

1.25 Mumbai, India (above), Toronto (top right), and Gander (right)

TOPIC 1.5

Geography and Culture

How would you feel if you lived in a city where there are 30 000 people per square kilometre?

What advantages and disadvantages are there to living in a big city or a small village?

Introduction

Can you think of reasons why Mumbai, India has 30 000 people per square kilometre, while Toronto has fewer than 3000 per square kilometre, and Gander has fewer than 100 per square kilometre? Part of the answer can be found in the natural environments, or geographic factors, of these urban centres. In this context, geography focuses on three main questions:

Where are things located? Why are they there?

How might this be important? Or as geographer Charles Gritzner puts it: “What is where? Why there? Why care?”

Geography is another lens through which we can examine culture. Two fundamental concepts in geography are **site** and **situation**. The site of a place refers to its **absolute location** (a position described in terms of latitude and longitude) and

the natural and human features that are found there. The situation of a place refers to its location in relation to its surroundings – in other words, its **relative location**. Elements of situation include its accessibility to resources and its connectedness to other places.

The different aspects of site and situation affect peoples’ lifestyles in many ways. For example, the traditional foods of Newfoundland and Labrador come from products immediately available here – such as fish, berries, and caribou. Likewise, many of our contemporary recreational activities, including snowmobiling, skiing, and hiking, are connected to the natural features of our landscape. Can you suggest ways in which our climate and landscape affect where people live?

How good is your geography? Take a blank piece of paper and sketch an outline of the province. When you’re done, compare it to an actual map.



1.26 (above) How are these activities related to natural environment?

1.27 (left) The oldest known map

Throughout history, humans have developed a variety of ways to relay information to others about a place's absolute position. These include maps, which depict Earth's surface (or a portion of it) on a flat piece of paper, and labelling systems, such as latitude and longitude.

The oldest known map of the world is the *Imago Mundi* from 6th century BCE Babylonia. It shows Babylon on the Euphrates, surrounded by a circular landmass and on the right a "bitter river" (Oceanus).

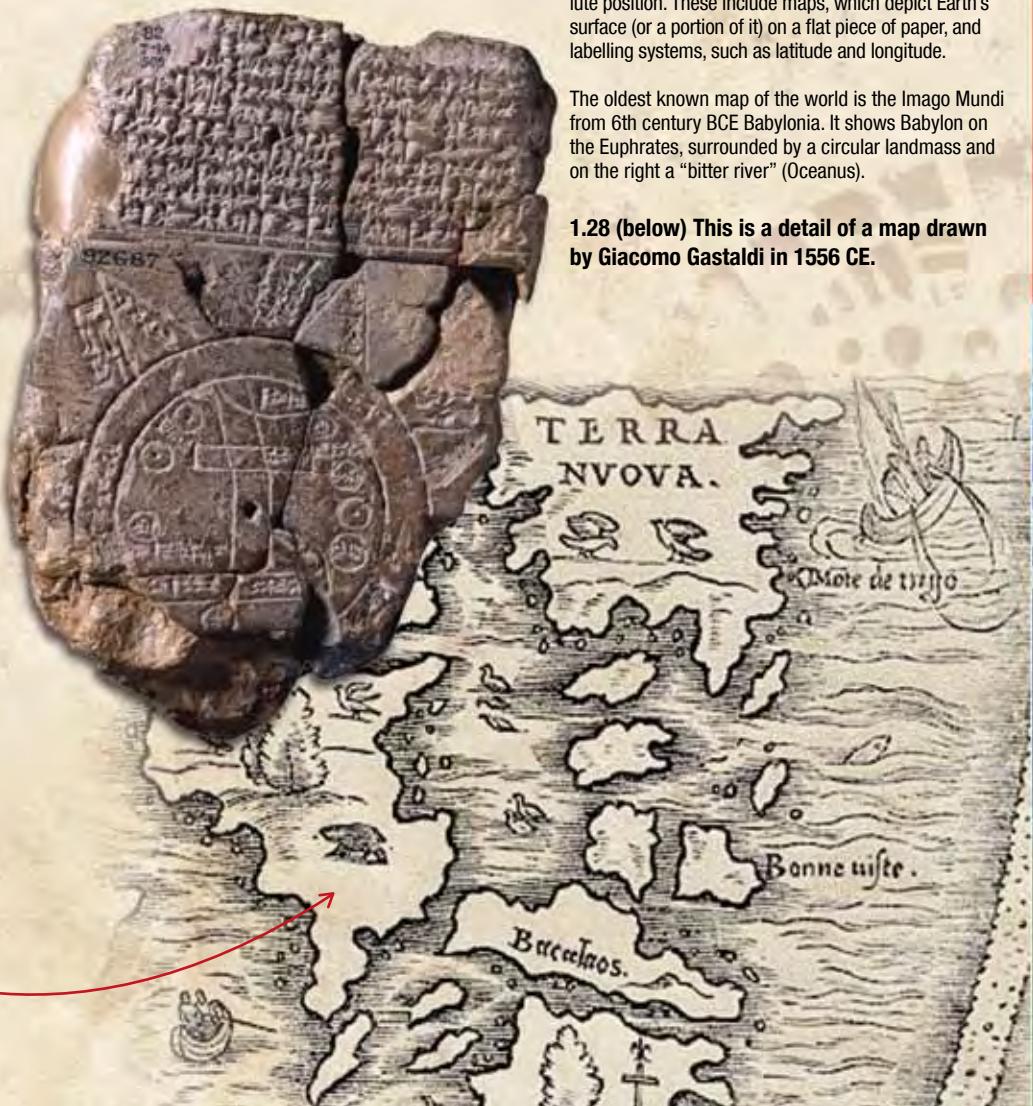
1.28 (below) This is a detail of a map drawn by Giacomo Gastaldi in 1556 CE.

WHAT MAKES US WHO WE ARE?

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries some geographers believed in environmental determinism. This was the belief that the physical environment is the primary factor in determining human behaviour. Groups of people who lived in similar environments (landscapes, climates, etc.) should have similar patterns of behaviour.

As more and more studies were done, it was discovered that people often responded in different ways to the same kind of environment. It was recognized that the environment does not dictate how people behave, but rather that people make choices among different possibilities. This led to the development of the term possibilism.

Possibilism allows that people sometimes make choices based upon environmental conditions, but also upon preferences which are often guided by their history and culture. For example, in Newfoundland and Labrador most people once fished because fish were bountiful (environmental factor). At the same time, some chose to farm, even though soils were not particularly good (preference).



1.29



1.30 Portugal Cove, Newfoundland and Labrador

From the information shown here, explain how site and situation influenced the development of this town. Now, consider the site and situation of your own community. What is the reason your community exists? Is it a result of site or situation or both?

Geography and Population Distribution

Site and situation can influence population distribution. Throughout history, humans tended to locate their homes near resources – such as fresh water, fertile soil, and natural food sources. The location of resources is a much less important factor in explaining where people live today than formerly. Today most people in developed countries reside in or near large cities. The trend toward greater urbanization is now global – occurring everywhere. Why is this? What are the advantages of living in or near cities? Why are great cities located where they are?

1.31



1.32 As you can see from this image, population distribution tends to be heavier along coastlines.

Population distribution is represented here as a night scene with population being represented by lights. If lights represent population distribution, where on this map should they be brighter?

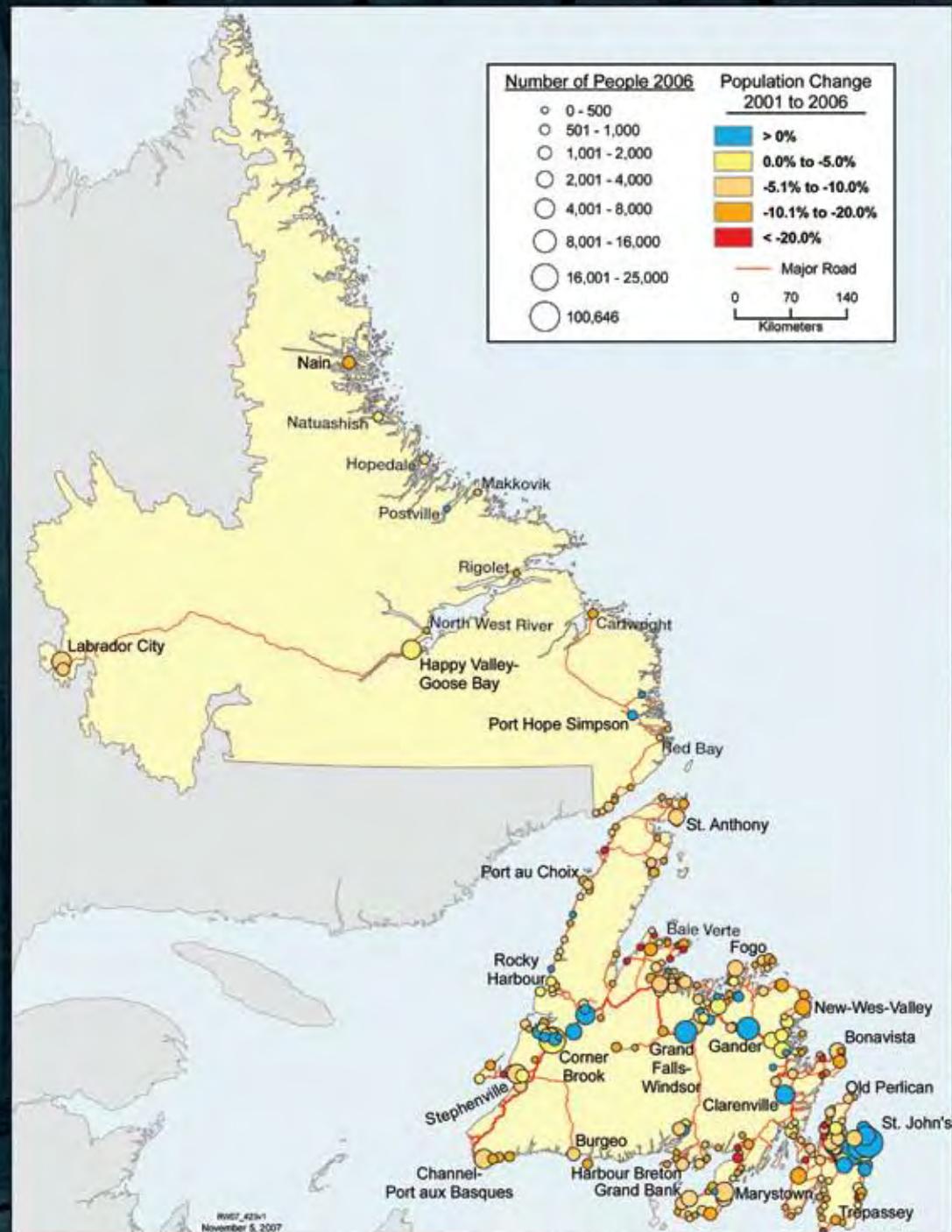


CASE STUDY

Looking at Population Distribution

CONSIDER HOW THE POPULATION DISTRIBUTION of the province is changing. The majority of communities are located along the coastline. However, based on recent trends, Newfoundland and Labrador is becoming increasingly urban.

1.33 Population distribution in Newfoundland and Labrador



Questions:

1. What accounts for this trend?
2. How will this trend affect the culture of the province?

Geography and Economy

A place's economy and its location (site and situation) are often strongly interconnected. In many cases, the natural **endowments** or qualities of an area are what first attracted inhabitants. Endowments used to meet basic human needs are called **resources**. Some resources are easily accessed and used – such as soil to grow crops – while others are more complex. Rocks, for example, are a nuisance for farming but can be used to build fences and buildings; fossil fuels like coal or oil must be extracted and processed before they are useful.

Which endowments are considered resources can vary over time and depend on economic or political factors. For instance, hats made of beaver pelts were once very popular in Europe. The abundance of beaver in eastern

North America, and its proximity to Europe, fuelled an industry that contributed to the settlement of Canada by Europeans. However, the supply of (and demand for) beaver pelts declined over the nineteenth century due to over-exploitation of the resource, the expansion of agriculture into beaver habitat, and a shift in fashion favouring silk hats.

In order for a resource to be **viable** it must be possible for it to be extracted and delivered to consumers in a cost-effective manner. Thus, how close an endowment is to its market and/or a transportation network (that is, its relative location) is often an important factor in the decision whether or not to develop it as a resource.

1.34 Cod drying at A.H. Murray's fishing premises in St. John's, c. 1900



1.35 Buchans Mine

In 1905, the Anglo-Newfoundland Development (AND) Company discovered zinc, lead, copper, gold, and silver mineral deposits near the Buchans River in central Newfoundland. However, mining in the area didn't begin until 1927, when technological advancements allowed workers to economically separate the minerals.

1.36 Logging
Grand Falls, 1908



1.37 Natural resources developed for export by Newfoundland and Labrador

Which primary resources are being exploited in your area of the province?





Geography and Expressions of Culture

In addition to influencing where people live and how they make a living, geography can also affect how an individual sees the world and interacts with it. The natural and cultural elements of an area tend to create a sense of place. This is a geographic perspective that comes from the combined experiences of the place's inhabitants and reflects what it is like to live in that location. The fact that people in different parts of the world can experience a different sense of place (even

The reverse is also true – culture can shape geography. For instance, improper farming practices can cause erosion, and poor forestry practices can lead to deforestation and even climate change.

when they live in areas with similar physical features and climate) means social practices and natural features in one location do not necessarily mean the same as they do to people in another location.

Expressions of culture are often influenced by a sense of place. In Newfoundland and Labrador, many of our sayings, stories, art, and other artistic expressions are about the sea and/or other features of our landscape. Likewise, much of our music reflects our experience with the sea. Inspiration from our geography can be found in the odes to Newfoundland and to Labrador, traditional songs such as "Jack Was Every Inch a Sailor" and "I'se the B'y," and contemporary songs such as Great Big Sea's "Fisherman's Lament" and Wayne Chaulk's "Saltwater Joys."

"At the intersection of culture and geography, you'll find art and science, individuals and communities, history and current events. You'll see how a mountain in the distance can inspire a Sufi poet, how a river blocking a passage occupies a civil engineer and ship builder alike ..."

– From *Culture and Geography* (www.beyondbooks.com/wcu91/index.asp)

Ode To Newfoundland

Written by Sir Cavendish Boyle (1904)



When sun rays crown
thy pine-clad hills,
And summer
spreads her hand,
When silvern voices
tune thy rills,
We love thee, smiling land.
We love thee, we love thee,
We love thee, smiling land.

When spreads thy cloak
of shimmering white,

At winter's stern command,
Thro' shortened day
and starlit night,
We love thee, frozen land.
We love thee, we love thee
We love thee, frozen land.

When blinding storm
gusts fret thy shore,
And wild waves lash thy strand,
Thro' spindrift swirl,
and tempest roar,

We love thee wind-swept land.
We love thee, we love thee
We love thee wind-swept land.

As loved our fathers, so we love,
Where once they stood, we stand;
Their prayer we raise to
Heaven above,
God guard thee, Newfoundland
God guard thee, God guard thee,
God guard thee, Newfoundland.



1.40

Saltwater Joys

Words and music by Wayne Chaulk (©1989)

Just to wake up in the morning,
to the quiet of the cove
And to hear Aunt Bessie
talking to herself
And to hear poor Uncle John,
mumbling wishes to old Nell
It made me feel that everything
was fine.

I was born down by the water,
it's here I'm gonna stay
I've searched for all the reasons
why I should go away
But I haven't got the thirst
for all those modern day toys
So I'll just take my chances
with those saltwater joys.

Following the little brook as
it trickles to the shore
In the autumn when the
trees are flaming red
Kicking leaves that

fall around me
Watching sunsets paint the hills
That's all I'll ever need to
feel at home.

This island that we cling to has been
handed down with pride
By folks that fought to live here,
taking hardships all in stride
So I'll compliment her beauty, hold
on to my goodbyes
And I'll stay and take my chances
with those saltwater joys.

How can I leave those mornings
with the sunrise on the cove
And the gulls like flies surrounding
Clayton's wharf
Platter's Island wrapped in rainbow
in the evening after fog
The ocean smells are
perfume to my soul.

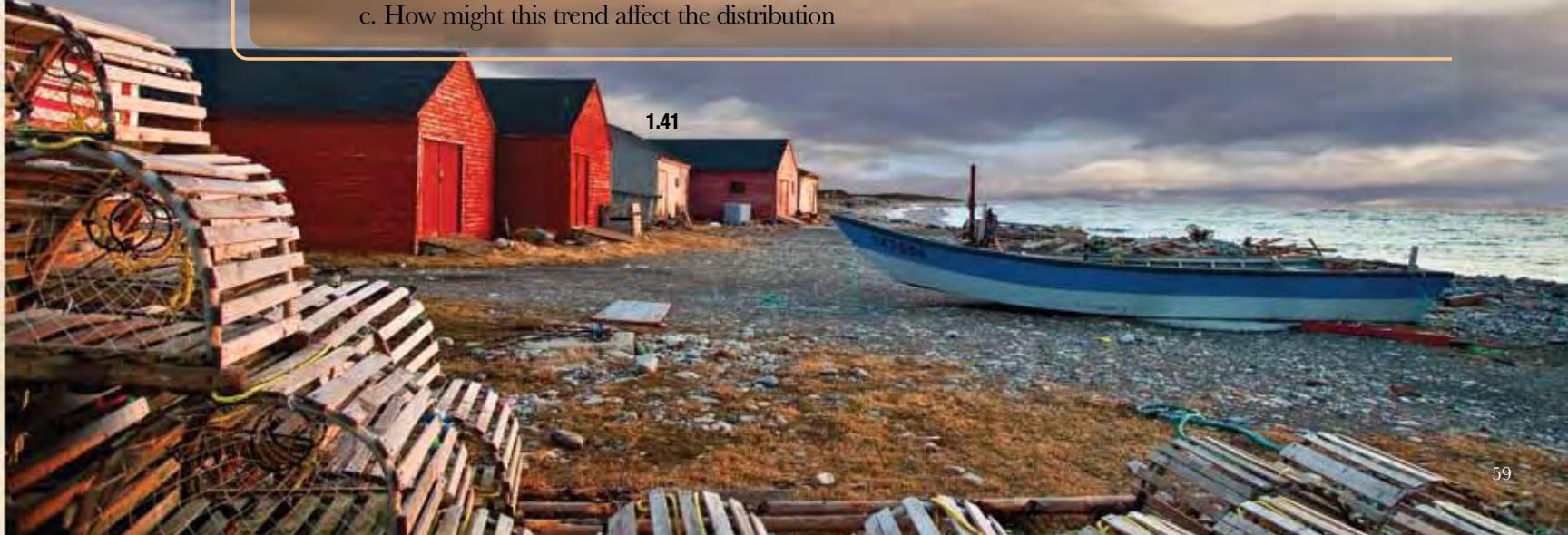
Some go to where the buildings
reach to meet the clouds
Where warm and gentle people turn
to swarmin', faceless crowds
So I'll do without their riches,
glamour and the noise
And I'll stay and take my chances
with those saltwater joys.

Some go to where the buildings
reach to meet the clouds
Where warm and gentle people turn
to swarmin', faceless crowds
So I'll do without their riches,
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And I'll stay and take my chances
with those saltwater joys.

Questions:

1. Create a chart that summarizes the main endorsements or attributes of your community or region. Use the headings *site* and *situation*. Compare your responses with a partner's.
2. Refer to Fig. 1.33 on page 55 "Population Distribution." In relation to your community:
 - a. What is the population distribution trend?
 - b. What are the pull-push factors contributing to this trend?
 - c. How might this trend affect the distribution of infrastructure, such as schools and hospitals?
3. Assuming the current trend continues, how would the urbanization of the province's population impact the way of life in areas that are experiencing (i) population decline and (ii) population growth?
4. What is the most significant feature of your community or region in geographic terms today? Is this different from 100 years ago? Explain.

1.41



History and Culture

Why do you think people are interested in their heritage?

What past events stand out in your family's history?

Introduction

"A man cannot free himself from the past more easily than he can from his own body." – André Maurois, writer

"What you need to know about the past is that no matter what has happened, it has all worked together to bring you to this very moment. And this is the moment you can choose to make everything new." – Unknown

Which of the two quotes above do you feel is more accurate? Does the past totally dominate us today? Or can we really make “everything” new? Could the truth lie somewhere between these two positions? Regardless of how you answer these questions, the fact remains that much of our way of life is deeply rooted in the past.

When we talk about the past, there are two words that frequently come up: history and **heritage**. Although they have different meanings, both are useful when examining culture.

History is the record or narrative of past events. Since the entirety of the past can never be fully recounted, it makes sense that we focus on those parts that are important for us today. That's why historians tend to be guided by the idea of **significance**. They generally explore those more important experiences that have had deep consequences for many people over a long period of time. Think about where you live, the language(s) you speak, and your nationality. It is likely that significant events from the past played a strong role in determining these parts of your culture.

Heritage, on the other hand, is a familiar word that is surprisingly difficult to explain. In general terms, it refers to that which is preserved and passed on from one generation to the next. Think about what has been passed on to you from your family ancestry. What objects have been preserved for you? What practices have you learned? What important values and ideas have been stressed to you and are now part of your culture?

1.42 Used and altered with permission from the Bank of Canada



((((DIMENSIONS OF THINKING))) *SIGNIFICANCE*

To help guide their inquiry into the past, social scientists use the concept of significance. An event, idea, or trend is said to be significant if it meets the following criteria: it has deep consequences for many people over a long period of time; or it is revealing and provides insight.

For instance, it is often helpful to study a particular example, not because the example itself is important, but rather that it helps us understand a larger experience. Therefore, the stories a grandparent may tell you about growing up 50 years ago may provide you with both revealing information about your personal history and a

deeper understanding of the experience of people living in those times.

Sometimes assessing significance can be difficult. Significance can vary based on time, perspective, and purpose.

1.43



Question:

Compare the significance of offshore oil and the fishery to our province. Which is most significant today? What

was most significant in the 1800s? What about 100 years from now?

By examining our history and heritage, we can gain better insight into how they have helped shape our lifestyles today. This is often very challenging, as our knowledge of the past is limited to the information that has survived to the present. When we think about historic information, it can be assessed in terms of both *quantity* and *quality*. The greater the quantity of information we have, the easier it is to create a comprehensive picture of an experience. Likewise, having quality information that is reliable and accurate is also important.

Often when we talk of historical sources, we think of tangibles such as documents, images, and artifacts. These types of information from primary and/or secondary sources tend to be considered “facts.” However, it must be remembered that historical sources are products of human actions. When an individual creates a record, he or she tends to do so with a purpose that is relevant to his or her present time. Seldom does the author of a document think that his or her creation will be used as a historical source at some point in the future. Therefore, the records that do survive and are used as historical sources are often “incomplete” or “biased” records of the past.

One other point worth making is that individuals and their memories are also valid historical sources. While oral histories have limitations, they can be excellent sources to help gain a deeper insight into a particular experience from the past – especially for those aspects that are not always documented in writing. For instance, if you wanted to know what life was like for the average person in your community 50 years ago, your best bet might be to interview an older person who lived during that time.

Oral history is based on the idea that powerful insights can be derived from people talking about their experiences. It ... assumes that everyone's memory is valuable and of potential historical interest. ... the voice of the past ... is that of the humble, of working men and women, who ... have rich experiences ... that offer a distinct historical perspective.”

– Dr. Ludmilla Jordanova, historian

1.44



“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

— George Santayana, philosopher, poet, and cultural critic

Questions:

1. What information can you get from an oral interview that you cannot obtain from other sources?
2. Create a list of objects, practices, and values that you have inherited. What is the most significant? Why?

This is called presentism.

THINKING ABOUT THE PAST

Our lives today are different than those of our great-great grandparents. Not only are there differences in the technologies we have, such as cell phones and microwave ovens, but also differences in the way we look at the world around us. Our expectations of what we are able to do in areas such as transportation, communication, and medicine are radically different from the expectations of people a century ago.

As we think about the past, it is important that we refrain from interpreting past experiences based on present-day values and ideas. Rather, when examining the past, we should do so in the context of the values and norms of that time period. For example, when considering lifestyles in Newfoundland and Labrador in the eighteenth century, we realize that there were virtually no government-sponsored services such as health care or education. This does not mean that the society at that time was “primitive” or “backward.” Quite simply, there was no expectation during that period that government should provide those services.



1.45



CASE STUDY

Using Information as Evidence

Primary sources are the “raw materials” historians use to answer questions, make inferences, and draw conclusions.

FOR A HISTORIAN OR OTHER SOCIAL SCIENTIST, INFORMATION becomes evidence when it is used to answer a question or support a point of view. Examine the following information to see what you can learn about trends in population distribution and changes in the past.

→ The 1836 data was not in the original source, but was added by the authors.

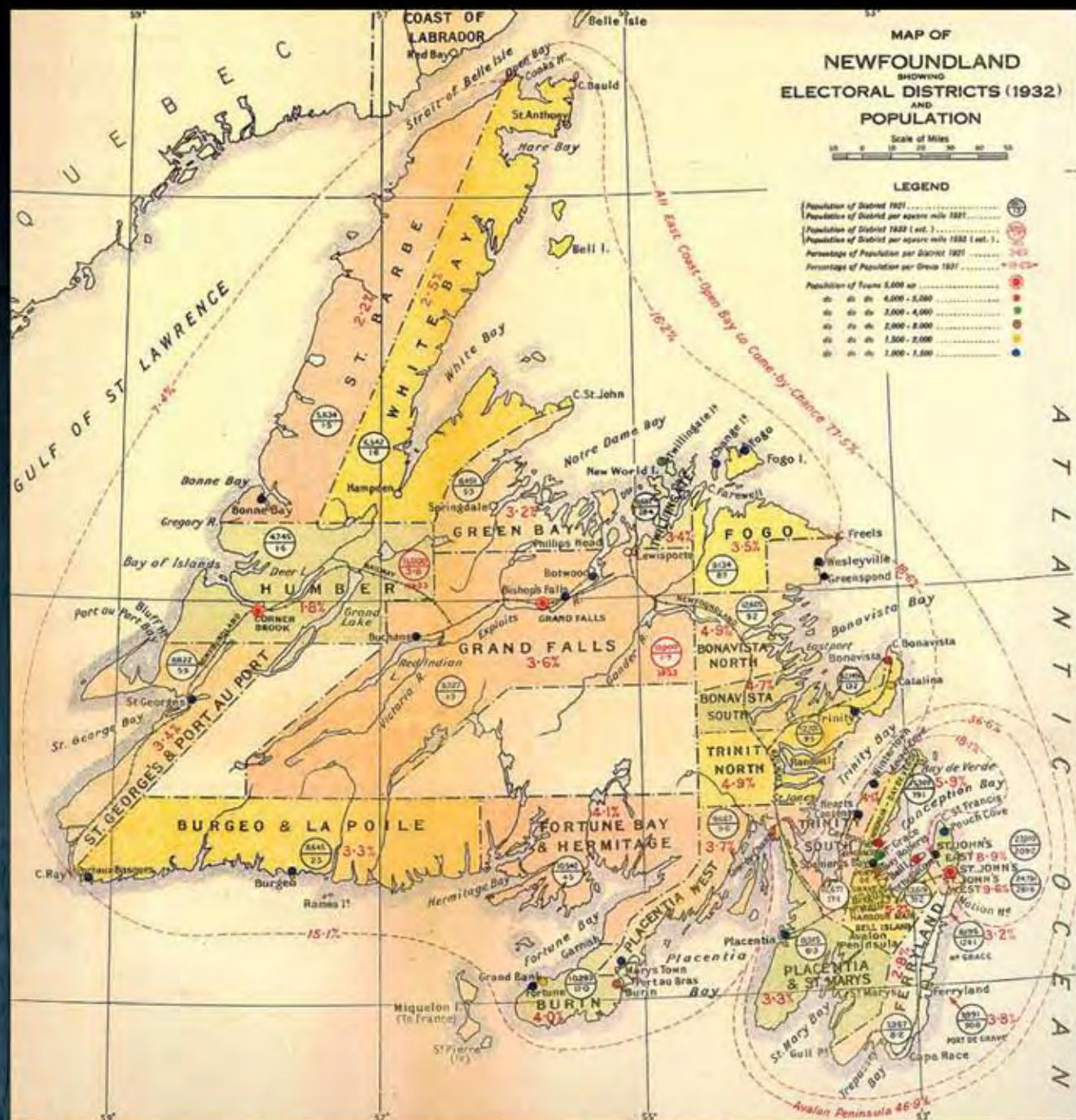
POPULATION BY DISTRICTS

1.46

Source: Newfoundland Royal Commission, 1933

The following table gives the population of the various districts by the 1921 Census, and also the figures for each district for former years:

Districts	1836	1857	1874	1884	1891	1901	1911	1921
Twillingate	---	9,717	15,135	14,058	16,780	19,453	22,705	26,320
Fogo	4,886	---	---	6,264	6,700	7,570	8,257	9,134
Bonavista	5,183	8,850	13,008	16,486	17,849	20,557	22,894	24,754
Trinity	6,803	10,736	15,677	19,005	18,872	20,695	21,788	24,754
Bay-de-Verde	---	6,221	7,434	8,403	9,708	9,827	10,213	23,422
Carbonear	---	5,233	5,488	6,206	5,765	5,024	5,114	4,830
Harbour Grace	23,215	10,067	13,055	14,727	13,881	12,671	11,925	11,453
Port-de-Grave	---	6,489	7,919	8,698	7,986	7,445	6,986	6,545
Harbour Main	---	5,386	7,174	8,935	9,189	9,500	9,471	9,262
St. John's West	18,926	13,124	12,763	15,962	15,251	18,483	20,550	23,739
St. John's East	---	17,352	17,811	22,183	20,776	21,512	25,135	28,419
Ferryland	5,111	5,228	6,419	6,472	5,853	5,697	5,793	6,015
Placentia and								
St. Mary's	4,701	8,334	9,857	11,789	12,801	15,194	16,099	16,472
Burin	3,140	5,529	7,678	8,502	9,059	10,402	11,616	12,579
Fortune	3,129	3,493	5,788	6,917	7,671	8,762	9,989	11,272
Burgeo and								
La Poile	---	3,545	5,098	6,544	6,471	7,011	7,793	8,645
St. George	---	3,334	8,654	5,473	6,632	9,100	11,861	13,556
St. Barbe	---	---	---	6,500	6,690	8,134	10,481	12,176
Total	75,094	122,638	158,958	193,124	197,934	217,037	238,670	259,259
Labrador		1,650	2,416	4,211	4,106	3,947	3,949	3,774
Grand Total	75,094	124,288	161,374	197,335	202,040	220,984	242,619	263,033



1.47 Source: Newfoundland Royal Commission, 1933

1.48 POPULATION BY CHIEF TOWNS

Source: Newfoundland Royal Commission, 1933

	1901	1911	1921		1901	1911	1921
Twillingate	3,542	3,348	3,217	Brigus	1,162	1,034	935
Grand Falls	---	---	3,769	Harbour Main	798	762	745
Fogo	1,118	1,152	1,216	Conception Harbour	932	988	892
Change Islands	1,067	1,087	1,075	Ferryland	535	478	562
Greenspond	1,358	1,304	1,211	Placentia	1,315	1,327	1,383
Bonavista	3,696	3,911	4,052	Burin	2,719	2,783	2,763
Trinity	1,197	1,332	1,356	Grand Bank	1,427	1,605	1,869
Heart's Content	1,079	1,017	1,229	Harbour Breton	763	654	725
Western Bay	695	966	869	Channel	1,280	877	994
Carbonear	3,703	3,540	3,320	St. George's Harbour	1,409	867	1,024
Harbour Grace	5,184	4,279	3,825	Bay of Islands	1,184	1,048	1,349
Bay Roberts	2,266	2,187	2,168				

Note: Corner Brook, which now* has a population of about 5,000, was only a small village at the time of the 1921 census and owes its present proportions to the establishment of a paper mill there in 1923.

*This note is from the original 1933 document.

*The degree to which a question can be
answered or a position supported by
evidence is a function of the quantity and
quality of the information available.*

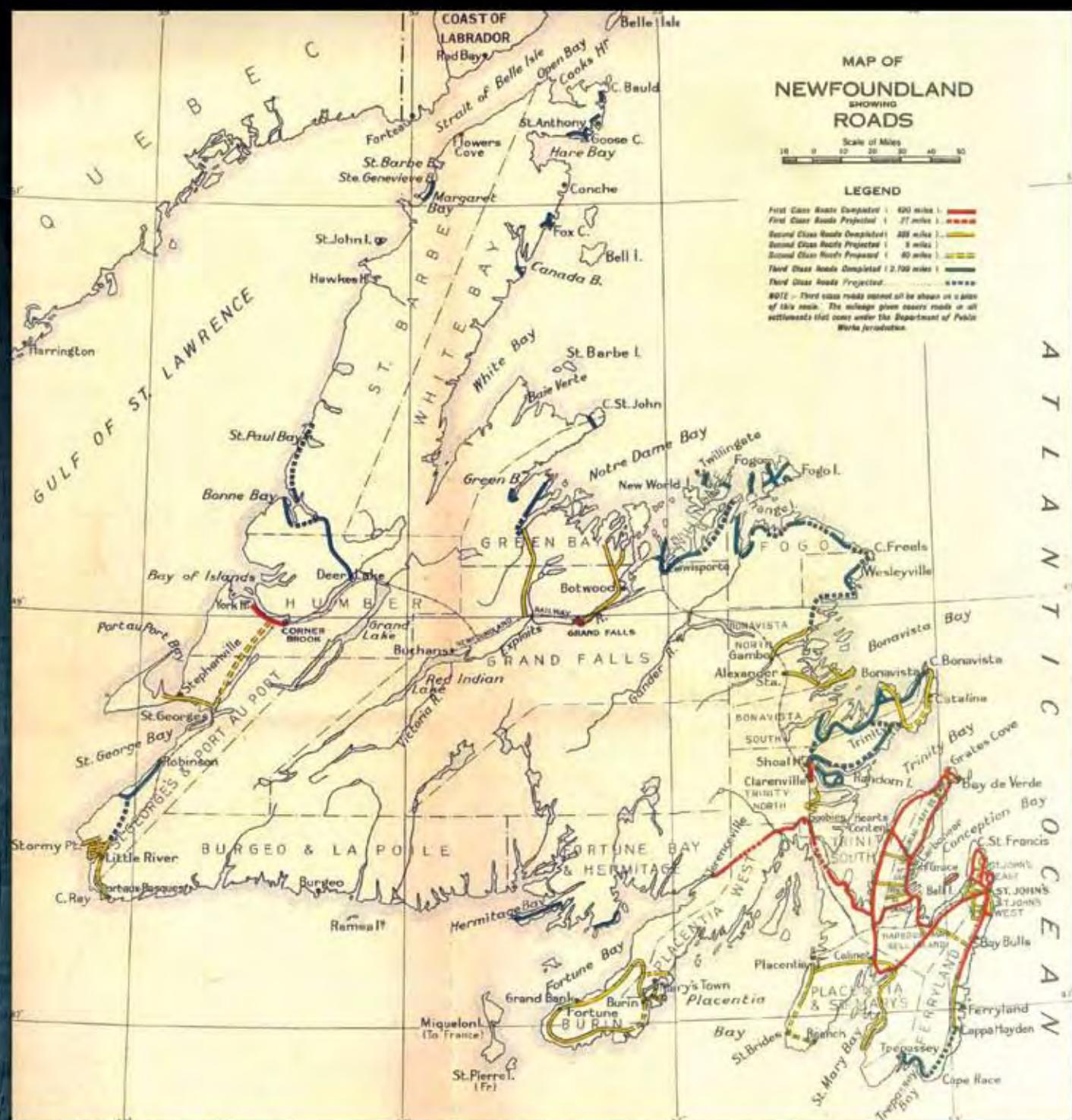
1.49 OCCUPATIONS

Source: Newfoundland Royal Commission, 1933

	1857	1869	1874	1884	1891	1901	1911	1921
1.	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	1
2.	---	2	4	3	3	4	3	3
3.	77	97	120	185	183	239	245	301
4.	---	---	---	---	606	789	1,395	1,622
5.	Lawyers and 24	Lawyers 30	Lawyers 41	Lawyers 43	Lawyers 55	Lawyers 46	Lawyers 47	
	Doctors 71	Doctors 42	Doctors 41	Doctors 56	Doctors 62	Doctors 83	Doctors 119	Doctors 92
6.	689	591	589	895	771	1,040	1,326	1,098
7.	---	---	---	1,613	1,952	2,353	4,641	5,186
8.	---	---	---	---	614	739	1,468	1,712
9.	1,552	1,784	1,004	1,685	1,547	2,475	2,915	3,227
10.	---	---	---	---	36,303	40,438	40,880	34,979
11.	1,970	2,019	2,171	3,628	2,682	3,111	5,376	4,862
12.	Males and and	Males and and	Males and and	Males and and	Males 36,694	Males 41,231	Males 43,795	Males 40,511
	Females 38,578	Females 37,259	Females 45,845	Females 60,419	Females 18,081	Females 21,443	Females 23,245	Females 24,937
13.	334	391	453	1,507	625	1,408	2,821	2,619
14.	---	462	29	404	1,258	1,576	2,260	1,137
15.	---	---	---	---	1,058	626	1,204	1,833
16.	---	2,353	3,023	3,360	8,686	11,639	14,811	16,121

1. Archbishops 2. Bishops 3. Clergymen 4. Teachers 5. Lawyers and Doctors 6. Merchants and Traders 7. Engaged in Office or Shop
8. Government Service 9. Farmers 10. Fishermen and others who cultivate land 11. Mechanics 12. Catching and Curing Fish (Males and Females) 13. Lumbering 14. Mining 15. Engaged in Factories 16. Otherwise employed.

↓ In earlier times mechanics referred to trades persons or skilled trades persons, including cooperers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, lumbermen, and loggers.



1.50 Source: Newfoundland Royal Commission, 1933

Questions:

1. Based on the information provided in this case study, what inferences can you draw about the way of life in your area of the province in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? What conclusions can you make about the colony as a whole? What parts of this lifestyle still exist today?
2. What are some other questions that could be raised about this time period that are NOT answered by this data? Where might you go to obtain answers to these questions?



Scott Antle, director of communications for the Canadian Cancer Society, stands in front of a cigarette powerwall. Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province which permits such displays of tobacco products. — Photo by Rhonda Hayward/The Telegram

Taking it to the wall

Anti-tobacco groups want big, colourful displays banned

By STEVE BARTLETT
THE TELEGRAM

Scott Antle hopes the government is finally ready to tear down the walls.

As director of community services with the Canadian Cancer Society, he has been involved in an effort to get rid of the large and colourful displays of tobacco products that are common at convenience stores, gas stations and smoke shops across the province.

Partnering with the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco and other groups, the cancer society has been pressing the province for the past couple of years to ban these cigarette setups, which are known as powerwalls.

Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province and territory that

doesn't have such legislation.

Antle says they've met with three different health ministers. Each supported a ban, he notes, but none made it happen.

"It's been very frustrating," he says. "We do understand that there's a process involved whenever you have to open up legislation, but we've seen province after province and all the territories move forward with this, and we've come up last in this part of tobacco control."

Antle and his colleagues believe powerwalls increase smoke sales.

They say the displays prompt impulse buys, trigger ex-smokers to start puffing again and increase the chances of youth taking up the habit.

"It's the draw and appeal it has for youth," Antle says. "When a young

teenager comes into a store and sees that big powerwall of tobacco there, it's attractive. ... (Tobacco companies) know they have to replace the 45,000, 47,000 people that die every year from tobacco."

Kevin Coady agrees.

The alliance's executive director

counter, near the candy, so that young people see it."

In fact, according to the cancer society, tobacco companies paid Newfoundland and Labrador retailers \$2.8 million in 2007 for these displays.

Antle, Coady and the others are

SYNOPSIS



Let us be free. Tobacco free.

The fact is... It is illegal for anyone, including parents, friends, family and retailers, to give or sell tobacco products to youth **under the age of 19**.

Share the Facts. Not Tobacco.

Newfoundland Labrador

Smokers' Help Line
1-800-363-LUNG (5864)

1.51

TOPIC 1.7

Politics and Culture

How does a government influence a country's culture?

What age do you think is an appropriate age for citizens to have the right to vote? Why?

Introduction

In Bangladesh or Columbia, you have to be 15 to legally buy cigarettes. In Canada, you must be 18 or 19, depending on the province in which you live. In Kuwait, you must be 21. What accounts for these differences?

All of these countries have decided that some kind of legal control needs to be placed on the sale of tobacco products to younger persons. However, each country has a different perception of the age to which this law should apply. It is likely that cultural differences have played a



1.52 Think of all the different ways that government controls affect your life.
Even where you cross the street or stop your car is affected by legislation.



1.53 Informal politics happens all around us each day ... at home, in the classroom, and at work.
This is often called small "p" politics. However, when most people speak of politics they are usually referring to formal politics.

role in this and therefore influenced the kind of legislation that has been passed. It might also be argued that young people are less apt to start smoking in a country where it is harder to legally obtain cigarettes. In this way, the legislation is in turn influencing a country's culture.

This is just one example of the many ways legislation or government controls can affect our lifestyle. Politics affects our lives in a variety of ways at multiple levels. In very general terms, politics is the process by which groups make decisions. The group making a decision could be the decision-making body for a country or it could be as simple as a group of friends deciding what to do on a Saturday night. Depending on the group, the political process varies. After some discussion, a group

might reach a consensus or agreement as to what they want to do. On another occasion it might be a simple democratic exercise – the will of the majority will prevail. In some cases, the group might defer to the will of one individual, and follow a more autocratic model.

In order for a decision-making group to make good decisions, its members need data about the people for whom they are making decisions. Well-being indicators are one tool that a government can use. Rather than using a single category of data, such as **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**, social scientists sometimes group together different categories of data to create indicators that provide a complete picture of the quality of life in an area.



1.54 Sir Robert Bond
During the period of Sir Robert Bond's administration, the paper mill town of Grand Falls was born. This was due in no small part to the efforts of the prime minister himself, who believed in the need to develop the timber stands of central Newfoundland. Beginning with the incorporation of the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company in January 1905, the paper industry provided the backbone of the regional economy for over a century.



1.55 Centre Block, Parliament of Canada, Ottawa

In Canada, our political practice is based on a **parliamentary system**. In an election, the people in each district or riding vote to pick a representative to sit in government on their behalf. The individual with the highest number of votes in each district or riding becomes the Member of Parliament in the federal

government or the Member of the House of Assembly in the provincial government. The elected individual is usually a member of a specific political party. The party with the most elected representatives forms the government.

St. John's South - Mount Pearl Federal Riding Election Results 2008

Candidate	Party	Votes	% Votes
Terry Christopher Butler	Independent	179	0.5
Greg Byrne	Newfoundland Labrador First Party	402	1.2
Ryan Cleary	New Democratic Party	13 971	40.6
Siobhan Coady	Liberal	14 920	43.3
Ted Warren	Green Party	643	1.9
Merv Wiseman	Conservative	4324	12.6
Total number of valid votes:		34 439	
Rejected ballots:		92	
Total Number of votes:		34 531	

1.56 For this riding there were 34 531 people who actually voted, out of 66 467 eligible voters.
What might account for low voter turnout? Should voting be mandatory?

In the 2000 federal election, the Liberal Party obtained 57 per cent of the seats in Parliament. However, the Liberal Party received only 41 per cent of the popular vote. Do you think this is fair?

1.57

Types of Government

Candidate	Party	Votes	% Votes
Majority Government	50% + 1	The party with the majority of seat forms the government and will be able to successfully pass legislation during its term	
Majority Government	Less than 50%	The party with the largest number of seats can form the government. However, if it is unable to gain the support of other parties when passing important legislation that is considered a matter of confidence (such as an annual budget), a new election may be called.	
Coalition Government	Less than 50%	If no single party has a clear mandate to form a government, two or more parties may seek to work together and share the exercise of power. Similar to a minority government, if there is a vote of non-confidence, an election may be called.	

People frequently refer to this type of government as a democracy. One definition of democracy is that it is the rule of the majority. This definition implies that the majority can make a decision by which all citizens would be bound. Such decisions might disadvantage the minority. To guard against this, in Canada we have what is known as a constitutional democracy. While decisions are made by the majority, the constitution sets out basic rights that apply to all citizens. Thus the government is unable to make decisions that would threaten these rights.

It could be argued that, more than any force discussed in this section, politics has the greatest influence on culture. Elected governments hold the trust of the people to make decisions that will serve the interests of the **electorate**. Bound by certain limits, governments use economic, geographic, and historical data to enact legislation that governs virtually all aspects of our lives. In fact, try to identify an area of culture where government cannot exert influence.



1.58 Lobbying for the seal industry

In April 2008, a Canadian lobby group visited London, Paris, Brussels, and Berlin in an effort to avert a European Union ban on the importation of seal products. The delegation – which included Nunavut Premier Paul Okalik and Newfoundland and Labrador Natural Resources Minister Kathy Dunderdale – pointed out that much misinformation has been circulated about the Canadian seal hunt. Some animal rights groups continue to employ images of baby seals in their campaigns, for example, but the whitecoat hunt has been banned since 1987. Despite this visit and other efforts, the European Parliament voted in July 2009 to ban the importation of seal products.

Questions:

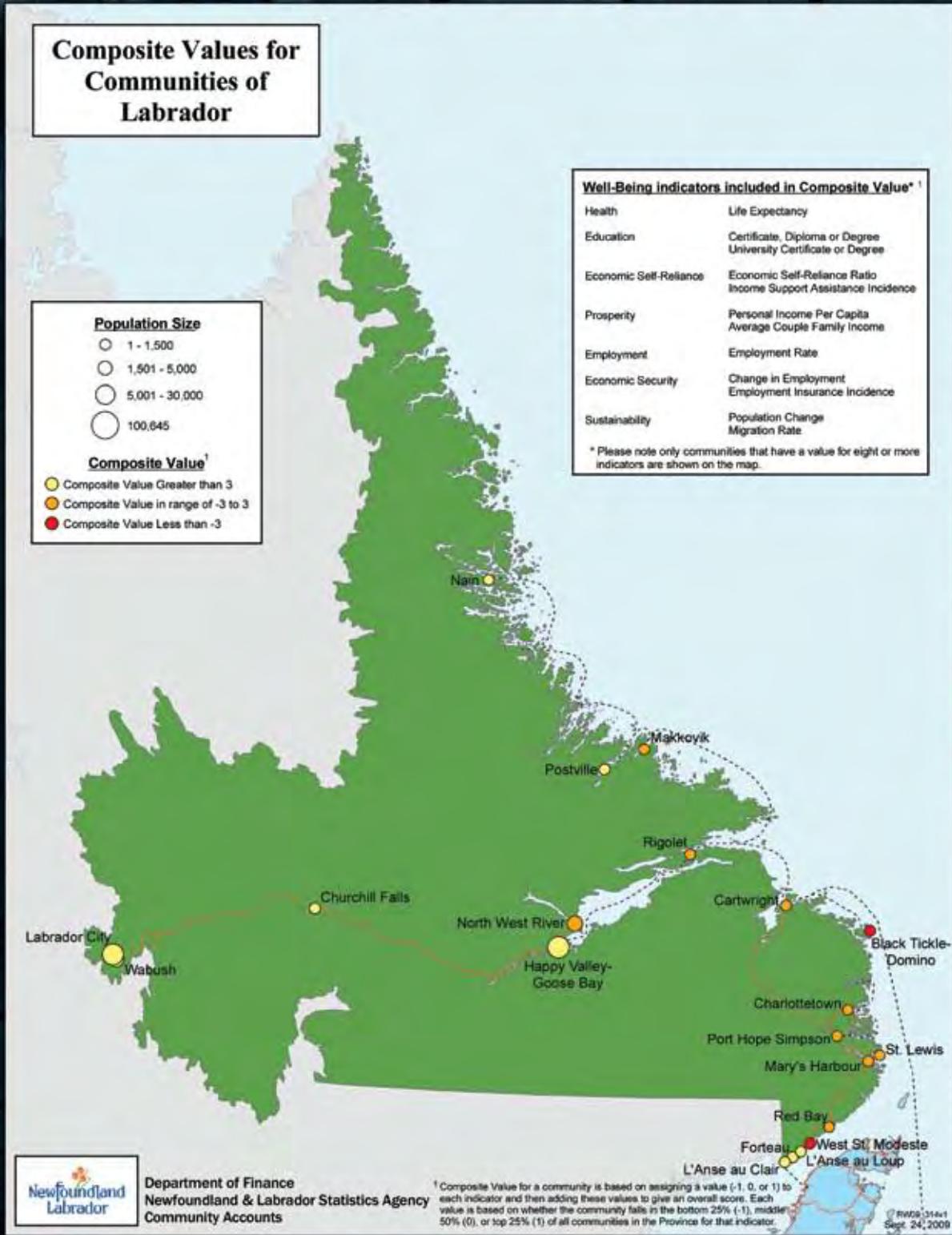
- Identify an example of an informal and formal political process that you observed recently. How were the decisions made in each example?
- a. What is the name of your federal riding and who is your Member of Parliament?
b. What is the name of your provincial district and who is your Member of the House of Assembly?
- What are some of the political issues facing your riding/district today?
- Given that formal politics both reflects and influences culture, with a partner develop three strong arguments that could be used to encourage people to vote.

CASE STUDY

Using Quality of Life Indicators to Make Decisions

IN 2009 RESEARCHERS EXAMINED SEVERAL categories of data and calculated an index of “well-being” for the communities throughout the province. This information is extremely useful for governments as they consider how to improve the lives of citizens.

1.59



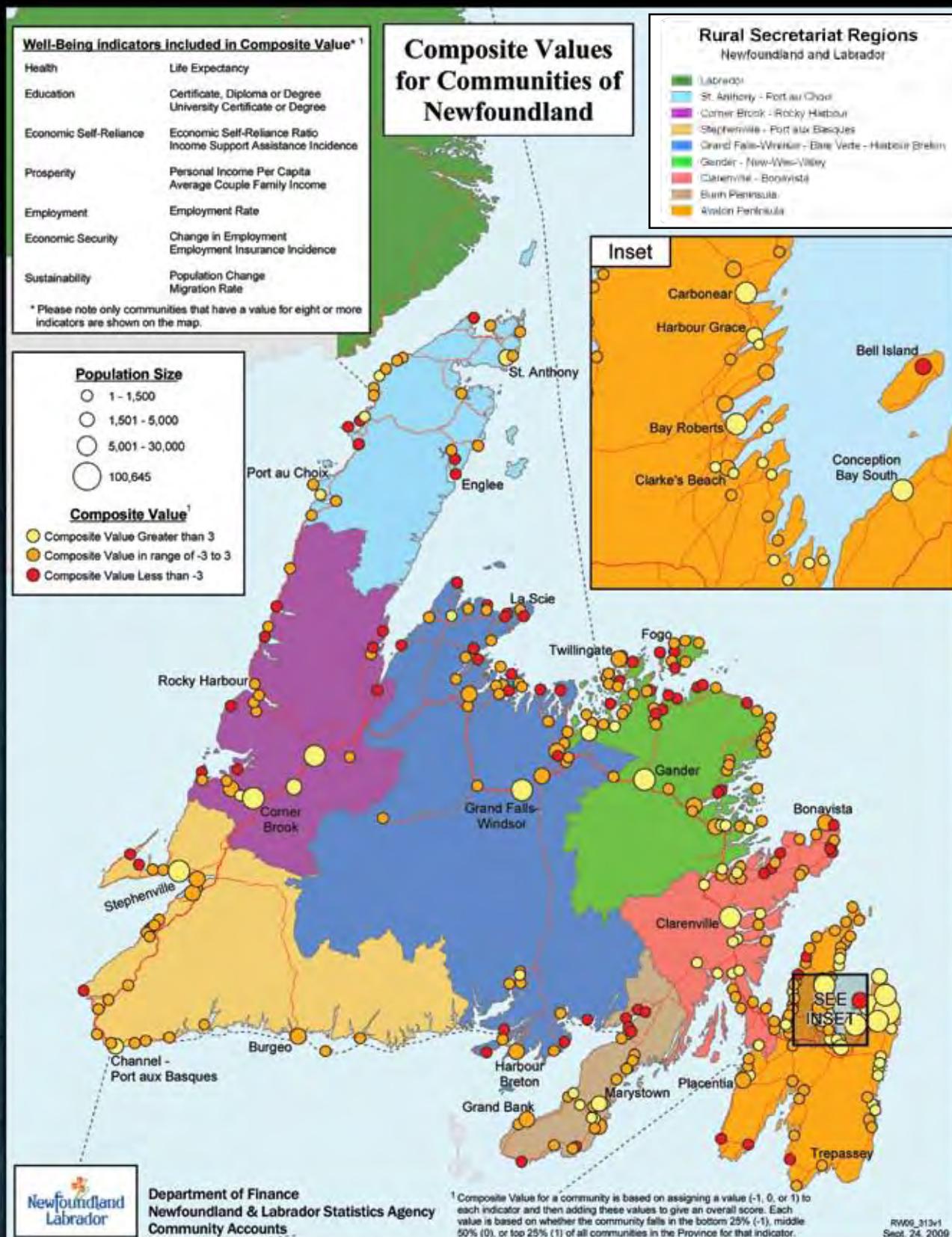


Fig. 1.60 The Rural Secretariat has developed detailed profiles for each of the nine regions of the province. The profiles serve as baselines that help examine change and progress over time. What is happening to the population? Are more people working? Are incomes rising? What are our health practices? How does one region of the province compare with others in terms of performance on any indicator? This data set examines how a variety of factors interrelate to affect "well being."

Questions:

1. Look at Fig. 1.59 and Fig. 1.60.
 - a. What is the composite value for your community/region? What might account for this?
 - b. What inferences can be made from this data?
- c. What specific information would governments need in order to respond to this data to help improve the well-being of a specific community?