



## CANADIAN COUNTERCULTURES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

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## Children of the Hummus: Growing Up Back-to-the-Land on Prince Edward Island

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*Alan MacEachern, with Ryan O'Connor*

The back-to-the-land movement of the 1970s was defined by choice. A segment of the North American population considered what contemporary civilization had to offer them and consciously rejected it. They abandoned their urban or suburban existence in favour of rural, out-of-the-way places. They renounced many of the trappings and traps of modernity and went in search of a life that would be simpler and more self-sufficient, that would bring them closer to nature, to their work, to their food, to their families. The back-to-the-land movement was in fact exceptionally deliberate as far as movements go because it demanded as its fundamental act voluntary relocation—that is, *moving*.<sup>1</sup>

And yet there was a subset of back-to-the-landers for whom there was no choice at all. These were the children who moved because their parents did or who were born into the lifestyle and so became back-to-the-land by default.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand, because of their limited or lack of other experiences, these children might be expected to have found the way of life more natural than their parents did. On

the other hand, because most attended school and so integrated with the wider society on a daily basis, and because their lifestyle was not one of their choosing, they might be expected to have found the experience considerably more difficult than their parents did. Children of back-to-the-landers—ambassadors or double agents for both the movement and modern life simultaneously—were in that sense a real test of the movement and what it signified. Given that, it is surprising how fleetingly children appear in histories of the movement. Eleanor Agnew does not interview any children of back-to-the-landers in writing *Back from the Land*; Jeffrey Jacob spends only a few pages of *New Pioneers* discussing the work they performed. The cover photo of Dona L. Brown's *Back to the Land* shows a child in a garden, but children do not appear in the index.

In 2008 and 2009, Ryan O'Connor and I conducted a series of two dozen oral interviews with back-to-the-landers who had moved to Prince Edward Island in the 1970s, and we documented their experiences in an online exhibit.<sup>3</sup> PEI, on the east coast of Canada, is the nation's smallest province in terms of both size (5,700 square kilometres) and population (112,000 in 1971) and had been a popular destination for back-to-the-landers during the era. It had beautiful summers, arable soil, and—thanks to a century of rural depopulation—cheap, cheap land. It was small enough that one could, like Henry Thoreau at Walden, get away from it all while remaining secure in the knowledge that civilization, in some form, was never more than a few kilometres away. What's more, the island was developing an international reputation in this period for its interest in self-sufficiency and sustainability, as evident in the provincial government's establishment of the Institute of Man and Resources to encourage a transition to alternative energy and the federal-provincial funding of an experimental bioshelter, the Ark.<sup>4</sup> Back-to-the-landers came from across Canada and the United States and spread throughout PEI, with clusters developing around the Dixon Road area in the province's centre and the Iris and Gairloch-Selkirk roads areas in the east.<sup>5</sup> They took over rundown old farms or they built homes in forests that had never been cleared. Their arrival "from away," as islanders refer to the

outside world, was both an assault on and a validation of the tranquil, agriculturally based society that had for the most part not yet left the land—one that seemed as close to the nineteenth century as to the twenty-first—so the new homesteaders were met with everything from open hostility to open arms. The back-to-the-landers whom O'Connor and I interviewed shared what it was like to enter PEI society, what the day-to-day nature of life and work entailed, and what led them either to give up the lifestyle or to continue it to this day.

Children figured heavily in these stories. Most strikingly, a number of those interviewed had been motivated to move back to the land to build a better life for and with their children, and yet it was ultimately children that returned many to a more conventional course. As Laurel Smyth stated, “Mostly after a certain amount of time everybody’s kids and the demands of putting them into the school system and everything seemed to pull us all back from the land and into the interfacing with the business economy in order to make a living. . . . Hippies became bureaucrats. It was shocking for us all.”<sup>26</sup> Such statements led O'Connor and me to realize that in focusing our attention on adults who had come to Prince Edward Island and failing to interview their children, we had missed not merely eyewitnesses of the back-to-the-land movement but some of its key actors.

As a second stage of this project, in 2011 and 2012, O'Connor and I interviewed eighteen people who had moved as children or been born into back-to-the-land Prince Edward Island households in the 1970s and early 1980s. Many of these were the children of those interviewed in our earlier project. They spoke about family dynamics, relations with other children, the greater back-to-the-land community, and how their upbringing shaped their later life. These interviews offer a distinctly different perspective of the movement. Most notably, whereas the older generation’s varied stories of settling into PEI evoked the movement’s diversity—as they arrived from all over the continent and all sorts of socioeconomic backgrounds, fleeing modernity, underemployment, or the draft, and seeking societal change or just a personal adventure—the children’s stories of growing up emphasize the commonality of their experiences. The children also speak far less about

the nitty-gritty details of living back-to-the-land and spend proportionally more time discussing their feelings about it.<sup>7</sup> Related to that, while both generations describe the lifestyle mainly in terms of anecdotes and warm memories, the children tell far fewer stories of exertion, poverty, and disillusionment. Whether because they remember the lifestyle through the gauze of childhood or because growing up in the lifestyle had made them inured to its hardships, the children of back-to-the-landers come across as, if anything, more loyal to the movement than those who had chosen it deliberately.<sup>8</sup>

## WE WISH WE COULD MAKE THIS UP

“The Dixon Road was . . . my entire life,” says Michael Stanley. His family moved to this well-wooded area in 1980, when he was two, and exploring the woods became his and his sisters’ prime source of entertainment. His father was a potter, his mother a weaver, and the family also raised animals. As a child he helped his mother make cheese and yogurt and bread and pasta. The house, initially lacking electricity and water, was a hippie shack built of recycled barn board; his parents built onto it four times over the years, giving it something of a maze quality. It was filled with objects: books, art, and, in Stanley’s words, basically anything that was homemade, sentimental, or just cool. Of his room he says, “It was pretty typical when I was younger. It was filled with posters of—” (he pauses) “—trees and leaves. Maybe that isn’t so typical!” All in all, he states, “We had an all-encompassing little microcosm in the woods. I didn’t know anything different until I had to go to school, and I realized, ‘Ooh, I’m not like all the other kids around here.’”<sup>9</sup>

Those who moved back to the land at a later age knew straight away how their lifestyle was different. Matt Zimbel was fourteen and living what he calls a *Mad Men*-style suburban existence outside New York City when his parents visited PEI in 1970 and fell in love with it. The family bought a rundown farm and one hundred acres in Argyle Shore with plans to live there the following year. “And then we came up next year . . . and drove right by it. ‘That’s not our house, that’s a

... shack.' Grass was all overgrown, the winter was brutal, it had done more demolition to it, and we kind of turned around and said, 'Holy shit, that's our house.' I certainly thought we were on a family adventure." Zimbel's father was an accomplished commercial photographer, and the family had no farming experience, but they dived headlong into a back-to-the-land existence, raising animals and producing ever more of their own food. They made butter and jam, milked cows, grew vegetables, dug clams, fished, and had a smokehouse. (Zimbel recalls the children having a pet lamb named Joey, and then his mother being absent one night and the rest of the family eating lamb for dinner: "Me and my brothers and sisters said, 'Dad—is this Joey?' And Dad said yes. And we said, 'He's good.'") Zimbel can't say he was pleased to be torn out of New York as a teen, yet he found it all interesting. But when his mother started making shampoo, "I said to myself, 'That's it—she's gone too far. That's fuckin' crazy.'"<sup>10</sup>

Whether they were born into a back-to-the-land existence or had it thrust upon them, those interviewed certainly understand in retrospect that their childhood was unusual. And they understand its narrative possibilities.<sup>11</sup> As Zoe Morrison, who grew up on the Gairloch Road, states, "It's an easy way to be interesting . . . because I didn't have to choose it, or do it, really."<sup>12</sup> That Morrison is willing to diminish her claim to a lifestyle in which she was immersed—saying she did not "do" back-to-the-land—suggests how important this lack of choice is in how the children today evaluate their relationship to the movement. Their childhood is not fully their story—or it can be treated lightly, *as* a story—because it was determined for them by their parents. That is not unusual, of course. Chanda Pinsent was eleven when her family loaded their belongings into a VW van and left British Columbia in 1974, buying vacant land in a valley in South Granville and building a house that had no electricity or running water. Pinsent recalls her parents as always taking the time to explain their lifestyle decision—even when as a typically disaffected teen she would ask, "Why the heck are we doing this?"—and that the children respected that their parents had clear political, philosophical, and environmental motivations for "taking ourselves out of the system."<sup>13</sup>

The earliest stories that many tell are secondhand, given to them by their parents. Clea Ward, born shortly after her American parents had built a log cabin half a kilometre into the woods on the Selkirk Road, in 1975, was told of her bottle freezing in her crib at night.<sup>14</sup> Ahmon Katz, born months after his parents had left Kent State University in Ohio, in 1971, and so likely one of the first back-to-the-land children on PEI, was similarly told that he used to turn blue while crawling on the floor of their ramshackle house.<sup>15</sup> Laura Edell, born two years after her parents had moved from New York in 1972, was privileged with the bedroom next to the chimney, as it stayed somewhat warmer in winter.<sup>16</sup> Those interviewed told many stories such as these, focusing on the pioneering nature of their childhood. And these accounts are typically told with pride and delight that they had experienced such a life so late in the twentieth century. Ahmon Katz remembers his little brother Sam waking him at night so that Ahmon could stand vigil outside the outhouse; Sam remembers sitting on his boots in the two-seater to keep warm. The Katzes also say, “We wish we could make this up: we really did have to walk uphill one mile in the snow to the bus every morning”; the Gairloch Road, which they lived on, was not plowed in winter—but the payoff was sledding home in the afternoon.<sup>17</sup> The back-to-the-land children tend to list a catalogue of things they went without: electricity, indoor plumbing, telephones, televisions. But these are not offered as evidence of deprivation. Michael Stanley recognizes that for his parents the back-to-the-land movement must have been “baptism by fire. They wanted to do it, and they did a lot of it wrong. But us kids, we didn’t notice the hardships.”<sup>18</sup> Aryana Rousseau, whose parents moved from Montreal (where she is now a lawyer), had never even heard of the back-to-the-land movement until she was a teenager; the life she lived just seemed normal.<sup>19</sup>

Considering that *Little House on the Prairie* was one of the most popular television shows of the era, it was probably inevitable that its portrayal of nineteenth-century homesteading became a touchstone. Pinsent never liked it when guests compared her home to those on the show just because there was kerosene lighting, no plumbing, and

lofts for children's bedrooms. "That used to drive me nuts!" she says. "No, it's not!" She would try to explain that what her family was doing was political, a rejection of capitalism.<sup>20</sup> It probably did not help that Pinsent had no way of watching the TV show the visitors were referencing, although she had read the books by Laura Ingalls Wilder. But Ward, who lived without electricity until age eight and without running water until high school, recalls loving the *Little House* series specifically because "it wasn't that far from my own experience." Her father would hook up a car battery to provide electricity for an hour of television each week, and it was *Little House on the Prairie* that the family would watch.<sup>21</sup> As a place to grow up, there were certainly differences between a little house on the nineteenth-century Prairies and one on twentieth-century PEI, but the similarities were sufficient to help some children of back-to-the-landers communicate their lives to peers—and perhaps to help them better understand their own lives, too.

## ALL ABOUT WORK / WE WERE THERE TO PLAY

The Prince Edward Island back-to-the-landers interviewed in 2008 and 2009 were unanimous in describing how much work the life entailed. Gerald Sutton summarized the difference between back-to-the-landers and hippies by saying, "to go back-to-the-land you have to do the work."<sup>22</sup> The children interviewed this time spoke with far less unanimity about work—if they spoke about it at all. When growing up on the Gairloch Road, Zoe Morrison was given a list of chores every day, from cleaning out the root cellar to picking berries to eviscerating turkeys (her family raised turkeys, so her memories of childhood Christmases are tainted by wholesale turkey massacres).<sup>23</sup> Yet Morrison's best friend then and now, Clea Ward, herself in a back-to-the-land family, does not feel she worked any harder than did other island kids. In fact, she jokes that back-to-the-land parents lacked some of the authority to demand work that other parents held: "No one was ever going to beat us. And there was no TV to withhold."<sup>24</sup>



Even siblings had conflicting memories of childhood work. According to Chanda Pinsent, “It was all about work. . . . Our lives were defined by the work and the chores we did.” The Pinsent children’s first year on PEI was spent helping build the house. They also regularly cut, split, hauled, and stacked wood to heat the home; hauled milk cans of water down from the river; and fed, milked, and cleaned up after a menagerie of livestock, as well as performing seasonal duties such as haying and tending the market garden. But perhaps Chanda’s experience was shaped by being the oldest child; her sister Celine remembers things quite differently. While Celine used to think she was given too much to do, she now believes that that was just a typical child’s feeling, and that she and her siblings had about the same amount of work as other PEI farm children and likely less than those on high-production farms.<sup>25</sup>

For others, either there was not much work or it did not feel like work. Sam Katz talks with surprising fondness of being tasked with getting the family’s water from the outdoor hand pump each morning: “I always thought of it as a fun thing. It was never a chore—the water was so fresh. ‘Sammy, pour me a bucket.’”<sup>26</sup> Aryana Rousseau’s mother loved gardening so much—a fact that undoubtedly contributed to her decision to leave Montreal to go back to the land—that the kids were never expected to do much.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, Vanessa Arnold, four years old in 1975 when her parents quit their Montreal teaching jobs and moved to PEI to apply the sustainable agriculture practices they had been reading about, calls herself just a “little helper” given manageable jobs like gathering eggs from the henhouse; growing up, she was in no way directed toward farming or gardening.<sup>28</sup> It may well be that many back-to-the-landers felt their children were making sufficient sacrifices just in living the life that had been chosen for them. Michael Stanley was free to get involved in any job that interested him, such as milking goats, but otherwise taking care of the garden or animals “was just something Mom and Dad did. We were there to play.”<sup>29</sup>

Play figures heavily in back-to-the-land children’s accounting of that time. They know that whether because their family was poor or

self-sufficient, or both, they largely went without the toys that other kids had. “There was no Tickle-Me Elmo in my house,” says Andy Reddin, much as Arnold, in a separate interview, declares, “There were no Barbies in my house.” But, again, they do not offer this as evidence of deprivation. Reddin appreciates having been taught at a young age the value of simplicity and the perils of consumerism. And Arnold mentions Barbie only as a counterpoint to the simple pleasures she enjoyed growing up in what was to her one big playground; crawling through culverts was all the fun she could have possibly wanted.<sup>30</sup> Like Stanley extolling the woods of the Dixon Road, many of those interviewed describe childhood as a rural idyll. The confluence of back-to-the-land kids in the Gairloch and Selkirk roads areas “free-ranged” together in the woods, as Zoe Morrison puts it, playing kick-the-can, hide-and-seek, and cops-and-robbers.<sup>31</sup> The Katz brothers tell of playing “Discovery” in the woods with their mother: burying, finding, and occasionally losing forever old coins she had collected.<sup>32</sup> Aaron Koleszar, who also came of age on the Gairloch Road, would years later appear on the cover of *Time* as an anti-globalization activist being violently arrested during the 1999 anti-World Trade Organization “Battle of Seattle.” To him, growing up back-to-the-land meant the freedom to explore the woods, trails, ponds, and beaches of Prince Edward Island. “I hadn’t put words to this before this interview,” he concludes, “but [it was] the feeling of freedom.”<sup>33</sup> For the children of the movement, because they did not have the same work responsibilities as their parents, back-to-the-land may have, more than anything, meant back-to-nature.

## WORLDS COLLIDE

It is ironic that Aaron Koleszar defines his back-to-the-land upbringing in terms of freedom, considering that he more than anyone interviewed was tyrannized at school because of his upbringing. Like many back-to-the-land children, Koleszar was singled out because of his hair, his clothes, and the food he brought for lunch. At first he was teased, but it got worse as the children got older and bigger. He

was bullied regularly, and in grade nine, two boys picked a fight with him—one jumped on his head, giving him a concussion. Koleszar moved back to Toronto to live with his father.<sup>34</sup>

Whereas adult back-to-the-landers withdrew from the mainstream, they had their children bussed back into it every school day. Michael Stanley describes his first day of school as “One of the most traumatizing days of my life. . . . I wanted to stay in the woods with my mom and dad and the little life I had known.” When the school bus arrived, he started crying, bit his mother on the hand, and ran off into the woods.<sup>35</sup> Clea Ward also tells of hiding from the school bus in the woods. She believed she had nothing in common with her classmates: “I felt like I was from another planet.”<sup>36</sup> The back-to-the-land children were exotic creatures in rural PEI schools. Eryn Gibbs, who was born on PEI in 1975, speaks of being treated as an outsider because of his long hair, his corduroys, and even the fact that his family did not go to church; that his family, like many of the back-to-the-landers, was poor did not help matters.<sup>37</sup> “We were definitely different,” says Morrison, stressing each word. “We were dirty, we were the kids with lice.” When lice were found on her and her back-to-the-land friends, and the school was unable to reach their parents because they did not have phones, the children were made to sit on the steps of the school until the end of the day.<sup>38</sup>

The back-to-the-land children did what they could to fit in at school. Some banded together in the French immersion programs, in which they were overrepresented.<sup>39</sup> The younger brother of Chanda and Celine, Miles Pinsent was teased about his ponytail when he started grade one, so he cut it off.<sup>40</sup> Pan Wendt, whose family came to PEI in 1975, distinctly recalls having to learn his appropriate gender role, which had not been impressed upon him by his parents or their circle of friends.<sup>41</sup> And what could not be changed or learned could be faked. Home Economics class made Chanda Pinsent particularly anxious: “I didn’t know how to turn on a stove because we had a wood stove. Or use a sewing machine, because my mother had a treadle sewing machine. And I didn’t know how to use an iron because we had an old cast iron that stood on the top of the stove. I would cover that

up. I was really good at watching what other people did and figuring it out, because I didn't want people to know we didn't have that stuff."<sup>42</sup> But some things could not be hidden so easily. In a province where the phone book was dominated by Macs and Mcs, the five K families in the Gairloch Road area—including the Katzes and the Koleszars—were conspicuous. At school, how could the Chandas, Keirans, Pans, and Ahmons help but stick out? At age nine, Pan Wendt decided that he wanted to be called "Steve Jones."<sup>43</sup>

School lunches were the single most mentioned element in the interviews, standing in for all the differences between the worlds of the back-to-the-land children and of mainstream PEI. Stanley begins his discussion of his school years by stating, "Hey, when you come to school with hummus, and everyone says you're eating cat barf—that's a way not to fit in at school!"<sup>44</sup> Hippie staples that had not yet hit the mainstream, such as hummus, yogurt, and alfalfa sprouts, were ripe for derision by classmates and had to be defended. Other foods simply could not be. When the Katzes told me of their raccoon sandwiches, I was as prepared as I could be, having heard about those famous sandwiches from others. I asked, Did you really take raccoon sandwiches to Belfast School? Absolutely, they insisted, because their father figured anything he killed was literally fair game. But it was mortifying, and Ahmon demonstrates how he would hunch over his meal, cocking his wrist to hide his sandwich while he ate it. It has been pointed out to him, he notes, laughing, that he still eats like that.<sup>45</sup> Many of the back-to-the-land children speak of having lusted after foods that bespoke normalcy: white bread and bologna sandwiches, in Celine Pinsent's case; Jos. Louis cakes in Ward's; bread and wieners in Koleszar's.<sup>46</sup> "Normal" food was the only "normal" thing that Vanessa Arnold ever remembers craving. She would fling her lunch under the greenhouse when she arrived home from school every day.<sup>47</sup> Many of the back-to-the-land children note the irony that the mainstream—and they themselves—have grown to prefer many of the foods they once disdained.

In some ways, states Celine Pinsent, the most daunting part of arriving on Prince Edward Island as a back-to-the-lander was "just

trying to catch up, to figure out what these people were about.” But the sisters feel that integration was ultimately made much simpler by the fact that farming played such a big part in island life. “We would have seemed weirder if we were on the edge of suburbia,” Chanda notes. Even if their family’s “Noah’s Ark approach” to farming—two cows, two goats, etc.—was hardly the norm, their peers could and soon did relate to them as just other farm kids.<sup>48</sup> And if their family was poor, so were many other farm families. The Pinsents and other back-to-the-land children found common ground with island kids through shared activities, such as 4-H or school sports or music clubs, or simply by being kids. Arnold recalls almost with amazement a little girl—“She was definitely from the island”—who announced out of the blue that Arnold was her friend; they played outdoors all the time after that.<sup>49</sup> While a number of those interviewed believe they were not invited to some friends’ homes because their family’s lifestyle was associated with drugs, promiscuity, atheism, or God-knows-what-else, Celine Pinsent notes with amusement that she seemed to receive some invitations specifically so her friends’ parents could grill her about how her family lived. While visiting a friend’s home could be a treat—watching television is often cited—the stakes were higher when they visited yours, and the back-to-the-land children speak of being careful with whom they opened their home to. Stanley was originally nervous about having “worlds collide” when friends saw his back-to-the-land existence, but he eventually took their reactions as a way of measuring his friends.<sup>50</sup> Visitors could even help a child see her life in a new way; Celine Pinsent had considered the sleeping lofts in her house irritating because they lacked privacy, but she was delighted to find them a big hit when friends visited.<sup>51</sup>

Of all those interviewed, only Rosie Patch speaks—with refreshing tartness—of an utter refusal to integrate with her island counterparts. Calling herself “brainwashed in a good way” by back-to-the-land life, she states that although she knew she lacked some things that others had, “I consoled myself with the belief that I was more moral, that I was living the right way, that I would end up smarter than those other people who had Fruit Roll-Ups in their lunchbox.” (Having said that,

she later describes trading her mother's homemade fruit leather for her classmates' commercial variety.) Patch made few friends in high school, believing that "Those people really, really weren't as good as us. . . . Those people had no moral principles! They were not struggling for any causes. I got on a train and went across the country to protest against the logging of Clayoquot Sound, I started an environmental club in my high school, I was damned if I was going to be friends with these layabouts!"<sup>52</sup>

While most of those interviewed agree that back-to-the-land children were picked on more than other kids, the boys in particular, they also believe that relations improved over time. Zoe Morrison sees herself as being on the "front lines" of back-to-the-land children who went to her school, and that even her younger sisters' experiences were far different, in part because she and her peers had made the lifestyle more familiar. "And we were, of course, very cool."<sup>53</sup> Back-to-the-land children often introduced progressive and cosmopolitan ideas to their island peers; when the Katz brothers returned to PEI after two years in Florida and Detroit, "we brought breakdancing back to Belfast."<sup>54</sup> Aryana Rousseau, born just seven years after Morrison, agrees that things were easier for younger kids like her. "The road had been paved," she says, using a phrase that nicely captures how rural PEI was becoming suffused with more contemporary ideas, in part thanks to the influx of back-of-the-landers.<sup>55</sup> In retrospect, it is easy enough to say that the back-to-the-land children had never been all that different from their island peers anyway—they were overwhelmingly white, roughly middle-class Judeo-Christians, if not Anglo-Saxons—so their integration experience was surely more straightforward than, for instance, that of subsequent Asian and African immigrant groups. But such a statement is made from a twenty-first-century perspective of greater societal respect for diversity. The children of back-to-the-landers experienced a distance that had to be crossed, and if the crossing seems simple today, it is because they crossed it.

## COMMUNITY

Back-to-the-land children may well have integrated more, or at least faster, with the broader PEI society than their parents did, but it was not as if their parents had no network. “My parents and [their] friends didn’t have to integrate on a social level” with islanders, Rousseau maintains. “They had each other.”<sup>56</sup> Although going back to the land would seem the consummate expression of self-sufficiency, the movement enlisted people with similar backgrounds and philosophies and gave them similar day-to-day challenges. They even lived close to one another because of a shared need for inexpensive real estate. The result was individualists who gravitated naturally to one another. And as the parents gravitated, so did the children.

“If there’s one thing I hope that you take away,” says Clea Ward, “it is this notion of community.”<sup>57</sup> Like many of those interviewed, she considers the back-to-the-landers as a close-knit, extended family, replacing the ones their families had given up to come to Prince Edward Island and standing in for the networks that other islanders enjoyed.<sup>58</sup> Although a variety of interweaving networks of come-from-aways, artistic types, and left-leaning folks existed on PEI in this era, the back-to-the-land network is remembered as being a particularly close-knit one. Monica Lacey recalls that she and her sister were jealous that although her father was an artist who had built their home on the Appin Road, because her family did not grow their own food or go off the grid, they were not considered full members of the homesteading fraternity.<sup>59</sup> It is worth adding that although the PEI back-to-the-landers were part of a continental movement sharing inspirations and cultural products—the *Whole Earth Catalog*, Helen and Scott Nearing, the *Dignam Land* newsletter, etc.—there was no sense of community between those on the island and those elsewhere. A number of the back-to-the-land children mention not being aware of the movement’s existence until they were adults; Ward, who studied law in Toronto and now works in New Brunswick, says she still has yet to meet a back-to-the-lander from beyond Prince Edward Island.<sup>60</sup>

Many of the back-to-the-land children played together all the time growing up, particularly those who lived in the enclaves in the Dixon Road, Selkirk-Gairloch roads, or Iris areas. Neighbouring families had dinners and parties together and travelled to gatherings of sixty or more to celebrate major holidays or welcome the summer or winter solstice. The families gathered for building bees, to tap maple trees, to sculpt, to watch movies projected on a wall, or to pick chanterelles or fiddleheads.<sup>61</sup> To Ward, this closeness was particularly valuable in giving back-to-the-land children access to a whole community of role models. For example, many of the women in the movement were strong feminists, and so not only helped bring feminism to PEI, but also brought it directly to girls like her.<sup>62</sup> In similar fashion, Michael Stanley says that the movement taught him to interact comfortably with adults from a young age, to have conversations with people decades older than him.<sup>63</sup> Of course, from a child's perspective, being watched over by a group of available adults could also have its downside; Ward and Morrison tell of knocking down a sign at a barn dance and then having ten adults on ten occasions tell them what they must do to make things right.<sup>64</sup>

Chanda Pinsent, born in 1963 and one of the oldest back-to-the-land children in 1970s Prince Edward Island, offers a more critical perspective of the community, even while calling her upbringing “an overwhelmingly positive experience.” She observed the sort of groupthink absurdities that can thrive within any small society. Why did so many of the back-to-the-landers, many of them without cars, choose to build at the end of very long lanes, making getting out in the long island winter that much more difficult? Why, for that matter, did back-to-the-land parents such as hers think it was cool to wear their rubber boots to town, their jeans jauntily tucked out? “That was one of the things that really bugged me,” Pinsent recalls. “*Nobody* else did.” Moreover, she saw with clear eyes the limits of the back-to-the-landers’ progressive principles. Differences in body strength meant that the homestead lifestyle often encouraged women and men to fall into traditionally gendered work roles.<sup>65</sup> Having become friends with many of the young women—some of them still teens—who moved to



PEI with considerably older partners, Pinsent believes that it was an especially hard life for them, because so many of the domestic jobs that became their responsibility were made much more difficult without electricity or running water.<sup>66</sup> And yet the back-to-the-landers' social broadmindedness could create its own tempests. While Laura Edell feels that incestuous is too strong a word to describe the PEI back-to-the-land community, she does note that partner-swapping was relatively common.<sup>67</sup> As one back-to-the-lander wryly put it to me, there were more divorces than orgasms.

That the back-to-the-land community was close-knit did not preclude its children from also interacting with Prince Edward Islanders outside of school. A number of those interviewed speak fondly of the relationships they built with mainstream neighbours, much as adults interviewed earlier for the *Back to the Island* project had done. Ward tells of locals such as Margaret and Barney Doherty taking her family under their wing—helping them, for example, with the horses that they had bought without having any knowledge of how to raise or work them.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Stanley recalls local farmer Alec MacDonald driving down the Dixon Road periodically just to make sure that the tenderfoot farmers were doing all right.<sup>69</sup> Matt Zimbel's principal memory of his time on PEI is of quitting school at age fifteen and taking a job on Eddie MacPhail's pig, cattle, and potato farm. "I didn't know anything about farming, but I was strong and I was available at 7:00 a.m. Monday to Friday. In Argyle Shore, that means you've got a lot going for you." He spent twelve-hour days working alongside long-time island farmers and grew particularly close to MacPhail and his wife. When years later the band that Zimbel formed, Manteca, performed at the Confederation Centre of the Arts, the very shy MacPhail came up afterward and hugged him—a moment Zimbel sees as the capstone of "a wonderful experience."<sup>70</sup> Of course, not all interactions with islanders were so affirmative, and the back-to-the-land children certainly realized that many of the negative opinions of their lifestyle expressed by PEI children were ones learned from PEI parents. But the preponderance of reminiscences about settling into the island scene are positive. Celine Pinsent argues that islanders had

been successfully integrating people for generations, not by changing them but by accommodating them.<sup>71</sup> In this way, back-to-the-landers were just another wave of migrants who embraced their prior identity in a new home, even as that home meant their identity evolved—and the identity of the new home evolved in turn.

## THE BUOY

Rosie Patch's family eventually gave up the back-to-the-land lifestyle. When Patch grew up and moved to Montreal, she missed her mother's homemade bread and phoned for the recipe. Her mother all but refused to tell her, saying that Patch lived in a big, cosmopolitan city and should just go buy bread. But Patch wanted to raise her own children with some of the same principles with which she had been raised, such as eating homemade food and not watching television. "My mom says, 'They've got to watch TV, or they'll be out of touch with their peers.' Out of touch with their peers!" she says with disbelief. Patch now sells bread out of her Montreal home for five dollars a loaf.<sup>72</sup>

Since most of the back-to-the-land parents either came to Prince Edward Island with children in tow or had children soon thereafter, they seldom had much of a head start on adjusting to their new lifestyle. "My mom always said that we [she and I] grew up together," says Morrison.<sup>73</sup> Ahmon and Sam Katz's father was from the Bronx and found rural PEI's nighttime quiet so alien that he slept with an axe under the bed.<sup>74</sup> Ward's parents were the urban children of professors and, she says, had never built anything in their lives before moving to Prince Edward Island and erecting a log cabin. She speaks not just of her parents but of the entire movement when she states, "They couldn't imagine that anything bad would happen to them, because nothing bad had ever happened to them."<sup>75</sup> For many, going back to the land was never meant to be more than a temporary experiment, or adventure. It is little wonder that almost all of the families living the life on Prince Edward Island in the 1970s were, to varying degrees and at different speeds, eventually drawn back into the mainstream. They

acquired running water and electricity, a car and television. They took employment outside the home to augment and then replace their attempts at farming, gardening, and self-sufficiency. They moved off their homesteads or off Prince Edward Island altogether. The children figured heavily in these decisions, because they relentlessly connected the family to the outside world and because their parents worried about imposing their chosen lifestyle on them.<sup>76</sup> While some of the back-to-the-land children interviewed here have retained or returned to vestiges of their childhood lifestyle, not a single one lived back-to-the-land straight through to adulthood.

And yet all of those interviewed speak of their unusual upbringing as absolutely formative. To be sure, some speak of the movement and their part in it in highly romantic terms. Laura Edell, almost forty and working in advertising in Toronto, says she still sometimes dreams of “chucking it all and moving back in a VW bug.” But what are we to make of this statement, and of the fact that she is proud of having lived back-to-the-land, knowing that she and her mother had moved off the farm by the time Edell was four?<sup>77</sup> Back-to-the-land is for many a source of stories of an otherworldly yet somehow more authentic existence. “I can tell my kids,” says Vanessa Arnold from her chiropractic/pilates studio in Toronto, “that I was attacked by the rooster and I ran out screaming with a bleeding leg. What four- or five-year-old can have that experience and then pass that on to their kids?”<sup>78</sup>

But the influences clearly run deeper than memorable anecdotes. Andy Reddin talks, as many do, about how growing up in the woods gave him an appreciation for nature. Now twenty-seven, and having earned a master’s degree in physics and travelled around Asia, Reddin has returned to PEI and is going back to the land, at least for a while, in a cabin he is fixing up on his parents’ Bonshaw property.<sup>79</sup> Michael Stanley stayed on the island and became a potter. He notes the resurgence in the past few years of “next-generationers”—grown back-to-the-land children—who are once again buying land on the Dixon Road and once again embracing the lifestyle, at least to some extent.<sup>80</sup> The Katz brothers even argue that being born into the way

of life made them adept at technological problem-solving, and thus actually better suited to the life than their parents were. Ahmon lives just up the hill from where he grew up, working as an artist, carpenter, and builder; Sam is a key grip in the New York City film industry.<sup>81</sup>

Many of those interviewed speak of their back-to-the-land upbringing more generally as a source of strength. Aryana Rousseau credits her childhood in Mount Vernon as, paradoxically, what allowed her to become a lawyer in a big firm in Montreal. “I had seventeen years living in the woods, in a safe environment with a wonderful family, and that prepared me to go out and see the world and see what else I could do.” And like many interviewed, Rousseau draws strength in part from the conviction that she could return to her old life if she had to: “I know there’s something else, something more real—I have a backup plan.”<sup>82</sup> Some of such sentiment is surely just daydreaming—and built on the questionable premise that being a child in a back-to-the-land household prepares a person sufficiently to adopt it herself decades later. But it is also an expression of how growing up in an alternative lifestyle revealed to those interviewed the possibility of alternatives. Ward, a lawyer who now works as a career counsellor in a law school, is not sure if she will ever move back to the land (though she and her husband talk about it), but if her children wanted to, she would encourage them to go for it. “Nothing bad can come of it. You can always go back to the grid. The grid will be there.”<sup>83</sup>

The Pinsent sisters provide an interesting reflection on growing up back-to-the-land on Prince Edward Island, if only because locally their family became, to some extent, poster children for asceticism. On the one hand, the Pinsents lived one of the most hard-core back-to-the-land existences about as far into the island’s interior as it was possible to go; on the other hand, their father grew increasingly well-known through his long-time involvement with the provincial government’s Small Farms Program. Chanda, who would receive a Commonwealth Scholarship, travel the world, and settle in New Zealand, says that what made her “overwhelmingly positive” childhood distinct was the degree to which family existence was concentrated around a single project, the farm: “It was always the farm, the farm, the farm.” But

her father sold the farm years after the children had left, and when Chanda was interviewed in 2011 she did not think she would even bother taking her youngest son to see it when she returned to PEI that summer. “It wasn’t the land,” she realizes now. “It wasn’t the place, it was the doing it, and that’s where my memories are. And once he sold it . . . Initially, I thought the tie was to the land, but now I don’t think it is, it’s to the experience.”<sup>84</sup> Chanda’s sister Celine received her doctorate in clinical psychology and now runs a management consulting firm in Quebec. She sees her back-to-the-land upbringing as having taught her that the world is a place worth exploring and as having given her the confidence to do so. She likens life to swimming in the ocean, in which back-to-the-land is a buoy she can always swim back to if she needs to.

And yet it is Celine Pinsent, of all of those interviewed, who most directly questions whether it was growing up back-to-the-land that really shaped her upbringing, or whether it was growing up rural or on Prince Edward Island that was key.<sup>85</sup> I myself was raised in a never-left-the-land household on PEI, our family having farmed the same ninety acres since the 1830s. We lived more of a pre-modern existence than most, but in the 1970s we were still working with horses, still milking by hand, and had just recently acquired indoor plumbing. When I hear Eryn Gibbs describe the novelty of living on an unpaved road or of using an outhouse, I think, “That’s my childhood, too”—at least until he describes keeping goats in the house in the winter.<sup>86</sup> It is interesting to hear Eryn’s sister Keiran, now attending law school in Montreal, say that growing up back-to-the-land taught her to value community, natural beauty, and stewardship of the land—all values I equate with my own childhood—but that she is unlikely to return to PEI because she never felt like an islander.<sup>87</sup> There is likely no way to pull apart the strands of influence, to determine to what degree it was living back-to-the-land that shaped the childhood of those interviewed—particularly because they were interviewed specifically because they had grown up back-to-the-land. What is striking is how few even attempt this determination, happy instead to identify their childhood first and foremost with back-to-the-land.

Zoe Morrison concedes that growing up back-to-the-land may have been akin to growing up in any rural Prince Edward Island household in the 1970s “but with really liberal parents.” Whether in terms of environmentalism, gay marriage, or organic food, PEI and North America at large have in the interim adopted many of the counterculture’s ideas, or else the counterculture folks were just somewhat ahead of their time. In turn, the back-to-the-land children interviewed are much more immersed in the mainstream than their parents were then—although not really any more than their parents are now. A distinguishing characteristic of the island’s back-to-the-land community, Morrison recalls, was beach nudity. Her mother was, in the words of a friend, “militantly naked,” and Morrison herself did not own a bathing suit for part of her childhood. But at the back-to-the-land reunion in 2012 where some of these interviews took place, families met at a local beach, and Morrison was amused to see that islanders and back-to-the-landers alike were not only dressed, but dressed alike. You could not tell them apart.<sup>88</sup>

Looking at the back-to-the-land movement through the eyes of its children offers insight into how this process occurred. How has North American culture absorbed the counterculture to the point that they now resemble one another? Most accounts and analyses of the movement are from the perspective of its adult practitioners, who explicitly rejected the mainstream and so tended to see it as backsliding if they gave up the lifestyle or as an affectation if the broader society adopted elements of it. But for their children, rejection of mainstream society was never an option, in the sense that school immersed them in it every day and that their way of life was not of their choosing anyway. (One might argue that this lack of agency, and so accountability, actually makes the children more reliable assessors of the lifestyle than their parents are.) The back-to-the-land children interviewed here escaped some of the worst features of the lifestyle—the backbreaking labour, the awareness of deprivation—and instead experienced it in terms of family, play, and nature. They then shared their lifestyle—one involving environmental consciousness, self-sufficiency, simplicity, and hummus—with their peers, which helped permeate the

broader culture even as the broader culture was permeating theirs. It is not that the back-to-the-land children turned their backs to the land while their parents toiled on it, but rather that they were by necessity always looking outward, facing the wider world.

## NOTES

- 1 On the American movement of the 1970s, see Dona L. Brown, *Back to the Land: The Enduring Dream of Self-Sufficiency in Modern America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), esp. chap. 7; Eleanor Agnew, *Back from the Land: How Young Americans Went to Nature in the 1970s and Why They Came Back* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2004); and Jeffrey Jacob, *New Pioneers: The Back-to-the-Land Movement and the Search for a Sustainable Future* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997). On the Canadian movement, see Sharon Weaver, “First Encounters: 1970s Back-to-the-Land Cape Breton, Nova Scotia and Denman, Hornby and Lasqueti Islands, British Columbia,” *Oral History Forum d’histoire orale* 30 (2010): 1–30; Sharon Weaver, “Coming from Away: The Back-to-the-Land Movement in Cape Breton in the 1970s” (MA thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2004); Amish C. Morrell, “Imagining the Real: Theorizing Cultural Production and Social Difference in the Cape Breton Back-to-the-Land Community” (MA thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, 1999); and Terry Simmons, “But We Must Cultivate Our Garden: Twentieth Century Pioneering in Rural British Columbia” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1979). It is difficult to calculate the scale of the movement; Simmons’s estimate (pp. 192–94) that roughly one million North Americans moved back to the land in this period has become common in the literature (see, for example, Jacob, *New Pioneers*, 3; and Agnew, *Back from the Land*, 5) but, more recently, has been challenged (Brown, *Back to the Land*, 206).
- 2 There is no entirely satisfactory way to designate these children. “Children of back-to-the-landers” diminishes their participation in the lifestyle, while “children back-to-the-landers” or “back-to-the-land children” overstates how much agency they actually had—and, particularly for those born into the movement, raises the question of how they can be said to have moved “back.”
- 3 The exhibit consists of a narrative history, a series of photographs by George Zimbel, and the audio recordings of

- the interviews themselves.  
 Alan MacEachern and Ryan O'Connor, *Back to the Island: The Back-to-the-Land Movement on PEI*, on NiCHE website, accessed 24 September 2015, <http://niche-canada.org/member-projects/backtotheisland/home.html>.
- 4 Alan MacEachern, *The Institute of Man and Resources: An Environmental Fable* (Charlottetown, PEI: Island Studies, 2003). See also Henry Trim's chapter, "An Ark for the Future," in this volume.
  - 5 There were several short-lived communes on the island, but the vast majority of back-to-the-landers homesteaded as families, couples, or individuals. Although a couple of those whom O'Connor and I interviewed in our two projects had spent time in communes, all spoke exclusively of back-to-the-land homesteading experiences. As Brown notes in *Back to the Land*, 275n11, the commune movement peaked around 1970, when the homesteading movement was just catching on.
  - 6 The *Back to the Island* interviews, plus brief biographies of those interviewed, can be found on the NiCHE website, <http://niche-canada.org/member-projects/backtotheisland/interviews.html>.
  - 7 Which is not to say, of course, that children of back-to-the-landers provide an emotionally deeper or "truer" portrait of the movement than their parents do. All oral history must deal with the reality that, as historian of childhood Neil Sutherland puts it, "[A] memory is really a reconstruction of what is being recalled rather than a reproduction of it." This is all the more the case when adults are being asked to recall their childhood—a time deeper in the past, when their personality was still being developed. And yet, as Sutherland writes, "if we are ever to get 'inside' childhood experiences, then we must ask adults to recall how they thought, felt, and experienced their growing up." Neil Sutherland, "When You Listen to the Winds of Childhood, How Much Can You Believe?" *Curriculum Inquiry* 22, no. 3 (1992): 239, 243. Sutherland's essay is an excellent introduction to issues surrounding the use of oral history of adults to recreate the internal worlds of children; it has informed our thinking here.
  - 8 It must be said that in both series of interviews those who were more content with their back-to-the-land experience were surely overrepresented, since they were more likely to still be living the life, to be attending the 2012 reunion where some of the interviews occurred, or simply to be willing to talk about that time in their lives.
  - 9 Michael Stanley, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 16 June 2011, 0:10, 36:30. Times given are for the beginning of new sections,



- as seen in the interview transcripts.
- 10 Matt Zimbel, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 1 June 2011, 0:10, 7:00, 9:15.
  - 11 Of moving from Manhattan to PEI, Matt Zimbel states, "My mother said, 'Children, one island's the same as the next, get in the goddamn car.'—That's not true, she never said that, but I think it's a good story." Ibid., 4:45.
  - 12 Zoe Morrison, interview by Alan MacEachern, 4 August 2012, 29:30.
  - 13 Chanda Pinsent interview by Ryan O'Connor, 15 May 2011, 16:15. The experience of Chanda and her sister Celine was distinct from that of all others interviewed here, in that they had been living in a commune before coming to PEI; in some ways, they found the family-focused nature of homesteading positively conventional by comparison.
  - 14 Clea Ward, interview by Alan MacEachern, 4 August 2012, 40:00.
  - 15 Ahmon Katz and Sam Katz, interview by Alan MacEachern, 4 August 2012, 0:10. My interview with the Katz brothers hardly satisfied oral history best practices. The only time and place we could arrange an interview was in pitch darkness in a tepee during the Home Again reunion, as a band played enthusiastically in the background. The fact that the two brothers were so often in agreement, to the point of ending each other's sentences, makes it difficult to determine which brother is speaking in the recording—even as it also makes such a determination somewhat less critical.
  - 16 Laura Edell, interview by Alan MacEachern, 4 August 2012, 1:00.
  - 17 Katz and Katz, interview, 5:50, 8:30.
  - 18 Stanley, interview, 7:08.
  - 19 Aryana Rousseau, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 5 June 2011, 1:20.
  - 20 Chanda Pinsent, interview, 9:30.
  - 21 Morrison, interview, 8:50, 12:40; Home Again roundtable, moderated by Ryan O'Connor, 5 August 2012, 20:45.
  - 22 Gerald Sutton, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 13 June 2008.
  - 23 Morrison, interview, 14:15; Home Again roundtable, 50:30.
  - 24 Ward, interview, 10:30; Home Again roundtable, 47:00.
  - 25 Chanda Pinsent, interview, 3:45; Celine Pinsent, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 20 April 2011, 44:00.
  - 26 Katz and Katz, interview, 4:50.
  - 27 Rousseau, interview, 2:50.
  - 28 Vanessa Arnold, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 5 May 2011, 0:00.
  - 29 Stanley, interview, 15:50.
  - 30 Andy Reddin, interview by Alan MacEachern, 4 August 2012, 5:45; Arnold, interview, 23:10.

- 31 Morrison, interview, 17:00. The Katz brothers also describe such play. Katz and Katz, interview, 12:00.
- 32 Katz and Katz, interview, 27:20.
- 33 Aaron Koleszar, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 29 May 2011, 32:40.
- 34 Ibid., 5:45.
- 35 Stanley, interview, 12:10.
- 36 Clea Ward, comments, Home Again roundtable, 19:00. As Laura Edell drily notes, the back-to-the-land and local youth had only pot dealers in common. Edell, interview, 4:30.
- 37 Eryn Gibbs, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 14 April 2011, 6:50, 12:40.
- 38 Morrison, interview, 4:55.
- 39 French immersion arrived on PEI at about the same time as the back-to-the-landers, in 1975. From our standpoint, it may seem that these back-to-the-land parents were making a rather bourgeois, integrationist choice on behalf of their children, but it is as likely that, just as they expressed difference from the dominant culture in their way of life, they sought to open their children to different languages and cultures. On the prevalence of back-to-the-land children in French immersion programs, see Rousseau, interview, 6:50; Keiran Gibbs, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 28 April 2011, 2:15; and Ward, interview, 14:00.
- 40 Chanda Pinsent, interview, 7:50.
- 41 Pan Wendt, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 28 April 2011, 29:30. Wendt's story was unusual here, in that his family was part of a small community of "Premies" who came to Prince Edward Island in the 1970s to follow the religious and meditative teachings of the Divine Light Mission, led by Guru Maharaji Ji (Prem Rawat).
- 42 Chanda Pinsent, interview, 19:30.
- 43 Pan Wendt, comments, Home Again roundtable, 84:00.
- 44 Stanley, interview, 12:10. On other mocked foods, see also Celine Pinsent, interview, 38:30.
- 45 Katz and Katz, interview, 14:45. In another vein, Pan Wendt had to constantly explain his vegetarianism to peers—and explain it once again to their mothers at birthday parties. Wendt, interview, 25:00.
- 46 Celine Pinsent, interview, 38:30; Ward, interview, 46:00; Koleszar, interview, 7:10.
- 47 Arnold, interview, 21:00.
- 48 Chanda Pinsent, interview, 11:00; Celine Pinsent, interview, 4:10, 8:50.
- 49 Arnold, interview, 5:00.
- 50 Stanley, interview, 34:00. See also Home Again roundtable, 28:00.
- 51 Celine Pinsent, interview, 38:30
- 52 Rosie Patch, comments, Home Again roundtable, 15:30, 30:00.
- 53 Morrison, interview, 4:55, 29:00.

- 54 Katz and Katz, interview, 9:40.
- 55 Rousseau, interview, 4:50.
- 56 Ibid., 7:50. More than this, Clea Ward suggests that some back-to-the-landers were not particularly tolerant and had no interest in becoming friends with islanders. Home Again roundtable, 94:30.
- 57 Ward, interview, 48:30.
- 58 On this theme, see Morrison, interview, 4:30, 9:00; Rousseau, interview, 7:50, 13:20; and K. Gibbs, interview, 2:15. The back-to-the-land children's own grandparents and extended family did appear in their lives, of course. Several interviewees touch on how much difficulty their grandparents had with their parents' decision. According to Michael Stanley, his grandmother demanded the family buy a flush toilet because she was convinced he would be traumatized by going to school without knowing how to use one. He thinks it more likely she did not like using the outhouse when she visited. Stanley, interview, 10:50.
- 59 Monica Lacey, interview by Ryan O'Connor, 28 May 2011, 6:10.
- 60 Ward, interview, 40:00.
- 61 Back-to-the-land community social activities are discussed in Ward, interview, 26:40; Stanley, interview, 17:20; Edell, interview, 14:10; and E. Gibbs, interview, 3:00.
- 62 Ward, interview, 26:40, 29:30.
- 63 Stanley, interview, 17:20.
- 64 Clea Ward and Zoe Morrison, comments, Home Again roundtable, 10:00.
- 65 For example, Eryn Gibbs states that although his parents tried to assign chores indiscriminately to him and his sisters, he ended up doing most of the outside tasks such as feeding cows and shovelling snow, in part because he was bigger (which, in itself, was in part because he was older). Gibbs interview, 14:15.
- 66 Chanda Pinsent interview, 28:00, 26:00, 40:35.
- 67 Edell interview, 14:10.
- 68 Ward, Home Again roundtable, 85:00.
- 69 Stanley, interview, 26:10.
- 70 Zimbel, interview, 13:25.
- 71 Celine Pinsent, interview, 45:30.
- 72 Home Again roundtable, 12:00, 15:30.
- 73 Morrison, interview, 20:00.
- 74 Katz and Katz, interview, 20:10.
- 75 Ward, interview, 3:00; Home Again roundtable, 85:00.
- 76 Ward notes that many parents told their children to get an education so they wouldn't have to live like this—"Which was hilarious, because *they* didn't have to do this." Home Again roundtable, 70:50. Parents discuss children's role in their returning to the mainstream throughout the *Back to the Island* interviews. See MacEachern and O'Connor, *Back to the Island*.

- 77 Edell, interview, 12:30, 1:00. Her family continued to socialize with the back-to-the-land community, however.
- 78 Arnold, interview, 32:15.
- 79 Reddin, interview, 1:55, 18:00.
- 80 Stanley, interview, 2:45.
- 81 Katz and Katz, interview, 20:10.
- 82 Rousseau, interview, 20:00.
- 83 Ward, interview, 48:30.
- 84 Chanda Pinsent, interview, 37:50.
- 85 Celine Pinsent, interview, 31:55.
- 86 E. Gibbs, interview, 4:05.
- 87 K. Gibbs, interview, 7:35, 19:00.
- 88 Morrison, interview, 23:55, 21:30. The description of Morrison's mother is from Ward, Home Again roundtable, 25:00.

