and fifty service users who were either diagnosed or self-diagnosed as neurodivergent, across eleven different UK prisons. They found that despite half of the group being diagnosed before they were seventeen years old, ‘none of them had been told how to live with their conditions’:

> At a crisis point, service users often found that they did not have the needed support networks, and therefore as a result, many had turned to alcohol and drugs which then had led to a life of criminality. Many told us that due to their neurodiversity, they are easily manipulated, coerced, groomed, or susceptible to peer pressure.
>
> (User Voice, 2023, p. 1)

I didn’t know what was wrong with me either. It was only when crashing, in falling apart that I saw the pieces clearly. An acknowledgement of my identifiers; class, culture, accent, and place of birth, all had their consequences, you are defined by others, and this affects how you grow. Those identities clash or harmonise, as well as fade in importance or gain traction for you and the people around who ultimately judge you. I understand that as hard as I try, people react with alarm, or ‘off-ness’; I am aware that people do not easily take to me, in that nanosecond of first impressions there comes an inevitable reaction. This is not a getting old thing or an estate kid thing or a northern thing or even a female thing, although these identities play their part; this was something else.

Joanne Limburg, *Letter to My Weird Sisters* (Limburg, 2021), writes in her introduction letter of suffering with what she terms ‘Uncanny Valley’ syndrome. Uncanny Valley is,

> There's something about it being almost human but not quite that can make people uneasy. … [many] ultra-realistic avatars, androids, and animated characters appear stuck in a disturbing in-between world: They are so lifelike and yet they are not “right." This void of strangeness is known as the uncanny valley. [sic]
>
> (Caballa, 2019)

I like the term ‘void of strangeness’, a state in-between human and not-quite-human, a disturbing place to exist. Odo, the outsider, the one who however much he tries to replicate a humanoid face does not entirely manage it, and for that he is treated with suspicion. According to Mary Douglas, society retains order by categorising what is acceptable, or pure, and learning what is dirt or dangerous, which then must be dealt with or purged, to retain the social order. She is oft quoted as saying, ‘dirt is a matter out of place.’ Her first category is to just ignore the anomalous thing, her fifth is more subtle, calling these ‘ambiguous symbols’ (Douglas, 2002, pp. 48-49). Paradoxically, these polarities appear indistinguishable, upending the viewer, tricking the eyes into confusion trying to determine if something good and harmless, or threatening. It keeps the viewer on their toes, it is destabilising, just like the uncanny valley. Human/avatar, happy smile/threatening smile, with not quite the right set of expressions who can tell? This is what Limburg is describing in action, we are those ambiguous things that upends the viewer. We do not wholly make sense. As a person with Autism, I unknowingly confront something inside people that is fearful. I frighten people just by existing. That is a hard fact to acknowledge.

Limburg writes that she too is caught between trying to be as human as she can but still giving out those disturbing radio-waves informing all other humans that she is other. She says she ‘startles’ people, they instantly recognise that she is not one of them (Limburg, 2021, p. 3). Ruth Grossman, 2014, conducted communication experiments which confirms this experience. She recorded nine children with mild autism and ten children without, each speaking a few sentences and played either video, audio or both, to eight-seven people.

It took **one second** before the observers had correctly identified the children with autism and those without. This study has been replicated many times with the same result. Grossman is quoted:

> Clearly there is something going on, something very salient and very subtle […] It happens all the time, and it leads to a reduced willingness of people to engage with people with autism.
>
> (Denworth, 2018)

One second before social execution.

One second and a reduced willingness to engage, ***one*** second, and you do not want to know. One second and I am perceived as a threat.

Angela Tinwell also has advice for animators to avoid the uncanny valley syndrome. She says one must ensure a character's facial expressions match its emotive tones of speech, have responsive body movements that reflect its emotional state, with attention to ‘facial elements such as the forehead, eyes, and mouth, which depict the complexities of emotion and thought.’ She continues,

> The mouth must be [modelled] and animated correctly so the character doesn't appear aggressive or portray a 'false smile' when they should be genuinely happy.

(Caballa, 2019)

Limburg concludes that this is why people do not treat her the same because she is giving off those uncanny valley waves, she does not register as human with others. As an autistic she registers as weird, as lifelike but not right. And when you do not register as human to those around you, you do not have to be treated as such.

I'm also a nerd, so I remember a scene from a particular Star Trek, Deep Space Nine episode: Laas, a Changeling, is trying to persuade Odo he does not belong with the solids because they see he is not like them and fear him,

> **LAAS:** … You saw the hatred in that Klingon's eyes. Perhaps now you'll recognise it when you see it hiding in the faces of your so-called friends. They tolerate you, Odo, because you emulate them. What higher flattery is there? I, who can be anything, choose to be like you. But even when you make yourself in their image, they know you are not truly one of them. They know that what you appear to be does not reflect what you really are. It's only a mask. What lies underneath is alien to them, and so they fear it. And that fear can turn to hate in the blink of an eye.
>
> (CBS Studios, 1999)

They've found out it is a mask, they tolerate but fear what is underneath, and under no circumstances are you one of them, they discover your secret in a single second, and this causes conflict.

Another test to discover how anomalous you are is the DISCO. The Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders, the ADI-R, Autism Diagnostic Interview − Revised, the ADOS, Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, and the 3Di, Developmental, Dimensional and Diagnostic Interview (National Autistic Society, n.d.). Diagnosing autism and ADHD involves a lot of paperwork, lots of

forms documentation, interviews analysing and testing which can be stressful for an ADHDer.

For ADHD, the diagnosing psychologist will ask questions about trauma, as any or every trauma might be responsible for the exhibiting behaviour, so all must be discussed and eliminated before digging for the next. For psychologists it seems there are always additional traumas to disclose. There was a lot for me to get through, but after stripping away all the layers the behaviours were found to have been present from early childhood. So, the phycologist accepts, when all else has been discounted that you are ADHD and presents you with your new label; however, the current thinking is that there are three distinct types of ADHD. At one end of the spectrum, we have symptoms of hyperactivity, whilst the other end of the grouped categories exhibits decreased attention or inward distraction, and those in the middle have a mixed profile, a balanced imbalance; I was diagnosed as a combined profile but with a 50/50 split. Another duality: which in simple terms means, I bounce about doing what I think I should be doing, but often have no idea why, because I got distracted when listening.

Another assessment is the Social Responsiveness Scale, second addition (SRS2). According to its author, John N. Constantino, MD, his test with its 65-point rating scale can be administered in a 15-20 session, and ‘identifies the presence and severity of social impairment within the autism spectrum’. As one of the most widely used methods of determining autism, though not without ethical considerations, the SRS2 means you can be diagnosed and medicated, in and out of the doctor’s office in 30 minutes ready to face life with your new label (Living with Autism, 2024). That wasn’t the case with me, or my children.

Once you get a label, it sticks. Labels are problematic, there are occasions when they can be helpful, though in other circumstances, not so. As an ADHDer people expect me to give up when faced with demanding situations, with implicit, or often even explicit suggestions that I lack the mental energy to cope. But I am also autistic, and that has people believing I must be a savant or obsessive compulsive, with lots of mental energy to indulge.

Fig22, Via Neurodiversity and Me.

It feels like I am two people in one, a dyad; the ADHD will get me on stage to do something, then abandon me, leaving the socially anxious autistic me to deal with the situation. Life within this syndrome is to live as a constant duality, the manifest experience of comorbidity. I am Tok'ra[6].

I have yet to fully appreciate the boxes I am supposed to inhabit. As with so much that I do, I cannot allow myself the limitation of engaging with only one activity at every moment; being a 50/50 split is absolutely apt. Not only am I both equally hyperactive and inattentive, but I also have two semi-autonomic systems, ADHD and Autistic, and these are distinct from each other, like VHS and Betamax, which achieve the same function through different operating systems. Each label for the affected serves a purpose with their positives and negatives; regardless of my condition from moment to moment the diagnosis becomes me, and I have become an ADHDer as the community of Bottom End became Brexiteers.

[6] SG1. 'The Tok'ra are small aliens that join with the host in a symbiosis. They do not suppress their hosts mind, allowing both entities full consciousness and control over the same body'. (Stargate Fandom, 2024)

Gender

> For feminists, the everyday routines traced by women are never unimportant, because the seemingly banal and trivial events of the everyday are bound into the power structures which limit and confine women. The limits on women's everyday activities are structured by what society expects women to be and therefore to do. The everyday is the arena through which patriarchy is (re)created – and contested.
> (Rose, 2007, p. 17)

I am a woman. I understand from this perspective, and I write from a phenomenological standpoint of what I thought the gender roles were and what I was supposed to grow into. The role of a woman presented to me as a child was not a role that I was in a particular hurry to take on. As a working-class girl from a northern town, the bounds and boundaries of what others expected from me were unappealing. Although I acknowledge that the term and definition of working-class are a middle-class construct, devised to set them apart and being better than, the 'others' (Skeggs, 2002, pp. 4-5). The role women inhabited in the Bottom End is presented through this piece, showing the influence they had within the fishing industry and their subsequent removal and the affect that this had. Within the same time-frame of the late 1970s through to the 1990s, this chapter details the role women played on the estate where I grew up and how as an undiagnosed neurodiverse child this influenced how I felt inside or outsideness.

I grew islanded on Barrowcliffe council estate, built on the outside of town to house those Scarborough residents uprooted from the old town after the bombings of World War Two and then the slum clearances of post-war Briton. It was at first, a utopia: indoor toilets, solid walls, gardens both front and back, and affordable rent

from the council. Workers lived there; they did when I lived there, but it didn't stop it being thought of as lower, as rough. Like the Bottom End, the estate was an almost self-contained area, growing up there was a newsagents/sweetshop, a bigger shop, a chippy, and a launderette, up the road and round the corner was a mini mart. People didn't do the expense of buses and so you went to where you could walk and bought what you could carry. Although the mini mart was more expensive than town many people including my grandparents shopped here, if you needed a post office for your pension then it was right around the corner and up another long street and over the concreate panelled road that my grandad built.

Lisa McKenzie, a working-class academic, describes living on an estate not so dissimilar to mine, and being isolated there, to be pilloried by stigma of the area you live, of it being an identifier (McKenzie, 2015). Her experience of living on a council estate and the shame that you encounter from that 'smell' as it follows you around is relatable. Life on the estate was contained. McKenzie writes about living on St Ann's in Nottingham and never really leaving it on any regular basis, living most of her life enclosed by an invisible boundary.

Gillian Rose cites Hayford, who argued that the 'household was originally a productive unit which through its labour transformed resources into food, clothing and shelter'. This was essential to the family's survival, but ultimately creates a division between the roles of men and women. Under Capitalism the dynamic gradually changed with all women's domestic labour increasingly disciplined and pushed in the suburban environment by the building of workers terraces, establishing large, contained estates. Hayford also suggests that the gender divided role structures were kept in place because, 'women play such central roles in the establishment of kinship it becomes important for them to be subject to control'

(Rose, 2007, p. 118). The loss of women triggers the disintegration of the community, as reflected with my observations in the Bottom End.

The Bottomender women and those who lived on Barrowcliffe were socially confined to an extent, due to their economic status and domestic duties. Rose quotes studies from the 1850s to the contemporary that found women's free time has always been limited by their domestic responsibilities in the home. When they do leave, they do not travel far mainly due to time pressure and economic restraints. Increased pressure to work has also been added to their household obligations, however they tend to work close to home for travel and time-pressure reasons (Rose, 2007, pp. 23-24). The structures exerted pressure for both the women of the Bottom End and the estate, this was largely accepted, it is just how things were. McKenzie cites Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant who would call this symbolic violence:

> People are subjected to forms of violence, which can include being treated as inferior and denied resources, and they are limited in their social mobility and aspirations. However, the people do not see it that way, they see it as 'the natural order' of things.
>
> (McKenzie, 2015, p. 8)

Domesticity featured large in my understanding of what I was supposed to be when I grew up, I would not have understood it as control, but I was aware of the consequences if you acted against expectations. There was an attitude that it was 'ever thus' and so we must not change it. When I think of the estate's women, Queen's 'I Want to Break Free' comes to mind, especially the first part of the video when they are dressed up as women cleaning the house, an image of our frustrated and impending domesticity. They looked like women we knew, John Deacon's Ena

Sharples, Brian May as Hilda Ogden, and Freddie Mercury's take on Bet Lynch, we were surrounded by women like that. Old ladies with small dogs, blue rinses, headsquare and a fag on. Homes decorated with large tapestries of animals on the wall and that dodgy print of the naked man with his awkwardly position arm to knee alinement. He is stood on the wing of a giant swan while an unclothed lady is sat on the flagstones watching her gift be delivered. It made no sense, but somehow said everything about how life was going to be.

The picture, titled '*Wings of Love*'[7] was the height of fashion, everybody had one, replacing the madness of the 1960 Spanish girls with blue skin and green hair. I think it was supposed to represent the pinnacle of young romantic love, the dramatic light and half silhouette of the lady, the sea spreading and lapping over the flagstones. The swan dominating the sky coming out of the clouds, the woman sat passively while the man has all the fun flying on the wing of the clearly crazed giant bird. I often stared at that picture (we had one too) and wondered, hoped, the waves would smother the woman before the fella had even noticed, so self-absorbed he seemed looking down at his own leg muscles. I wanted her to swim away, disappear with the sea witches, anything, to just not be there when he looked up.

I'd rather have been on the back of the swan flying off to interesting places, not sat shivering on cold flagstones waiting for some man to arrive. After the wings of love must surely come the domesticity, the cleaning, the hoovering − the Freddie Mercury in drag. Endless, repetitive, work all week, being taken out on Saturdays to the pub, to be allowed in the pub, that male domain but only on occasions when socially acceptable, only when taken.

I wanted to break free before I'd even got there.

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[7] The artist, Stephen Pearson was born in Yorkshire.

I had a good role model, my mother, who when needed stood up and said no. Not regularly, but often enough to be noticed and sanctioned. Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (2017), writes about being wilful, using literature and folk tales as a model of how expectations and warnings are told and retold through stories. As an example, she quotes George Elliot's Mill on the Floss, and Maggie who in a moment of clarity gives up being wilful so that her mother can love her, her mother's reaction was to think of her as, 'the only bit of furniture now in which she could bestow her anxiety and pride' (309)'. Ahmed comments that, 'you have to work to recede, or work to become part of the background. To be willing to obey is to be willing to recede' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 69).

I was still in primary school when I wilfully said no. It must have been 1980-81, I was perhaps six. The school was a Victorian square hall, shiny parquet floor and a huge atrium of glass roof that seemed to touch the sky. The classrooms were arranged around the outside of the hall, the offices were in one corner of the square and our classroom was in the other. We had been told the whole school was to have a hearing test, we would be called individually to the headteacher's office and the 'Doctors' would conduct the test. We were told to do as we were told. As I was in a middle classroom, and my surname a middle letter I was called in the afternoon and told to go to the headteacher's room for the test. I snuck, as quietly as my patented leather shoes on wood block floor would allow, to arrive at her office. The head was at her desk, but it was a huge room and a large table at the side had two people sitting at it, who were fiddling with a headset connected to a large box with switches and nobs. I was told to put the heavy headphones over my ears and listen to the beeps but only rap the table when I heard a bell sound. Next, I was to stand on a twister type mat, with coloured squares painted on. When I heard a particular sound,

I was instructed for example, to put my left leg on the green square, and such like. All well and good, this is great I thought I can hear and see colours.

‘Now can you take your clothes off?’ I remember the shock of that question, and I remember looking over to see the Head peering at me over her glasses. All the room was waiting for me to be amenable. I said, ‘No.’ From then on it was a verbal assault, I was cajoled, scolded, reminded that this insolence was holding up the rest of the school. That I was the only child to refuse out of the whole school. And that I should be ashamed. ‘But I can hear with my clothes off.’ No matter I was sent in disgrace back to my classroom, hot and tearful. My teacher was spoken to, and I was isolated from the group. I was to be recalled at the end, ‘when she’s had time to think about her behaviour.’

I was called back just before the home-time bell, all the pressure of everyone needing to go home was pilled upon me. I still said no. Then it really kicked off. After raised voices, I was informed that as they could not contact my mother, my father was to be summoned. To child of the 1970-80, that was the ultimate threat. Your father who has better things to do that spend time in school, disciplining naughty children. My father turned up fresh from the hairdressers with a Kenny Dalglish perm under his hide cowboy hat and suede tasselled jacket. He was as out of place as I was in the nice middle-class, respectable school. They explained my disobedience, and then explained to him what they wanted to do. I was not convinced he would agree with my stance, or if I were about to get a hiding, until they said they wanted to test me without any clothes on. The adults did not read the signals, but I did. I felt suddenly confident to stand within his arms as he sat observing these ‘doctors’. Eventually he demanded of me; ‘do you want to take your clothes off?’, ‘No’, ‘Then

she's not doing it' he told them. The relief. My old gypsy father had, for probably the one and only time, stood up for me.

There was chaos. Now they had two wayward gypos refusing to comply. After much discussion it was agreed I could do the test in my vest and knickers, but only with my father present. Which I know sounds unacceptable now, but then, that was just how you did PE, so it was tolerable. I do not know if the other three hundred pupils unquestioningly submitted to this request, I was not allowed to talk to them. Ahmed observes that if you are not willing to recede and dare become visible, this is seen as selfish, of wanting your own way, of being spoilt. With that 'no' I became very visible, marking me as a troublemaker.

I would like to tell you this episode taught me the power of my words and that my consent is valued. It did not. Unlike Ahmed finding power in announcing violence (Ahmed, 2017, p. 73) this taught me was that my body is for others to decide and look at, and that my words mean nothing without negation by a man (in this case my father). It takes a very long time to unlearn such a public lesson of shame, to understand your body has boundaries, and that no is a complete sentence.

My wilfulness had caused a stir at six years old, and from then on, the phrase 'don't rock the boat' took on a very clear meaning. I must never 'get above myself', that is for spoilt, selfish people; but I needed to get above myself: I needed to run away.

Relph mentions the flip side to belonging as the grind of being in a place, the knowledge that the place around you can stifle and smother, which can lead to a need to abscond. It becomes a finely balanced tightrope to walk, the knowledge and love for a place, of the complete belonging to it and being known within it and the all-consuming nature of suffocation these elements can bring.

He cautions one must identify and accept this element of belonging to live within it successfully (Relph, 2008, p. 51). I never did. Something inside me was at odds with the outside world and I could not explain. The events and happenings around me also indicated I was different.

My cousins and I often took ourselves walking along the cinder track, or Peasholm Park, and roamed around the coastline, beach and Scalby Mills when you could get around that headland. Not doing much just exploring, wandering. But like cockroaches, we children only seemed to come out when it was quiet, after the tourists had gone home in the summer evenings or in the winter when they never came. We were the ones people pretended not to see, dark-skinned, unfashionable clothes, thick as mud accents. I was becoming aware of who we were, and how we were perceived.

A commensal of mischief.

This was our town, our place. I stood with at least six generations of Bottomenders, Scarborians at my shoulder, but I was not welcome because I took up tourist space, 'them others' were worth more than an estate-wallah. Gillian Rose writes that the structures and reactions we experience every day, subconsciously educate us into knowing our place, our understanding where we are expected to be.

> Everyday interactions with people and objects, individuals develop certain kinds of knowledge – conscious, subconscious and ideological – and their subsequent actions based on these kinds of knowledge reproduce a social structure.
>
> (Rose, 2007, p. 20)

On the estate, back inside our boundary, our place, we were surrounded by family and stories, everyday stories, that compiled our identity. The family assembling at an

auntie's houses for parties which were full of tall tales and songs. Stories are not only an information exchange, but storytelling also envelops you into your family and your community, it anchors you within somewhere special. There is a love to telling stories and a love surrounding those listening, it is a unique experience. When I was little, I remember the Christmas parties we had; family would call in at various family houses collecting people on the way to ours, however, you cannot leave each house without a drink to welcome the New Year. So, in gathering more people, by the time they had made it up the long road to ours, there not only would be a huge crowd, but they'd all be drunk. And there was the smell, everyone except the smallest children smoked, it was the 80s, and the noise and fog fell into the house in one chunk.

It is in these family get-togethers you learn the family's favourite songs; and with it your place. A popular song for my family, always rousingly sung is, 'My Brother Sylvest'. (And if you do not react to that title by in your head singing *'He's got an arm, like a leg − big leg! And a punch that would sink a battleship (big ship), It takes all the army and the nay-vy, to put the wind up, Sylvest'* − then I'm quite sure we didn't have the same upbringing). Grandad singing 'Grace Darling' with actions, all my aunties and uncles immediately sitting on the floor in a conga line doing the actions behind his back: a recreation of when they were kids. McKenzie argues that narratives and storytelling are part of working-class identity.

> It is how we explain ourselves, how we understand the world around us, and how we situate ourselves in a wider context. We learn to make sense of what sometimes seems senseless through narratives.
>
> (McKenzie, 2015, p. 6)

Through songs and stories, I understood my Scarborough, my family and the tribe I was born into on the outskirts of the town, far away from the tourists. I was born on a

Jurassic cliff stuffed full of ammonites and bones, a rich chronicle of animals and sea creatures of the past, people of old and older buildings and the millesimal force of the sea and its impact on the cliffs. History is everywhere in Scarborough. History is the fabric of Scarborough. I almost envied the people I spoke to, wrapped, parcelled in by family and community ties; they belonged to both the land and people. I do not have an experience of insideness, I do not understand. I was both compliant and wilful, autistic and ADHD and I never truly belonged.

To be confronted with the Bottomenders complete absorption within their community and role in life was, curious. I was never at ease with community expectations, the identity or gender role I should have aspired to. I knew I did not want it; I knew I didn't like the box being prepared for me.

This is where the artist, the ADHD in me comes into play. She is wilful and noisy and relentless. Or as Ahmed would say, 'Willfulness [sic][8] is persistence in the face of having been brought down' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 84). Ahmed writes that as disciplining a wilful child is culturally seen as the right thing to do, she counteracted this by being vocal; 'the acquisition of a voice as a refusal to be beaten.'

> By screaming, I announced my father's violence. I made it audible. And I learned from this too: becoming a feminist was about becoming audible, feminism as screaming in order to be heard; screaming as making violence visible; feminism as acquiring a voice.
>
> (Ahmed, 2017, p. 73)

The artist, she is aways asking questions, always challenging authority; she is visible. It is a balance, I am aware that I am seen, but not part of the crowd. I know now that this half of me is the ADHD. Ahmed when writing of diversity work and

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[8] Using Ahmed's spelling.

changing to include difference, describes the ‘norm’ as being like a house, ‘giving residence to bodies’ but,

> […] not to inhabit a norm (or not quite to inhabit a norm) can be experienced as not dwelling so easily where you reside. You might be asked questions; you might be made to feel questionable, so that you come to feel that you do not belong in the places you live, the places you experience as home; you might turn up and not be allowed in or find it too uncomfortable to stay.
>
> (Ahmed, 2017, p. 115)

This resonates with Limburg’s inhabitation of the uncanny valley. Ahmed states you can feel, ‘thrown’ by this. The word thrown can be either to propel with force through the air, or the swirling sickly feeling of turmoil, both descriptions sum up the effect of growing with uncomfortable expectations and a different personality/neurobehavioral condition.

> i could not account for myself. that is, i am unacceptable as myself, and unconvincing as one of them. [sic]
>
> (Lock, 2022, p. 21) No capitalisation used by Lock.

I understand now that the reaction I experienced to these incidents and many more were felt differently to the others around me. Neurodiverse people usually have a sensory profile: their senses are wired up differently. This included the scenes of, audio, visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile, and vestibular (system of balance and body position), interoception (internal sensors for hunger thirst, temperature and such) and proprioception (interpretation of body parts in relation to oneself and the outside world. How much force/delicacy is needed to perform actions). For example, when someone says something unexpected or unkind it is overwhelming, because

many of the senses are triggered. As well as the emotional, which as an autistic I find difficult to process in the required timeframe, our senses are involved too. It can feel as if someone has forced you into a jumper (sweater) full of angry wasps, crawling and stinging your body. The volume you hear things at switches from loud to muffled, and the 'thrown', that queasy feeling Ahmed talks of becomes manifest. This is not momentarily, it lasts for a long time, coupled with the neurodiverse tendency to remember and relive for years, the impact of such can be destroying. And as a working-class woman, you always assume it is all your fault.

For example, I can remember where I was when I was first made aware of the fact my face does not always say what I want it to say. I must actively think about the expression, and sometimes I get it wrong or forget. I was in a pub with my stepfather, it was meant to be a treat, for him to take me to the Navy club on a Saturday dinnertime when for a few hours they allowed children inside, a bonding exercise I suppose. I think I was at the end of primary school. It mainly consisted of me sitting at a table at the side of room, eking out a panda pop wishing I was at home, while he stood at the bar laughing with his friends. One of his friends, or someone he knew sat down to talk to me, I have no idea who this person was, but he chatted for a bit, and I tried to reply as best I could, first rule of being a child − be polite. And he just took a swing of his beer, stood up and said, 'smile why don't ya, you look rite miserable'. I was so taken aback and upset mainly that I'd upset him, and I didn't mean to, but I suddenly became very aware of my face, which up until then hadn't been a problem. Since then, I have been very aware, and that incident still brings back the sensations it caused forty years later.

Since the 1980s society has come to call this coercive control, a social control of women's bodies, the expectation to be pretty for men, even as a child. Bev Skeggs uses Bourdieu to argue that,

> Just as we are born with different access to different amounts of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital we are also born with a physical body which may or may not fit into the sign systems which define what it is to be attractive.
>
> (Skeggs, 2002, p. 102)

I no longer worry if I am pretty for the audience, they are no longer looking, and I find that empowering.

> *trauma time* is a recursive and hiccupping: not a *continuum* but a circuit. it is never not happening now. which is also the deviant time of the poor: we live a concentric series of looping routines, through and across time, that nevertheless are subject to every conceivable kind of disruption, encroachment or glitch. [sic]
>
> (Lock, 2022, p. 1) No capitalisations used by Lock.

Chapter Four

SACRED SPACE

The Bottom End is experienced by occupants as a place of multi-faceted encounters (Relph, 2008). The placement of the harbour and its buildings creates emotional attachments and a feeling of insideness and belonging, establishes it as a place of sacred significance. To be in a known place is comforting, and to be known in a place is reassuring, providing people some structured meaning to their lives. From a phenomenological standpoint 'insideness' is being so deeply immersed in the experience of a place that it becomes part of a person's identity and well-being. The opposite of this, according to Relph, is 'outsideness', a feeling of not belonging to a particular place. The deepest of these points are existential insideness; belonging so much you become part of the place and it becomes you, to feel protected, safe and totally at ease within a place. Existential outsideness is to feel threatened, in danger, ill at ease, it is an uncomfortable sense of abstraction from place. We experience these two states of being in lesser or greater extents as we travel though our daily lives.

Bottomenders are very much attached to their half square mile of old town, it is their inside place, and for most probably their place of existential insideness, they are as if combined. The Bottom End had a continuity, the community's history was written in the street names, with generations of your family having lived on these narrow, cobbled streets, played under the castle or down the harbour, then grown up to work on the boats or marry a fisher. Relph stresses the importance of the relationship between our surroundings and people.

> The relationship between community and place is indeed a very powerful one in which each reinforces the identity of the other, and in which the

> landscape is very much an expression of communally held beliefs and values and of interpersonal involvements.
>
> (Relph, 2008, p. 34)

Although we may take the landscape of where we live or grew up for granted it is more than just visual white noise, it is a fundamental part of our identity and who we are and are becoming.

For the fishers of the Bottom End, there is a care and regard for their place, their place that is both physical geography and a multitude of experiences which spark a variety of emotions and memories. Complex responses gathered by living in that same place all their lives. Places, like people are complicated and bring out an assembly of reactions both positive and negative which all knot together to form our attachment. It is also to have responsibility for that place and a genuine commitment to it like those between people. For example, the fishermen describe themselves as conservationists, they genuinely care for the land and the sea they fish in. They do not want to hunt the fish into oblivion, but manage the situation, not just for their selves but for their sons and grandchildren. All of them spoke of the need to care for and preserve fishing and their way of life for the next generations of their families. (Although these two things may be becoming increasingly polarised.)

Identity and Community

Within this community identity, a person's own identity is forged through stories. The stories I collected through interviews show how the fishermen and Bottomenders reflect their community, how it has changed and how they wished to be represented. These stories revealed their expectations of their roles in life and how gendered roles were still adhered to, with men going to sea and only a slight variation of the staying on land/housewife role for the women.

As the Bottomender women were socially confined, as Rose stated due to their socio-economic status their lives were contained and expressed largely though the domestic area. As Rose writes it is,

> [...] in recoding women's everyday experiences of spatial mobility, feminist time-geographers stress the extent to which women's movements in public space are constrained by the ideological claim that women's space is the private domestic area.
>
> (Rose, 2007, p. 18)

Steph Lawler, *Identity* (2008), argues that our identity is shaped not only by our interactions with people but also by the stories that are told to us, that we tell ourselves and the stories that are told about us. Like the gender roles above that saturate our subconscious. Stories make people.

Lawler believes that identity is influenced and moulded by our relationship with others, claiming our identity is in flux, ever developing and changing, always influenced by external factors and influences. She writes that,

> A focus on narrative challenges the concept of the atomized individual and replaces it with a concept of a person enmeshed in – and produced within − webs of social relations.
>
> (Lawler, 2008, p. 19)

In other words, identity is not magically within us and stable like an internal body part, it is produced, propelled, and pounded into being by the stories we tell about ourselves and the stories that we are told by those around us. Our kinship, our identity within those kin, is formed by that community and the stories they tell.

Lawler explains that belonging with the tribe gives people an identity. Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship*, (1996) calls this nurturance a

‘Pervasive general reciprocity’ which for him forms the basis of kinship. The tribe for Scarborough fishers was to be a Bottomender and Bottomenders belonged together because, as they said, ‘anybody who had owt to do with fishing lived here’. For example, Holy cites L. Langness in a 1964 study of the Bena Bena people of Papua New Guinea who noted,

> The sheer fact of residence in a …. group can and does determine kinship. People do not necessarily reside where they do because they are kinsmen; rather they become kinsmen because they reside there.
> (Holy, 1996, p. 10)

This identification creates positives experience for its members, a study by Dr Juliet Wakefield et all (2016) found that,

> ‘[…] there is a positive relationship between group identification and one of the key measures of subjective wellbeing: satisfaction with life.’

The study also suggests that being a member and identifying with a group can be beneficial to your mental wellbeing when faced with difficult situations. In short, the study concludes, ‘that to be your best self, you tend to require the support of others’. This is exactly how the Bottom End operated, as a collective with interconnecting families supporting one other, with clear career pathways and stories. Even the Bridlington fishers acknowledged that the connections of where they grew up in Bridlington’s Old Town are not as strong as they are for the Bottomenders. They seem a little envious of the strength and community of the Bottom End.

For some knowing the pattern of life and expectations of who you would become was a comfort, an accepted inevitability. Tom Rowley as the eldest boy thought it was his duty to help his dad on the coble.

> **TR:** […] Now I'm stood on deck gutting the fish, an' skipper's int wheelhouse with his string vest on, pot a coco, an' you've got icicles hanging off y'r eyebrow, an' y'think, 'errf, if am gonna do this for the next thirty years, I wanna be doing that.' For me, y'know […] I knew I wasn't gonna do anything else, so, it's no good skiving out of owt, y'have t learn.
>
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

However, the aspiration and role models for the Bottom End's young boys may have been higher than for the rest of Scarborough. Fred Normandale told me a story of when he was a very young boy and he bumped into one of the top skippers.

> An' I think the top two or three skippers, when we were kids, we knew the top two or three skippers, Denk Mainprise, Willy Pashby, two or three others − an' they were gods!
>
> 'Hello Mr. Pashby' an' if he spoke back to you, it was wonderful!
>
> **TP:** You were on cloud nine?
>
> **FN:** Yeah! So, I suppose we got to that a point where we were the top skippers, I mean, markets full of [our] fish, an' it was euphoric.

After an acknowledgement for his god, Fred became a top skipper himself. This is reflected in the theory of Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity*, (1996) who suggests that for a community identity to continue the identities of that community need to be continually performed. As Actors on a stage, we need understudies to take over the performance of that identity and continue the cohesion of the wider play / community. Jenkins believes that communities act as organisations in the sense that:

> Without personnel renewal and replacement, the life-span of any organisation could be no longer than that of its most long-lived individual member. Since a characteristic of organisations is that they can persist

> despite routine attrition of personnel, procedures for recruiting replacement members are vital. [sic]
>
> (Jenkins, 1996, p. 140)

These organisations then need to recruit members with the first pool of recruits being the ones with 'givens' such as 'parentage, age, position in the life course, gender etc.' These givens are also 'collective: they identify as a member of a group...' (Jenkins, 1996, p. 140). This follows the pattern of sons following fathers onto the boats and daughters following mothers to skeining, preparation and selling the produce. But to be fully accepted the potential recruit/understudy must be acknowledged, usually by the gatekeepers, as in the anecdote above by the fishing god Mr. Pashby.

> Organisations are also always networks of reciprocal identification: self-identification as a member depends upon recognition by other members.
>
> (Jenkins, 1996, p. 154)

The men all appeared to acknowledge their expected life path, following their fathers and community role models. I noted that the fishers such as Fred Normandale spoke with affection about *his* net-mender, the boat builders, coble men, and *his* crowd; the trawlermen. According to S.E. Bird these local narratives both define a place and the person who belongs to that community. These almost throw away sentences and phrases reinforced the bond with which these people have to their community and place.

> Thus, many local narratives work to define a place as a particular kind of community, with a distinct history and value system. In addition, […] narratives that define not a whole community, or an ethnicity, but a different kind of peer group.

(Bird, 2002, pp. 537-538)

Life into this community organisation, the play and performance of being a Bottomender appears to have been a smooth inevitable pathway for the fishermen, but they changed the direction slightly. Their fathers were mainly in cobles, which is where my interviewees started before moving into smaller trawlers called keel boats, before switching to beam trawlers fishing for pelagic species. Unlike their day-fishing fathers, trawlers were out for a few days or a week or so at a time, until the fish room was full, then they would race home to be the first one at the market to get the best price for the fish.

> Well, er, when you go around the pier end, you've got freedom. […] but you go around there, 'ahh'. And there was somebody catching summat seventy miles Northeast, so you'd set off [to go] there, cos, an' if there wasn't much there then there wasn't far to go to try other places, cos the clocks going like this, once you get round pier end. An' you know you've got t be back for Thursday an' the market, an' clock goes like hell. So, er, yeah, but the euphoria of a big catch. It's awesome.
>
> You know, you can see a boats head going down cos of so much fish on board.
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner.

The successful fishers were thought of as sea gods by the young boys such as Fred Normandale, which is surely is the ultimate role model, the men at the top, the pinnacle of what fishermen wanted to be; these are important stories to tell about others and what you yourself hope to be. Not only do you aspire to be a 'sea god' but in your community, your gods walk among you. The whole area revolved around their

occupation and to some extent their leisure time. That is quite an identity to live up to and live with. It is also quite an identity to lose.

Within the labels of identities, we tell stories which identify us by the language and cultural symbols we use. Lawler argues that identities are produced from the 'raw materials available notably: memories, understandings, experiences, and interpretations' (Lawler, 2008, p. 11). She argues that these produce a narrative or plot line which links together to convey the story of the production of one's identity. The references used in these narratives and plot lines expose where a person is situated by using cultural references and symbols.

For example, in this exchange between Catherine Wheat and her brother George Sowray, they use Dick Barton, Ken Dodd and snake belts to culturally ground and date the narrative (1940-50s). They also talk about their granny, Florence, who was born in the Bottom End and married a coble fisherman, giving an insight into the homelife of the fishing community.

> **George Sowray:** I've got a photograph of me in me Dad's clothes I have. Trousers were down here, they used to cut legs off. And a pair of shoes on, I looked like one of Diddy Men. I say where are you from Notty Ash?
>
> **Catherine Wheat:** Big wide waist cos they were y dads' trousers, then you had y'snake belt to hold it all together, didn't y' George? Or a pair of braces.
>
> **GS:** Snake belt! (chuckling).
>
> […]
>
> **CW:** Yea, holding y'trousers up. Trouser tops were up here. And y'snake belt was about here. Snake belts brilliant!

GS: Every other day when Dick Barton was on, we used to go round to wireless to listen to it.

CW: Yea, listen to Dick Barton! (Laugh)

GS: Dick Barton! Soon as you went in ‘Sit y’sen down sh sh shs’. But they wer hard days.

CW: They were hard days but they wer lovely people. Me Granny always had a big bowl of stew in oven, didn’t she? Like a big metal washing up bowl it was, that wot it looked like. Er, er…

TP: Like a cauldron?

GS: Yea! Cauldron

CW: Yea, yea, a cauldron. Yeah, literally it wasn’t that deep, was it George, maybe that...? Mindst that wasn’t deep, it had to fit in oven. But it wer big, biggest thing she could fit in to go int oven and she’d always have stew an’ dumplings cooking. I can never remember a day when stew and dumplings didn’t go in that oven. Every day she’d say ‘Aye, d’y want a bit’t summat te eat, ayy slop it in yer, eh get that down y, y waint ail nowt. Y’ waint ail nowt.’ She used to say.

George Sowray and Catherine Wheat

Fig23, George and Florence Messruther, born int the Bottom End, who liked Dick Barton on the Radio, and always had food to share.

It was still common when I grew up to have a granny who always had a stew bubbling on the stove or in the oven. It was always offered come midwinter or blazing sunshine, the pan was always full, just bits added, an ever-present brown lumpy soup of continuity. It was both a running joke and a comfort blanket. In Catherine and George's generation, it was common practice to share food with your community. Even when you had nothing much, you shared. This reiterated Holy's theory that sharing a food resource constituted kinship (Holy, 1996, p. 11).

Childhood

During the 1940-50-60s when my subject group were small children, they would spend their time down the harbour doing all sorts of things to earn a few bob (slang for a shilling, old imperial currency of the UK). George Sowray, who was born in the Bottom End, was also drawn to the harbour, bunking off school even when he was very young. However, some of these stories could only happen in a coastal town,

and some could only happen in Scarborough, the narratives are grounded and specific to the geographical and social identity of the teller.

TP: Did you skive a lot, George; you told me you skived?

GS: Yea, oh yea.

CW: Wiseman, Wiseman truant man, Mr Wiseman. I remember him.

GS: Him? He used to come for me every day. (chuckling) I used to get a bus ha'penny it was. Half pence in old money. Wont it? At terminus?

CW: Yeah, yeah

GS: T'Market, and I used to dart off fishing for't day. Come back at 4 o'clock and me mam'd ask, 'Oh yeah it's been marvellous, yeah'. 'What you been doing?' 'Oh well er, er erm.'

Went on for a couple of weeks, and Wiseman come, and he said, 'That lad, he ain't bin t school for two weeks.' Me dad said 'What? what?' (Mock anger, chuckling)

Next morning, he come with his bike, two seats and he come, an' fastened us on, so I couldn't get away. (chuckling) Past me 11+ though. Couldn't go to an' high school cos we couldn't afford it.

George Sowray

While at the harbour there appears to have been lots to do; one lucrative line of work during the short herring season was to 'redistribute' herring dropped by the fishermen when landing their catch. These stray herring would be quickly snapped up by the kids who would stack a couple of fish boxes together to form a sales counter and sell them to the visitors.

We charged six-pence a fish to begin with, reduced to three-pence if it was beginning to dry up and smell, and sometimes I would hold back the

liver after gutting and sell it as herring roe, ‘a popular local delicacy’ I would explain, but God knows how they cooked it and what it tasted like.
George Sheader, ‘Me Old Mam and the Sea’
(Sheader, 2021, p. 180)

George Sowray: A lot of fish were landed ont fish pier an’all. Do you remember herrings?
Scotch herring freight used to come in, and load herrings off, when the fell ont floor they’d be thousands of, and folk jumping for em. […]
So, what it was, when they chucked all stuff off, low tide, mackerel, we used to go fishing in all mackerel. Scoop’em (chuckling) tek into are batheten?? all fish and flog it twelve bob a box. You could make £30-40 quid out of it. But erm Scarborough was nice. You could do fishing and nobody bothered y.
George Sowray

TOM ROWLEY: …But getting back t ma younger days, when I was doing crab-pots with ma Dad, he would er, he’d be sat like this, he would be int room an’ me Mam would bring us a cup of tea, like that an’ then we’d get a crab pot, there’d be loads of empty frame crab pots int back yard to do. All hand made. Er, I started doing em for me Dad, well, y’never got nowt off y’Dad, where I got ten bob a pot off everybody else. So y’got a nice crispy ten-bob note from everybody else, a pot, a pot would take you about two to three hours to braid it, and you’d braid a pot, then I stopped doing em for me Dad, our backyard was full of other people’s, an’ I never

> a penny of me Dad, everything was, and that was same for't lines, you were baiting lines and stuff like that. Y'd get thirty Bob for skeining a bag of muscles off other people but y'd get nowt off y'Dad.
>
> But there was always ways of making money, y'know. We used t go digging worms ont beach or we'd go flithers, collecting flithers, limpets, all for lines and baiting lines and er, y just messed about down t harbour all the time, trying to earn a penny or two y'know, selling herrings int summer, catch herrings that had come outta baskets and we'd put em on a fish box and we'd mek our own counter, an' sell em t visitors.
>
> Tom Rowley, Skipper and Owner

As insightful as these stories are at showing a glimpse into life either growing up in the fishing community or having older relatives who carried on the practices, I felt that I was being explained to as I was perceived as not understanding the details. I needed to be told the detail, which was great for my purposes, but I felt that if I was a Bottomender the story would have been told differently. My identity, as someone not really part of this community, was projected onto what I was being told; I was seen as an outsider.

Fred Allison (2016), studied memory and found that we change the way we present our memories, rather than change the basic storyline. He found that the stories we tell about ourselves often change slightly as we grow older and use further experiences to process what happened before; the lens changes slightly and our memories often colour. We mis-remember, or we embellish, perhaps for different audiences.

In the stories they told me about pinching the fallen herring and selling them to visitors, maybe at the time if their mothers would have known what they had been

doing. I suspect this practice went on for as long as the herring had been coming to Scarborough, a hundred years or so. Every generation of children, darting in and out of the men and fisher girls' feet to catch the herring that slipped out of the baskets. They might have also just said, 'down't front', or they may have said nothing at all, because of course, they had been 'down the front'; everyone was always down there, and they came back stinking of herring, which might have been all the communication that was needed. But to me, it was all explained, just a slight look of confusion on my part was met with a kindly explanation, because I am an outsider.

Memories are a re-telling and explanation not only to be told to people who may not know the full story, but maybe more importantly we are telling ourselves the story. Detailing, and verbalising that detail to better understand what has happened and how it fits into the plot lines of our lives. How we got from there, to here.

> The relationship between community and place is indeed a very powerful one in which each reinforces the identity of the other, and in which the landscape is very much an expression of communally held beliefs and values and of interpersonal involvements.
>
> (Relph, 2008, p. 34)

Most of the stories, like the ones below, could not have happened anywhere else but the specific geography and social-economic situation of Scarborough. The cliffs, what grows on and along them, the sea and its tides, the coble fishing industry, the seasonal fishers it attracted at different times of the year and the strong tourist element that brought unsuspecting visitors to the area.

The stories my interviewees told to me and told to themselves were about a Scarborough full of joy, with a close network of people both funny and heroic who are woven into the fabric of the town and into the story of my family's past. Within the

boundary of the Bottom End and the boundary of the estate, everyone there had their place and a reason for being there at that moment in time.

Catherine Wheat: Jack Davis? He saved my life he did. When I was a child.

George Sowray: Yeah?

CW: Jack Davis?

GS: Yea, Jack Davis by he worra strong lad.

CW: He pulled me out of that quagmire, at erm, at Beck.

GS: Yea, that's right.

CW: This thing of quicksand. We all had t jump over it. We knew, we knew it was there going down't Beck. I was only a little kid, our Trina was int pram so that long ago. I'd be about 6, 5 something, probably 6, she was int pram. An' me Mam, me Man used t go an' all with pram an' everything. Me Mam was game, wont she.

GS: …down Beck swimming.

CW: An' we were all jumping one way and we went downt Beck. Had a lovely afternoon down there swimming. But coming back, y'know we, all lads used t pick prams up an' threw em ova y'know. And everybody joined in. An' I jumped ova but me little legs, I didn't make it to the otha side and I went straight int middle of this quicksand. And luckily there was a tree that overhung, weren't they George? There was a tree.

GS: Yes, there was a tree at side.

CW: An' I couldn't get out, an' am trying to get out but of course the more you struggle when y'r a child y'panic. An' they tried to reach me. But Jack Davis climbed up, an' he was a lame lad wont he? He was lame. Only one

leg worked and he was lame but by God wasn't he strong! He got up this tree an' he came over, an' you know how heavy you can be covered in quicksand, an' he only had this one hand, didn't he George?

GS: Only one arm.

CW: One good arm and one good leg. An' he laid right across tree, an' it were bowing, 'Get hold of me arm!' Cos me little arms couldn't reach. And he leaned as far as he could dare. Like this… an' I just managed to grab his fingertips. And with one hand he just went 'whhoosh' and he slung me ova and said, 'Catch her!', like that. And I was absolutely covered in mud, it was up to here, absolutely covered with mud an' slime and everything else. An' that lad saved my life. Me Mam took me straight ova t Beck an' dunked me in it!

GS: (Laughter) No two ways!

CW: No two ways, no tek y'clothes off or owt. She got hold of me arms an' she said 'Right we need that mud off' an' she went dunk, dunk, dunk! Like that, up and down, till it was all off. As if she were weshin up a wesh leather. Yeah, she dunked me like that. Somebody had a coat, 'Put that coat round y' she said, 'Y carn't walk home like that' she said, 'Get in Trina's pram'. And all the way home from the Beck our Trina was kicking me out her pram. She were kicking me out of that pram, all the time. But Jack Davis saved, I owe my live to that lad an' I've allus said he should have had a medal. In different circumstances that lad could have had a medal. He never thought about it, he just did. Cos they just couldn't get to me. Couldn't get to me, just couldn't quite reach, cos y' only a child. But

he did, he knew exactly what to do. He just went up this tree which went ovat thing, with one hand, one hand.

GS: Mindst he was fearless won he Jack?

CW: Oh eye, he was.

GS: Not a bad bloke really.

CW: Well, he saved my life George, I wouldn't be here without him, not today. Cos nobody could get to me. I was going further and further down.

(Lead sinkers were sold to visitors to put on simple lines to fish with, they'd inevitably fall off and local kids would go about the rocks and beech, or in this case in the sea, to collect the sinkers and sell them back to the shop, who would then sell them back to the visitors. It was another way local kids could make a few pennies from being down the front, early recycling.)

George Sowray: Raper, he were a good swimmer, butt'a, we had a boat, a blow-up dinghy, y'know oni a silly thing. An' he got this lead belt, and he stood in it and drop threw bottom! He, down in Scalby Beck! Straight threw bottom.

CW: He weren't all there though. He weren't all there, wont Frank Raper. Same bloke wot tried to bring a thing of lead sinkers up, didn't he?

GS: Yeh, a bucket of lead sinkers.

CW: Lead sinkers, nearly drowned! An' when he got t top.

GS: Colin said, 'Y should have put it ont rope and pulled it up ont thing.' 'Baa god' he said, 'Its bloody heavy' he said.

CW: There he is still trying to get this big bucket a lead sinkers he'd found int sea.

GS: He'd bin round marine drive, everywhere and collect em'all int mud. And he got a bucket full. 'Barr its heavy'.

CW: Couldn't get em out. You could imagine what the weight was once they'd got out of't water.

[…]

GS: Yet he saved that blokes life. Bloke never thanked him. And I witnessed that.

CW: He did, he pulled a bloke out from drowning.

GS: He told him, he said where he were going and Frank told him, 'Y don't want to be going down there, cos a't weeds', 'You lame brain' he said to him. So, Frank said, 'Aye all right.' An' he went and he got int weed and if you fight weed you've had it. You've got to sort of like, and Frank said, he knew where he was. An' he knew what he'd done so he cut him out. Dived in an' cut him out. An' bloke said, 'Fuck off'. That's the truth I witnessed that.

GS: Me Dad was telling me that, that the fella there they called him, er, he had big feet y'know-Jefferson. And he was Bilberrying and he picked a wasp up like that and it stung him ont lip. (chuckling)

And he went t farm at bottom, and they put a blow bag on.

CW: Like a dolly bag, weren't they used to be like to bleach y'clothes.

GS: And he went home. Next morning he kem back, they had spent night there and they were looking, an' they saw this thing coming up (road). What the bloody hells that? Couldn't mek it out, they saw this big head,

> little legs, big feet. Little bloody big feet like, its Jefferson! He took size15 and he only took an 8, y'know. He were like a clown.
>
> When he got closer, he's had helmet on. One of these diver's helmets. He screwed front off, an' said 'They won't get me t day George!' an' banged it back!' (laughter)
>
> George Sowray and Catherine Wheat

These stories and the many others I were told, form a person's identity and their identification within a community. It also shows that the tellers of these tales are members of that community and have the authority to speak as custodians. Bird concludes:

> These stories are ephemeral, and their "meanings" float from person to person and occasion to occasion, sometimes told "for true," other times almost as jokes. Yet we bother to remember them, and we pass them on. Of course, some of our motivation is that the stories are simply fun—they are entertaining, spine-chilling, or even funny. Nevertheless, another dimension of our motivation seems to be that these stories constitute one small thread in the complex way we construct our cultural identities, especially as those identities are tied to places. [sic]
>
> (Bird, 2002, p. 543)

Work

When my interviewees were young and growing up in coble households, they all had a job to do either helping their mother's skein, bait or collect mussels or flithers, or to go aboard and help on their father's coble. The men described life growing up as 'always something to do', or someway to make a few pennies.

Becoming involved in the daily activities of the harbour meant they started their working life very young. Then after attending Graham's Sea Training School as young teenagers, they joined their fathers at sea. Some of them joined the Navy for a few years, but then ultimately, they returned to work with their fathers or family friends. They fulfilled the 'sea god' prophecy of their younger days and followed a set path to their fisher identity. These stories offer an insight into life as the son of a fisherman, and the expectation that comes with preserving that identity.

Fred Normandale

> **FN:** Me Dad's a fisherman, erm, his dad was a fisherman, they were small boats, coblemen, they didn't have a lot see, hand to mouth stuff, er, but Dad was a grafter, he worked really hard.
>
> […]
>
> He was a cobleman, 33ft coble, summer they caught crab and lobster, with pots, an in the winter, in winter they caught cod and haddock with lines.
>
> […]
>
> **FN:** It was really long lines. Each, me'be had 10 lines in a coble that size me'be up to 15 lines. Each line would have 200 to 240 hooks, 10 to 12 score of hooks, and they would all be joined together or in 2 or 3 lengths, er, on the seabed then they would pull em up, hand over hand. Yeah, I know, wooden ships and iron men.
>
> […]
>
> **FN:** yeah. I just needed t fish.
>
> **TP:** In yer blood?
>
> **FN:** Yeah, I think so.

[…]

FN: I did a short stint with me Dad but we were ‘rrrarh’ we didn’t get on, er. We got on really well ashore, Dad died two years ago, 94, 9yrs old. He was great. But we couldn’t get on at sea. And my son and me couldn’t get on at sea either.

[…]

FN: I was a deckhand. There was three of us, skipper Tom Pashby, another guy Tommy Lundly, and another guy Tommy Rowley. So, there was three Tom’s and me.

[…]

FN: Yeah, yeah […] we were ont same boat, well our dads were together in the coble. They were both in the coble the Rose Mary together. Erm, so yeah there we were trawling. Merchant Navy my first wage packet I was on, £15.10 shillings a month. Which is ten bob a day. I got rated up to, £21.12 shillings as an ordinary seaman, a month.

Well, my first wage packet on the Whitby Rose with Tom Pashby, for a week, was £59.

TP: Wow. Wow you must have thought …

FN: I was a millionaire! That was in, when would that be, came out of Merchant Navy 66, I was, I joined in, just after the New Year in 65 and I was home just when world cup was on. Yeah, so eighteen month.

TP: Did that continue, that kind of wage, or does it go in big troughs?

FN: Oh, it allus goes in waves, like that, always goes like that. But I think I got £59 or £57 quid the next week, an’ £37-8 next week. Guys were

keeping a family on £10 a week. It was phenomenal, and I thought, this is it, this is where you need t be. An' er, I won't daft.

Fred Normandale, Skipper, Owner

Tom Rowley

TR: […] so I was the second born but the eldest of the lads. And that more or less broke me int fishing, cos I just tagged along with me Dad, been the eldest.

TP: When were you first on a boat, how old were you?

TR: First on a boat? would be, 6-7 years old. Fishing with me Grandad, actually with hand-lines, just with the visitors, just pleasuring.

[…] this was just for, er, like the visitors that come t Scarborough and we used to go angling, in a little rowing boat, just take five or six off at a time, then I used to go, we were like boat lads to the older men, there was motorboats carry eight passengers, and there was er, little rowing boats doing same, doing hand-line fishing. So that was my earliest memory. Up to being, maybe, well, 13 and then I went an' got, when the motorboats could carry eight passengers, I got a boatman's license, which would then entitle them to take ten. So, the extra two passengers they took, the guys I used to werk with, I'd get half-a-crown, an' he'd get half-a-crown (Old imperial money of the UK).

[…] I'd just look after't boat, and I'd jump ashore with ropes an' things like that, just as young lads, you were always, it wasn't werk, you were always down there, I mean with school, but you'd be down there on a morning, you'd be down there straight after school an' spend most of your life, just doing something and you learnt a trade, y'know.

And I went t Sea Training school, it was ma secondary school, when I left Friarage, at eleven, I was the only one to go from ma school that year so, I left all ma mates behind so, you can imagine at eleven years old you're still a kid, and I was straight int deep end at, I didn't know anybody, I'd make new friends and everything but finished up some of the best years of me life.

We did do a lot on seamanship and navigation so all the subjects that I liked doing, I did well at, but subjects like algebra and stuff I couldn't understand, I didn't do very well at. But I think anybody when said to us do somink y'r enjoying an' y'll do it well but, y'know, y'don't want to be in a job where y'have t get outta bed and think, 'err, I have to go to werk today', an' err.

TP: So, has it always been fishing, fishing is your happy?

TR: Fishing has allus been ma goal an', an', ma life, an' if, I'd do it all again to be fair, if I had me time.

TP: What was, when you first went out commercially, your first job, how old were you?

TR: er, 15.

TP: 15 on your first job. What did you feel, standing on that deck, sailing out, what did you feel?

TR: I felt like a man. I felt like a man. But er, I went under unusual circumstances first, cos, er, at the age, 12-13 we used to do, mek crabpots with me Dad, things like that, and er, bait lines, skein muscles in winter, when winter fishing, it was a family thing, the girls were skeining, the lads would be baiting lines, this is all before we went t school 13-14

years old. Then you had t go dump the shells ova Marine Drive int sea, an' mussel shells with me mam, skeined at home. And er, that was y'life really, everywhere, y'stunk! Y'could smell fishing kids at school cos everybody reeked a mussels an' that in winter.

But er I came outta school, ma dad er, I sortta trained for a life in Navy I wanted t go int Navy, or some sort, mek a career outta me life, although I loved fishing, don't get me wrong, but, then and me Dad, ma last year at secondary I was head boy, I was doing well at school, I was in for an' apprenticeship with Merchant Navy, an', an' everything was going rosey. An' me Dad, one of me Dad's crew had t go in hospital with ulcers, me Dad was a coble fisherman, crabs and lobsters, an' he pulled me outta school to go with him while his crewman got fixed up, y'know so, I thought, I'll come outta school an' help, I've got t help me Dad like, I'm eldest of the lads, so I left school an' went with me Dad. Coble, an'ter, six months something like that with him, I couldn't werk with me Dad, being a single man, he didn't, they were hard men, y'know. They didn't understand, we were courting, an' yer out dancing two or three nights a week, an' getting up at 3 O'clock int, int, 15–16-year-old didn't suit.

And er, I had two or three goes with me Dad, it didn't werk, although I grew to, er, I mean he's dead and gone tweny odd years, but I loved him and I respected him, but y'know, and he, er, so that didn't work out, so I left me Dad an' went with me Dad's best pal sort of thing, in a coble again. He was coxswain of lifeboat, an' me Dad was heavily involved with lifeboat.

TP: Who was that, who did you go with?

TR: Who? Bill Sheader. An' that was a coble called 'Constance' and er, I was, I had my own gear an' everything, an' I did everything right with other skippers, but I couldn't do it right with me Dad. Y'know, I was always, I was always wrong with me Dad. An' I had it out wi him years after, an' I said, 'Why were you so hard, y'know, I was doing...', he said 'Cos I always want y'to be the best'. I think it's, y'know I've had advice off me Dad, he was still ma John Wayne, he was ten foot tall to me, he was, but that was by and by, an' I went with Bill in Constance, I was with him about a year, and then the big money was in trawlers but trawlers you had to go away from home for up to a week at a time. But er, so I moved from coble fishing in t trawlers where I started to earn the money for the first time.

TP: How old were you when you went ont trawlers?

TR: 16, er, 16-17.

[…] an' I never went back int cobles, I stopped int trawlers then. So, I er, I went with all top skippers, ova next ten years, some of, er, I'd done trawling, I've done pair-trawling, done sea netting, I've done lining, I've done crab pots, so I've done all different types of fishing ova't years.

Tom Rowley, Skipper, Owner

Bridlington's eldest living fisherman **Robert 'Rolly' Rollisson**, 92, whose story was as remarkably familiar as the other Brid fishers and the fishers of Scarborough, explained the course of his life:

RR: We followed similar paths; it was a thing. I think it was a progressive thing. Where you started off rowing boats, cobles. When I started on cobles in the, when I was thirteen, I used to get 10 shillings a day during the week and a pound on the weekend. So, we took a lot of money, still,

> and then, when I lost my mother in 1965, my oldest sister was from Flamborough, she married a Flamborough guy. That was Pamela and Margret, Irene, Wendy all married fishermen. The youngest sister was four years older than me. I'm the youngest. She married a civil engineer. So, it was always expected that you'd follow, you'd follow that thing. But when my mother died, they had a boat called The Acorn. And I was basically pushed into doing that. I left school early. But he had confirmation that I didn't have to go back to school. And so, I stayed with them for three years. But I enjoyed it. It was great. A really good thing we worked out though. The only day I got off was Christmas Day. If you weren't at sea, you were making nets, repairing stuff.
>
> So basically, we worked every day if it was a bad weather day. When I got married to my wife, I'd be married 50 years this year, I said I'm off to London for a honeymoon. He said (his Skipper), 'Why'd you wanna do that for?' I said, 'It's a thing you do.' 'You didn't wanna be going to your honeymoon.'

For many of the Bottom End community, identity and identification with occupation and place was a straightforward projection. Part of their identities and personalities, which rely on the stories told to them and stories people told about them, are pliably moulded and reinforced into an almost reassuring pattern. This web of stories and words provides comfort and a predictable pattern to follow, binding the Bottomenders together as a community and place.

These elements demonstrate Relph's existential insideness, a feeling of belonging completely. What makes their stories different to their fathers and grandfathers are the changing times of this generation. It is in the re-telling of their

story, how it is remembered, the words and phrases used to ground their narratives that presents how that person perceives their lives and their identity.

Since the 1960s when the study participants began their career, society in general has changed, especially the role of women. With trawl fishing the women were no longer required to bait lines and skein, they could go out from the home to work in different industries. My interviewees told me they went to work in shops, took on care roles, and clocked-in at the small industries popping up around town. Trevor Lummis, *Occupation and Society, East Anglian Fishermen 1880-1914*, (1985) concluded that the collapse of fishing in Norfolk was due to the declining role of women in the fishing industry. Once they left, either by choice or necessity, local fishing suffered.

We can surmise that this shift in the identities of the women affected the very fabric of the Bottom End; as the Common Fisheries Policy had pulled the economic net from beneath the fishermen's feet, with this change in roles the fishermen struggled to retain their identity as leaders of the community.

Alcohol

The pattern of life for the men was quite different from the rest of the town, but also reassuringly similar to their fathers and grandfathers. The fishermen of my study kept unusual hours, compared with many other occupations in Scarborough, not only the unsociable times of work, but their leisure times and drinking. Fishing is a rhythm of tides, spawning and shoaling fish, where to go at what time of year, and what to do when the weather is fine or against you[9] but also going and coming back home. Fishing, drinking, home, fishing, drinking, home; it is a steady ebb and flow. Drinking

[9] Many of the skippers will keep a little book of this information, where they got the best fish and at what time of year or the weather; this will then be consulted the next year and notes made. These little books are fiercely guarded with many passed down as heirlooms to their sons. A symbolism of the next generation taking over.

deep, being generous, loud and occasionally getting into fights became part of the men’s identity.

> I mean, this is it with the fishermen, they had a bad reputation, basically when you were earning the money, you could buy what you wanted, you could drink as much as you wanted, whereas other people didn’t.
> And of course, drink leads to fighting. And we got a bad reputation. But as you’ve seen, they’re nice people.
> Robert (Rolly) Rollisson, Bridlington fisherman

Alcohol formed the pattern of many lives on the working-class estate where I grew up but it was usually an activity that soaked up most of the household budget. The fishermen however had the money to spend, they told me that once a week they’d take their family for a ‘slap-up meal’, with treats for the children and if they decided to drink in a pub, that publican ‘did very, very well’ out of them. This may account for a concentrated number of public houses within the Bottom End, sadly many are now closed. They were working people with extra money, and this was spent on alcohol consumption which according to the men goes hand in hand with fishing. Drinking was part of the job, part of the culture part of life within the boundary of The Bottom End, and almost part of the heritage.

> Yeah, me Grandad er, er, not so much as been a fisherman but, I remember him more as been a drinker cos he was always drunk, and he was about five foot if he were, if you give or take an’ inch, but he would fight anybody, he was allus…but he were a comedian yeah, and we’ve sort of carried that funny streak down with us. All jokers our family.
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

This wasn't a unique Yorkshire Coast activity, it is reflected in studies, world-wide and UK based that conclude 'the findings are consistent with fishing being an occupation with a high risk for alcoholism' (Rix & Hunter, 1982).

> […] 2 or 3 o-clock in the morning, and we'd be landed by 1 o'clock, and we'd go to the pub for a couple of hours. Go and have a sleep and get back up again. Have some tea and then some of us might come back out have another few rounds. Then they'd go to sea again.
>
> Jim Buckingham, skipper

The men confessed that they would come off the pier and walk straight into a public house, their day done, time to let their hair down.

> y'know, you have a lot of camaraderie, a lot of good mates an', you all, just talk about chit-chat we've worked hard and played hard, we're all heavy drinkers, I suppose on a weekend. We, er, that was y life, that was it, y just fell into the pattern.
>
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

They were fiercely territorial about their pubs, and their seats, especially if you were not a fisherman or didn't live in the Bottom End. It formed another invisible boundary.

> All good people though. If you saw em all now, there all old men an' that. But when they wer', soon as they got ashore, they wer straight int Newcastle Packet. Straight int t…y'could soon tell wen't boats were in cos y'could hear em all singing an' yowling! An't er, Dolphin.
>
> I went in with me Dad once y'know, Whisper Camish come in, great big bloke he was, he looks, 'yerrrrrr! That's ma seat, you'. Me Dad said, 'What's tha talkin about?' An' he got one cheek on an' he pushed, and he

> pushed like that, till I was ont floor. Two pushes an't me Dad was ont floor.
> And he was sat on it. He took it all up.
> He were a big bloke. Called him whisper cos he shouted.
> George Sowray

Because of their spending power the fishermen were granted a certain leeway and their behaviour, acceptable or not was tolerated.

> Well, again, it's like any community. With the fishing industry, 'cuz we were doing so well, the bakers, the butchers, all them were supplying [the] stores, people were repairing your boat, engineers and that. It was like you say at Hull, when one was made redundant it put ten people ashore out of business.
> Because cafes, things like that, we used to come in here as young kids, we used to have a great big pot belly stove in the middle of here, back in the day. We used to come in here, warm our hands, and it was very basic to say the least.
> But the community, again, it was all revolved around this sort of area so basically, it was accepted because if you, if you chose that pub to drink in, that pub did very, very well because we spent a lot of money in there. The shops, we might want a new three-piece suite, [we'd just go buy it, so they did well].
> Jim Buckingham, Skipper

The facts quoted here is difficult to verify as this would have been in the 1980s however A Fishing for a Future, report quotes that of the 12,000 men still fishing in the UK in 2014 they supported another 4000 jobs more widely (Seafarers UK, 2018, p. 7).

For many in my study, their identity and identification with leisure time and occupation facilitated the building of a bubble around the Bottom End. Their identities and personalities which relied on the stories told to them and that people would tell about them are pliably moulded and reenforced into an almost reassuring pattern within this community. This web of stories and occupational paths provided a comfortable and predictable pattern to follow, binding the Bottomenders together as a community with everyone having a place and function. These elements make up Relph's existential insideness, a feeling of belonging so completely. What makes their stories different to their fathers are the changing times of this generation. It is in the re-telling of their story, how it is remembered, the words and phrases used to ground their narratives that presents how that person perceives their lives and their identity.

Boat

In traditional wooden coble households, the whole family would be employed in working for the boat as it took up a central concern: mending nets, splicing rope, cleaning and baiting lines, flithering. Tom Rowley mentioned preparing mussels and baiting lines before school, and in the holidays fetching mussels and tipping their shells back over the sea wall to help his mother. Even if you do not directly work on the family coble you spent a lot of your time working on behalf of it.

Relph writes that a boat is more than just a means of travel and quotes Levi-Strauss to emphasis the point,

> […] it was the opposite of 'trave', in that the ship seemed to us not so much a means of transport as a place of residence − a home, in fact, before which Nature put on a new show every morning.
>
> (Relph, 2008, p. 30)

Relph argues that even ‘a place with no fixed abode is still culturally a place’, as people form attachments easily, even when they move about a boat and where it travels becomes part of their sacred place. Quoting Ian Nairn, Relph claims that those who travel ‘are people open to new experiences’ but that paradoxically, ‘mobility increases the sense of place’ (Relph, 2008, p. 30).

For the people of my study, who owned or worked on trawlers without the need for pots, lines or family involvement the boat still took up a considerable amount of time, money and emotional attachment. Relph explains ‘places in existential spaces can be therefore understood as centres of meaning or focuses of intention and purpose’ (Relph, 2008, p. 22). This attention and meaning both physically and monetarily for me makes their boats sacred spaces. To the fishermen their boats where places where they felt entirely comfortable and safe, the ultimate expression of existential insideness.

Boats are more than wooden hulls, or utilitarian workspaces, they are thought of as if they are alive, have personalities and are, as mentioned before sacred spaces for the men. A boat is a ‘she’ and she is thought of as a member of the family, or as another woman; Lindy and Tom joked about his other woman, the Our Margaret. There is real affection and love when the men spoke of their best boats, their heart boats, the one boat they’d sail to the ends of the earth in. Fred Normandale said he would never chop up a boat he’d had built or that he’d worked on, ‘…nothing I’d possessed an’ bin proud of, I wouldn’t do that.’

All the men in my study talked with affection about the boats they had sailed on, remembered their registration details, had brought pictures of them to the interview to show me, or had scale models they’d had built or paintings they had commissioned. Even if they had sold the boats, told me where they were now; they

spoke with real pride and real concern if the boat subsequently being in an accident and sunk. Almost like the boats were their children of whom they were immensely proud. When I asked Phillip, which was his heart boat the one boat, if he could own again if it were possible; he initially remained silent. Then he just stood up and fiddled with his belt, then turned around. I was worried for a second; so were the rest of the pub who all audibly held their breath; it did look like he was going to pull a 'moonie' at me. Then he tipped up his jacket to reveal his old brown leather belt, craved with the words Lois Anne, his heart boat.

Boats are therefore a self-contained place of cultural intention and purpose, it does not appear to be just an office, or living space but thought of as another person, a member of the family. One man revealed that his wife was always very annoyed that if they had a row, he would go and sleep on his boat for the night; in her eyes perhaps, he chose the boat over her. Culturally, and domestically they are significant spaces, and at different time revered or perhaps sometimes reviled places.

The boats also demand their share of the profits, called 'shares' just as the men are paid in 'shares', she is symbolically part of the crew, and importantly she is paid first. As a place and space of huge significance, a fisherman's boat retains a strong hold over a fisher's psyche. I have seen big strong, larger-than-life fishermen get quite choked up and teary when talking about boats that were decommissioned, or 'chopped up'. It is as if they were speaking of the death of a close family member.

Fishermen and trawlermen spend what must amount to years of their lives aboard their boats in, at times, extremely challenging conditions. Some of the men explained their daily routine.

TOM ROWLEY: Well, y get three or four hours off depending how long your tows are, how long you're towing and er, but if y've got fish t gut in

between times, that three or four hours y've spent half ye time on deck or meby all your time on deck, an' y'ant got below or stuff like that.

TP: I don't suppose there's much time for chatting then?

TR: Only ont first watch when you can sit around int cabin, but then y have t catch up on y'sleep. Most lads get turned in, or y read or something but then if you're among fish y don't get much time for owt, no, and it could be thirty-six hours, y'know y'r on deck an' it's hard life, yeah, y've just got t brace y'self for, but that's where y'making y'money an' y'go till y'drop more or less.

Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

JIM BUCKINGHAM: In the wintertime, we used to work daily. Due to the weather. It could be very poor weather, but we could still go and fish mainly in the day, weren't comfortable, but you'd do that. The summertime, we'd leave at Saturday midnight or early a Sunday morning and we'd stay over a week, but then we'd go further afield you see. So, we'd look further afield.

So, we'd used to work all week, and then have the weekend off, and then back to sea on Monday on the midnight. And that's what we did, ya know. But when you're a hundred mile, two hundred mile away, you had to stay out, it wasn't feasible to go backwards and forwards, unless you had a lot a fish. If ya were lucky, you'd go out on Sunday and you'd get a haul lot a fish.

You'd string back in, get rid of it, put it on the market, and get a good price for it because no`body else had their fish on the market. And then you'd

go straight back again, and then the rest of the week was your cream if you like. Yep, you paid your expenses. You got some money. So, the rest, you've got, the rest of the week was your cream, you know, that was your bread and butter.

TP: […] What's it like on the boat, with 4 other blokes? What would you talk about? What's it like? […]

Neil: You've got other stuff going on as well, you're watching the job all the time.

JB: Don't forget, Neil, you're in your net every two or three hours, so… an' if you've got time, if you've got an hour, you're in your bunk. So, you an't got a lot o' time ta talk. Most the time, ya too tired to argue, aren't you?

Neil: Yeah, I mean, that's it. Yeah. Your too tired. You'd get the best part o' your talk if you had time for a meal.

JB: That sometimes consisted, if ya working on deck, that could be Skipper that could also cook. So, you get a meal ready, and then you, if you've got a bit o' a break, come off deck, you'd get your meal, get it down you, and ya back up deck again.

And a lot a' time, while you're on the deck, gutting or whatever, as bad as it was weather wise-some days you had good weather and that was great, but if it was bad, all you'd do is talk about what ya'd do over the weekend, you know, when you got back home. Go to the pub, take the kids out, whatever, ya know, so.

And you'd get some really bad voyages, what am I doing here? You know, I'm tired! I mean sometimes you could two or three days without going to

sleep. Because you've been catching fish, which is great, but you were on deck all the time.

Jim Buckingham, Skipper

Thirty-six hours on deck: Haul. Gut. Box. Repeat. A daily ritual.

The harbour may be a symbol of home and land, and the place where the fish markets are so you can make your money, but all that is secondary to the time and money spent, and the protection the boat offers.

There is an interdependence between the fishermen and their boats holding a personal private intensity for those who live and work on them. This intensity can be from an object such as a favourite mug or sleeping shelf, or the deck of the boat itself. When Tom Rowley had to decommission his beloved boat 'Our Margaret' he kept her most important pieces, the things with the strongest personal intensity, he even has a scale model of her. Indeed, many of the fishermen have models or paintings of their favourite boats.

TP: So that was your, best boat?

TR: Oh god yeah, I'll show you a model of it in there

LR: It was his life.

TR: When we've done.

TP: yeah.

SP: You've got the wheel up ont landing, haven't you?

TR: That's ma, that's ma boat's wheel yeah.

LR: That's the bell.

TR: That's the bell.

TP: You've got bits of it then.

TR: There's bits of it all ova round here in't they?

SP: You got the engine in y'car as well?

TR: Ha! (chuckles)

LR: He's got the anchor under the winda.

He could not part with her; he kept her near even after her 'death'. Their boats are emotional spaces, with memories attached that evoke powerful reactions.

It is also not a passing fancy to own a fishing boat, they are expensive to buy and expensive to maintain, it has been said to me you are only ever as good as your boat. In other words, she has to be maintained, regardless of cost. As Tom Rowley testified

> A boat is just a hole in the ocean that you keep filling with money.[10]

I suspect their boats had more money spent on them than their houses, when the men told me about it costing one thousand pounds an hour to run a boat during a particular fuel crisis, you can appreciate that even selling your catch for thirty thousand pounds does not leave much if you've spent twenty of that just on fuel.

The care and maintenance of the boat also took up a good proportion of the physical space of the Bottom End. There were once boat builders, engine repair shops, and net menders all dedicated to the fishing boats. Families' lives and livelihoods depended on the making, maintaining, safety and strength of the boats. All these aspects contributed to making it their place, their insideness and it becomes part of their unique identity, just as it had done for their forefathers.

There is a weight of generational expectation, I saw this in the fishers, they desperately wanted something to pass on to the children and the generations that come next, that was their duty to pass on their boat and their skills. In Fiely, a small

[10] This phrase was painted on a sign in Tom Rowley's office. He said it was the most accurate description he could think of in what it means to own a fishing boat.

fishing village between Scarborough and Bridlington, there is an old saying, 'there's sons to come after, and sons after that.' Meaning that you must look after the now to ensure a future for those to come. This predictable pattern ensures the continuation to the lifestyle and occupation of the Bottomenders. The Bottom End was and needed to be a self-contained and self-perpetuating place, producing distinctive characters, occupations, and social activities. To protect this unique life the community over many centuries has grown strong psychological barriers around it. Barriers that Scarborians respect, in my case without question, why else when we were young, we never dared walk its streets, even as a shortcut from beech to town? Why do I still feel like I am intruding when I walk those streets as an adult? Perhaps I understand I did not belong there.

These invisible boundaries to the Bottom End keep its residents safe, Tom Rowley joked he does not like going past the market or he'll 'get a nosebleed'. Lisa McKenzie talks of being islanded in communities which can be positive, because if everyone on the outside is hostile, you are at least welcome there, in a community of people just like you (Critical Perspectives on Youth, Community and Urban Regeneration, 2015). As the stories above demonstrated, they were told they smelt at school, so no one wanted to sit with them, so the fisher children stuck together. This continued into adulthood; a couple of fishermen said that if you had been fishing for dogfish, then you'd clear the pub when you went for a drink after, except for other fishermen. 'Smells of ammonia − cat piss. Stinks. You could clear a pub, we din't care.' The boundary, in this instance of smell, kept them safe and away from any name-calling or bullying and if you are told from a young age you smell, why would you want to engage with those outside your world?

The boundary of the Bottom End used geographical, social and language as an obstacle to keep themselves safe and other people out. Sociolinguistics is the relationship between language and society, an accent – the variation in the pronunciation of words and, dialect – different words and grammar. Speech and speech patterns are an expression of cultural identity, to belong with a group or kin a person will talk the same, have the same accent and dialect and sometimes these variations are hyper-local. In the UK many sociolinguistic barriers have a geographical boundary, as seen in the Bottom End which had its own idiosyncratic accent and dialect. These differences can be used to identify a person who is not a resident, they are 'from away'.

'From away' is an expression, that comes with a look, that is used by my parents' generation and above. 'He comes from away, he does.' As if that is all the explanation needed as to why someone does not act or think like you; they are simply, 'from away'. It is not a compliment: it is derogatory, and it is another annoyance from someone who does not know what they're talking about. Away can be Spain, London, or any of the surrounding villages; what matters is, they are not from here. They are different. They are not us. They are from away and in some circumstances, this can be a danger.

As a little background to how dangerous an occupation fishing is, a study by S.E. Roberts, *Occupational Mortality in British Commercial Fishing, 1976–95* (Roberts, 2003), found that over this period, 616 deaths occurred with drowning being the main cause (394 souls). The fatal accident rate was '103.1 per 100 000 fishermen-years', which was '52.4 times higher than for all other workers in Britain in the same period'. But during the 1980s this started to increase till the 1991-95 period when the accident risk rose to 76.6 per 100,000 fishermen-years.

Trawlers foundering in adverse weather was the most frequent cause of mortality from casualties to vessels (115 deaths), and 82 of 145 personal accidents at sea arose during operations involving trawling nets. Just being on a fishing boat increases your chances of having an accident or fatality while at work, a grim statistic that is stoically accepted by the fishing community.

> **TP:** How do you cope with that, knowing you're gonna be going out there into the same sea?
>
> **FN:** No different to coal miners is it, you've still gotta go back downt pit. But the three of us that were…nude wit seaboots on, Colin Pickering he er, had a boat called 'Ocean Gift' er, and he was building a new one and he got his nets stuck in bad weather an' he went out an' threw the wires over the side cos they were slack, an' the ship went boing, like that, an' wires came tight and catapulted him over. An' they never found him, er, that would be 77 maybe? No, it was before that, 75, yeah, they never found him.
>
> Yeah, so course there's tragedies, but it's a high an' low life init?
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

Added to this increased risk from your occupation on your boat is the added threat from other vessels. My interviewees all worked on smaller trawlers, which were in considerable danger from bigger trawlers, the freezer boats as they are known, especially coming out of Hull docks. These larger boats could sink a wooden vessel and drown the crew, and more worryingly they'd never know they'd done it. I was told you could always tell when the dock gates at Hull and Grimsby were open because of the boats charging up the coast.

DN: Oh yes. Always knew when the lock gates had been opened at Hull, cos all the trawlers would come up the, up the North Sea there, and you had to be careful then. Cos, yeah … (chuckle) they didn't care!

TP: Did you have a couple of run-ins with em?

DN: Well, you just kept clear of em, saw em coming and y'got out the way! You didn't know if anyone was on the bridge or not − yeah, it was good fun.

David Normandale, skipper, owner

TOM ROWLEY: Oh, I've seen, I was on a boat called 'Jan Denise' an' we got, an' we got run down by a German, an' I wasn't skipper I was deckie, an' I was down fish room, putting fish away, an' it was midnight, on a beautiful night, calm night which always turn out to be the ones wot end up; cos the big boats get a cuppa coffee put their feet up an' think everything is hunky-dory. Not bothered about small boats. Anyhow, we were trawling, so we were hampered really by what we were doing y'know we carn't be, pulling a net behind us like, an' this boat was bearing on us and er, I'd just come outta fish room an' everybody, there was four crew on our boat, we started, we knew he was gonny hit us. But it was just a matter of where he was gonna hit us, an' as it happened, he hit us right on four gallast, which is probably the most re-enforced part of starboard side where he hit.

Pushed us a way like that, to one side, an' he kept going, he didn't know he'd done it, till we started blowing SOS on the horn. An' he had to turn around an' put big searchlight on us, an' by that time were filling up, we

was sinking cos we had a big gash down't one side. So, we jumped, two of us jumped down fish room, an' put wot fish we had onto the port side to sort of lift us above the split, with it been such a fine line, we were lucky we could lift the split a foot out at water, an' putting everything ont port side. An' then Whitby lifeboat come, Scarborough lifeboat come, put pumps aboard of us, an' we managed t get home OK. But it was flat calm, that's what saved us. If it had been anything different, we'd a been…

Tom Rowley, Skipper, Owner

SUE IBBOTSON: The Cyprian boat, the Cyprian cargo boat.

PHILIP IBBOTSON: Oh eye, we got belted with one of them. We were three hundred and odd, three hundred and sixty mile away… an' we were trawling on the pipes, in the big Wayfinder, an' we were below decks. An' me brother was on watch.

SI: Robert.

PI: Our Robert. But he kept going below to fry our dinners, our fish, any way he come up. An' this, I tell you wot it was; it was a big super tanker hit us. Hit us. On the side. We all run up, it was Keeker for Limassol hit us, hit is broadside, knocked all the forward out, caved all the railings in, an' we only had a couple-a-three days to go. We were full of fish anyway, but we were turning back t go home. But Pete said, 'We'll go to this next pipe, an' bung her right in', mega money, right keep going. He said we're running short a' food but we got plenty of fish. So anyway so, plenty of oil, so that's all you want, stale bread like, pick the mould out ov it, y'alright. Well moulds medicine init?

Anyway so, anyway there was this big bang an' we all run up there, then there is this bloody great red thing from, Keeker from Limassol.

An' I grabbed hold of this lump hammer an' I run down the shelter deck, an' I threw, an' it bounced off the funnel. It went ova all these blokes in white hats, they ducked, an' it hit the funnel of their boat. Bounced off.

TP: So what? Was your boat alright?

PI: No. we had t turn around an' go back, go to Grimsby, we were heading towards land anyway but. Well, we had to call the coastguard up y'see on long range radios, big-long set we called it, big set. Called it in.

But you see the overtaking vessel should give way to the slower vessel, Rule 6, save speed. Then just overtook her like that, but it banged us. Cause we blamed Robert like, but it were nowt t'do with him, he (the keeker) should have veered off but he hit us. Took all the mast off.

[…]

Yeah. Well, we were laid-up for a couple-a-three weeks.

SI: When he came home, I'll always remember that night. Come home, I was at home with the three kids, an' I come down, (I had t do cos toilet was downstairs) an' he threw his arms around me, an' he actually broke down in tears. Cos Philip is very sentimental, an' he said, he thought, you and the kids, flashed, cos they were in bottom of the boat, they were down there. The boat went like that, and the ballast, or whatever they call it, swung back.

PI: Yeah.

SI: Fortunately.

PI: Yeah. That stuck out a million miles with me. Keeker from Limassol, I'll never forget that. I got a [new] hole in my backside.

[…]

Never even slowed down. We were wood, that was solid steel. Big super tanker. But with that hammer, an' I said, that was it when it was going back, I said 'Y'can keep the fucking hammer.

Philip and Sue Ibbotson

If every time you went to work, a there were near misses, and accidents or non-fishers called you names, I can understand why those from the Bottom End didn't want to travel far away from its comforting borders, and why they are suspicious of any outsider. Maybe this is the beginning of the Eurosceptic nature of fishermen, those folk from 'away' are a danger to your existence. There is safety, physically and emotionally within the boundary of the Bottom End, which for its residents is worth protecting.

Encroachment

Nevertheless, the encroachment of the outside did begin to affect the Bottomenders. As much as the Bottom End is steeped in history, it has during the last hundred years gone through some major redevelopment. The flattening of houses and the building of new not only changed the look of parts of the Bottom End's streets but disrupted the social fabric of its community, causing families to split and lose their identity as Bottomenders, as happened to my family.

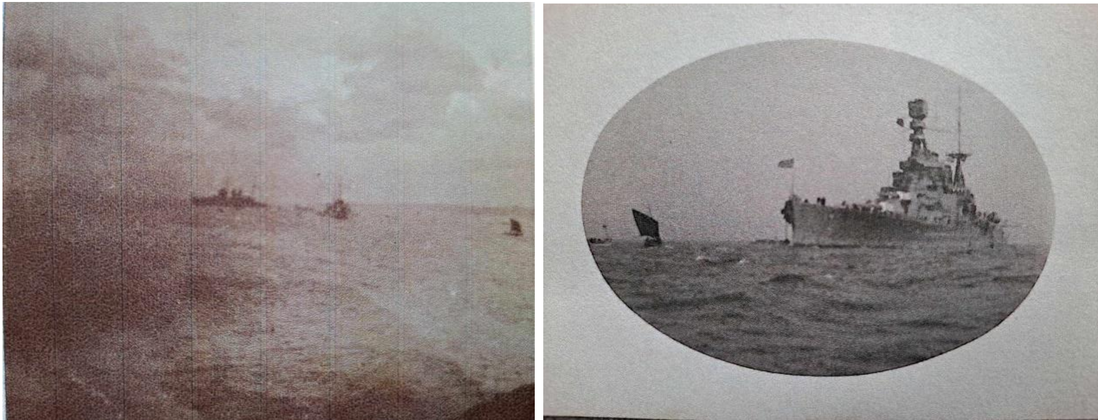


Fig24, Fig25, Warships in Scarborough Bay, escorted by sailing cobles, around the time of WW1.

In World War One, two German warships attacked Scarborough sending over five hundred shells into the town. Consequently, in the 1930s parts of the town and the Bottom End were redeveloped and then again in the 1960s, with developers bulldozing entire streets and yards of fishermen's cottages to build back concrete flats and houses. There are some of the older generations who see this as a good thing, others see it as terrible. However, they all see it as something done to them; an example of mass architecture decided by someone not local or is 'from away'.

When speaking to the Bottomenders and Scarborians, there is an unspoken acceptance that authority does things to you, and it must be accepted whether it was asked for or even wanted is entirely inconsequential. From removing bus stops, play parks or knocking down the well-used swimming pool; complaining never gets you anywhere; there is often an acceptance that decisions are done to you. A high-profile recent example is the Futurist Theatre on the seafront − the summer home of the likes of Ken Dodd, Joe Longthorne, Chuckle Brothers and Summer Variety Shows, it was also used as a cinema, and music venue. The Beatles play a gig there; I saw my first band there, The Beautiful South, but it was falling into disrepair. It had been neglected and by 2017 the local council concluded that it should be pulled down. The

locals disagreed and paid for a survey of how much it would cost to refurbish it to its former glory, compared with the cost of pulling down. It was cheaper to fix it; even the council figures conceded this, but the council were adamant that it should be sold to a well-known local business/developer. There was a fight, but the council got their way, it was pulled down; another well supported and important part of Scarborough's heritage and summer scene destroyed. Deals fell through and it is now a vast concreate expanse which for the last few years has had a small Ferris wheel and pirate golf-putt on it. Even now if you ask any local about The Futurist, they almost spit their answer back at you, such is the strength of feeling still. Even with a fight, decisions are made. George Sheader writes about the buildings that have been demolished and the loss to his community.

> It must be mortifying to find a building, or anything for that matter, that you have been familiar with for almost a century, that radiated permeance, that symbolised, in a' the past, why Scarborough was the place to visit, that has accompanied you through your childhood, your middle-age and your later years – to find that it was, after all, merely expendable bricks and mortar. Bricks and mortar that, in the eyes of a few men of influence, stood in the way of progress, as did the Pavilion, the Balmoral, countless churches and, as will, inevitably, St Thomas's Hospital. And when I say progress, I mean the building of long, oblong structures with lots of glass, void of any gratuitous embellishments, both inside and outside, to prevent them from looking attractive.
>
> The bricks and mortar, and the space they contained, and the shadow they cast, were no longer there.
>
> (Sheader, 2021, p. 17)

In the Bottom End the homes in the yards were cramped, large families squashed into two rooms of houses of multiple-family occupancy, overcrowding was a huge problem (see fig13 Doreen Sheader's map). Families sharing a water standpipe, no hot water and no privacy. When these were raised, the build-back could not accommodate everyone. Whole or part families moved out and were exchanged for the new houses which do not look like the traditional houses of the yards they replaced or even complement the surrounding architecture, standing out like a deep scar.

The new houses and flats are also in the same style as many houses in many places around the UK[11]. They are concrete slabs built in straight rows, rather than the meandering nature of the older cottages. They are a beacon of modernity, in a place that lives and breathes traditions. It is a reminder of where the fishers used to live but do not anymore, only the names of streets on old maps; my own family's house was knocked down and gone. Any physical link with my past family and their lives has long gone, no house to walk past and imagine.

Like many others my great-grandfather and my grandparents were moved into the newly built council estate after the war, physically removing them from their wider family ties and landscape. Placing them inland, far away from the shore and the smell of the sea. David Clark (1982) describes the effect this type of redevelopment had on the community of Staithes, a small fishing village just along the coast from Scarborough.

> The new parts are at least by the older villagers, to be populated largely by 'foreigners' who have moved into the modern housing there from the

[11] I have seen houses in the same style that were built in the same period in such places as Derby, Nottingham and Burton.

> surrounding district, or else by Staithes folk who have somehow turned their backs upon the old community.
>
> (Clark, 1982, p. 16)

But for the families who were lucky enough to be moved to the new houses it was utopia. George Sheader (2021) quotes his mother, Doreen, who used to live on Hall's Yard but was moved into the new East Mount Flats.

> My mother was brought up in Hall's Yard. The living conditions were terrible − no running water, one communal toilet emptied once a week to serve fourteen families and just two rooms for a couple with as many kids as ten. (Sheader, 2021, p. 167)
>
> Eastmont Flats were built in the 1930s, after the demolition of Hall's Yard, my mother, at twelve years old and her family, moved into Eastmount Flats. "It was like moving into Buckingham Palace", she recalls. "We each had our own room, there were taps that water came out of, a toilet, a bath. Back in Hall's Yard we had a tin tub that me mother used to put on t'table to bath us in. Even when we were big, we had to climb onto t'table to get a bath. But the best part of living in Eastmount Flats was the view. A marvellous view of the bay. [sic]
>
> (Sheader, 2021, p. 173) (Spelling as published)

For Doreen Sheader the redevelopment had a huge impact and improvement to her life, but it also meant a huge loss felt by the families who moved away, and a sense of loss to the families who stayed. Clark notes that within the confines of Staithes' fishing area, the communal norms continued, the importance of familial ties, fishing and drinking, but with a sense that now they must not just live their lives but also defend their way of life:

> [...] in which these aspects of communal existence are defended against the encroachment of the wider society.
>
> (Clark, 1982, p. 19)

When I was interviewing the Bottomenders I sense this happened in Scarborough too, they not only wanted to remain closed off, but they also now felt a need to defend themselves from outside control.

Everything that was not Bottom End was 'from away' and must be kept out. Coupled with their ingrained and growing euroscepticism, the ultimate outsider, the EU was also something to be wary of and kept out. The men were exasperated at the changes in their industry and consequently believed they were witnessing the decline of their way of life. They began to increasingly adopt the position of looking back to when they judged fishing, and their life and community was vibrant and at its peak. Cohen would suggest that looking back can help forge a way forward, however it also can turn these stories into myth. Stories again are important in this as they link individuals together, as Bird cites Lippard, 'once you start hearing the stories, you are becoming a member of the community. (1997)' (Bird, 2002, p. 544). These community building stories of the past act as mnemonics which then act as 'condensation symbols' which form to become myths. Myths according to Cohen, '[…] confers 'rightness' on a course of action by extending to it the sanctity which enshrouds tradition and lore' (Cohen, 1985, p. 98).

> Symbols of the 'past', mythically infused with timelessness, have precisely this competence, and attain particular effectiveness during periods of intensive social change when communities have to drop their heaviest cultural anchors in order to resist the currents of transformation.'
>
> (Cohen, 1985, p. 102)

The myths that form in these changed times give advice and caution how to proceed with the present situation. In this case to be wary of anything foreign and any bureaucracy, and especially a combination of the two (Peterken, 2022).

The people I spoke to all talked of fishing as almost lost, with phrases like 'it'll never return' or 'needed to save it' usually for the children and grandchildren. The words and feelings generated were ones of hanging on by their fingertips. It all seemed like a last chance to preserve fishing, preserve a way of life and stop it being 'taken away' from then. Cohen suggests that a community is in the eyes of its participants and if they see it as destabilised, then the situation for its continuation is bleak.

> […] whether or not its structural boundaries remain intact, the reality of community lies in its members' perception of the vitality of its culture. People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity.
> (Cohen, 1985, p. 118)

Chapter Five

SUSPICION AND SUPERSTITION

> […] the boundary encapsulates the identity of the community and, like the identity of an individual, is called into being by the exigencies of social interaction. Boundaries are marked because communities interact in some way or other with entities from which they are, or wish to be, distinguished.
>
> (Cohen, 1985, p. 12)

I grew up with and I have witnessed the language of protection in circumlocution, name avoidance and ritual practices, with these behaviours corresponding with the Bottomenders need to protect their luck and community. The socially constructed boundary around the Bottom End had not substantially changed for hundreds of years until the social changes that started to occur in the 1960 onwards. Previous to this time, the social activities, the calendar of herring fishing, the mending of lines and pots, of the work of fishing, and the superstitions, all knitted together to make a strong community bond.

Dalby and Mackenzie suggest the identity of a community only solidifies and unifies when it is under threat (Dalby & Mackenzie, 2005, p. 102). If this is so, it could be argued that the fishers have been 'under threat' since 1626 when Thomassina (or Thomasin) Farrer discovered the healing properties of the southside spa (Scarborough Civic Society, n.d.). According to local historian 'in the hundred or so years that followed the end of the English Civil War, it is no exaggeration to claim that Scarborough invented the seaside holiday' [sic] (SMHC, n.d.).

The development of the Spa and the waters credited with kick starting the tourist industry in this country with the gentry flooding into the then small fishing

town. The Spa facilities were initially developed in 1660, with a Dr Wittie writing in a medical journal, advocating the drinking of two half pints of the water in the morning before a brisk walk along the beach (SMHC, n.d.). In 1826 the Spa and facilities were redeveloped with better access and a cliff bridge; however, this was damaged by a storm in 1836 and redeveloped again in 1839 as a stone Gothic saloon. This was replaced again in 1879 as a grand Hall. Today the Spa includes the main hall, theatre, Ocean room, Promenade lounge, open air sun court for concerts, cafes and bars. It was refurbished back to its 1879 glory with a phased £2.9million redevelopment 2007 followed by a £4.9million refurbishment in 2010-2011 (Houltons, 2024).

Much of Scarborough was constructed in the Victorian and Edwardian era, for example, the Lighthouse and pier in 1806, the iconic Grand Hotel 1863, Railway Station 1845 and the Town Hall originally built in 1846 as a home for John Woodhall and the Woodend Museum built for civil engineer George Knowles as a marine villa in 1835 (Woodend and Sitwell Family, 2024) (Moscariello, 2020). For the fishers huddled in the ancient ginnels of the Bottom End, Scarborough must have seemed like it was a place constantly invaded by foreigners, both the tourists and the builders to construct the hotels and services the town now needed to satisfy those same outsiders. In recent times as the fishers have left the houses of the Bottom End have been converted to tourism lets. A selection of houses busy and transient by summer, deserted in the cold mists of winter.

The community was also constantly under threat from their dangerous occupational hazards and alcoholic lifestyle. Adding to this sense of risk was the interference by UK authorities and ultimately a foreign regulatory body, the European Union which created a tension and further risk to the lifestyle. Outsiders were trying

to come in and their interference was not welcome. Mary Douglas (2002) calls this pollution behaviour. There is an order to things, an order to how this community operates and anything contrary to the established patterns of life is perceived as unclean and must be delt with via a recognised order. The Bottomenders did this by trying to keep out those who may present a danger to the usual order out of their area and occupational tasks. I will discuss how a variety of superstitions contributed to this and acted as a barrier for those who were not 'in the know', or aware of and connected to knowledge about the community.

Dalby and McKenzie also suggest that the past can be 'selectively mined' to (re)construct the boundaries that are threatened' (Dalby & Mackenzie, 2005, p. 102), The study participants were looking back in time and wanted to return to how they fished before quotas and decommissioning, because that was when their world appeared stable and their identity was firm. It is a rose-tinted way of selecting only the best bits of a history, but it is comforting. We have lived the past and survived, we have not lived and cannot know the future, so by default it is an uncertain place. As Cohen suggests the past is used as a 'resource' to guide our future (Cohen, 1985, p. 98).

The fishing industry in the UK, and especially along the Yorkshire coast really exploded during the industrial revolution as better designed steam fishing trawlers were developed. The North coast with its developed harbour and connected infrastructure provided a suitable location for establishing fishing grounds in the North Sea, Dogger Bank and into the Atlantic. Scarborough's railway station was opened in 1845, creating an easy way of distribution produce and bringing visitors to the area.

In 1801 Scarborough had a population of just over thirty-four thousand people, but by 1861 this had jumped to just under fifty-nine thousand. In the 1911 census, before World War One the total population was recoded as just under seventy-five thousand souls. In 1861 the main industry is recorded as 'agriculture' (which included fishing) and employed over thirty percent of people, by 2000 this had declined to under five percent (University of Portsmouth, 2009). This increase as well as the annual invasion of tourists, reinforced the Bottomenders need to keep themselves to themselves and look inward to their contemporaries for support and continuity.

However, the Bottom End does not have stone walls and a gate to keep out strangers, instead its boundaries are socially constructed. The social activities of work, such as the baiting sheds, the calendar of herring fishing, the influx of herring girls to gut the fish and the mending of lines and pots all knitted together to form a strong community. In addition to this calendar of division and the idiosyncratic dialect and accent, there had developed a myriad of ritual practices and circumlocution that formed a sociolinguistic barrier of protection around the Bottom End, the fishers and their work. These practices and linguistic differences bonded the community together, made them recognisable amongst themselves and other fishermen, but also helped identify outsiders who may, if they do not know what they are doing when engaged in fishing work, pose a threat. Ahmed suggests that, 'to be identified as a stranger is to be identified as someone who endangers who is here' [sic] (Ahmed, 2017, p. 117).

This chapter looks at what a superstition is, how it is passed on, what types of practices have survived, what has changed, why the fishers are superstitious, and how this formed another layer of protection for the Bottom End. Fishers are known to

have their own words, language and observances that are practised around their boats, at sea, and in their homes on land. Some practices are more general to fishing or particular to the East Coast, some specific to a family. Paul Belshaw told me that his fisher grandfather's superstition was to not talk before setting off on a fishing trip. He and his crew would not speak until their boat was free of the harbour wall, so they developed a sign language to use between themselves. At the time he was only a small boy, so didn't remember any of the gesticulations; and it really was only for his grandfather and crew, but this appears to be quite distinct. I cannot find any other record of a sign language being invented and used concerning fishing and good luck practices.

Fig26, Paul Belshaw's Grandad who invented his own sign language.

The sea, life-giving and life-taking, occupies a central position in the lives of the Bottomenders. Superstition and rituals dedicated to the sea or fishing appear as markers of ritualistic practice. When practised by a densely populated community, all following the same rules, these rituals and language must have seemed impressive, but also intimidating to outsiders.

Growing up in a large family with a fisher-girl Grandmother we learnt the various customs and sayings without question. When we visited family for the New Year, I was always pushed through the door first. Sometimes, a piece of coal was found in the front garden, dusted off and given to me to carry into the house. The custom is ‘first foot in’; with the person with the darkest complexion going through the door first, preferably carrying a piece of coal, as this is claimed to bring prosperity to the household for the coming year.

There are numerous customs around doors and transitions concerning luck, for example, if you enter via the front door of a house, you must leave by that door, not the back door. The explanation is that if you use both front and back doors you are showing the luck how to escape, providing it with a pathway to go straight through the house and be lost. On its own, luck flies in but cannot fly out the same door it entered; luck itself is bound by a boundary.

My grandmother would often say, ‘I won’t see you out’ when you were going to leave, I never saw her go to the door as people left. Many years later I found out that many fishing families will not say goodbye at a doorway, as that is bad luck. In an interview with SMHC Scarborough fishermen, Tony East tells the tradition,

> **TE:** […] She never went to the front door to see him off, that would be done somewhere in the house, but certainly not at any door.
>
> (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.)

The *Cambridge Dictionary Online*, defines a superstition as; ‘the belief that is not based on human reason or scientific knowledge, but is connected with old ideas about magic, etc.’ and as an example cites Cambridge English Corpus; ‘according to context the term superstition might designate controversial beliefs, the practice of confessional opponents or the beliefs of the ignorant masses.’ (Cambridge University

Press, 2020) ‘old ideas about magic’ I can understand, but ‘ignorant masses’, this is not my impression of the fishermen.

Bairbre Ní Fhloinn, *Cold Iron* (2015) a study of Irish fishermen’s superstitions suggests that there are three categories to enable superstitions and therefore boundaries to remain relevant. The first is accounts of initiation, secondly, belief indicators, and third, narratives of validation or negation.

Initiation

All the men I have interviewed have spoken of the beliefs and practices of the elders from whom they learnt their trade. Often the men first went to sea with their fathers or father’s friends and learnt how to ‘cope’ with their ‘rules’. In some cases, these rules were practiced by them and passed down to the younger men who crewed under them. Superstitions form an expected behaviour pattern of certain rituals whilst in the skipper's company and these are repeated down the generations. Skipper David Normandale explained,

> Well, they’ve been passed down, y’know. I was with one chap there, and somebody had put a certain animals head on the front, so he went home. Wouldn’t go t sea.
>
> All sorts of daft things, you knew the skipper who you were with, and you accepted his bits and pieces, the rules sort of thing. No whistling, and er… oh what else was there, oh so many.

Scarborough fisher Fred Normandale also relates what it was like working for a superstitious skipper when he first started.

> **FRED NORMANDALE:** Well, I wasn’t on a coble then, I was on a little keel boat, a little trawler, boat called the ‘Whitby Rose’ with Tom Pashby. The most superstitious man you could ever, ever, have met.

> Oh, it was a nightmare, you were walking on eggshells trying to not say anything that would upset him.
>
> **TP:** What sort of things was he superstitious about?
>
> **FN:** P.i.gs. R.a.t.s. R. a double b, i, t, s. S.a.l.m.o.n. that's another fish, silverfish, another, fluffy tails, long-tails, curly tails.
>
> You couldn't put the brush on the net cos you're sweeping your luck away.
>
> He didn't like crossed-eyed people and er, he didn't like nuns. It were hard work.
>
> Tom Pashby, you couldn't stay with him long, 10 months is, I went with him twice, ten month was the longest. Cos, he drives you nuts.

Many of the people I spoke to remembered practices around the fish room hatches and brushes. Tom Rowley recalled,

> An' never put a brush on fish room hatches, things like that, mek a clip − oh that was a clean sweep, y'gonna lose all y'gear.

Several other fishermen from Bridlington and Scarborough also confirmed that is it unlucky to leave your fish room hatch boards upside down as this could cost you your catch. The skippers the boys crewed under taught them that everything must be stored back in its proper place.

Name avoidance is still practiced. Mentioning rats is a taboo, with a range of alternative names; many from Scarborough refer to them as 'long-tails'. Jim Buckingham, from Bridlington discussed local pronunciation:

> Long-tails is the correct term, but it's pronounced as lang-tails in the fishing community, especially in the village of Flamborough.

However, several confirmed a rat or 'vermin bigger than a mouse' could be called a *'*Bradford Lad*'*. The name avoidance of these creatures goes back to a reference in

1886 stating that the word ‘rat’ should never be used while baiting lines (Opie & Tatem, 1992).

Rabbits were another taboo mostly referred to as Bob Tails in Scarborough, Filey, Flamborough and Bridlington, but occasionally Bunny or Cotton tail would be substituted. Skipper Jim Sheader, in an interview for the SMHC refers to Bobtails, saying his father was ‘dead against’ saying the real word (Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre, n.d.).

Sheep were sometimes called ‘jump dyke’, although this does not appear too common.

Salmon, which coble men certainly caught, were referred to as redfish, fish or silverfish or spelt out, however there is a Salmon Steps in the Bottom End.

> S.A.L.M.O.N.S − that’s another, fish, silverfish another.
>
> Fred Normandale skipper, owner, fisherman

This reluctance to talk about salmon was also recorded by Ní Fhloinn seen in parts of Ireland from Killybegs in Co. Donegal (Northwest) to Co. Kerry (Southwest) to Kilkeel on the North East coast. Various euphemisms are used such as ‘fish’, ‘the lad’, ‘the buck’ and ‘the gentlemen (Ní Fhloinn, 2015, pp. 105-106). Some fishing families in Scarborough can trace their families to Ireland, as in the case of Tom Rowley, which provides a link to the language used.

Pigs were also unlucky to see or speak of and often referred to as Curly tails, Broad Noses or Grunters, but one lady said her fishermen Dad always called them chakkies. A similar pronunciation can be traced back to the late nineteen century as Dakky and was recorded as used by Yorkshire fishermen (Ní Fhloinn, 2015, p. 50).

Many fishermen said that if any of these names were mentioned then their father’s generation would refuse to go to sea that day; some still follow traditional

superstition. such is the strength of the fishermen's beliefs that this sort of talk would bring bad luck if spoken of on land and sea. Many have confirmed that when they were young and helping to bait lines that if anyone mentioned one of these animals, especially a 'pig', then there would be a 'going on' because it was bad luck. This superstition of the word pig infusing the bait lines with bad luck was also recorded in Flamborough in 1875, 'the fishermen would not go out' (Opie & Tatem, 1992, p. 308).

Bridlington Skipper Jim Buckingham also spoke of the taboo around pigs from his Flamborian brother-in-law. If anyone mentioned the word pig, or if they saw pigs on their way to work it would be a very bad sign for the day's fishing. However, in later years his brother-in-law went on to keep pigs, so it appears it is not the animal itself but the context in which it is seen or where it is spoken of.

Ní Fhloinn suggests that just because these men were initiated into these superstitions does not necessarily mean they believe in the practices, or maybe not as convincingly, as their predecessors. However, it is interesting to note that many of the men said they do not believe or were not superstitious, but in the accounts above both David and Fred practice name avoidance and circumlocution. David says they were 'daft things' although he would not tell me what the animal's head left on the boat was (I suspect a rat) and Fred would not say the words, just spell them out, Ní Fhloinn calls this 'passive belief' (Ní Fhloinn, 2015, p. 224). Tom Rowley confirmed that he does still observe some word substitution but not as seriously as the previous generation.

> An' a' course, bunnies and long-tails and curly tails we don't say them. An' er, we maybe not as superstitious as our dad's, but me Dad he was quite superstitious.

Philip Ibbotson remembered the sailing of a brand-new family boat into Bridlington harbour. He and his brothers were excitedly taking delivery of this new vessel, and all was going well until his father spotted the green engines.

> […] when we had the Lois Anne built in 1975, all the Calvin engines were green. When we turned up in Brid with this brand new, spanking new boat, me father wanted it sprayed grey, an' he paid extra money for it. Wouldn't have green one in it.

I got the impression that his father didn't like spending money he didn't need to spend, so his request was relatively extreme. However, Philip told me one of the boats he worked on, later in his career was partly painted green, 'it didn't bother me'. Others have said that fishermen would not even buy a green car, such was the strength of the superstition. One man recalled that he had sailed with a skipper that would buy any green clothes from charity shops and throw them overboard, yet his trawl and its hatch covers were green.

Some practices appear diluted or only practised in certain contexts, others not practised at all, however some beliefs still have significance. Many fishermen, wives, and wider family members discussed the significance of Friday thirteenth, when countless fishermen will not sail or start anything new, as starting something on that day is seen as deeply unlucky. Julie Robson remembers that 'in the past, we've signed for boats on Thursday evening or Monday anything to avoid signing on a Friday's bad luck.'

The number thirteen is often said in a particular way, either 'twelve and one', or 'twelve and an odd one as well' or, 'one-and-three'.

> **SI:** Friday the thirteenth, or Black Friday.…
>
> The thirteenth, no, never. No.

PI: I'm a big believer in that.

Philip and Sue Ibbotson

Skipper Fred Walkington MBE recalled an incident when he was the volunteer assistant coxswain and had gone to Poole to collect the new lifeboat for Bridlington, which shows a strong belief and strong will to comply with observance of the rule.

> When we brought the new Bridlington lifeboat 'Marine Engineer' from Poole, we were told that we had to leave Poole on the Friday for an' overnight passage.
>
> I disagreed. And we left five minutes passed midnight!

However, some men in more recent times have said that they have sailed 'once or twice' on a Friday as they had been laid up all week with no fish, so they had to sail to make their wage. Though I got the feeling this was a real last resort action to take; the boat owners wanted them to go out rather than it being the skipper's choice.

The second of these categories for superstitious practice to remain relevant is belief indicators which detail, the reactions of the older fishermen when the rules and observances are disobeyed, or a taboo boundary is crossed. If name avoidance or circumlocution was not observed the elder fishermen would react, often with extreme measures to counter the loss of luck. These actions and narratives of validation or negation overlap quite significantly.

Many fishermen simply described the older generation they crewed under as deckies, as 'going mad' when a custom was not adhered to, which suggests the telling off for non-observance was severe enough to make one try to avoid repeating the experience in the future.

> When I started the skippers were extremely superstitious, and you had to tread carefully. One of the biggest taboos was not to speak of pigs, rabbits

or rats, doing so got you a swift whack round the ear. One of the first things I got in trouble for was turning the fish room hatch boards upside down and also whistling.

Jim Buckingham, Bridlington skipper

However, Tom Rowley and his wife Lindy told me a tale of when he was a young sailor and asked if a friend could sail aboard the boat he was crewing on and quickly learning the consequences of breaking a taboo.

TOM ROWLEY: But all superstitions, very superstitious, like if you saw a vicar if they were going to sea, that was bad luck.

'Ton round an'

come home.

TP: Why was that?

LR: Scarborough had a convent, so it used to be if you saw a Nun. But then again, how is a fisherman going to sea, at 3 o'clock, going to see a vicar or a Nun int street, but that was a superstition.

But you did tek a vicar to sea, din't y? But he wouldn't let him wear…

TR: We had a vicar who lived in this house opposite here, an' he was alright, he was friendly as you got like, without**,** I'm not religious, but he was alright, spoke to us, went for a pint int pub an' he knew everybody. An' he sez, 'Is it alright if I come t sea with y, for one trip?' Now I wasn't skipper, I had to ask skipper; I've got a mate, can he come t sea. But I didn't dare tell him he was a vicar.

LR: An' you told Charlie not to wear his thing.

TR: On he didn’t wear, no no, no dog collar. So, we went t sea, an’ we weren’t doing very good at all. An’ I thought, if he finds out he’s a vicar he’ll kill me!

An’ we run out of gas bottles, had empty, so we’d picked up an old 42-gallon drum, oil drum in’t net, empty y’know, so we put some diesel cloths int bottom, an’ we put a bar across top an’ we put kettle on it, an’ it was teking all day to boil. An’ Charlie, vicar, I said ‘Say a few words, see if we can get it going, I’ve got dinner t do!’ (Chuckle)

TP: What did he (the Skipper) say when he did find out he was a vicar?

TR: He weren’t very happy. (pause)

TP: No?

TR: No. Chucked him ashore.

TP: But he let you back on again?

TR: Yeah, yeah, he let me.

Tom and Lindy Rowley

As far as I know, he never let another vicar aboard his fishing vessel.

There is also a traditional prohibition on not taking photos when out in a boat, although as some fishermen have shown me photos of them at sea; there was no explanation given.

I never took Camera out to sea with me, ever, that’s why there’s no picture of us, no pictures at all. Bad luck.

And I carn't remember ever having a photo taken. Nope. I've got some video of course, but I ain’t got no stills of me at all.

Jim Buckingham.

The third of the indicator categories Ní Fhloinn describes as ‘narratives of validation or negation’, which are accounts of practices not being observed and the negative consequences experienced, or whether there were consequences; an account of what happens when the boundary is transgressed, to serve as a warning to others.

For example, Sharon Wheat mentions that whistling at sea is seen as bad luck because ‘the fish swim away from the nets, not into them’. As a remedy to disperse the bad luck, she said the whistler must be punched till blood is drawn. Consequence of action, and action to avoid consequence. Many accounts I have been given hint at what happened to anyone who did not adhere to the rules. Tom Rowley’s account of smuggling a vicar aboard the boat had the negative penalty of a good telling off from his then skipper and a very bad fishing trip – and for that reason one can assume the rest of the crew were annoyed at him too. Jim Buckingham and many other fishermen tell of a ‘clip round the ear’ if they did something wrong to break a taboo.

> Whether it’s true I don’t know but I heard that if the Flamborough crews came across a pig on their way through to Bridlington they turned and went back home. When I was on The Acorn the skipper hated the colour green. He went berserk if you came down wearing that colour.
>
> Jim Buckingham, Bridlington skipper

One common way to dissolve the bad luck from an incident and restore the good luck was to not sail that day, to turn around, go home and leave it twenty-four hours before attempting the journey again. This was a huge undertaking and very risky for the family to lose a day’s wage, it is not an action to be taken lightly, but its practice and as such belief in its restorative powers underpins the action needed to reinstate the protective boundary.

> Cos you've got no, nobody is gonna pay y'wages when your off sick an',
> that is when you have t start taking it all into account y'know, it's not easy.
> But it's just, its … y'know, no fish, no money.
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

Turning back meant real hardship for the family, but that was better than what might happen if the order of things was not restored. This practice was still occurring through the 1970 to the 1990s. The fear was that the fishermen might die or that the boat would get into difficulty and sink; they just could not risk it. However, rather than lose a day's wages, many fishermen developed methods of warding off the bad luck; some mentioned walking a loop around the harbour to counter any effects of the spell.

Bridlington fisher Robert 'Rolly' Rollisson recalled a story of what happened when a custom was ignored and the reaction of the elders. He was on a boat travelling to Scarborough to take part in the annual herring fishing when one of the young fishers noticed pigs in a field. Rolly told me what happened,

> I'll give you one instance, when we were drift netting for herrings in the 50s. Say you had to lure, and the thing got settled down. We started herring fishing from here 'cuz the Scotsmen came down and there was four, four boats went from 'ere. And, of course, we were more or less stationed at Scarborough. The herrings was between Whitby and Scarborough and taken from six, twelve mile that was the area where the herrings came south. They bread at bottom, and we used to start with the boats here, get on the boats here, then the Brid fishermen, we used to call in Flamborough.

[…] by the time we got to Scarborough, we double-deckered. Quite a lot of fishermen. Most of the Brid men went up deck to start with, and as we go to Scarborough, new rules now. We used to go around the, the code book. A pub, there used to be a pub. The back way. The front way, then, was on the other road. And they cut the road back. And near that pub was a farm, up the other side.

And when you're on the top deck, you're looking down into the farmyard and there's some black and white pigs. Big hogs, you know. Running around, running around the floor.

One o' the lads, called Ted Enderson, and he was a bit of a, he liked the rhythm, you know.

And he used to shout, 'Little pigs with curly tails, run along the starboard rails, run ya bastards, run.' Then there was Tom O'Dose, Jack O'Dose. Jack O'Dose lost his arm at the winch, when the cobles, anyway, this was before then. He said, 'Turn this f***ing boat round now, we shan't go herring tonight.'

So anyway, we got to Scarborough. It was a reasonable, fine night, you know, wanted a fine night really, we all got shot down with our nets. Twenty, thirty, forty nets, all in the length. And there was that many herrings.

They come to the top on what they call a dabble, and they kept swimming for most of the night. We all shut down. All right. And there was only one boat, well, it used to belong to, the Victory, it used to belong to Bradman's, but they got a new boat, but the first new modern trawler, but not a trawler, a boat. And his boat was sold to Scarborough. And instead of shooting

> thirty nets, they shot two tens. You got ten in the water and got them out and put another ten in and it filled it, filled his boat up.
>
> And he's the only one that got all the nets back.
>
> We got nine nets out of thirty, we got nine nets. We just come at a solid wall. We just couldn't do anything with them. So, we have what you call a pole end and that was your other end net. So, we was looking for these and you had pellets at the end of each net. Half-length of this rope-type of thing, and your big floats on.
>
> Anyway, we're looking for these and the down there underneath the water. We couldn't get hold of them. We goes to the pole end, what we call the pole end, the other end, alright, we couldn't find it.
>
> Now in the meantime, we've got half of this net that we put back into the water. And it was just as full as the other half was. It just kept swimming and all the lot went down.
>
> There was only one boat that was Scarborough. They rode out ov Scarborough, she was a proper herring drifter. And it was onny him that got all his nets back. […] They were that many [herring] that they just kept swimming and they reckon that was the biggest swim there ever was at sea. The silver line.
>
> Robert 'Rolly' Rollisson, fisherman

By mentioning this animal, the older men blamed him for a terrible night's fishing.

However, the industry was undergoing rapid change in a short space of time, something these fishermen had not experienced before. Fishing methods, the cottage industry around it, the lifestyle; these all would have been reasonably familiar to people from the seventeenth and eighteenth century all the way up through the

1960s. The fishers I spoke to recalled that they too started in traditional cobles during the 1960s, a style of fishing which has practically disappeared. They then moved into beam trawling boats, which has also mostly disappeared from Scarborough and Bridlington's harbours. In one generation, everything has declined.

Within that decline certain practices have survived, those relating to keeping luck and safety, while the practices associated with coble fishing and women's roles have fallen out of use. Opie and Tatem's, *Dictionary of Superstitions*, records superstitious beliefs relating to line bating, recording in 1875 Flamborough, south along the coast from Scarborough, it was 'considered unlucky for a woman to walk over the nets or any tackle' (1992, p. 308). David Clark, records an account from, The Times, 22nd September 1885 which tells; 'it was customary, when a smack or coble had had a protracted run of ill-fortune, for the wives of the crew and owners of the boat to assemble at midnight and, in a deep silence, to slay a pigeon whose heart they extracted, stuck full of pins, and burned over a charcoal fire (Clark, 1982, p. 184). None of these practices, however, has been mentioned by the fishermen working from the 1960s onwards.

As women were not needed for trawl fishing, this inevitably removed certain customs that relate specifically to the women's roles and practices; in a self-perpetuating community where actors replace themselves, half the cast went missing. Removing this many community actors changes the structure of the community. In the Bottom End, superstitious practices that created and maintained a strong boundary started to fail and fall.

Customs, stories and superstitions were passed down when the family or community came together in their homes or in the sheds and workshops dedicated to line baiting, skeining and mending. The collective nature of these tasks meant

time spent together learning from the elders. Tom Rowley described sitting with his dad mending pots over a cup of tea, while his Mum would skein mussels. But the baiting sheds of both Bridlington and Scarborough are long gone. Tom Rowley and many of the other older fishermen never taught their children to make a pot or skein a mussel, and without the need to teach these actions, the superstitions accompanying these actions have not been learnt.

The fishermen in my study had made the deliberate move to a more commercial rather than largely cottage-industry style fishing, which can be seen not only along the Yorkshire coast, but there are also parallels in the Irish sector. Ni`Fhloinn describes the rapid technological changes in recent decades, the pressure to compete with big freezer vessels the size of the Kirkella, and the pressures of lower prices and rising costs has produced a business minded commercial fleet which also may be part responsible for the decrease in some superstitious activity.

Ní Fhloinn quotes from her subject group who suggested that 'superstition died with electric light', and as boats became more advanced practices of belief lessened (2015, p. 221). Your luck was negated by reassuring technology warning you of danger, however in a wooden boat with fewer technological aids there is only luck to rely on. The argument is that fishermen of past generations were more in tune with nature, on the Yorkshire coast they used low-lying boats with a design stretching back to the Viking age. In the more profit-driven 1960-70s and the commercial nature of larger metal-clad trawlers, which had fish rooms instead of baskets, and not only an engine but an array of instruments to locate fish and warn of problems, the fishermen became removed from nature and more reliant on

technology rather than luck. The boundary created by superstitious practice was more important to past generations of fishers than to my interviewees' generation.

Skipper Fred Normandale told me a story that illustrates this theory; while fishing he was so engrossed in what his instruments were telling him that he forgot to look up and see what he was heading towards.

> I was once fishing fifty miles north east of here, flat calm day, not a ripple, sun high in the sky, not another boat in sight anywhere, I was going along a long piece of narrow ground, an' this ground was going east south east, west north west, more or less off east, an' it was so narrow this ground, I had a sonar, y'know on the best submarine pictures when it's pinging off, pinging off. An' it was going 'bump, bump, bump on the hard an' ping on the soft, an' I was following this. An' I know there is a wreck right on the eastern end, an' I'm looking in the sonar for the wreck, an' I'm looking ont sounder an' I'm looking at the data, an' I'm thinking, 'I must be past that wreak now, I'm sure I'm past the wreck now', an' I've just come into the soft at the end of the round, I'll give it five minutes, an' I got hard-a-port, swing her right round an' get back on it. An' get back onto the ground again, oh, I got past-five minutes, ten minutes, an' this autopilot, into not a wheel; we've got a wheel, but we use autopilot, 90 degrees she starts to come around, an' the sonar started going 'bang, bang, bang!' Shit! It must be that wreck, but it carn't be that wreak, I'm past the bloody wreak.
> An' I look up, it must be first time I've looked up for at least an hour, an' there's a bloody 60 thousand tonne super tanker, an' I've just turned across his head!

> Moved the 90 degrees back but a'course you're towing a trawl, come straight back on course again so, we were gonna miss him, but he went down on our side really close. An' he's sounding his siren, washing about with his wash, an' all me crew came running up ont deck, obviously cos they were all asleep, an' they're looking at the stern of this ship that's just going away from us, an' it was called 'Fanny'.
>
> Gospel. 'Fanny'.
>
> One of me crewmen said, 'Me muther said fanny would be the death ov me, but I din't think it'be like that!'.
>
> But there wasn't a ripple, but I hadn't looked, I wasn't looking at the radar I was looking at the plotter an' the navigator and the sounder and listening to the sonar, an' looking at the sonar, ah, yeah, funny cos I'd, since I'd been going ont Lord Nelson one of the old captains, he does college talks now, and he's a lecturer in collage, an' one of his main things is; 'Just cos you can see a fishermen, it don't mean he can see you, he's got other things on his mind'.
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

It is hard to imagine this happening in quite the same way whilst fishing from a small coble with few if any instruments to guide the course.

Staying Alive

My findings indicate that the sons and daughters of contemporary fishers are not taught the same crafts and practices their parents were, which corresponds with Ní Fhloinn's suggestion that the shattering of the community caused a break in the traditional methods of passing along superstitions to each generation, and was yet another reason why fishing superstitions, traditions and beliefs are dying out.

As the harbour, and by that we can read: specialised occupations, changes from beam trawlers to lobster pot boats, the men develop different lifestyles and live in different parts of town, no longer the Bottom End, as Fred Normandale suggested, ‘they’ve all got cars now’. Ní Fhloinn and I both recorded that the elders thought the camaraderie of the fishermen has diminished in recent years, with the younger men not stopping around the harbour to talk to them. This they believe has inhibited the transference of superstitions and customs. The fishermen of this study were concerned that their personal connection to the harbour and its environs has lessened as they ‘know no-one’. This contributes to the shattering of the once strong community and its solidarity. I also noted that many of the pubs the fishermen frequented after work had closed, another lost source of community, economy, and opportunity to pass on knowledge.

The geographical placement of the houses in relation to the harbour made it a sacred space, or as Relph’s explains, sacred spaces are ‘that of archaic religious experience’ (Relph, 2008, p. 15). The geographical placement of the houses in relation to the harbour, and the many steps running down the hills, creates an amphitheatre of action, facing the sacred sea discuss study. The harbour with its fishermen disciples practicing a multitude of customs and practises began to wane as the community of the Bottom End changed and the harbour began to lose its power of focus and attraction. The new fishermen, the pot-men, pass by without a thought to the old rituals, their work is not catching whitefish and beam-trawling, they are pot-men, tossing hundreds of pots into the sea to catch crab and lobster. The fishers I interviewed are no longer part of the hustle and life of the harbour because their generation has retired, their boats reduced to scrap, and as reported by Tom

Rowley and Fred Normandale, the folk who work down the harbour now, do not live in the Bottom End.

Their new neighbours in the Bottom End aren't fishermen, and even though the harbour still has a hold over the older men, it simply makes them feel lonely and out of place. Many of the old fishermen still perform their daily ritual of visiting the harbour, to watch, and smell and remember, making the experience thoughtful, or maybe a little melancholy, believing that they and their knowledge are no longer needed.

> You knew everybody in the harbour, all knew em, all help each other. If you broke down at sea, somebody would come to pick you up and tow you in − never had to call the Lifeboat, or anything like that. It was a big family, helped each other out and now, I go down there now and I don't know a soul. Not one person.
>
> Well with it only been crab pot, they aren't really, well most of them aren't really Scarborough's.
>
> David Normandale, fisherman, skipper

These feelings of community decline and personal loss of significance were also reported by Lisa McKenzie (2017). She found that the working-class people she interviewed largely felt 'locked out' of the areas they had lived in all their lives. They felt others were taking over and pushing them out. My interviewees, once the men people went to for advice, the ones with the knowledge, were downhearted at not being needed by these pot-men, whom they didn't know and perceived as not belonging to Scarborough, and certainly not belonging to the Bottom End community.

However, superstitions relating to luck, nets, the boat and all its workings are still relevant to many, and so have survived in my interviewees' generation. Certain

customs and superstitions continue to linger or evolve, the electric light hasn't killed off everything.

Anthropologist Branislav Malinowski, who undertook extensive field work with the Trobriand islanders, Papua New Guinea, developed theories to explain how religion and folk magic develop. Originally published in 1925 his '*Magic, Science and Religion*' study concluded that magic can be found when man come to a gap in his power to control or understand his life experiences, despite this he must continue forward. Religion is then born out of man's struggle with his life plans and reality (Malinowski, 1982). John Poggie and Carl Gersuny's in 1976 took this theory forward to suggest that magical practices like superstitions are practiced more by the fishermen who have a greater risk to their personal safety (Thompson, 1983, p. 193). David Clark (1982) looked at the relationship between folk religion and Methodism in Staithes, a small North Yorkshire fishing village a few miles north of Scarborough and also concluded that personal safety was a factor in their superstition. He offers that as fishing is a high-risk occupation it has given rise to a:

> […] realm of folk religion, namely the tendency for […] a set of occupational observances […] it is possible that these coping mechanisms will be generated which serve to mitigate the threat of unfortunate events.
>
> (Clark, 1982, p. 145)

To emphasise this attitude, Ní Fhloinn quotes Irish fisherman Joseph Caulfield:

> There's a reason for all these superstitions, on the shore, it didn't matter, but if your boat was sinking, you've kind of left to nature out there in a big way, so they took these things aboard.
>
> (Ní Fhloinn, 2015, p. 224)

It does not matter how many instruments a boat has; the destructive awe-inspiring power of nature still takes boats and lives to the seafloor. Fishermen still feel the power of the waves; everyone I spoke to had lost friends or family at sea or had a serious near miss that could have gone the wrong way. Experience and science, radar and radio appear to offer a safety blanket, but one that can be pulled away in a moment by the great North Sea. At that point the protective boundary of superstition is all you have. The nature of a fishermen's occupation is filled with personal risk, and so they need all the luck they can get to meet their commitments and obligations, and after all, as they would suggest, what harm can it do?

Trevor Lummis, (1985) suggested economic anxiety as a theory for continued superstitious practice. Anxiety-ridden theory suggests that it is the financial burden of bigger boats that induced superstitious practice. They argue that expensive safety equipment and instruments and the constant obligation to provide fish for the markets in a commercial-driven industry had the effect of cementing superstitious practices into modern fishing. Lummis also found in his study of East Anglian fishermen during the early nineteenth century that the fishermen with more to lose were the most superstitious. He concluded that the traditional fishers were the least superstitious. However, driftmen, who caught fish using a line of with net held by buoys, forming a wall for fish to swim into, how were for the time the most technologically advanced, were also more likely to practice superstitions. Lummis found that these men who were largely skipper-owners had hugely expensive boats and were well equipped with the latest technology.

Nevertheless, for all the advancement of the drift boats they used drift nets, which hang in the water to catch herring as they swim by, it was a highly competitive

area of fishing with hundreds of boats lined up waiting for the passing shoals, and the men could do little to influence which nets the fish swam into.

Lummis came to the 'conclusion that superstition was most extensive in the most modern commercial fishery, and at its lowest level in the most traditional sector' (Thompson, 1983, p. 193). He believes that his theory of economic anxiety more accurately portrays the need for luck than the personal risk theory.

However, this is not entirely reflected in my research, I was told that the traditional generation before were very superstitious, but the men of my study professed to not be so bothered by it and did not practising rigorously. Despite this, my interviewees moved from subsistence-style fishing to commercial enterprise fishing and had therefore invested considerable money in their boat and business, increasing their financial commitments, yet they professed to not believing in superstition and its rituals. However, they still observed circumlocution, so perhaps they needed a little good luck to fulfil their commitments, because if they were not met, they now had even further to fall.

Ní Fhloinn saw this in Ireland too. Career fishermen at the hugely capital intensive, high end of the industry had that much more to lose than their part-time counterparts if things went wrong, and so still observed some of the good luck behaviours of the previous generation.

> […] if a contemporary professional skipper or fishermen, working on a high powered, heavily equipped, multi-million-pound vessel, were to catch no fish for the equivalent length of time the effect on his livelihood and his financial situation could be serious indeed.
>
> (Ní Fhloinn, 2015, pp. 226-227)

As the fishermen in my study have testified, the rules and changes in directives from joining the European Union and Common Fishing Policy have meant heavy investment in boats, nets, and equipment. The threat of 'tens of thousands of pounds' in fines is also a huge financial concern weighing heavily on the minds of the men.

> We used t have a big brass plaque in our office an' it used to say, 'A boat is a hole in the water you pour money in t', an' it's true. Cos there is always something you want renewing or doing or, you are onnny as good as your upkeep of your boat − so you had to keep it top-line all't time. An y' nets, yeah, you had to renew them an' you get no help, no grants, really. Very hard.
>
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

The heavy cost of scientific advancement and modern equipment for the fishers has resulted in saving some practices and superstitions rather than extinguishing them all together, as one may have expected if superstitions were purely based on magic.

Craig T. Palmer in *The Ritual Taboos of Fishermen*, An Alternative Explanation, (1989), starts by following the logic of the anxiety theory, but points out that in order to reduce anxiety these practices must be believed, otherwise there would be no point to them:

> Indeed, identifying the belief of subjects is necessary to testing the anxiety explanation because it is the belief in the efficacy of the taboo that allegedly relieves the anxiety.
>
> (Palmer, 1989, p. 61)

Many of the fishermen of my study said that they didn't bother much with superstition, but then would refuse to say certain words or would only spell out

certain animal names. They accept and respect a man who practice*s* superstitions, even if they themselves do not, but then they would not 'flaunt it'. Perhaps despite their protestations of being a non-believer, they do on some level believe enough not to disrespect an accepted superstition.

Palmer conducted a small study[12] of lobstermen in southern Maine, and though the results concluded that day trip fishermen took superstitions more seriously, he was sceptical, and so looked at the findings in greater depth. He theorised that not just any ritual is belief, but rather it is behaviours which are regarded as such by those around the speaker, whose influence is accepted without question. It is a willingness to trust the influence of others and follow the taboo or ritual practice. This is observed in places where cooperation is needed to ensure everyone's safety. Cooperation is essential to survival on a fishing boat and this fact was emphasized by my interviewees.

Palmer proposes that rituals increase cooperation in challenging situations and are what drives the need for, the social acceptance of, and involvement in the practice of superstition and taboos (Palmer, 1989, p. 66).

The skipper of a boat is responsible for maintaining cooperation and good relations between those under his authority. The cooperation hypothesis is consistent with my findings that skippers are more interested in taboos and take them more seriously.

Confirmed by my research, the fishermen all respected their skippers unquestionably, seeing them as gods, they were in awe of them and followed their rules unquestionably. The men in my study trusted their skippers to keep them safe

[12] He sent out thirty-two questionnaires and received nineteen back, divided between day and trip fishermen.

and they were willing to go along with a few superstitions to keep this balance and cooperation. Many of my interviewees were skippers, so what they believed in and practiced, for example Friday thirteenth protocols, was passed down to their crew.

> No, no. To have a good boat. To have a good boat, you've gotta have a good crew. Rely on the crew. The crew. They all say this that and tuther but you get a faithful crew, they'll stop there. Some of 'em stop for twenty year.
>
> Philip Ibbotson

Magical practices and beliefs go back many generations. Bo Almqvist, can trace instances of circumlocution and name avoidance strikingly similar to today's taboos, back to Viking and Norse fishing practices (Ní Fhloinn, 2015, p. Introduction). These ancient practices survived through an enlightened age of science to still be practised today. Although many customs involving baiting and mending pots, lines and hooks, may have diminished because of modifications in the women's participatory role alongside the change from traditional cobles to commercial trawling of their husbands. These older superstitions involving women would have ensured that they worked and cooperated for the good of the community; now the women of my study no longer work in the fishing industry, so that element of community adhesion has disintegrated.

Personal safety and anxiety-ridden theories are supported by evidence from my study and others, especially the work of Ní Fhloinn on the fishers of Ireland, however, the cooperation needed to fish safely and successfully may also be an important factor. In-shore trawling from the Yorkshire coast is a small-scale affair with only five or six crewmen on a trip lasting a few days, where everyone has a part to play. As skipper Tom Rowley said, 'if you are on a boat, you work'. Many of the men

accepted the skipper's rules, the superstitions and circumlocution, unchallenged, as they worked with him and more importantly, they trusted him. This supports Palmer's cooperation theory; in tough conditions where everyone needs to be pulling their weight to not only bring in the fish and therefore wages, but also ensure the safety of the boat and the men.

Accidents are still frequent enough to ensure that every person I spoke to was either involved in at least one rescue, knew of someone who had died in an accident, or had been involved in a frightening near miss, or for most, all three. Many fishermen would say they do not strictly believe however, the collective power of working together for common goals which these rules help to reinforce, and they believe it safeguards their working environment, all the crew stays focused and safe; both the explicit and passive belief of superstitions still works to form a protective boundary around the men while at sea.

Superstitions now appear limited to practices aboard the boat, but if they serve no other purpose than ensuring everyone follows the skipper's orders to ensure a safe fishing trip, then their presumed power is still justifiable.

Another element to circumlocution, name avoidance and superstitious practices is one of identity for the user. The micro-superstitions mark you as a member of the Bridlington fishers, or Hull, Grimsby or even which skipper you crewed under. These practices identify individuals not only as a fisher or from a fishing community, but tie each man to a harbour, a particular boat and specific skipper. Given that fishing is a very competitive business, this would have protected each skipper's individual way of working, the safety precautions on board boat, and protected *your* luck for a good catch.

One fisherman told me his dad had turned his life around after moving his young family to the seaside with the explicit ambition of becoming a fisher.

> Well, they come from all ova actually, actually we come from West Riding,
> but me father come here when he was a little lad. He loved his fishing.
> And I'm talking the 20s, 1920s.
> And he allus said he'd own a boat. An', he'd, he'd be a fisherman.
> That was me father. […] so, he said, 'Right we're moving to Brid'.

I got the impression that he ruffled a few feathers, and the other men weren't as welcoming to him, so he bought his own boat. But of course, he was *from away*. Even years later, I got the impression from other fishermen that this family were still seen as outsiders, or at least a family who do things their own way rather than how the others, the traditional fisher community, would do it.

Superstitions form a linguistic barrier of social and psychological identity and are used as protection from those who do not know the rules and may interrupt the cohesion of the working relationship on board a boat. It provided and still provides a protective boundary around the fishermen and the Bottom End, but as the number of fishing boats decrease*s* and the harbour's significance to many people living in the Bottom End diminishes, so to do the ties that bind the fishers to the area*.* As their identity and the stories of their occupation are so closely linked to the area and fishing as a trade, this weakening of ties to place and softening of the power of myth has had the effect of alienating the fishermen from their status within the community; they no longer have that intrinsic connection, yet as younger men, they were the connection.

The community fragmented further when the women left their traditional support roles within the industry; their gendered practices and customs are no longer

relevant, so no longer observed. These elements all thread together to create yet another loss of identity that the community has suffered, breaking the cohesion and safety on land and at sea.

Lifeboat

Fig27, Fig28, Scarborough lifeboats:1901, Edward and Lucille and 2017 The Frederick William Plaxton, Shannon Class.

Another aspect of community life that has changed is the issue of who crews the lifeboat. Traditionally the lifeboats were manned by the coble men because of their skill, strength and knowledge of every rock and sand bed along this stretch of coast. Scarborough was one of the first ports in Britain to have a lifeboat service, and it began saving lives on 2nd November 1801. Paid for by local donations and crewed by local people, it was designed and constructed by resident boatbuilder Henry Greathead. Between 1824 and 1973 thirteen silver and four bronze medals for bravery had been presented (RNLI Lifeboats, n.d.). It is said that at times there were eight members of the same family spanning several generations serving on the lifeboat at the same time. Whether the exact details are true or not, it was pointed out to me that if the lifeboat had gone down it could have wiped out the men of a family.

This was also a daily concern for the fishing boats, when a whole family was on one boat if it went down everyone would be lost. I was told some families

accepted the risk, but others made sure their sons trained with family friends, so the risk was distributed amongst the fleet.

Tom Rowley explained that when a distress call comes over the radio every boat hauls up their nets and hurries to the co-ordinates to help. He emphasised the loyalty and ingrained faithfulness to every fisherman, whoever they happened to be or wherever they were from. Tom spoke with pride at his father's contribution to the lifeboat service, for which he received a medal for bravery, even though some encounters troubled him for the rest of his life. They didn't do it to sleep easy, they did it because it was imperative to help those in trouble at sea; it is a fundamental part of a fishermen's identity.

But between their father's generation and theirs to the current fishermen, this has changed. Only one pot-man is a member of the lifeboat today, and he is a member of the shore crew. The following e-mail from Dave Barry, Scarborough RNLI Press Officer confirms that today a variety of people in diverse occupations fill the roles traditionally worked by fishermen.

> Of the people I know about, we have a doctor, a joiner, two paramedics, a policeman, an electrician, a hospital theatre technician, a chef, a businessman, a seaweed cultivator, a nurse, a mechanic, and a fossil hunter.
>
> One guy runs a car-repair garage, one works in a bacon factory, one (the only woman on the crew) works at a vehicle-hire place, one runs a seafront café, one is a manager at a timber merchant, one operates outdoor cinemas in the summer and one hires out cherry-pickers and similar equipment.
>
> I guess this picture is reflected elsewhere along the coast.

Dave Barry, Press Officer Scarborough RNLI

Amongst the Bottomenders I spoke to, there was a deep sense of loss at this fact, however this situation may have arisen as a consequence of their own actions. For example, past lifeboat crew were coble fishers, who by nature of their craft were day fishers, and the next generation sailed trawl boats; if you are a trawlerman you are away for days and therefore simply not available to be on-call. By leaving the cobles for the trawlers this generation of fishermen altered the dynamics of the situation in their community.

However, the fact there are no fishermen on the lifeboat is a reality that still weighs heavily on many of the men I spoke to, 'they don't seem to think it's necessary' said one fisherman. Whatever the truth of the situation, I felt I had been told a story of a slow death, but also told a story of a dream of resurrection.

Chapter Six

PRESSURE

Well, to put it bluntly, anything with an eye and an arsehole.

Philip Ibbotson, fishermen

The sea is a woman, call her Calypso, Amphitrite, Cliodhna[13] or one of a thousand names, she is the goddess that is offered coins in return for her fish and her witches are the ones who cling to a boat's rim bringing bad luck. The little sea witches that sail in boats of eggshells are another reminder of birth, rebirth and life that women have power over. But ultimately it is the men in boats, those chasing the fish that have had the power over the sea and all the lives in it.

When that is your life; when you are the kings of the sea, hauling the biggest and the best catches from the belly of the ocean; with a quick wit and luck you cheat a death of cold stone sea every day. When you are a god, you are at the top and centre of your world, but what happens when all this starts to collapse?

The boundaries that protect your world are breeched, whatever amount of coinage you throw over the side is not enough to buy the next catch, and your community is shrinking. The fish are no longer 'ten foot thick' or throwing themselves into your fish room. People from away and above you are telling you what to do, interfering with your traditional way of doing things, disrupting your life and community. When the giant whose shoulders you stood on crumbles, what do you do?

All the men I spoke to reported that they tried to engage with the politics of their industry, harbour governors, presidents of fishing federations, or vice presidents, they wanted to participate in decisions. They tried to put forward their

[13] Pronounced Klee-na

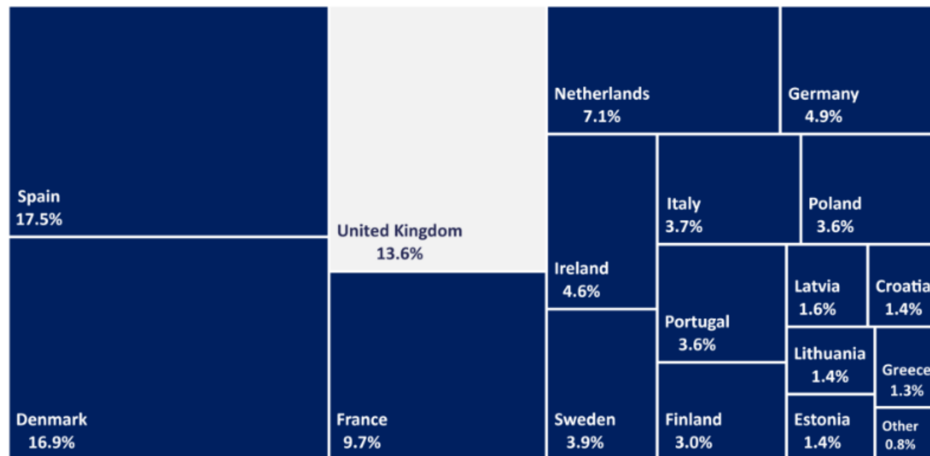
concerns, but they said the ministers were, ‘not listening’. Mainly the men believed it was because they don’t ‘have letters after our names’, they felt ignored, and the inevitable, ‘it was ever thus.’

As the regulations grew the men became more frustrated, and it was the men who had the most to lose, the top skippers who were hit hardest.

Politics

Three countries account for over half of EU fishing

Breakdown of fish landed by EU vessels by weight by country, 2017.



Source: Eurostat (ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/fisheries/data/database).
Note: Spain, Denmark and France account accounted for more than half the fish caught by EU countries in 2017 when the UK is excluded from the EU total.

Fig29, UK was the third biggest fisher of Europe in 2017.

The men I spoke to all looked back to a time at the beginning of their careers, the 1970s and before, when the world was secure around them, just as it had been for their fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers, they were mining the past to make sense of the now (Cohen, 1985) (Dalby & Mackenzie, 2005). They wanted the changes to stop so their world could be secure again, if not for them, for the coming generations.

It in’t me I feel sorry for, it in’t me grandkids I feel sorry for it, it’s their kids I feel sorry for, wot’s gonna happen there, cos we are in, to me, the Millennium now and there int owt.

Philip Ibbotson, fishermen

The fishermen explained that when the EU first introduced quotas, they were told that those rules were for other people, not the British, the others. However, as Robb Robinson’s, *Trawling, The Rise and Fall of the British Trawl Fishery*, notes, ‘in the 1990s the worldwide catching capacity greatly exceeds the sustainable marine catch’ (1996, p. 248). It was inevitable that everyone would have to conform to the rules.

Then reality hit them; the rules were for them too, and they started to be restricted; restricted movement, restricted catch, restricted landing, restricted income.

Quotas

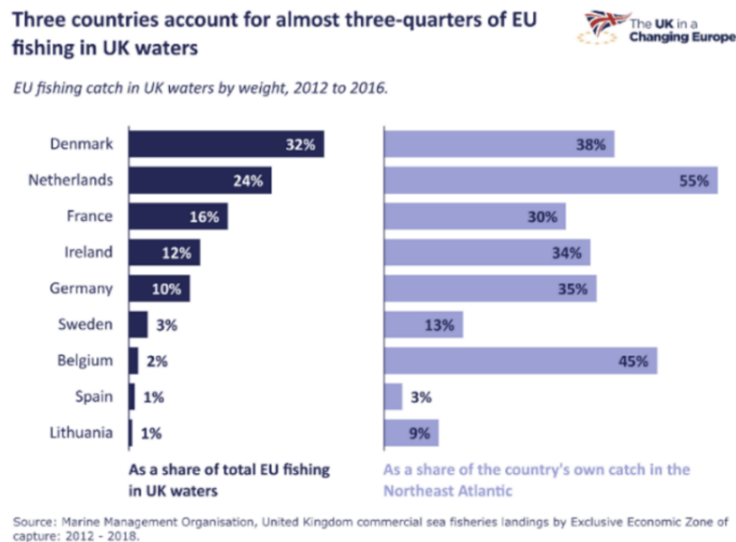


Fig30, Graph showing the percentages of fish taken from UK waters by EU fishermen.

The allocation of quotas is another area where the fishermen feel like they have not been listened to or even consulted by the fisheries ministers or government officials. Quotas are permits detailing which species each boat is allowed to fish and how

much of that species you are permitted to catch. The UK gets a negotiated amount which is divided into individual quota shares for the fishermen. The fishermen reported that they have never agreed with the joining of the Common Fisheries Policy (1970) whose objective was to create a standard way of working throughout the EU's member states with conserving fish stocks a priority (Marti, 2017). In 1979 the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), was passed into law which enforced the preservation and management of marine resources within its Established Economic Zone (EEZ), the principle of jurisdiction by the coastal state concerned over the management of marine resources within its EEZ is established.

In 1983, the first regulations begin with the introduction of, Total Allowable Catches (TACs) and quotas. There was also 'structural policies' that managed the EU fleet capacity but also allowed subsidies for modernisation of vessels. These regulations are strengthened through the introduction of Multi-Annual Guidance Programmes (MAGP) who required minimum mesh sizes for fishing nets to protect juvenile fish. During the period between 1985-1990 the CFP had to adapt to Greenland pulling out of the treaty in 1985, Spain and Portugal joining in 1986 with their considerable fishing fleet and the unification of Germany in 1990. These all had a discernible impact on the size and catching capacity of the European fishing fleet (European Commission, 2023).

Despite some regulation, by 1992 more was needed to control the 'exploitation of resources' while balancing the needs of the fishermen. The aims of the EU's reforms were to:

[…] reduce the fishing to levels consistent with sustainability,

reduce the size of fleets to levels consistent with sustainability,

> reduce the employment in a controlled manner and provide alternative work in fishing-dependent areas.
>
> (European Commission, 2023)

Access to specific waters or fishing areas became heavily restricted through fishing permits, while regulation aimed to reduce the fleet through decommissioning boats but with 'structural measures to alleviate the social consequences' (European Commission, 2023). Despite these measures by 1995 the Commission tasks marine experts to review their policies to date and advise on further action. This advisory group concluded that,

> A draconian reduction of the fleet is urgently needed considering: 40% overcapacity, a huge disequilibrium between fishing capacity and available resources, despite limited nominal reductions no significant real capacity reduction under the Multi-Annual Guidance Programmes (MAGP)'s.
>
> (European Commission, 2023)

By 2002 the EU commission concluded that the reforms led to some progress being made but that they did not lead to a sustainable recovery of fish stock with, '88% of stocks' still being overfished (European Commission, 2023). However, the fishermen of this study reported that they often didn't understand why the quotas were so restrictive. Philip Ibbotson tells of the cod just off Bridlington in the 1990s in his opinion 'throwing itself' into their boats, yet the 1996 quotas were restricted again, due to the 40% over-fishing capacity.

> But they was a lot of fish off Flamborough Head. In fact, it was throwing itself at boat, cod. Ohh, I mean loads, I mean tonnes of it. They all come. They were coming from Fraserburgh an' all over filling em up. It was

> absolutely heaving with it; it was giving itself up…they were making a fortune in here, in Bridlington, every trawler was earning, aww er, four or five grand a wage, were crewmen.

Philip recounted how the survey boats assessed the fish stocks:

> Well, we took some survey people with us. Wot it was is, all the quotas come about it's like…. these surveys come along when, they got this big survey boat there with this big trawl gear there and everything, and they start trawling the bottom, and they said there was no fish there. No fish there. And they went into Scarborough, so Freddy Normandale and Colin Dilt …and they went, 'let's look at y'gear'. He said, 'the way you've got your gear you won't get nothing', he said 'let us rig your gear then av a go at it.' And they refused. So, there was no fish there. So right, they said, you're going on quotas cos there's no fish!
>
> It is pathetic.
>
> Phillip Ibbotson, fishermen

If the officials had permitted the fishermen to fit the nets correctly the men would have felt listened to and may have accepted the government advice. Of course, they may be experiencing environmental generational amnesia.

Many fishermen in my study believe that fish stocks are recovering, and that policy and quotas should be relaxed so that the fishing industry as they knew it, can be saved from extinction. This could be due to Shifting Baseline Syndrome, a phrase coined by Daniel Pauly in 1995 to describe the tolerance of declining fish stocks over generations. It can also be called 'environmental generational amnesia'; in other words, what we accept as normal or even, great, what would for past generations be a shockingly intolerable decline (Pearce, 2020). Callum Roberts, Professor of Marine

Conservation at the University of York and author, *The Unnatural History of the Sea*, (2008) uses old documents, diaries and eyewitness accounts to estimate how large the various fish or sea mammal populations were in the 1700 and early 1800s, and how big or rather how sparse those populations are now. Interviewed in 2011 Roberts estimated that,

> The amount [sic] of fish in the sea today of the traditional species is probably 10% or less than what it was a hundred years ago, this is despite 'low-level' improvements due to fishery management.
>
> (BBC World Service, 2011) (16 mins 06 sec)

Roberts takes the long view of fish stocks, there may be more fish than there were in the 1980s when quotas became restrictive but compared to 100-150 years ago stocks are still in a critical state. He demonstrates, chapter after chapter that the fish we have now are not as plentiful, have a reduced breeding pool of genetics and are also smaller than they naturally should be. He cites an example of fishing of the Northeast coast in 1834 when a small rowing boat on a night fishing trip set three hundred and eighty hooks and caught two-hundred and fifty fish. The halibut was so strong and large it nearly overturned the boat when the men tried to take it from the water. 'That experience could not be replicated on the coast today; the fish simply aren't there' (BBC World Service, 2011) (15mins, 15 sec). But because of Environmental Generational Amnesia, the fishermen and probably most of us don't see it like that, we only think that compared to a few years ago things are improving. We can only see our lifetime and rate that as the standard normal, we don't often see or understand or believe how it was for past generations. One of my interviewees described the fish as 'ten foot thick', and that to him was great, but

Roberts suggests that in the past it often appeared that there was more fish than water (Roberts, 2008, p. 44).

However, fishermen count themselves as conservationists, Fred Normandale claimed, 'we don't want it to be a free for all, that would be really irresponsible'. Some of the men told of how they put forward suggestions, for fish stocks could breed and recover. Suggestions of sectioning off fishing grounds and rotating them to allow areas to remain fallow, as farmers do to let grounds recuperate. The Ibbotson family suggested that the fishermen could lay up the boats for three months of the year but for the remaining months they should be able to catch everything.

> Like our Pete said, 'Let us catch what we want, right, and come January, February and March', I'm willing, the family's willing, lay the boats up for three months. Let the fish breed, kelp, smeer itself, do whatever, and then; let us catch what we want after that.

However, this is not what Greek Minister and Commissioner of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Maria Damanaki, (2010-2014) had in mind when she said she wanted the EU to be flexible in its approach to quotas, saying,

> For example, a member state would like to have quotas, but another member state can say to their vessels, 'look I'm not having quotes for this year, you can go there and fish everything, but only for ten days'. But we cannot say to the fishermen they can fish everything; we cannot permit that.
>
> (BBC World Service, 2011) (21 mins, 29 sec)

Two very different opinions. When asked the fishermen became rather annoyed.

> **TP:** How can you make a living out of 10 days a year?

> **FN:** Well, y'carn't, she's talking out of her arse. They're not int real world, there's nobody int real world.
> There's nobody in the commission who is on the real world, they're in their own little global goldfish bowl.
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

The disgust and the swearing that comes from the fishermen when talking about these directives shows the anger of this industry towards the EU and the lawmakers. Constant change unnerves people, it disturbs their equilibrium and shakes their sense of place. The fishers' protective boundary around their lives at sea and on shore was being attacked on a daily basis, and the resentment was evident when they spoke about it.

> I don't, I don't think they understand, and they don't bother, they don't come to the fishermen an' ask 'em, y'know instead of coming up with some brainwave, what doesn't affect their wages…[but] is affecting thousands of decent fishermen just trying to earn a living.
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

Inspections at Sea

One of the most direct and stressful consequences of rules from Europe has been the change of atmosphere at sea, especially when dealing with 'the fisheries police' or 'gum' boats as the fishermen call them. In the UK the Navy has a dedicated Overseas Patrol Squadron (OPS) that can board boats, but from 2009 The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) was created by the Marine and Coastal Access Act which also has the power to inspect boats. Tom Rowley fondly recalls the encounters as friendly, 'hello lads, how you doing? Here's a basket of fish,' he said with everyone 'having a job to do'. However, these friendly exchanges disappeared

during the mid-1980-early 90s with a Conservative Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in charge of overseeing EU directives, from Michael Jopling (1983-87) to Douglas Hogg (1995-97). All my interviewees agreed that inspections at sea became a more formal, even aggressive experience.

> **TOM ROWLEY:** Where a fisheries boat, Navy boat would come and board you at sea you had some friendly banter between navy and yourselves, you'd give 'em a basket of fish, n' 'there you go lads', n everything all, an' now, I say now, when I finished last two or three years before I finished it wasn't like that no more. Navy boarded y and y felt guilty, though y'weren't guilty y'know and they wanted t'go, stopped your fishing, made y' all y nets, they went right through your fish-room. Checking what fish you had; if you'd logged it properly. The log sheets to fill in every day, where you'd been fish, how much fish you'd caught, different species had t be registered. An' all that with the threat of hefty fines, fifty, hundred thousand pound hanging over ya, y'job was, stressed.
>
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

> **PHILIP IBBOTSON:** What it's called is spawny time off Scarborough, everybody knows that. An' wot to was, it was like, the herring, an' the cod was after the herring. An' it was like, at it, but an' we were talking to Dex who had The Carousel, an' he sez, we were just coming out, he sez 'Whatever you do, don't go through it, tek a slice of it, we're marking it.' Teking a slice out of it, we were only, the keel was only in bottom of boat, in for five or ten minutes, then we were full. Wheel it aboard, chuck it down, wheel it aboard 'n' chuck it down, we were full.

So, there was onny three of us for all this fish. We were gutting, so our Pete said, ‘Right, we’ll go in, get this lot chopped up, tek it’s engines out, ice it away, box it, but just because we never filled the logbook in. In this thing (fishery inspector) like that, yapping (talking) in ma face. I sez, ‘Who the hell are you splattering in ma face for?’

We we’re in Scarborough cos we never come back to Brid, we sailed out of Scarborough all the time. For about eight, eight years out of Scarborough. An’ they was chopping in ma face, an’ I said, ‘I tell you wot, you slaver in ma face mate you’ll end up ova that dock’. He sez, ‘Well I wanna know who’s the skipper of this place’. So, I sez, ‘I tell you what mate, there’s me, brother number one, an’ there’s another big brother round there, three of us.

Whaaaa! Anyway, he got in, went in the wheelhouse, which shouldn’t ov been allowed, he opened up and went into the wheelhouse, where all the instruments are, going through the logbooks. Course that was it. Red war paint come on, dinit? He stormed in and our Pete said, ‘You shouldn’t stromp (look/nosey) that without ma permission.’ ‘I’m looking though y’logbook, nah you ant filled it in.’

‘You tell me what’s on this fucking deck!’ − well that was it − he started; his head boiled up. Do you know what they did to us?

Took the licence off us. It’s the first offence in forty-odd years. We ended up going to Whitby court, paying, x number of thousands of pounds. We, our Pete didn’t like that, so he chucked his deeds of his house on, that’s no good, they wanted a banker’s draft. So, they went to go to the Halifax in Whitby, they wouldn’t allow it. So, I had to go, we had to go back to Brid

to get this banker's draft to go back to Whitby to clear him. Then they kept us, they took the licence off us for another week, an' then had to wait another week for it to get through the post to get back to us.

TP: So, you lost three weeks wages?

PI: Yeah, three weeks. That's wot, this is it. The moral of the story is, we felt like thieves, (something so simple) as, it is.

PHILIP IBBOTSON: Setting off, gum boat come alongside of us. 'Stop y'boat'. We'd been laid in there for like, two and half days, an', 'Wot for?' 'Check y vessel.' 'Wot for?', 'For fish.' The trawl nets are dry, wid just come out the dock, out a Scarborough. Three and half hours later, three and a half hours later, we set on our grounds, I'll never forget it, this went on for weeks and months and months.

Philip Ibbotson, fisherman

The effect of these directives and how they were implemented is obvious in the fishers' body language and their lack of words, more so even than what they manage to say through the anger and regret. The fishermen's boat was a sacred space, their safety in a frequently hostile environment, to be boarded without permission, or rather the inability to refuse permission, took away the men's agency and respect, the captains of their own ships. They felt violated and without control; they were voiceless.

'I had a good life out of fishing', said Tom Rowley, however the increasing administration, pressure of the job, and the additional concern over hostile boarding 'ruined' that way of life. Rowley blames this stress for having to endure numerous operations and his fight with cancer until his death in 2023.

The fishermen reported that the European directives on changing net sizes, such as the instructions of 1983 are also expensive to implement, as new nets must be made or purchased and the trawl-gear head needs to be altered to accommodate the new size of the net. Tom Rowley suggested that when he first started the size of gap between the net squares was approximately 70cm but when he finished in 1999 it was 120cm. Fishermen have whispered to me that it can cost thousands of pounds, 'hundreds of thousands' to keep changing net sizes, although they would not disclose an exact figure. Tom said that these changes can sometimes 'wipe you out' and he knew of other fishermen who had got into debt over refitting the gear to keep pace with regulation. Tom says he never had to get into debt, but that he had to 'start again'.

> So, your job wasn't your own no more. You were a bag of nerves worry about this, fines, lose your house, your boat, everything overnight. Quotas, you finish up, you're not just a fisherman no more it ends up, you've got t be like an accountant.
>
> Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

The fishermen understand why the nets kept changing, to keep the younger breeding fish down in the sea and only bring the older fish up, but they don't understand why all European fishermen don't live by the same rules. This is a sentiment that other reports confirm.

> Moreover, there is a widespread distrust amongst fishermen of many nations regarding the motives of their foreign counterparts and their maintenance of agreed conservation measures.
>
> (Robinson, 1996, p. 248)

Both Philip and Tom told stories of when they went on holiday to the continent and were wandering around the dockside:

> We walked round the corner an, big wet fish place, an' ... hake, now anything about that long, we weren't allowed to land. Well, I looked at them everyone was about that long (about a third of what he was allowed to catch)
>
> Bloke shut shop, cos I was looking, cos he knew sumatt.
>
> There were rows of it! I went in, honestly this is no word of a lie, I walked on the harbour, an' there's blokes there with their catch in, mesh about that big (smaller than UK permitted) an' when I finished trawling all our meshes had t be like that! (About 4inches square).
>
> Yeah! Yeah. Like hitching bags, we had the cod end n had a bag to lift the cod end up, but it had to be, like, ten meshes deep, the sqwack, so we wern't straggling they call it.
>
> Errr, give us a life!
>
> Philip Ibbotson, fisherman

All the fishermen agree that the updated rules and harsh inspections left inshore trawler fishermen feeling guilty for fishing, the word guilt being used by many. They felt like they have been accused of cheating every single day that they set out to sea but cannot understand why in their minds other European fishers have been able to get away with, in their opinion, landing illegally small fish. The fishermen I spoke to became very animated and angry when discussing regulation and quotas. This knowledge and the beliefs in not every member state conforming to the rules, contributed to the already demoralising atmosphere within fishing that ground down

many of the men I spoke to, according to their statements this convinced them, them to leave the industry.

Discards

Discards, the practice of throwing away any fish that is over quota or that is too small and is enforced by heavy fines if when your catch is weighed at the harbour, and it is found to be over your allotted quota. It is universally despised, according to the fishermen they were throwing good, edible fish overboard. The fishermen await each haul of the net; they won't know the catch until it's on board, with some species of fish having a very low quota or choke quota attached, with heavy fines imposed for any fish above the licenced quota. If they had a choke species in their net, they may have hauled their whole year's allowance 'in one go'. If they had caught more of that species in the next haul, then the only option would be to throw the excess back into the sea − but by that time the fish are dead. Professor Roberts when interviewed in 2011 agreed that discarding fish that could be landed is:

> A crazy system…When you see that sort of waste, of course you are going to think that there is plenty of fish in the sea, the only problem is, I'm not allowed to take them home.
>
> (BBC World Service, 2011) (14 mins, 17 sec)
>
> […]
>
> **FRED NORMANDALE:** The fish are coming out of the retaining hobs and the crew are selecting the biggest and gutting them, throwing them into a big tank of water to be washed. The remainder of the fish are just being fired down a chute, back overboard and you can hear the gulls feeding on them. At least the seagulls are feeding on them if that is a small consolation, but it does nothing for our economy, does nothing for the fish

stocks, it's polluting the ground, the ones that don't get eaten by the gulls. It absolutely serves no purpose whatsoever, apart from ruining the British fishermen.

(BBC World Service, 2011) (13 mins)

[…]

What's happening is just obscene, there are a lot of hungry people in the world, we are importing fish from all over, all the transport miles involved in that and here we are dumping perfectly good fish over the side. It's criminal.

(BBC World Service, 2011) (3 mins 40 sec)

Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

PHILIP IBBOTSON: An' the amount [sic] of fish dumped […], when we wer off on the pipe, that Coley, y'know Black Coley, or they call it torpedoes, I've seen lifts of that just let it go. Dumped it, floated away, then gulls are after it. I've seen it off west side.

TP: So, you just chuck it?

PI: Chuck it. Why carn't you give it t pensioners?

Sue Ibbotson: All y'doing is feeding seagulls.

Sue Ibbotson and Philip Ibbotson, fisherman.

Decommissioning

For the fishermen, the most destructive and soul-destroying of the restrictions set out by Europe was a plan called decommissioning. The scheme encouraged fishermen to voluntarily agree to sign over their boat and licence in return for a sum of money. The boat was subsequently chopped up, and the fishermen's licence take out of

circulation and not sold back into the fishing fleet. It was designed to reduce fishing capacity and tonnage in the EU fleet.

The UK had aimed to reduce its fleet by a Multi-Annual Guidance Programme II (MAGP II) recommendation of 7% tonnage and 5% in engine power through natural wastage. Instead, the fleet increased, and this target was rolled over to MAGP III 1995, increasing the targets to 19% respectively. This increased the pressure on the UK government to act (eurobc, n.d.).

The first decommissioning scheme came under, The Fishing Vessels (Financial Assistance) Act 1983 UK (gov.uk, 1983) which was a scheme to reorganise the fishing fleet.

> This scheme provides got the making of grants by Fisheries Ministers for the purpose of re-organising and developing the sea fish catching industry of the United Kingdom. There are four types of grants, namely laying up grants, decommissioning grants, exploratory voyage grants and joint venture grants. Provision for laying up grants and decommissioning grants is made in implementation of council directive No 83/515/EEC concerning certain measures to adjust capacity in the fisheries sector…'
>
> NB: The Commission means the Commission for European Communities.
>
> (gov.uk, 1983)

These schemes were subsequently heavily criticised for their low take up and expense.

> […] of heavy criticism from the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons Review which had concluded that the 1983 − 86 scheme was grossly expensive for what it achieved.
>
> (eurobc, n.d.)

The next and biggest decommissioning offer entered UK law on 5 July 1995 (uk.gov.uk, 1995). The Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mr. Tony Baldry, addressed the commons in a debate to set out the government hopes for the scheme.

> The importance of decommissioning is very clear. Yesterday I had my first meeting with the fishing industry when I visited Grimsby and met representatives of the national fishing organisations from all over the country. They are in no doubt that overcapacity lies at the root of many of the industry's problems.
>
> Striking a better balance between capacity, the quotas and other fishing opportunities will make our industry more efficient and viable. The need to tackle overcapacity is also recognised in our obligations under the European Union multi-annual guidance programme targets. The decommissioning schemes that have been in place for the past two years—and which will continue for three more years—are designed to make a key contribution to achieving the targets.
>
> The Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mr. Tony Baldry, House of Commons debate 18 July 1995.
>
> (House of Commons transcript, n.d.)

After years of tightening restrictions, more frequent and formal inspections at sea and threats of thousands of pounds in fines, the men reported that they were suffering from anxiety and worry, and some hesitantly saw this as a way out. The physicality of fishing and the pressure had begun to take its toll on an already ill Tom Rowley, so he begrudgingly applied for decommissioning. I was left with the

impression this was not an easy decision for the men, as this would mean the death of the family boat and generational fishing.

Observing the men’s reactions and body language when decommissioning is mentioned, I suspect this scheme is where the desire to leave the EU really solidified. Gone were the Eurosceptic grumblings of the last few generations, decommissioning and its effect on the industry was the call to arms against the EU. By crushing their boats, they crushed their souls. This appeared to be the lowest point for the men and the Bottomenders; their whole community is based around the sacred spaces of their boats, and now they watched as many of their family boats were destroyed. Decommissioning left the community and men broken.

Marc Fried, (1966) studied Boston residents whose houses had been confiscated and they had been relocated. Fried noted that the residents had emotional responses such as grief for their lost place, including signs of a longing for, and a sense of hopelessness at being detached from their home.

> At their most extreme, these reactions of grief are intense, deeply felt, and, at times, overwhelming. In response to a series of questions concerning the feelings of sadness and depression which people experienced after moving, many replies were unambiguous: "I felt as though I had lost everything," "I felt like my heart was taken out of me," "I felt like taking the gaspipe," "I lost all the friends I knew," […] "I felt cheated," [sic]
>
> (Fried, 1966)

Of 250 women questioned Fried recorded that 46% ‘give evidence of a fairly severe grief reaction or worse.’ Out of the 316 men he interviewed 38% recorded feelings of

long-term grief (Fried, 1966). The displaced also tended to idolise the lost place, just as the fishermen were doing with their boats.

There was also a visceral anger that the government would not help the fishers with grants to update their boats and nets but would pay the men to crush their livelihood to satisfy the EU. However, some of the men did note that other EU countries had been given grants to improve safety at sea.

> […] government went an' introduced a decommissioning scheme an' they wouldn't give you subsidies, but they'd give you money to chop yer boat up.
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

Tom Rowley spent twenty-six years on the 'Our Margaret', a boat he bought as a young 26-year-old man through a partnership with Hamlin's of Hull, and later acquired to run solely as his own. He confessed that he loved that boat and would 'sail to the end of the earth in her'. She was an old but faithful companion on his thousands of trips out to sea, and every time through calm and storm she delivered him and his crew safely back to shore. There is reverence when she is spoken of,

> Cos, I felt safe, she was mucky sometimes, water, there was never a day hardly where you didn't get water ont deck but in bad weather she was a little trojan; I loved it.
>
> Tom Rowley, fishermen, skipper, owner

A model of her complete with a mug of tea in the wheelhouse sits proudly displayed on the windowsill of his home, a lovingly crafted seventieth birthday present from his wife, Lindy. However, the government, or as the fishers see it, the EU, demanded Our Margaret as a sacrifice in return for his decommissioning pension. By eliminating these precious boats, they removed the voice and agency of the men.

The men blame the EU for decommissioning and its impact upon them and their industry, however the regulations and schemes were created for a reason, with the EU commissioners having hopes it would thin out the fishing industry, to ease pressure on fish stocks, which were perilously low. The decommissioning scheme was set up by the European Parliament to run between 1st January 1997 to 31st December 2002 and the plan for trawling was published as a European press release:

> The Council will have to decide on significant reductions in capacity in fleets using trawled gear targeted on demersal species and on some pelagic species whose situation is serious. For these stocks the necessary cuts in capacity are 40%, and these will have to be more severe in the first three years. For less sensitive stocks, reductions between 20% and 30% are essential in order to improve the situation. For stocks currently in balance only the effect of technical advances would need to be compensated, i.e. 12% over the MAGP period. Lastly, for stocks likely to withstand an increase in the present levels of fishing effort, the Commission is proposing stabilizing current capacities in the knowledge that this will mean an increase in overall fishing effort because of technical progress.
>
> (European Parliament, 1996)

This meant all the fish that the inshore fishermen were catching were now going to be heavily restricted, and their boats taken from the water to ‘reduce the over capacity of the European fleet’ (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 1997). Figures by the Marine Management Organisation, in 1987 suggest there were around 25,000 fishermen in the UK, today there are only 12,000 (Seafarers UK,

2018, p. 6). It was the fishing industry's equivalent of the closing of the coal mines, and it appears to have had a huge negative impact on the older fishermen. It took out many of this generation who were the experienced elders with the knowledge bank of how to beam trawl in these local waters. With the destruction of the boat came the surrender of the fishing license, cauterising traditional inheritance fishing.

On February 3rd, 1999, sixteen years after joining Europe, Tom Rowley navigated 'Our Margaret', his livelihood and love, to Whitby to be dismembered. Tom spoke of 'the hardship of seeing her chopped up', and as he spoke to me twenty years later, he was still emotional, as if he had witnessed the quartering of a family friend. Decommissioning not only took away Tom's boat, but also his sacred space and core identity.

The *Multi-Annual Guidance Programme (1991-1996)* or MAGP III's end report in 1997 commented on decommissioning stating that, 'the report indicates this [the reduction] is satisfactory'. The UK by 1997 had reduced enough of the fleet but

> […] the performance of individual Member States has differed considerably, with some failing to reach their objectives and others exceeding them.
>
> (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 1997)

For the men, it seemed that while they were asked to chop up their beloved boats to comply with the rules some European fishermen were evading this hardship. I kept hearing the phrase, 'it should be one rule for all, all in it together' only to their minds they weren't all in it together?

There were also problems with the scheme in the terms used to define loads and how 'tonne' and 'engine capacity' were interpreted in different countries, thus making some results un-comparable. However, 'with adjustments the UK is

marginally above the objective on tonnage (103%) and just under 100% for power,' (1997). There were some serious problems between the list of fishing vessels kept in Brussels which differed drastically from the lists held by some member countries. These member states had not kept updated records on their fishing fleets, so the European Commission did not accurately know what vessels were out there to start with, therefore, it was difficult to know if any reduction had been genuine. The UK's conclusion was:

> If the Common Fisheries Policy is to function properly in terms of both conservation and the livelihood of fishermen, it is vital that the results of the Multi-Annual Guidance Programme are not fudged.
>
> (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 1997)

The next report, *MAGP IV*, concluded that decommissioning between 1993-97 had reduced the fishing fleet by 10%, which had been targeted at older less efficient vessels. This led to the old vessels being removed, yet the new more efficient vessels that could catch far more than their older counterparts of the same power capacity were still fishing. It also raised doubts about the scheme's effectiveness in relieving pressures on fish stocks, and that it had 'virtually no impact on the pelagic and beam trawl segments which are highly profitable (Select Committee in Agriculture, 1999). The report also identified that some fishermen used their decommissioning money to invest in new licenses or boats, 'the overall capacity and effort will not decrease because the fishermen may just move into other segments of the fleet' (Select Committee in Agriculture, 1999). This has been seen in Scarborough and Bridlington, as now the fishing fleet is almost exclusively set up for catching lobster and crab; as I write, there are no quotas for these species, although the license is expensive.

The *MAGP IV* report also recognised the danger of 'technology creep' when trying to reduce the capacity of the fishing fleet. For example, the bigger more modern vessels have such advances in technology that they outperform the older, smaller boats when it comes to locating and hauling fish. The report concluded:

> To be successful in the long term, decommissioning has to be targeted on the sectors of the fleet where there is the greatest capacity and the greatest threat to vulnerable stocks. Witnesses suggested to us variously that decommissioning should be applied on a more regional basis or that it should be used to encourage low-impact, sustainable methods of fishing.[202]
>
> (Select Committee in Agriculture, 1999)

There were also fears that it would lead towards a fleet dominated by larger more efficient vessels at the expense of small local industries (Select Committee in Agriculture, 1999). This appears to be exactly what has happened; small local industries like Scarborough and Bridlington, the small lower impact inshore fishing sector, have been decimated. David Normandale comments, 'There's no trawling fleet. No. Nothing. Gone.'

Smaller fishing boats, the ones I remember as a child no longer fill the harbour, and now the main boats that trawl for the UK's fish suppers are boats like the Kirkella (UK Fisheries, 2022).

The Kirkella once worked out of Hull's docks, a massive freezer vessel that catches twelve tonnes of fish per haul and store 780 tonnes of fish fillets plus the fishmeal made from the skins and heads. The caught fish go into the hold live and

come out processed and frozen and ready for market; and to do all this the Kirkella employs just thirty men[14].

The Seafarers UK *Fishing for A Future*, report (2018) has confirmed that fishing is now dominated by large boats. Using a DEFRA April 2018 survey that found larger fishing vessels use 98% of the quotas, but only account for 1181 vessels, while 4,222 smaller, 'under 10 meters' registered and licensed fishing vessels in the UK fishing share only 2% of the quota (Seafarers UK, 2018, p. 7). The one man-and-his-boat industry has become restricted and possibly unsustainable both in what species they can fish and from the competition between so many vessels.

Warming Sea

> Cod and haddock, you see, it's a cold-water fish, so they're moving North, and they'll keep going North.
>
> Philip Ibbotson, fishermen

Anecdotally the fishermen confirmed that the cod and other fish they once caught off the Yorkshire coast have relocated north. Philip Ibbotson believes that this is due to warming water. There is growing scientific evidence to support this observation. A UK Government, report, *Parliament Office of Science and Technology*, or POSTnote 363 on Sea Level Rise, September 2010, authored by one hundred scientists, paints a grim picture. The report found that some species of cold-water fish had moved north 'by between 50km to 400km (30-250 miles) over the past 30 years' (The Telegraph, 2010). This was again found in the POST 2017 report which mentioned cod as a species that was threatened by warmer temperatures, which cause slower growth

[14] But even these huge boats are facing a quick extinction thanks in part to the Brexit the fishers voted for, and the changing climate conditions of the sea. (Armistead, 2021)

and fewer fish to survive to adulthood (McKie, 2017). Phillip Ibbotson has observed this phenomenon.

> It was getting werse, cos all the fishes are up North now y'know, cos it's cold, the warm water is coming from the South to the North, it's ten-foot thick at Frazerborough and Peterhead, and all them, with fish, but there is nothing at this end.
>
> Phillip Ibbotson, fisherman

> Because you don't catch coley round here, it's more north, or hake which is moving further north.
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

Some fish with nowhere to go, such as sole and plaice may disappear, but some species, for example, cuttlefish and sardines are thriving in the changing waters. Professor Stephen Simpson, of Exeter University, quoted in The Guardian; 'apart from cuttlefish and sardines – which are already moving into our waters – we can expect fish like red mullet and john dory to be more common'. Professor Simpson also confirmed that cod is already in decline from the North Sea along with plaice and sole, something most of the fishermen I spoke to anecdotally confirmed (McKie, 2017).

A rise in shellfish has been seen in the waters around the North Yorkshire coast, with waters warming creating a booming industry of 'pot-men'.

> It's all crabbing now and lobsters… Cos there's no cod to pick at the small lobsters. That's why they're breeding like hell, cos there's warm water all the time, it's going from South to North.
>
> Philip Ibbotson, fisherman

Philip Ibbotson also thought the sea was getting ‘more acidic’, which the shellfish and lobsters like, whereas cod do not. In October 2017 the BBC reported on a BIOACID project using over two hundred and fifty scientists’ data to analyse the acidification of the world’s oceans and the effect on sea life. Acidification happens when CO2 dissolves in seawater creating carbonic acid which then lowers the PH balance of the water. The report suggested that younger fishlings and sea life would be more affected than adults, warm water species more affected than cold water, with some marine life more sensitive than others. However, an experiment with barnacles found that they did not react adversely to acidification and algae positively thrived (Harrabin, 2017). More algae to clog waters and excessive barnacles to be scrapped off the hull of the boat, these are not likely to be thought of as positive circumstances by fishermen.

The POST 2017 report also warns that invasive species may take over from local shellfish and ‘slipper limpets could destroy mussel and oyster beds’ (McKie, 2017). This may be the start of a serious and irreparable decline as more harmful species could take up residence in UK waters. One such is the ‘club tunicate’, a creature native to the Northwest Pacific, which looks like ‘a floating plastic bag’. It is thought that this could colonise British waters and compete for food with native mussels and other shellfish. It also ‘releases toxins that can trigger respiratory attacks in humans’, wireweed and the acorn barnacle are also potentially unwelcome guests who vie for food and foul harbours (McKie, 2017). Professor Stephen Simpson ominously warns, ‘Life in our seas is changing’ (McKie, 2017). Nevertheless, these new species could be profitable if consumer tastes change with the marine changes, with recent arrivals such as the American razor clam or Pacific oyster.

A report released in November 2018, which was a joint study by the MET office, DEFRA and the Environmental Agency, called *UK Climate Projections* (UKCP 18) forecasts even more significant changes. It predicts a greater chance of warmer, wetter, winters and, hotter drier summers, and much more winter precipitation after 2050. All this projection, however, is dependent on the current levels of emissions and continued fossil fuel use, but the picture is one of massive change even in best and worst-case scenario (Met Office, 2018)[15]. Sea levels, which have been rising throughout the 20th Century, are also predicted to rise further, which will cause huge differences in tidal patterns and wave characteristics. In best-case scenarios, this may be as much as 29cm, at worst 115cm higher than tides are now (Met Office, 2018). A previous 2017 POSTnote report found that:

> Global mean sea level (GMSL) has risen 20cm since 1900, at an average rate of 1.5mm per year during 1901-1990. During 1993-2014 sea levels rose on average 3.2 mm per year. The rate of sea level rise during the 20th century was faster than at any point since reaching near modern day levels around 3,000 years ago.
>
> (Parliament UK, 2017)

These rises create problems for coastal communities by speeding up coastal erosion and damaging infrastructure, businesses and homes. Coastal flooding costs the UK ‘£540 million’ per year, which according to the 2017 POSTnote report will ‘increase with future sea level rise.’ (The Telegraph, 2010). Global warming and an increased lack of suitable fish for food between 2000-2008 also contributed to a 9% reduction in breeding seabirds, and a ‘drop in breeding success’ (McKie, 2017).

[15] Report published 26 November 2018

Marine environment minister Richard Benyon (Nov 2023 to July 2024), quoted in The Guardian:

> For hundreds of years our seas have supported our fishing industry that provides us with food and coastal communities a way of life, as well as the vital marine ecosystem ... but the seas and oceans are changing, and we are only just starting to understand what this means.
>
> (McKie, 2017)

All this is very predictable. We live on a planet of finite resources.

The fishers I interviewed worried that they were the last of their kind. Some understood in moments of unguarded clarity what their contribution to this mess had been and how the next generation needs to change:

> The top of the nub in all this, is the fishermen are their own worst enemies. ‘Ger it aboard, ger it aboard, ger it aboard; kill it, kill it, kill it, kill it, I’ve seen it, av done it! I’m one ... I’m the culprit! But it’ll end up down there just the same, the crabbing and the lobsters, [unclear] − like they are catching lobster an’ that, let’s get it. They couldn’t care shit! We couldn’t care, but now we are trying to tell them to care, but, but they couldn’t care nothing.
>
> Anonymous

However, changes in ocean temperatures, fish stocks and rising sea levels cannot be blamed on fishermen, there are many factors contributing to climate change. Nevertheless, perhaps the Royal Commission of 1863 was right in part; fishermen are seeing ‘the evil effects of their own acts’ but unlike a hundred and fifty years ago the law has acted to protect the biodiversity of our seas and rule against the fishermen’s interests. Although unpopular, the legislation brought in by Maria

Damanaki, former European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs, has been credited as bringing twenty-two unsustainable fish stocks back to healthy levels. Today there are twenty-seven fish stocks classed as sustainable, in 2010 when Damanaki started it was five (oceanpanel.org, 2022). Progress is a very slow and painful process.

The fishers were anxious at witnessing the collapse of their industry, and it became easy to lash out and blame 'faceless bureaucrats', them *from away* who are restricting access to fish stocks for these skilled fishermen. Perhaps this high price was foretold in the 1863 Royal Commission:

> […] fish will become scarcer, and the produce of a day's work will diminish until it is no longer remunerative.
>
> (Roberts, 2008, p. 144)

One hundred and forty years later, Phillip Ibbotson illustrates that point while recounting a conversation with his son.

> I've told him, I said 'Nothing comes out of cod end.' When we emptied the cod-end it dropped into two baskets, how can you run a trawl on that?

The coblemen who gave evidence at the 1863 and 1883 Royal Commission enquiry were perhaps correct when they predicted that the trawler would be the death of fishing.

But that does not prohibit the human cost of this decline, and it is that cost which fishers emphasised; there was a real feeling of sadness from the men. They and their whole industry are in a state of flux, and that isn't an easy place to exist when you are not used to it. Born in a community where tradition is the norm, rapid change is alien and frightening.

As with superstitions and repetitive practices, we as a people like to do things the same way as we have always done and pass that practice to our children. It

keeps our world familiar and therefore safe, and the fishers wanted to pass that safety on to their descendants as it had been passed onto them.

One fisherman talked about how he always wanted to fish with his son, his son would have been the skipper because he trusted him, and he would have been the crewman with thirty-plus years' experience. He talked with joy at this version of the future, and then of how much it would cost to buy a second-hand boat, over three-quarters of a million pounds, which was money they didn't have, and the plan floundered. As he stared into his pint glass, lost in thought**,** he looked sad and adrift. There was a grief that he had been the last fisherman in the family line, leaving no inheritance for his son. He had survived, but all around him had been hunted into extinction. There was nothing left. There was much remorse and dejection at the bottom of that glass.

And one should never be the last.

Another superstition is that fishermen never say, 'the last', as in the last trawl to come back; this would bring bad luck onto the boat, and it could be lost at sea. They use terms like: 'the finishing tow'. In calling them the last of their kind, the last fishers to beam trawl, the last to catch white fish out of the harbour, the last of their family to fish; maybe we have doomed them to be lost.

The men would say they are the finishing fishers, in the hope that tomorrow they all go out again.

Promises

People look back on their past because they have lived it, in our minds it appears stable and comforting, for this reason we use it to understand and navigate the unknown future (Cohen, 1985, p. 98).

Scarborough is a place that has become accustomed to looking back to its glorious Victorian heyday, when boats filled the harbour, stylish and wealthy visitors took the air on the promenade and sipped the waters of the Spa; life was colourful and vibrant, now it exists in sepia tones of remembrance. It is as if Scarborough did not amount to much before Thomasina Farrer discovered the healing properties of the water, and the upper classes arrived with their great trunks and picnic baskets, although we have the castle and all its history still looking down on the town.

Generations have been schooled to look back to better days when Britannia ruled the waves, and we were a nation of seafarers conquering and dominating much of the globe. We are schooled to think of ourselves as great and isolationist; we are the little island that commanded the world's attention. This knowledge and taught history are then repackaged in the wider debate about Brexit, even the language of self-promotion, four hundred years apart, is similar.

> **LUCY WOLSEY:** The wider political legacy of the Reformation because Henry's break with Rome caused a lasting schism. And now Britain is breaking away from Europe all over again.
> What parallels do you see with the reformation and Brexit?
>
> **Professor Adrian Pabst:** The most striking parallels I see are that 'we are better off on our own'; we are better off out and that National Sovereignty and the will of the people should prevail over anything else. So, at the time of the Reformation was about the Catholic church being corrupt, being decedent, being over centralised and not really being to our benefit. And now it's about the EU; being undemocratic, potentially authoritarian and riding rough-shod over what people really need and want. The Reformation reinforced the idea that Britain is separate, rather

> than actually seeing Britain as part of the wider European continent. And that is where Euro-scepticism has its deep roots, in the Reformation.
>
> **LW:** So, it all happened in the fifteenth century, this is when the seeds were planted and are still shooting up to the sky today.
>
> **AP:** If you are looking for the origins of Brexit, look no further than Henry VIII.
>
> Series 1 Ep 1, (Royal History's Biggest Fibs with Lucy Worsley, Series 1 Ep 1, 2020)

The second reaction to change is anger and frustration.

The Brexit vote had been won by the Leave campaign, but the interviewees were still very frustrated and very angry that it was taking too long to leave the EU; the angry still directed at the EU was tangible. Since the UK had joined the EU fishing has been politicised like no other industry; the men were hyper-aware of the rules and the consequences and who they believed was responsible. In their minds, they have been on the end of a long line of 'brainwaves' 'dreamt up' by politicians from the EU who sit 'behind desks' and who have made the lives of the fishing community harder and given no help to allow them to comply, apart from chopping up their beloved boats and stripping the men of their common identity.

Racist Vote?

Voting for Brexit was portrayed by some media outlets and academic papers as a racist or xenophobic vote (Shackle, 2016) (Stone, 2017) (Swami, et al., 2017). Accordingly**,** voting for Brexit was perceived as a rejection of foreign interference, and a claim of Britain for the British. Media outlets and academic studies concluded that it was the lesser educated that voted for Brexit.

This study does not concur with this opinion. The fishermen may have left school young, as was the custom in the 1960s, but they are very knowledgeable, quick thinking and resourceful individuals. This study found that people tend to react to feeling under threat: for example, when not being able to get a job to enable one to function within society. For the men to lose their family boat and occupation was for them a loss of personal and social identity. Being without a job, society and politicians label you as a scrounger, as lazy scum, as the root of all society's ills. Having a job not only means you can provide food and shelter, but that you can be part of your community and wider society. I would not call a fisherman a scrounger, as the reaction would be extreme; they are hard working men, iron men, sea gods; not idlers.

Many of the fishers described worked alongside or with the Dutch and other European nationals. One man worked in South Africa for a few years, another in New Zealand. Philip Ibbotson recalled fondly an 'Italian fella' he crewed with, taking time to find out what career he went on to do. Tom Rowley warmly remembered fishing alongside many foreign nationals, describing the scene at sea as like a cosmopolitan city, with boats all lined up bow to stern and side by side, lighting up the night.

> Cos when we used to get them on the, er, herrings come up in the night, so drift nets, we used t have about 40-50 Scotchmen August, September in Scarborough. They'd shoot drift nets on top ovt water, mehbe a bit deeper than this room, an' they'd have two or three mile of them, then just lay with 'em, let 'em drift. Then the herring come up in the night and swim up into a wall of net, that was their job.

And us as trawlers used to wait while daylight come, when the herrings condensed down t bottom. So soon as they hit the bottom the cod gets ‘em all. First one through, tow-in, it’s easy to get, I’ve got pictures, 1000s stone of cod an’ stuff like that, an’ but, erm, we just used to sit waiting for day light talk t Scotchmen, shigging their nets, an’ shouting across, the sea would be just like raining ‘pituspitusss’, all with herrings all ont top ovt water.

An’ whales would just come alongside you an’ blow, an’ get a mouth full of herring, an’ go down again. An’ they were y’best, they were y’best markers for herring shoals was a whale. Cos you’d see a whale turn over, then if you saw him coming back other way, you knew he was on the mark; that was better than any sonar, or anything for finding herrings.

An' we just used to wait while herrings went down, shoot our trawl, tow through ‘em, cod, cod full of herring, too fat t swim, an’ that’s how you caught ‘em in the trawl net.

But everybody got on, there was no, to say there was thirty, forty trawlers even, fishing, and thirty forty drifters, all in three- or four-square mile. It was like a city, lit up out there. An’ you used to get the Dutch and the German’s, and French, all fishing in’t North Sea.

Tom Rowley, skipper, owner

At the time, there were enough resources to go around, so the fishermen didn’t feel threatened by dozens of foreign boats after the same fish. In one exchange a fishermen wanted to stop the ‘foreign boats’; on the face of it an intolerant answer, but with follow up questions, his first was concern for the welfare of fishermen on these boats, although they did want the EU to stop updating and changing the rules.

This frustration at ever-changing legislation, which seemed focused on the fishing industry, turned into a bubbling anger, with no political outlet and no-one listening to their opinions this sleeping giant become a very irate political leviathan.

In political terms, a sleeping giant is how Cees Van der Eijk and Mark N. Franklin (2004) would describe voter frustration and then action (de Vries, 2007). Historically the political parties of the UK all agreed that membership of the EU was a good thing, and the ministers who did interact with the fishermen, in the men's opinion, didn't understand their concerns or fight for their interests. The men were frustrated and could do nothing to show this annoyance, and without a political voice to articulate their concerns and dissatisfaction with EU membership, it simmered under the surface. Then suddenly the Conservative government opened the EU-UK debate and called for a referendum on EU membership. At last, an outlet, the sleeping dragon could roar.

Catherine E. de Vries, *Sleeping Giant: Fact or Fairytale? How European Integration Affects National Elections* (2007) expanded on this theory by looking at how matters within the European Union influenced national elections in a way that previously they had not done. National elections are predominantly fought on domestic issues by the two main parties, but due to this growing sleeping giant of anti-European feelings whipped up by political actors, the EU became a domestic issue. This is achievable when EU issues are noticeable and perceived conflict with them is high. In the UK for the last thirty years, there has been a string of inflammatory headlines supposedly quoting outrageous EU law. For example, banning prawn cocktail crisps (no they didn't!) and the beloved custard cream biscuit

(still available) to the official curvature of bananas (still bendy) (Lyons, 2016)[16]. Even popular sitcoms had a dig at these supposed infractions to British life. In one episode of The Thin Blue Line[17], written by Ben Elton, a 'European Commissioner for Human Rights and a French citizen' is accidentally arrested, while Rowan Atkinson's Inspecter Fowler's hero character is aghast: 'a Frenchman, in my station!'

> You, you British err? No wonder we all hate you. Your chocolate isn't chocolatey enough, your bananas are too long and bendy, you insist on eating prawn cocktail crisps, despite the fact we have told you not to! (Dailymotion/The Thin Blue Line, 2011)

The scene ends with the villainess Mayor running after the Frenchman in fawning appeasement. While I am not suggesting Ben Elton caused Brexit, but the frequent repeating of falsehoods in popular culture has become so ingrained in the British psyche that they became a version of truth. It was then easy to exploit these 'truths' for political gain.

During the EU referendum in the UK, the problems with the fishing industry and the EU took centre stage in many newspaper headlines, highlighting and utilizing the conflict in the public's mind. It was this dissatisfaction that was tapped into and developed by political actors dubbed 'Brexiteers', who pushed for the UK to leave the European Union in the referendum vote of 2016.

Hope

During the campaigning months, the British fishing fleet became a flagship of Brexit (Ares, et al., 2017). Politicians latched onto the taught history and into the national psyche of the imperial image of Britannia ruling the waves, with publicity stunts such

[16] A handy Guardian article, also worthy of note is how many of these stories were made up or exaggerated by those who became Brexiters, Boris Johnson, Jacob Rees Mog, Rachel Johnson, and David Rennie.
[17] Series 2, Episode 2; Ism, Ism, Ism. First broadcast 21 November 1996.

as a flotilla of boats and fishing vessels sailing up the Thames past Parliament with Nigel Farage, then leader of the UK's Independence Party, on board, these polemical photo opportunities created huge media stories. Attended by every national news outlet, this event was designed to highlight perceived problems with the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and by association, European membership. By representing the UK fishing industry as a last bastion of imperial glory, fighting against persecution by the EU, the Leave campaign repurposed existing mythologies of Britishness to advance the cause of Brexit. They called this makeshift fleet an armada, directly linking their course with Elizabeth I and England smiting the foreign invasion.

The National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation remained neutral throughout the Brexit campaign and referendum; however, the Scottish Fishermen's Federation's (SFF) CEO Bertie Armstrong came out in full support[18]. Armstrong, quoted in Holyrood, Scotland's current affairs magazine, echoes how many fishermen felt:

> We are unusual, and possibly unique, in embracing Brexit with open arms. Whatever people think of other aspects of it, fishing was very wrong indeed under the Common Fisheries Policy.
>
> (Kirkaldy, 2018)

Brexit had promised so much to these fishermen with phrases like 'taking back control' seen and heard frequently, with ministers such as the then Agriculture Minister, Michael Gove (2017-2019) quoted as saying, 'The Prime Minister is crystal clear; the moment we leave, we become an independent coastal state' (Kirkaldy, 2018). Gove is also quoted as pledging to withdraw from the 1964 London fisheries

[18] Chief Executive from 2005-2019. Bertie Armstrong was awarded an OBE in the Queen's birthday honours list 2020. He said, 'I am please this OBE recognises the input the Scottish fishing industry made to the grand debate coming to a head soon, establishing the UK as an independent coastal nation.'

convention, which would then enable the UK to control the zone between six and twelve miles out (Kirkaldy, 2018). Even George Eustice, at the time, Minister for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs eulogised,

> As we leave the EU and look forward to a new era for fishermen, we have an opportunity to design a new domestic fishing policy – one which is in the best interests of all parts of the fishing fleet and allows our industry to thrive.
>
> (Seafarers UK, 2018)

Control of the waters, especially the six to twelve-mile boundary, is a particular flash point with the fishermen; David Normandale told me this was how we could bring back fishing as he knew it.

> **DN:** I would like to see it eventually, but it may take 10-15 years now, before it recoups again.
>
> […] But we have to get rid of these bigger foreign boats, fishing just off the 6-10 mile away, for it to come back again.
>
> Whether it will or not I don't know. It won't be in my lifetime!
>
> David Normandale, skipper

However, some sharing of waters will continue as grandfather fishing rights, which are historical fishing patterns used by some EU fishermen, which gives them the right to continue fishing in those close waters. The UK then has only a twelve nautical mile exclusion zone around its coastline which it has to share with other nations in the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Other coastal states such as Norway and Iceland, after a change in international law in the 1970s, managed to claim a two hundred nautical mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) around their coastline, depending on proximity to other lands. This equates to Iceland keeping around 90%

of the fish in its exclusive zone while the UK only keeps 40%. Bertie Armstrong argued that when the UK leaves the EU and the CFP, it would be an independent coastal nation able to access all of the fish in the local waters, or as he puts it, 'harvesting what grows in your farm' (Kirkaldy, 2018). The then Agriculture Minister Michael Gove, promised that after the UK left the EU on 29th March (this was the expected date in 2018), it would pull out of the CFP and have its own EEZ of up to two-hundred miles. Purportedly, the UK hoped to be like Norway and negotiate with the EU on equal terms for fishing rights and ultimately keep more fish for the UK's fishermen (Roberts, 2018).

Armstrong did not exclude the possibility of letting European fishermen have access to our waters, but only at the UK's discretion, setting our own quotas for foreign fishermen. The EU did not and does not want this and demands access to 'our' waters. There was discussion from the UK Government about staying in the CFP until 2020 rather than March 2019 and many fishermen's unions were furious. Bertie Armstrong's language was strong on this:

> The EU would like to mix markets – 'unless you give us access to your waters then you won't access our markets' – to which the answer is, would you like the one-word or the two-word response?
>
> (Kirkaldy, 2018)

However, this is nothing compared to the language of the fishermen themselves.

It is in the language of Brexit and how the framing of the EU as a villain, stealing our food and resources, taps into a British mythology and collective psyche of the nation as the plucky underdog rising, the heroes of Arthurian legend and a looking back to times of greatness, when we defeated foreign powers from our

impenetrable island. Through language, the Brexiteers sold a sacred vision of Albion, they sold hope to the fishermen.

Language

To understand how emotions were fed into the fishing industry it is necessary to digest and assimilate the soundbites and speeches. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (2014) argues that emotions are cultural practices not psychological states. Emotion used in speeches effect the body of society and the individual aligning them with popular ideology. The repetition of words used in speeches produces an emotional response which grows and intensifies with every hearing. Mary Douglas, (2002) is also used to understand how this order it maintained.

Purity, Dirt and Expulsion

Mary Douglas writes that humans make sense of the world by forming patterns with what should be there, purity, and what does not fit, uncleanness. Douglas explains we classify all we encounter into three categories: tolerated, submerged into the pattern, or rejected. The EU was a discordant idea interfering with the comforting pattern of how the fishers understood their lives, one the fishermen tried to assimilate but ultimately needed to reject. Some of the men mentioned that when they were asked back in the 1970s if they wanted to join the CFP and ultimately the EU they said ‘no’ but were persuaded. In their minds, they have tried to make it work but could not.

> Well in ‘74 we were all asked if we wanted to join the Common Market, all, all the fishermen, and I’m sure round the country said ‘no we don’t’; but we were talked into it, and it sounded good, we all joined the common market, not the EU as it is today, an’ it’s terrible for a fisherman.

Jim Buckingham, skipper, owner

It is generally believed amongst the fishermen that the expulsion of the EU from British fishing waters will return the pattern to something more harmonious. Not only the psychological pattern, but the physical pattern of the establishment of the promised UK Exclusive Economic Zone (British Sea Fishing, n.d.).

Douglas notes that those in the margins have power; fishermen inhabit the edges of our nation, the edge of our seascape and inhabit the edges of day and night. They operate in the edges of our psyche; protect the edges and you protect the whole. Or in the case of Brexit marketing propaganda, listen to the fishermen, the men at the sharp edge of EU interference, they know all and can protect us.

Headlines in the national press claiming ‘the biggest ever invasion’ create panic and fear that something has invaded and penetrated the boundary of our national body. This is transferred into the fear that we will be changed or subjugated in some way, which eventually generates hate and loathing, as ‘they’ are taking what is ‘ours’, and this was exploited by the right-leaning press.

FISHING WAR: France trawlers INVADE UK waters − Angry fishermen rage 'We'll STONE THEM'

FISHING wars have erupted off the coast of Cornwall − following the ‘biggest ever invasion’ of French trawlers in British waters. [sic]

Headline from the UK, *Express* Newspaper (Nellist, 2018)

According to Ahmed, invasion, being incorporated into something else is crucial to the politics of fear and a ‘cannibalistic fantasy’.

> Such fantasies construct the other as a danger not only to one's self as self, but to one's very life, to one's very existence as a separate being with a life of one's own.
>
> (Ahmed, 2014, p. 64)

Concerning the EU, one can see how easy it was to position it as a cannibalistic machine, gobbling up countries and people, assimilation into the Euro-Borg: a fearsome faceless enemy whipping out nuance, individuality, and identity. It is unclean and must be expunged.

Magnifying Fear

In their speeches and public declarations, political actors took fear and reflected it back to the fishermen. Ahmed cites Machiavelli (1950) 'fear is maintained by a dread of punishment which never fails' (Ahmed, 2014, p. 63); Fred Normandale's quip about the 'eye in the sky'; an image of being constantly watched and in fear of an unseen enemy that could strike at any moment, and Tom Rowley's 'threat of fines'. Fear was all around for the fishers; the pressure of keeping up with fast-changing laws, the threat of huge fines and hostile inspections; a fear of constant punishment.

Fishery leaders, ministers and political actors selected words and phrases to place the EU into the shade, giving it a darker more sinister image. According to Ahmed this impression of something in the darkness has the effect of magnifying the emotion of fear, we become more fearful of what we cannot see than that which we see clearly. 'So the object of fear is not simply before us… but impresses upon us in the present, as an anticipated pain in the future' (Ahmed, 2014, p. 64). Armstrong reinforces this with phrases such as 'veiled threat' and 'unspoken half sentence', something unseen and nasty; this again is reflected in the language of the fishermen, 'behind a locked door' and 'ulterior motives. Ahmed calls these 'sticky' words as they

are remembered, through repetition through the fishermen, intensifying their meanings of an unseen threat and fear.

> Mr Barnier, President Tusk and Mr Verhofstadt have all made dark threats that there will be changes after Britain leaves the EU. Well, you bet there will be changes – those gentlemen always phrase it as a veiled threat, with the unspoken half of the sentence being that you won't much like the changes.
>
> Bertie Armstrong, Scottish Fishermen Federation
>
> (Kirkaldy, 2018)

> We've always had a fishing fleet, and there's no reason why we shouldn't have a fishing fleet now. It's been taken from us artificially, stolen from us by politicians from other countries, not here in the UK even, we are not in charge of our own fisheries anymore. We are administered from Europe. And for whatever reason we are being denied the right to fish when there is plenty of fish in the sea.
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

> But hopefully if we do get Brexit, we'll be able to set our own quotas. We don't have to go behind a locked door in Brussels and get what you beg for, we'll set our own quotas, in conjunction with politicians and scientists, we don't want it to be a free for all, that would be really irresponsible. But neither do we want someone telling us what we can and carn't catch, and they have got other ulterior motives.
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

(BBC World Service, 2011) (3 mins 50 sec)

This pressure and anxiety the fishermen believe has been a direct result of the policies of the EU − the EU for them represents that unseen threat and fear. When this fear is confirmed by the words of leaders, it acts as confirmation that all the fishers' problems are because of the EU.

To add to the fishermen's anxiety, fear has also followed them onto the land. Ahmed also cites Furedi (1997) who sees fear as a personal safety issue that is tied to the weakening of the social institutions that link the individual with their society (Ahmed, 2014, p. 71). The fishermen can see how their society, their Bottom End has changed, as routines and traditions have weakened. The Bottom End no longer revolves around the fishing industry. This feeling of separation from the communities they grew into and the one they find themselves in produces fear and longing for a time when they felt safe.

TP: So how has the town changed since you were a lad?

DN: It's ruined now. Pulling things down. Futurist has gone. Cinemas have gone, everything else, big hotel top of town went. They got that halfway down, and suddenly decided 'oh it's protected', 'sorry, too far gone now'.

TP: Do you think there was more of a community? The Bottom End seemed quite strong.

DN: Oh, definitely. You knew everybody in the harbour, all knew em, all help each other. […] I go down there now, and I don't know a soul. Not one person.

David Normandale, skipper

Them and Us

During and after the Brexit referendum, the UK country felt like it was on the brink of civil war, the emotions and hatred towards those of a different opinion were all around. If you are already fearful then turning that into hate is quite easy. Ahmed examines how emotions such as fear and hate are produced by words and metaphors, which divide people into two conflicting camps: 'them' and 'us.' Some want to protect and love society in opposition to those who threaten it, or as the Express headline implies those who 'invade'. Those who are not us are the invaders, they threaten what is ours, they threaten to take away something that should be your birthright, as a true subject of the nation. As Ahmed explains,

> These short sentences depend on longer histories of articulation, which secure the white subject as sovereign in the nation, at the same time as they generate effects in the alignment of 'you' within the national body. (Ahmed, 2014, p. 2)

When Phillip said to me, 'I don't know about you, love, but I'm proud to be British.' it was not said with an air of nonchalance or semi-interest, it was said angrily, it was a demand as if in threat − if I were a Remainer, I was the threat. It was also said as if the two are mutually exclusive, he voted Leave because he loves the nation, anyone who didn't must hate the nation. This type of wording, professing love whilst not directly expressing hate has the same impact. By turning away from the object of fear one turns towards the object of love, which becomes a defence against the threat (Ahmed, 2014, p. 68).

Fear is also concerned with saving not just 'me' but also 'us', and life as we know it (Ahmed, 2014, p. 64). For the Bottomenders and many fishermen, Brexit was a vote to save their ancient way of life for their grandchildren. The interviewees were

genuinely concerned for everyone's future, voting Brexit for them was an attempt to save all of us. They wanted Britain to 'stand on our own two feet', to resist the machinations of Europe.

> Well, that's the thing, it's not going to benefit me, […] it's our children and grandchildren an' that, that's the thing.
>
> Jim Buckingham, skipper, owner

By analysing words and objects that circulate in the public domain Ahmed identifies how emotions such as fear and hate 'stick' to certain words and phrases and use cultural histories and associations to reinforce the idea of 'them' and 'us' as enemies and actors. This emotional stickiness of words and phrases leads to repetition, from political actors' speeches to hearts and minds and the mouths of the fishermen.

> It's crazy, but it's more punishment because we are coming out of Europe, they've cut cod quotas, they've cut haddock quotas, they've introduced this because they are punishing the Brits.
>
> Fred Normandale, skipper, owner

This idea of punishment for our democratic choice is a theme running throughout the fishing Brexit debates. And if you supported remaining in the EU, you were complicit in hurting the people of the nation or even being treasonous to the UK.

> Boris is trying to defend us from the EU's attempts to punish us for our democratic choice to leave. [sic]
>
> Professor Andrew Roberts.
>
> (Webb & Carnie, 2019)

Off with their Heads

When some press headline with 'Traitors', 'Enemy of the People' and certain language becomes normalised, at what point do we say imagery like this, openly and proudly displayed outside parliament yesterday, is unacceptable?!! @JoStevensLabour

Fig 31: Source Twitter

Punishment was also to be meted out to those treacherous Remainers who were described in the media and by political leaders as traitors. Linking them to historical ways in which Britain, when it was strong and independent, used to deal with this type of person. This is shown very clearly by Darren Selkus (Brexit Party candidate), who posted a video to social media exclaiming on a visit to the Tower of London with his children:

> With all the news this week, with the Tory Remainers and rebels, plotting with the opposition, in parliament, to block the result of the referendum, stop us leaving the EU on the 31st October, denying democracy, I thought what better to do than take them (his kids) down to the Tower of London, and show them how the UK used to deal with traitors who are committing treason have a good day. [sic]
>
> (Evans, 2019) (spelling as published)

Academics have also used phrases to suggest a link between the defence of the realm and traitors, Andrew Roberts Professor of War Studies at King's College London said:

Boris is trying to honour the referendum results and his enemies are all trying to subvert it [sic]

Professor Andrew Roberts (Webb & Carnie, 2019)

Ahmed's theory explains how Roberts and Selkus' sentences can have numerous emotional connotations and recollect history to guide us in how to treat people in the future (Ahmed, 2014, p. 220). As Douglas noted, we use our history as a comfort and a guide in how to navigate our future; Roberts and Selkus are offering people a tried and tested historical way to deal with those who threaten the sovereignty of our nation.

The call for Britain to stand on its own two feet is a call to be separate from the others for the nation to be 'less emotional, less open, less easily moved' to one that is strong, hard or tough (Ahmed, 2014, p. 3). This attribution dredges up the possibilities of emotions being seen as female and beneath modern man, a throwback to times before civilisation and a lack of good judgement. This infers that those who wanted to vote leave are the grown-ups, the ones with good judgement taking tough decisions to protect their nation, the child of the sovereign male. This of course has been reinforced by politicians using insults such as 'big girls' blouse' and 'girly swot' (Evans, 2019) to undermine perceived feminine aspects and demand the nation be more male by being stronger and independent. This was also reflected with Fred Normandale adopting a female voice for the voice of the minister in charge of fishing.

> We must not cede sovereignty or tell the EU it can go on making decisions for us. Why on earth would you do that with your own natural

> capital? That is not the same as refusing to allow a degree of access in an interim period, while we move from the compromised position from inside the CFP to the day we can harvest what grows in our own farm. The central point is that we must retain sovereignty – that means you can be kind or unkind in negotiations, with regard to quotas, on an annual basis. Bertie Armstrong, Scottish Fisheries Federation.
> (Kirkaldy, 2018)

Using Ahmed's approach, the pictures and histories of the productive farm analogy colour the reception of Armstrong's speech, attaching histories − the mythology of England as a green and pleasant land, and therefore emotion, to certain words and phrases. The farming analogy has very strong historical, ideological and political meaning attached to it. England is the home of rolling hills and a rural idyll of yesteryear when all was well with the world and for some, when Britain ruled a quarter of the globe. Although to precisely date this idealised period is impossible and likely subjective. 'Harvesting what grows in your own farm' is suggesting the natural order of British things, the farmer and his workers toil in backbreaking work throughout the year to reap the rewards of the harvest, to which the Christian calendar observes a thanksgiving to God. The bounty is God-given, from him to us, our 'own natural capita' that we have worked hard for. It would be a terrible crime for a foreign farmer to pitch up and start harvesting a British farmer's field; everyone would see the theft. What Armstrong is implying, is that we 'harvest' our own farm rather than the current situation where foreign fishermen plunders our crop of fish, it is a clear statement of the stealers and invaders, and the us – the honest hardworking Brit. It is the them and us shtick again.

> On the arrival of Brexit, our exclusive economic zone will become a reality for fishing, and we will have sovereignty over the resources in there, so that's why the fishing industry is calling this a sea of opportunity. If we move towards the position that every other coastal state finds itself in, which is taking first call on the resource that exists in its area – harvesting what grows in your farm, if you like – then Brexit is a very, very good thing. Bertie Armstrong, Scottish Fisheries Federation.
>
> (Kirkaldy, 2018)

Armstrong tells his listeners that 'we will have sovereignty over the resources'. Brexit will put a stop to this plunder, putting our fishermen in charge of their fish. Armstrong repeats the phrase 'retain sovereignty' and 'must not cede sovereignty' and it is a word used in many political speeches; he is telling his listeners that they are the kings of the sea, or rather for the Bottomender, they will be Sea Gods again. Armstrong is demanding that the UK set the rules for their industry, not a distant foreigner in Brussels who lets other foreigners steal what is not theirs. The most notable EU fisheries minister was Maria Damanaki, a woman the fishermen really didn't like; most fishermen refer to her as 'that bloody Greek woman'.

Both the speeches and statements from the fishermen and the ministers have an emotional component, but to what degree did this influence their voting preference? Ahmed analyses speeches from 2010 to find the emotional stickiness of words, but Jonathan Moss, Emily Robinson, and Jake Watts, Brexit and the Everyday Politics of Emotion: Methodological Lessons from History (Moss, et al., 2020), argue that most notably, emotions have been used since at least the year 2000 to win political debates.

They reason that emotional debates were of course used before this, but the tide turned after the beginning of this century, and it has now become the dominant way to argue. They analysed data from the project Mass Observation (MO) which sends out surveys to one thousand people every three to four months specifically to gauge their 'feelings' on current matters. Moss et al. wanted to examine real people's 'everyday narratives', and in doing so found that emotional language and 'feelings' were reported to be behind many people's reasoning when deciding to vote Remain or Leave. They quote previous studies that show emotions affect how people vote, interestingly those who were angry, like my fishermen, were less likely to listen to cost benefits and instead more likely to have relied on their emotional responses.

> Anxiety encourages individuals to seek more information, while anger leads them to close off new sources of information and rely upon pre-existing attitudes.
>
> Likewise, hope and enthusiasm are associated with higher levels of campaign interest and participation, while anxiety and anger have been shown to affect political tolerance (Marcus, 2000). Various studies highlight the role of emotion specifically in shaping citizens' attitudes towards the EU and European integration. Vasilopoulos and Wagner (2017) found that voters who reported feeling angry with the EU were less receptive cost–benefit considerations, less nuanced in their opinions about integration and – unsurprisingly – more likely to want to leave the EU than citizens who reported feeling anxious.
>
> (Moss, et al., 2020)

The people in my study were very angry and when working felt very anxious; both powerful emotions were directed, rightly or wrongly, at the EU. My fishermen were

generationally Eurosceptic, which had grown into a mythology, Britain as the under-dog hero against the villain EU, and in their anger these feelings intensified.

Moss et al. also concluded that people trusted their gut feelings and emotional responses, but then thought negatively of others who used their own gut feelings to come to a different conclusion. Many respondents blamed their reliance on gut feelings and emotions due to a lack of facts or information they could trust. My interviewees trusted their experiences as they saw them and trusted their emotions to decide their vote.

Fishermen's Brexit

The men used phrases such as feeling 'guilty' for fishing, that they were made to feel like 'thieves' when they 'had done nothing wrong.' They felt the EU was stopping them from catching fish, 'the British fisherman is going to sea to avoid fish' and making them throw away perfectly good fish by the practice of discards or heavily fining them for landing already dead fish. The system they felt was 'crazy' and was a 'punishment' to the fishermen. It had become a high-pressure, high-stakes industry, and now it carried the additional burden of being boarded indiscriminately and having your logbook scrutinised, with the constant threat of high fines for any indiscretion.

In this atmosphere of depression, anxiety and fear the Prime Minister announced the Brexit referendum. Fishermen were starting to see that their complaints were being listened to, that politicians and political actors were not only listening directly to them but promising them a future filled with hope. Their sleeping giant of frustration had a voice within the voting system, and they felt they had to inform the rest of the UK about the problems with EU membership as they saw it.

The fishermen's words and body language told me they were at the end of their tether working under EU directives. Tom Rowley repeatedly told me it was

‘stressed’, that he ended up being more like ‘an accountant’, it was stressful trying to keep up with many changes of nets sizes and the cost of such.

Tom and Fred mentioned, almost spat out the words that the government would pay you to chop up your boat and pay you to not be a fisherman but would not help with costly net changes or other directives, nor even with money for much needed safety improvements.

Fred believed that the more recent directives were a ‘punishment’ for the British fisherman for daring to want to Leave the EU. This reflects the language of the unions and political actors as described above. Even physically, for example when Philip told his story of being boarded by the ‘gumboat’ for what seemed like every day for ‘months and months’ when they hadn’t even wet their nets; the gumboat was, of course, an agent of the EU directly threatening the men and making them feel guilty for fishing.

The men all said they just wanted to do an ‘honest’ day’s work. They increasingly felt unwanted in an industry that had grown up around generations of their ancestors. The whole reason for the Bottom End was the fishers, now with their sons unable to follow them, the men felt that this was a huge personal failure on their part. The most evident emotion surrounding the fishers was loss and grief. Often, they could not say the words, but a gesture, a look, the intensity of emotions being expressed, spoke loudly. It was a grief for the hopes of the next generation, a loss of identity, a loss of occupation, a loss of generational fishing, the loss of an honest day’s work and the loss of their Bottom End.
They also desperately wanted to believe the politicians; they wanted a resurrection.

Brexit, for these fishermen, was a reaction to placelessness, a reaction to feeling excluded and locked out, stagnated within society, they could no longer see a

place for themselves or their descendants. The fishermen are rooted in their places and live a life steeped in tradition and generational fishing, which grounded them and gave them their purpose. But through the regulations proposed by the EU and enforced by the UK government they saw their industry destroyed. So, they reacted and rejected that future world for one that was recognisable from the past, one they hoped included fishermen. They believed that the Bottom End and the fishing industry would be rejuvenated by exiting the European Union. The men were identifying with the emotion of hope.

'This is where this Brexit is coming from.'

Only this wasn't a detailed EU contract with rules and regulations to protect the buyer; it was a good old-fashioned British, 'buyer beware' purchase.

And after hope there is silence.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this thesis, I made two, declarations:

In 2016 the UK held a referendum on whether it should Remain inside or Leave the European Union, with fishermen in support of Brexit.

In 2016 I had an Autistic breakdown.

These two statements formed the base for my interview strategy. Essentially, who are the Bottomenders and fishermen of the North Yorkshire coast and why did they vote for Brexit; and why am I falling apart?

To discover the answer to the first question, I talked to the fishermen of Scarborough and Bridlington about their industry but centred my research on the Bottomenders of Scarborough for their homogeneity and identification with place.

Two generations ago, my family lived in the Bottom End, fishing from cobles with hand-pulled lines and pots and embracing the lifestyle of the local community. If the family had not been moved from Paradise to the estate on the hill, and fishing had continued as it had done for hundreds of years, I would have grown up there. So, when the Brexit referendum stirred up the country, I wanted to find out who these ancestral Bottomenders and fishermen were, and why they thought Brexit was the best solution to their current problems.

The Bottomenders lived in an area that had for hundreds of years been constructed to be centred around the fishermen, specifically the men. They were the pinnacle of the community; people's jobs relied on the economic vitality of the skippers taking their boats out to sea. It was also a community that lived very differently to the rest of Scarborough, keeping unsociable work hours, a myriad of superstitions and practices, a distinct dialect and the smell of fish all helped to keep outsiders out. The Bottom End was socially sealed off from Scarborough, yet it was

only the men who left in their boats to go to sea or sometimes stay in other harbours and fishing communities along the coast. The women were expected to lead very traditional gendered roles of wife and mother but also be workers, for the older generation that was the cottage industry of coble fishing, but for the generation interviewed it was through jobs in other industries.

These distinct and identifiable characteristics became part of the Bottomenders' identity; they associated with the geographical area, fishing and industry and the close community, it was a self-fulfilling and self-perpetuating community. However, this thesis attempts to record the effects of when this certainty and reassuring life pattern began to destabilise and record the actions the fishers took to reclaim that mythologised lifestyle. During the 1960s when all the country was undergoing huge social change from external influences, the men of this study started their careers and drifted into trawl fishing, leaving the traditional cobles of their fathers. This freed the women to work in jobs that were not involved in the fishing industry; so, unlike their grandmothers, mothers or aunties, they didn't have to learn to bait lines, skein mussels, or hawk the fish in market stalls or around the hotels. The social fabric of the Bottom End had started to unravel and change for better and worse.

During the 1970s, the UK joined with Europe on trade agreements, which eventually developed into treaties establishing the European Union. Fishing regulations were transferred to the control of Brussels but by the 1980s fish stocks were declining or collapsing. It was the sea's time to change. Regulations and fines for not following the new policies appeared to come thick and fast, hitting the men in unprecedented ways. The fishermen recognised that their industry was changing, and that began to affect them and how they thought of themselves and their position

in the greater society. The men identify with their boats and are hugely proud of the fact fishing was passed to them from their fathers and grandfathers, however, the scheme of decommissioning, not only crushed their boats but crushed the men and the pride they had in their livelihoods. They saw these regulations and laws as the interloper EU surreptitiously stealing their identity not only from them but from their descendants.

This research paper aims to go beyond the stereotypes of the reasons why a working-class community voted for Brexit, to provide a detailed and subtle portrayal of identity and the ramifications of that identity being threatened. Social and industrial changes were transforming the collective community, political and environmental landscape, threatening the fisher's identity, so they reacted in the familiar, a way guided by their community's myths and their own history.

McKenzie interviewed working-class people in a Nottinghamshire village and London, recording their reasons for voting Brexit (McKenzie, 2017), and found people were feeling displaced within the areas they were born. This study corroborates these findings as the Bottomenders, and the fishermen felt that they and their grandchildren were being prevented from participating in the generation lifestyle and occupation of their area. This left them feeling that they were not wanted, and had no purpose in their community, leading to the mobilisation for the vote to change. The study participants all mentioned their concerns for the future and how their grandchildren would not be able to continue the family occupation of fishing; this was a central concern. This study also recognises the Eurosceptic attitudes developing and festering beneath traditional roles for generations within the fishing industry.

This thesis differs from contemporary studies of working-class attitudes to Brexit, as I found that the fishermen had always been highly political and politically active within their industry. One man had been president of the Fishermen's Federation, and others sat on harbour committees; their fathers and grandfathers had been Harbour Governors as well as sea captains. They had attended meetings, discussed changes and made improvements in the community, as well as implementing protocols on animal welfare within their harbours. From the skipper to deckhands, all knew the legislation and believed they knew who had devised and implemented it. They were found to be a politically shrewd collection of people, but this engagement did not stop the encroach upon their industry. They felt helpless, ignored and emasculated by the restrictions fishing was being placed under, the dwindling number of boats, watching as support businesses were closing, and sons forced to seek work elsewhere.

The fishers of this study voted for Brexit believing that their past political activism guided them to the 'right' decision. They based their actions on their own first-hand political knowledge and experiences, and therefore their vote was a considered one, not a reductionist knee-jerk reaction to immigration, as other studies and certain sectors of the media have suggested.

The men repeatedly told me they were made to feel 'guilty' for fishing, 'guilty' for an honest day's work and that they were being treated as 'thieves' when they had 'done nowt wrong'. They told me that the rules became so restrictive that they were 'going to sea to avoid fish' and the rules were only there to 'punish the British fisherman'. The whole point of who they were, why they were and why the Bottom End existed has been, in their eyes, extinguished. After a career in fishing, they

ended up feeling worthless, increasingly invisible and with their community destabilised. More importantly, no one was listening to their cries for help.

This sleeping giant was woken and fed by the promises of the political actors championing Brexit. The men believed that Brexit would help them save their industry for their children, and in turn save their own identities.

Walking around the Bottom End today, it looks more left behind than other parts of Scarborough, it gives the impression of stagnation. As the fishermen were the reason the Bottom End existed, they felt personally responsible for its decline. They have been the last of their line and the last fishermen to live immersed in the Bottom End as an insular community, of idiosyncratic culture and practices.

The Brexit referendum promised to give this community the voice they craved, to be listened to, and thus gave them hope to reverse their industry and community decline. They wanted to see their family name around the harbour again, and they wanted to be able to pass on their knowledge, just as generations of elders had in the past. This study is significant as it records a distinctive working-class identity, who by voting for Brexit have expressed a profound hope for the future; they wanted to be an intrinsic part of a dynamic community again.

This research is not fully representative of the entire industry *n*or the whole of the Bottom End, as there were limits on whom I could interview, time constraints and a worldwide pandemic in contention for the attention of my subjects. However, my aim has been to provide an honest account of the responses of interviewees, and present a balanced picture of people's attitudes, beliefs, and values at this exceptional point in UK history. It would be of value to return and interview the 'pot men' to record how the break with the EU has affected their lives and fishing. It may also be provident to interview the few remaining fishermen's wives and women of the

old Bottom End to record their lives and experiences of this new landlocked existence.

The second question running through this piece was, why am I falling apart? That is simpler to answer. I was falling apart because I was an undiagnosed Autistic/ADHD middle-aged woman whose identity eventually ceased to function under the strain of forty-seven years of masking. There are many forty-plus aged woman who fall apart in these circumstances, there are fewer who document and publish as a PhD.

The second thread of the study is an individual account of identity reclamation. It offers not only a distinctive insight into how confusing life can be for undiagnosed adults, but it also documents the effect interviewing can have upon the ethnographer. Robert Pool (2017) claims that the ethnographer is never the same after being in the field and interviewing people. The study is a record of how this method of working can impact a person when they leave the study group behind. My breakdown and diagnosis did not affect my interviewees or the analysis of them, but it did change me and the person I am.

I understood what was happening to me was not a regular mental breakdown, or even depression, it was something more, it was something quite different, and it was influencing the study's analytical and narrative structure. Therefore, it needed to be examined and documented.

This study recognised the working-class gender roles of the estate and how these affected how I saw myself, and how I then reacted against them. Relph writes that the flip side to belonging is the drudgery of place, the knowledge that the place around you can stifle and smother, which can lead to a need to run away. It becomes a finely balanced tightrope to walk, the knowledge and love for a place, of the

complete belonging to it and being known within it, and the all-consuming nature of suffocation these elements bring. One must identify and accept this element of belonging in order to live within it successfully (Relph, 2008, p. 51). I was not successful; I saw the drudgery. I could never accept the asphyxiation of Scarborough; the boundary of my life was suffocating and restrictive, contrasting with the fishers' experience of a tight-knit boundary which kept them safe.

Within this all-consuming community structure there wasn't the option to conduct a personal exploration of neurodiversity, like the fishers, you just got on and tried not to make a fuss. In the 1980-90 mental health was not a priority and not something to speak of openly. No one had heard of neurodiversity, Autism or ADHD; it was a bit modern to be dyslexic. Anything emotional, or regarding one's mental health was only spoken about if or when it intruded upon other people. When it really could not be ignored any longer, it was reduced to hushed embarrassed tones, accompanied by a look, wide pointing eyes and a peculiar twitch of the head with the whispered words, 'a doctor… for up there.' It was the hidden shame, and so in shame, I hid from it.

Limburg calls this the 'Uncanny Valley', explaining that she to is caught between trying to be as human as she can but giving out those disturbing radio waves informing all other humans that she is other (Limburg, 2021, p. 3). Reading Limburg and Fran Lock forced me into a realisation that I didn't have any more 'try' with people left, and the public masks of compliance had started to slip. I only realised once I had crashed, that life had been a masquerade, shifting sands and quagmire that I flailed about in, trying to navigate a way around whilst getting nowhere. I am placeless and outside; I am other, and I have always been othered.

Alongside everything else I have to accept that I'm weird. This study is a testament to the revelatory and diagnostic process of that struggle toward acceptance.

The implications of this part of the study are personal. By 'outing' myself to the academic world I worry that I may have curbed the career I would like to have. This study stands as a testament to how difficult it is to be a working-class woman who is ADHD and Autistic in the academic world, but there is hope that this will start an academic conversation. We may be difficult to understand at times, but we make brilliant, creative, empathetic researchers, who have the energy of the devil.

Below is a statistic that is so important and made the biggest impact upon me, that I request you to take these results, let them fully sink in, and do better when you next meet a weird person. Give them more than one second of your time before banishing them to social oblivion. We may take some time to warm up, and as Lock writes, we are not allowed to take up time, but if you do offer us understanding you will be rewarded by entering a community who as a collective are brilliant, funny, clever and colourful.

Ruth Grossman's study on communication (2014) found that it took only ***ONE SECOND*** before the observers had correctly identified the children with autism and those without.

> Clearly there is something going on, something very salient and very subtle […] It happens all the time, and it leads to a reduced willingness of people to engage with people with autism.
>
> Ruth Grossman, (Denworth, 2018)

ADHD Assessment

I'm not sure why I added the ADHD to the assessment. I sort of had an inkling that I am very like my eldest son, which is why we understand each other, but also why we clash at times, it is a bit of a wild card, a punt. The autism, I've come to accept*,* makes a lot of sense.

I filled in about twenty self-assessment forms, which I hate because the answers are always more complicated than the preset responses provided, or the box is too small for the answer; and official forms give me cold sweats. The form says, do you do this thing now – well, I did when I was young but not so much now, do I put a definite yes, or a maybe? It was very stressful, and I've worried constantly since I handed them back to the woman in white. It has been an incredibly fraught few months, but now I'm sitting in my room on a camping chair at on old wonky table. The blinds are down, and the door shut so I don't get distracted.

If they say I am autistic or ADHD, how will it help now that I'm old?

Diagnosis is for the young, I am told.

As I wait, forty-seven years of rubbish is swirling around my head, I'm exhausted, and I haven't yet clicked on the link for the meeting.

It's going to last about two hours, my son's lasted two and a half.

I sit waiting with my thoughts, which is never a comfortable place to be.

I've talked a lot about physical and social boundaries around me, even linguistic ones, but I've not been brave enough to confront the inner boxes. I know this is going to be the point of the next two hours, but to be honest, I do not know if I can talk about these traits, this identity that I've kept so secret for all this time. But if I have to pick a favourite flavour it would be the artist, she is freer and closer to me.

The artist, who by nature spends hours in the clay lab or days by an easel is always searching for answers, open, looking from a different point of view, to test a theory, rigorously, the need to be near people. The artist has ideas, a constant state of imagination, ideas above her station. Her life governed by a seeking of answers; answers she will never truly find, but that is the game.

It is a push forward with childlike innocence and enthusiasm, the need to be creative, not to doubt, always doubted, the task you are setting yourself, both a refreshing place to inhabit but in it, you sit exposed. Deep velvet magentas, reds from post-box to ox blood, tips of orange, dashing pinks, sallow yellows mixed with umber browns: blacks, purples and royal sky blues. Pale skin warmed with gypsy tones, the artist Diana, The Hunter. The hunted.

And now you look at the artist as if she is the crow. Those cold coal eyes staring; ready with knowledge, to entertain or to inflict violence upon thee, you are not sure which. You look at her as if she is through a window, and the artist is not sure if it is You in the cage or. If it is her. One of us cannot move. One of us has freedom. And the unblinking black bead eyes stare waiting your next move.
She says I have a wonderful ADHD brain.

A mind that sees patterns, that's why when I interview, I notice the non-verbal, the sighs, the energy or the frustration; to create masks I observe, and those pinprick fine observations help me to see others so I can adapt my own behaviour when around them.

This is also why I travel many paths to get to an answer rather than go the logical way there. It is the need to see the full pattern, the view all the way around the problem; exploration, and why I can hold several lines of enquiry in my head at once: my little butterfly brain has a gift.

She asks me about collecting things; I tell her about the teddies when I was young, each with their place in the room, each needing to be tucked in at night. I tell her I collect books now; I forget to tell her about my stone collection. I do not tell anyone about my stone collection. I do not consider it a collection anymore because I've had to let go of so many, and folk look at you oddly when you have jars and boxes of stones everywhere. So now I pick up only one at a time, one that is beautiful in colour or pattern, or shape, or of a smoothness which interests me. And I carry it around in my pocket, a different stone for almost every coat. Then I let it go, release this ancient warrior back into the world. So, it is not collecting, it is more like stone relocation, or stone holiday boarding.

She wants me to describe how I feel in busy rooms, at parties; I tell her I do not go; I feel overwhelmed. I describe as best I can, the isolation, the volume, the spending half the time in the toilets crying, trying to hold it all together. Trying to be normal.

I cry.

I tell her my first love is clay.

I was taught by ceramic tutor and artist Peter Hough, who demanded exploration from his students. He insisted we go out into the world, find objects, smell the sea in the air and be a part of our environment of the North Yorkshire coast. His work was influenced by the skeins in the rock and the natural form, and he wanted us to take note of the colours and shapes around us. I spent many a happy hour, failing, trying and experimenting within the ceramic lab of Scarborough Sixth Form College. Ceramics taught me to fail, try again, and fail better. And a love of landscape.

I tell her I recently booked myself onto a wheel-throwing course, having never mastered the art when I was younger, and the moment I walked into that little studio,

I felt as if I were a feather, rising on a warm breeze. It was if the universe had aligned for that brief second, I breathed in and everything was in a perfect balance, with me at the centre. Then when I held the clay, I again felt connected, I felt part of something bigger. The sensation of my fingertips as the clay, a little bit of landscape, passed from hand to hand as I formed its identity.

I felt at peace. I felt like I was home.

She says I must carve out a place for me to go and do ceramics, a place in my timetable just for me, as a matter of urgency.

She asks me about routines for things, and yes, every job had a correct way to be done; I forgot to tell her the overwhelming emotion I feel when it is not. It is sort of an anxiety, but more a compulsion, a fear, an I-can't-rest-till-that-is-put-right-ness. I do not think it is an emotion that has a proper name. For example, when someone is sweeping a floor and missing bits, just wandering around flapping about. No. This is an occasion when methodical plodding is needed. Up and down, line by line, every square inch had to be swept, or it is not done, and I cannot rest.

Or when some crazy fool puts the washing out upside down and not in the correct order and using the wrong pegs for the items of clothing. Or worse still, bunches the fabric up; did they not learn anything from physics lessons? The thicker the fabric the longer it takes to dry either by evaporation from the sun or by wind.

She asks about cutlery, and if I have a favourite − sort of but not really, only for yoghurt, but that's because I can taste other food, or worse, tea on the spoons, so I keep one back for kefir. But she does not ask me about crockery − that would have been a longer conversation.

Masking is also a crossover between autism and ADHD, and I'm socially anxious. She's 100% sure I'm ADHD, she describes me as, 'textbook women

presentation' – I've never been textbook before, I'm normal. Excellent. I cannot describe to you the joy I feel at being normal at something; granted it is normal at being weird, but let's not dwell on that caveat.

I'm just a regular woman, in an area of my life I am regular, textbook, run-of-the-mill.

But she's not sure, taking out all the crossover symptoms I could have a stand-alone diagnosis of Autism, but she'll think, look at the forms, the dastardly forms, and she'll write a report. With a blink the room returns to quiet.

And I'm again left with my thoughts.

I try not to think.

I text my son that I am 100% text-book ADHD; 'no shit Sherlock' is the reply. Also 'congrats' (Congratulations on being weird and congratulations on becoming a member of the ADHD club).

I tell another son that she is concerned I am socially anxious; 'Really, Mother?' and 'She needed two hours to come to that conclusion?' He shakes his head in mock surprise and wanders back to his computer.

In the two weeks it takes for the report, I read a little more on female ADHD. It turns out that all the traits I have been calling 'the artist' is just my ADHD symptoms. My understanding of colour and shape, texture, the way I see the detail in the world. The tiniest detail, the patterns, the sense of a place that I experience. The emotional register, even if I cannot describe them, but the need to translate these onto a canvas or page. The energy and the fall.

Those unanswerable questions have made me an artist.

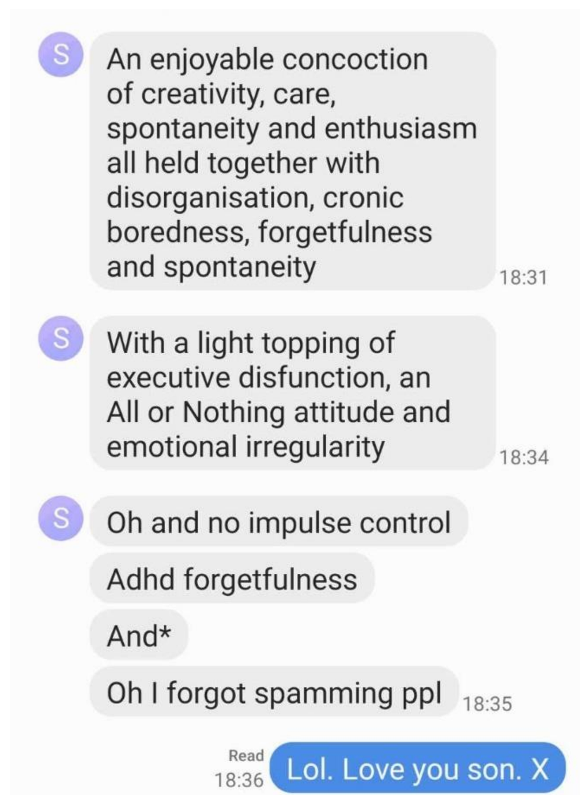


Fig 32 What is ADHD?

And it all boils down to this: what drives me is a neurological brain dysfunction, not some higher purpose. Just a mind carved out using the wrong map; Ikea instructions on a flat-pack brain.

Yeah, Ok. I'll take that and see where it goes.

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