Injury and Therapy: Proletarianization in Puerto Rico's Fisheries

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When I worked nights
on the milling machines
at Cadillac transmission
another kid just up
from West Virginia asked me
what was we making,
and I answered, I'm making
2.25 an hour,
don't know what you're
making, and he had
to correct me, gently, what was
we making out of
this here metal, and I didn't know.

—Philip Levine, *A Walk with Tom Jefferson* [1988:63]

Recognition of the incomplete incorporation of peasants and tribal peoples into the formal economic structures and processes of capitalism has placed new demands on anthropological inquiry, challenging us to focus explicitly on how peasant and tribal production processes and symbolic systems complement or conflict with those of capitalism. Among the more influential recent studies oriented along these lines are cultural-historical analyses of merchant capital's dominance of kin-based production processes (Roseberry 1983; Sider 1986). These have shown how mercantile relations created, distorted, embellished, or otherwise used supposedly "traditional" features of culture to assume control over production decisions and the appropriation of surplus. Other studies focus on labor migration between poor world regions and the centers of capitalist production, demonstrating how remittances and the development of social infrastructures of migration serve to reproduce specific demographic trends and social organizational forms (Griffith 1985; Massey, Alarcón, Durand, and González 1987; Richardson 1983). A third group of studies examines human responses to the direct expansion of capitalism into tribal or peasant groups in the form of plantation agriculture, mining, cash cropping, cottage industry, or factory production (Collins 1988; Nash 1979; Nash and Fernandez-Kelley

Peasant fishers throughout Latin America and the Caribbean typically combine fishing with wage labor to varying degrees. Certain scholars have interpreted this as a reflection of incomplete incorporation into capitalist spheres of influence, where contradictions emerge as groups attempt to maintain economic and cultural autonomy while being subordinated to capitalist relations of production. In this article we investigate the conceptual and political consequences of this process among Puerto Rican fishers. We find that fishers have appropriated the concepts of "class" and "therapy" from their participation in the formal economy and have adapted these concepts to the politics and semantics of artisanal fishing. [fishing, hegemony, semiproletarianization, Puerto Rico]

1983; Ong 1988; Sanderson 1985; Stoler 1985; Wolf 1969). These studies document the interplay of class and culture, in some cases showing how workers use cultural vehicles such as mummering or spirit possession to protest or make sense of capitalist relations of production, thus anchoring their incorporation in bodies of cultural knowledge.

The new demands placed on anthropological inquiry derive from concrete political and economic developments. As capitalist production systems expand into underdeveloped regions and as labor migration becomes institutionalized in the survival strategies of the world's poor, incomes from wage labor have supplemented or replaced incomes from domestically organized, small-scale production. Many peasant households and social groups can thus be considered semiproletarianized; their members are likely to organize their domestic production and their participation in the formal economy in relation to each other (de Janvry 1983). In addition, they develop and revise conceptual categories to characterize the semiproletarian lifestyle. Traditional subjects of anthropological inquiry have thus already formed opinions about world capitalism, usually seeing it from the perspective of low-wage, unskilled, or semiskilled workers (Frobel, Heinrichs, and Kreye 1980; Nash and Fernandez-Kelley 1983; Sanderson 1985).

Clarifying our notions of hegemony and counterhegemony, the seminal work of Gramsci (1971), combined with Raymond Williams' work on "dominant culture" (1977), suggests that the perspectives of low-wage workers regarding work and the distribution of social products draw heavily (and, at times, critically) on perspectives developed in ruling intellectual circles and dispensed through public school systems, other public bureaucracies, television and radio programming, and less formal arenas of social thought and action. Rarely are these ruling perspectives mere justifications of exploitation. Instead, they are subtle and complex institutional and intellectual means of addressing the material consequences of workers' incorporation. Further, workers do not embrace these perspectives uncritically; they revise and reconsider them in light of their own concrete circumstances. In this process of revision lies the genesis of counterhegemony, or the struggle for a new hegemony: "A lived hegemony is always a process. . . . [I]t does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified. It is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own" (Williams 1977:112). In a recent review, Rebel clarifies this position by pointing out that the construction of a counterhegemony is heightened in times of crisis. Yet Rebel cautions against focusing on obvious crises to the exclusion of "the permeation of everyday life by culturally necessary . . . victimizations," concluding that

> the political economists' perspective is able to set its sights both on the reproductively determined and class aspects of social relationships and on the split selves required to live the split texts that run out of words at precisely those moments when victims become necessary to sustain what claims to be necessary culture. Rather than merely seeing how this or that culture has worked historically, we can begin to trace the cultural-historical reworkings of specific traumas of primary accumulation as these appear in hegemonic redefinitions of and proprietary claims to the surplus, and are all experienced, during "normal times," in the repetition compulsions of dispossession and enforced social failure. [1989:363–364]

The culturally necessary victimizations that permeate the everyday lives of low-wage workers often include occupational injuries. Many jobs worked by labor migrants and factory workers tend to be hazardous, capable of injuring, poisoning, or killing workers. While less hazardous occupations have injury and illness rates of between four and six incidents per 100 workers, many low-wage jobs have rates that are two to three times higher: construction work's injury and illness rate is 14.5 incidents per 100 workers, agricultural production's is 12.0, durable goods manufacturing's is 11.8, and food processing's is 16.2 (U.S. Department of Labor 1987; cf. ILO 1983). Further, these are only the *reported* rates of injury; as Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) investigations often find, the underreporting of occupational injury is particularly widespread in hazardous industries (see, for instance, OSHA 1989). For example, in the U.S. meatpacking and poultry processing industries, which are notorious for

their use of new immigrant workers, occupational injuries such as repetitive motion disease, cuts, and falls are among the principal concerns of workers, points of contention in labor disputes, and issues around which employees organize for protest and legal action (Center for Women's Economic Alternatives 1989; Griffith 1990; Hage and Klauda 1989). In response to such adverse working conditions, fields such as occupational therapy and vocational rehabilitation have developed and disseminated both their programs and their ideas throughout worker populations, providing new concepts and meanings that the workers can draw upon to characterize their worlds of work.

Occupational injury is often made worse by the hazardous living conditions associated with working for low wages, particularly among migrants. Housing, for example, tends to be overcrowded, substandard, and subject to fire and vermin infestation; transportation often involves reliance on unsafe and uninsured vehicles (Friedland and Nelkin 1971; Griffith, Kissam, Runsten, García, and Camposeco 1990). Many low-wage workers occupy the same neighborhoods as groups engaged in drug trafficking, prostitution, petty theft, burglary, and other crimes. Further, low-wage workers and their families suffer from the effects of social structural imbalances that are enhanced and maintained by legal mechanisms and cultural differences. These imbalances manifest themselves in such forms as usurious interest rates, unstable or controlled ("price-fixed") markets, differential citizenship status, discrimination in labor markets and courts of law, and, in the case of Puerto Rico, public school policies against the teaching of English (Algren de Gutiérrez 1987).

The hazardous living conditions, discrimination, and other structural imbalances facing low-wage workers have given rise to public and private social service and outreach programs. These programs not only dispense emergency funds, food stamps, medical and legal services, and other material support, but also provide new arguments and information about legal and political mechanisms available to remedy abysmal living conditions, raise consciousness regarding workers' rights, and direct workers to labor unions or other organizations engaged in political struggle. Liberal legislation, too, often addresses the problems of the poor, justifying and offering legal support to civil disobedience, labor organization, and political activity that challenges existing social relations. Responding to abuses of farmworkers on the U.S. mainland, for example, the Puerto Rican Departamento de Trabajo (DDT) pressured for the passage of Public Law 87, which guarantees wage rates, minimal seasonal incomes, travel reimbursements, housing arrangements, and social security payments to all farmworkers the DDT refers to U.S. growers. In addition, the DDT takes pains to educate workers regarding their rights and their employers' obligations. Through experiences with programs and organizations such as these, small-scale producers are able to glean ideas from the rhetoric and ideology of class struggle and to apply them, sometimes haphazardly, in objectifying their experiences, raising the class attributes of their experiences to the level of knowledge, and thus achieving political consciousness. They do so most swiftly during crises, such as strikes or other labor disputes (Edwards 1979; Hage and Klauda 1989; Mintz 1959), plant closings (Newman 1988), illegitimate developments in the quality of on-the-job supervision (Lamphere 1987), and severe cost of living problems associated with job loss (Nash 1985).

While the incorporation of small-scale producers into wage labor markets provides them with new experiences and new ideas, this incorporation remains incomplete as long as they remain attached to their natal communities and production systems. The persistence of such attachment has been documented in work on southern European migrants to northern Europe (Brandes 1975; Castels 1984; Magnarella 1979), on rural migrants to urban areas in Latin America (Lomnitz 1977; Radcliffe 1990), and on Caribbean and Mexican migrants to the United States (Gmelch 1980; Griffith 1983; Massey et al. 1987; Portes and Bach 1985). In the present case, we have found that even after prolonged absence from Puerto Rico and years of work in low-wage jobs on the U.S. mainland, Puerto Rican fishers remain tied to small-scale production systems and to the politics and economics of fishing in their natal coastal communities. This

suggests that they see their wage labor experiences through the cultural lens of Puerto Rican artisanal fishing.[1] It is in this light that we consider our material from Puerto Rican artisanal fisheries.

conceptual and political consequences of proletarianization

occupational injury and the appropriation of *terapia* Members of Puerto Rican fishing families move between domestic and capitalist production contexts in various places and at various times throughout their lives.[2] The diffuse, continuous interaction between capitalist and domestic processes results in their influencing one another in both material and ideological ways. In some cases, for example, concepts from capitalist-based systems of meaning are appropriated and revised in light of domestic production. *Terapia,* or "therapy," is one such concept, taken from the official rhetoric of occupational therapy and invested with new meaning as fishers use it to characterize fishing. We emphasize, however, that the complexity of the interaction between capitalist and domestic processes is such that neither the concept nor its appropriation occurs in a uniform manner among all Puerto Rican fishers.

In a survey of Puerto Rican commercial fishermen (Gutiérrez 1982), two questions elicited responses illustrating fishers' sense of fishing as therapy. The fishermen were asked one general, open-ended question about their reasons for fishing, allowing them to outline a wide array of reasons. They were also asked if they would recommend fishing to a young person they liked. In response to both questions, the fishers launched into a discourse in which they used the word "therapy" and related concepts as they characterized the fishing experience. Reviewing these cases, we found that slightly less than six (5.82) percent of the 292 fishers actually used the word "therapy" to describe fishing, making such statements as:

> I am handicapped. I receive social security [benefits]. My family used to fish. I earn some money. It is a therapy.
>
> [Fishing] has its advantages. It is a job as well as a therapy. One does not work for a boss; [one is] in no one's service [*servidumbre*], under no yoke. Nobody intervenes. It is only you and nature. There are people who work eight hours [a day] and earn a miserable salary; [in fishing] one works less.

Is it appropriate to say, on the basis of this survey, that fishing as therapy is a widely held cultural category among Puerto Rican fishermen, given the small percentage of respondents who actually used the word "therapy"? Addressing this issue, we expanded the fishers' discourse into two areas. Respondents who spoke of fishing as therapy explained that its being a "healthy activity" and a sport were key elements of the therapy of fishing.[3] Those who considered fishing a sport constituted 13 percent of the total sample, while those who defined it as a healthy activity accounted for ten percent. Thus, nearly a third (29 percent) of the fishers characterized fishing as therapy, as a healthy activity, or as a sport. We emphasize that it is not our intention here to inflate the percentages in order to have a larger group of cases to discuss, but to show the semiotic extensions of the concept of fishing as therapy.

Associated with fishing as a sport, for example, were comments such as "It keeps your mind occupied with useful things," "It is a distraction," "It keeps you away from drugs," "It is entertaining and fun; it does not bore you," "It is a clean activity," and "It is good exercise." The remarks associated with fishing as a healthy activity included "It is good and healthy," "It is peaceful," "It keeps your mind occupied, away from bad thoughts," "It clears the mind," "It keeps you young," "One forgets problems and tensions," "It keeps you from vices," "It is a distraction," and "It keeps young people from delinquency." While less than a third of the survey respondents expressed their feelings about fishing in those terms, it is our contention, based on detailed life histories we collected during 1987–88, that the notion of fishing as therapy is widely held by Puerto Rican fishers, although the exact meaning of therapy has been altered to conform to their concrete circumstances. Before examining some of the cases, we

consider the notion of therapy as developed in the lived and historical processes of a capitalist hegemony.

therapy as a "Puerto Rican" cultural category? We opened this section with the claim that fishers had appropriated the notion of therapy from "established" social realms such as occupational therapy, in the context of which therapy has been elaborated as a sophisticated concept that invokes both physiology and psychology. Ethnographic impressions suggest that the population at large shares the concept, although a study of its popularization has yet to be done. Historical studies of Puerto Rican mental health and social services institutions (see Hernandez 1985 for a brief account of mental institutions) could illustrate better, among other things, state strategies with regard to specific conditions of the population *as a labor force*. Such institutions are pivotal in managing the population's health in relation to labor allocation (Bonilla and Campos 1985).

The existence of mental health institutions and professionals in Puerto Rico dates from 1821, under the administration of the Spanish Crown (Hernandez 1985). Under U.S. colonial rule in the 20th century, asylums, psychiatric hospitals, and mental health services became well established enough that the psychotherapeutic trends of the United States started to take hold in Puerto Rico. The insular economy's dependence on large money transfers and social services programs from the United States (cf. Pratts 1987) laid down the general parameters for the dissemination of therapy as a cultural category. Although therapy was part of the language of mental asylums, it wasn't until 1963, when mental health clinics were established, that the concept of "therapy" (as used by occupational therapists) began to expand into Puerto Rican households across the island. Vocational rehabilitation programs, which had been in place since 1936, were redefined in 1969, giving the concept's popularization an added boost. Puerto Rican psychologists agree that issues affecting wage laborers—including the mental and physical condition of the labor force, the treatment of migrants, the retraining of injured workers, and the rehabilitation of the *lumpenproletariat* (drug addicts, criminals, and juvenile delinquents)—have been a priority of these programs (Gomez 1985; González Marin 1985; Irizarry 1985). During the 1960s, incorporating people into the labor force became a clear objective of various government programs, an objective based on the idea that labor was essential to social order. According to Irizarry, labor is "a mechanism of social control. In the job setting, socialization is consolidated, in correspondence with society's hegemonic values and ideology" (1985:164).[4] Labor is thus perceived as having a rehabilitative value for society as a whole as well as for the individual.

The establishment of bureaucracies for vocational rehabilitation and of two-year university degrees in occupational therapy consolidated social work as a profession just prior to the recession and oil crisis of the early 1970s and the subsequent large-scale return migration, when the island's already overcrowded labor market was having to accommodate even more workers. At the same time, industrial development was expanding job opportunities and the state was matching people with jobs through "vocational" programs, as well as attempting to control labor supplies by intervening in the reproductive behavior of proletarian households (Bonilla and Campos 1985). The social services available to fishers included low-interest loans for the establishment of fish markets, the provision of training materials (gear, boats), and social security benefits for the disabled (money that could be used to buy fishing equipment). Channeling the young, injured, unemployed, and handicapped into the economy, these programs operated throughout the island, involving individuals from all segments of Puerto Rican society and contributing to the popularization of the idea of "therapy." Among fishers, fishing became therapy against unemployment, helping to maintain the domestic unit while reducing stress during hard times. This was well in line with the goals of occupational therapy, which included attaining low rates of unemployment, promoting good mental health, and facilitating the learning of new productive skills (González Marin 1985:201).[5]

Yet occupational therapy's aim of incorporating fishers into the Puerto Rican economy often conflicts with the ways in which fishers have appropriated the concept of therapy. Fishers themselves suggest that fishing is in fact a therapeutic *alternative* to incorporation into the Puerto Rican economy *as a wage worker,* since wage work generally involves risks, separation from one's family (for migrants), and other hardships. Most of those we interviewed had worked in highly hazardous occupations, and many had been injured on the job or had relatives who had been injured. In a number of cases, a fisher had suffered an abbreviated education and childhood when the principal wage earner in his household was injured and the children were forced to seek work to compensate for the lost wages. In the field, we saw people using fishing as a way to help themselves mentally accommodate to leaving the proletariat, as a means of earning money while recuperating from a job-related injury, and as a vehicle for redefining their political affiliations.

Most important, however, while receiving physical and mental therapeutic benefits from fishing, fishers can continue "working" without formally "working"; in other words, they can earn money without entering the formal economy. In addition, they can divorce themselves from political activity or alter the nature of that political activity.[6] The therapeutic dimension of fishing, as contrasted with wage labor, is all the more important because working in wage labor contexts also affects fishers' political activity *within* fisheries.

semiproletarianization and *villas pesqueras* In Puerto Rico, a government agency called CODREMAR (Corporación para el Desarrollo y Administración de los Recursos Marinos, Lacustres y Fluviales de Puerto Rico), working in conjunction with various commonwealth and federal agencies, oversees the fishing industry. CODREMAR has built marketing, landing, storage, and meeting facilities for fishers all around the island, establishing *villas pesqueras,* or fishing associations. These associations are designed to allow fishers to organize, centralize, and stabilize their markets, to store equipment, to gain access to credit and training, and so on. Their impact varies from place to place: some associations have become defunct while others are powerful political and economic forces in their communities. The success or failure of these associations derives from a variety of circumstances, including the quality of the resources available, the fishers' existing technological capacities, and the extent of alternative employment in the area.[7]

Semiproletarianization has contributed to the success of some fishing associations and to the failure of others. On the one hand, many fishers have gained leadership skills and become politically astute by virtue of their wage labor experiences. Migrating to the U.S. mainland or working in Puerto Rican factories and fields has engendered class consciousness, enabling Puerto Rican fishers to see themselves as part of a broader proletariat or, at least, to appropriate the rhetoric of class struggle in crises facing their fisheries. Valdés Pizzini (1990) documents this phenomenon in his study of the rhetoric used in a dispute over the state's attempt to establish a marine sanctuary in La Parguera, on the southwest coast. We have discovered it as well in disputes between commercial and recreational fishers over questions of access to the sea—disputes in which the former portray themselves as poor fishers trying to make a living, contrasting their desire to satisfy basic human needs with the leisure motives of the upper-class, recreational fishers (Griffith and Maiolo 1989; Griffith, Valdés Pizzini, Johnson, Chapparo, and Murray 1988; Johnson and Orbach In press; Meltzoff 1988; Valdés Pizzini, Gutiérrez, and Chapparo 1988).

On the other hand, semiproletarianization may also undermine the success and integrity of fishing associations. Some fishers we interviewed wouldn't join associations because they believed the associations existed only for those who fished full-time. More fundamentally, however, CODREMAR-built associations, and the money and other benefits that accompany them, are often used as tools of political alignment and dispute within fishing communities, especially when the fishing association comes to be dominated by groups that controlled fish markets

before the association's existence and have used it as a vehicle for legitimating and solidifying their control. Disputes arising from such a situation have rendered associations defunct. Again, the disputants often adapt the rhetoric of class conflict between a proletariat and a bourgeoisie, depicting merchants as a nonproductive class that appropriates a surplus from working fishers (Valdés Pizzini 1985). Fishers have learned such tactics in part through their wage labor experiences. As the cases that follow will illustrate, fishers use fishing associations in numerous ways, and fishers' participation in associations further complicates the complementary and contradictory linkages between capitalist and domestic production activities.

trajectories of proletarianization

Given this background, the challenge facing us is to relate the contradictory consequences of semiproletarianization to concrete developments in the Puerto Rican fisheries. Specifically, we have identified three trajectories of proletarianization, in light of which the metaphors of injury and therapy become understandable as ways fishers deal with their incomplete incorporation and the contradictions it entails. Some households, that is, may be reducing their reliance on wage labor and expanding their fishing enterprises (deproletarianizing); others may be increasing their wage labor and phasing back or reorganizing their fishing (proletarianizing); still others may be maintaining, from generation to generation, a mix of wage labor and fishing (semiproletarianizing). The theoretical explanations for the first two of these trajectories can be traced directly to Marx, who argued that, under the influence of capital, peasants would become either petty bourgeois or rural proletarians (1967 [1867]).

The idea of peasants "evolving" into definable capitalist classes has appealed to modernization theorists as well. Those relying on traditional-modern dichotomies have incorrectly conceptualized this process as "progress" toward increased political participation on the part of one-time social and political "isolates." Instead of drawing on Marxist notions of class or the rhetoric of conflict, however, modernization theorists tend to view peasants as practicing "primitive" production techniques and as needing primarily imported innovations in order to become "modern," market-oriented farmers (Dalton 1971; Maiolo and Orbach 1981; Rogers 1969; see Roseberry 1983:ch. 7 for a critique of this orientation).

While the first two trajectories have long been the subject of theoretical debate, the concept of semiproletarianization derives from more recent, primarily anthropological work on peasants and rural proletarians around the world. In both concrete and abstract contexts, this work has documented the long-term viability of peasantries or has shown that peasants are capable of combining wage labor with small-scale production over long time periods without changing in the directions predicted by orthodox Marxists or modernization theorists (Collins 1988; de Janvry 1983; Griffith 1986; Mintz 1977; Roseberry 1988; Wolf 1982). In some cases, the expansion of capital has contributed to the *formation* of communities and regions of small-scale producers, as well as many of their so-called traditional customs (Rebel 1989; Roseberry 1983; Sider 1986). Significantly, semiproletarianization seems the most likely of the three trajectories to generate the contradictory outcomes that the injury/therapy distinction attempts to resolve.

We conceive of these as trajectories, rather than as specific mixes at one point in time, for at least three reasons. First, the direction of a household's economic activity reflects broader economic trends. For example, a household's increasing its wage labor suggests that domestic production is insufficient to satisfy its consumer needs, that the wage-benefit-working condition packages offered by the formal economy are attractive compared with domestic production, or some combination of the two. The directional aspect may also signal a "crisis" in one or the other setting, a crisis as individual as a problem in mobilizing household labor at a specific time or as general and international as the Great Depression. Second, since a great deal of small-scale production is organized according to the changing composition of the household (Chay-

anov 1966), the life-cycle of the household, a temporal variable, may influence the mix of wage labor and independent production. Third, trajectories draw our attention to processes of social formation and, in this case, to the processes by which social groups are subordinated to the needs of capital or engage in a struggle to free themselves from its influence, a struggle in which the appropriation and revision of conceptual and political material occupy a central position.

In the following pages we explore the three broad trajectories mentioned above—deproletarianization, proletarianization, and semiproletarianization—in terms of such phenomena as the conditions under which they come about and endure, including the social and cultural conditions that facilitate their coming into being; their implications for fishing and, by extension, for the ecology of artisanal fishing; the problems they pose for class formation; and their implications for cultural analysis. Most important, however, we discuss the trajectories in terms of how they underlie the political and conceptual consequences of incomplete incorporation, including their influence on the injury and therapy distinction between wage labor and fishing.

We offer the following cases as *examples* of the ways the three trajectories can affect household task allocation, relations among households, political activity, and so forth. At this point, in other words, we do not present these cases as statistically representative, although the trajectories that the cases represent engage the theoretical positions discussed above (Johnson 1990). We do add, however, that the cases themselves were purposely selected from a broader, randomly selected sample and that the selection was based on a fairly intimate knowledge of Puerto Rican artisanal fishing and the island's rural proletariat.

deproletarianization or reproletarianization? Deproletarianization, or the process of withdrawing from wage labor in order to fish full-time, is a phenomenon we could easily confuse with retirement if we weren't using the household and its life-cycle as our primary reference point. The fisherman who works as a janitor in New York until he's 65 and then retires to Puerto Rico to fish cannot be considered deproletarianized; he remains a part of the proletariat, perhaps still even receiving income (a pension) from his employment. Here we present instead the withdrawal from wage labor by two related households, both of whose heads abandoned wage labor while still relatively young. In our discussion, we reconsider the notion that deproletarianization implies moving toward petty bourgeois affiliations.

case 1: Ruperto Correa[6] As a man who emerged from a proletarian background to establish a trap and net fishing operation that provides income to two households and supplies fresh fish to his own *pescaderia* (fish market), Ruperto represents one variant of the classic Puerto Rican artisanal fishing success story. Injury was the cornerstone of his success: he was awarded a settlement of $7000 after an on-the-job injury at a multinational chemical corporation's factory in his home municipality. In 1975, only 26 years old, he used this windfall to buy 70 traps, a 22-foot boat, and two outboard motors.

The injury and its windfall, however, were the culmination of a 13-year employment history that began in 1962, when the 13-year-old Ruperto and his parents moved to New York from Puerto Rico's south coast. From 1962 to 1964 Ruperto worked as a bookbinder and from 1964 to 1969 as a waiter in a New York restaurant. He then served in Vietnam, returning to Puerto Rico in 1971. Back home he worked for two months in a small factory and for nearly four years at the chemical plant, until his injury and settlement in 1975.

Like most Puerto Rican fishers, Ruperto came from a fishing household, although a semiproletarianized one that seemed to be on a proletarianizing trajectory (with the parents' move to New York, Ruperto's own employment history, and so forth). Ruperto's father and brother were fishers, and Ruperto himself reported that he had begun fishing at age 12, just a year before moving to New York. While he was able to fully withdraw from wage labor because of his windfall, preparations for his return to fishing actually began four years prior to his injury, with his return to Puerto Rico. His return, moreover, was facilitated by Puerto Rico's tax-incentive-

driven program of industrial development, which lured many major conglomerates to the island and succeeded in displacing much of the sugarcane production in Ruperto's home municipality, shifting the area's economic base from agriculture to manufacturing. At the time, many of those who had migrated to core regions were returning to the periphery, as core-region job opportunities shrank between 1965 and the two world economic crises of the 1970s.

Equally important, however, the community to which Ruperto returned was and still is a fishing community: it sits on a spit of land between a sheltered lagoon and the sea, with four boat-access points on the lagoon, two fishing associations, and a recreational fishing club and marina. Most households in the community fish, even if only part-time, and one of the associations is currently active in a dispute with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) over mangrove conservation as opposed to access to the sea.

Ruperto thus returned to the social and cultural space of artisanal fishing. While helpful, this atmosphere in and of itself was insufficient; Ruperto also needed material support from members of his household and the community at large. He was related to other households of fishers who lived in the community at the time, and when he received his settlement, he was able to move into artisanal fishing with ease, finding *proeles* (fishing crewmen) in the community to help him fish. As in many fishing households, his wife helps him with the construction and maintenance of the equipment as well as with the cleaning, processing, and marketing of the fish. Nine years after his settlement, Ruperto brought his cousin's household into his operation.

For our discussion, it is most significant that Ruperto owns his own fish market, that he eventually took his cousin's household into the operation, that his primary gear consists of traps, and that he was a member of both fishing associations at one time but now belongs to neither one.

case 2: Juan Correa Juan, Ruperto's cousin, owns no fishing equipment himself and works primarily as a *proel* on Ruperto's boat, helping him haul traps and nets. Instead of sharing the catch, the most common arrangement among the island's artisanal fishers, Ruperto pays Juan a wage according to the amount of fish they catch; Juan, that is, works more or less on commission, receiving 30 cents a pound for the fish and 75 cents a pound for the lobster he and Ruperto catch together. He helps too with the construction and maintenance of the gear; in exchange, he is allowed to use Ruperto's large yard and sets of tools (including welding equipment) to work on cars.

With the exception of the windfall, Juan's work history is similar to Ruperto's: Juan has combined work in the United States with work on the island and has maintained an attachment to artisanal fishing out of both boyhood love and family heritage. His father and brothers were fishers, as was at least one of his uncles (that is, Ruperto's father). Five years younger than Ruperto, Juan was employed as a migrant farm worker during the summers of 1973 and 1974, as a construction worker in his home municipality for four months in 1977, and as a mechanic's helper in San Juan for two years before joining his cousin's fishing operation in 1984.

During Juan's times of unemployment, his father, brothers, and other relatives helped his household. Two other members of his household, his wife and eldest daughter, contribute to the enterprise by helping clean the fish. This kind of support should not be underestimated, since preparing fish for market is a value-adding service in an operation so directly tied into the market for seafood. Women usually process the catch, both cleaning fish and creating new products (such as *empanadillas,* or seafood pastries). Juan also has two other daughters.

Like Ruperto, Juan joined the newer, renegade association at its inception, breaking from the old association and helping to wage the war against the DNR over access. But unlike Ruperto, who later quit the new association, Juan has remained an active member.

While Ruperto's means of withdrawing from wage labor (that is, using an injury claim against a major corporation as an initial investment) may seem exceptional, we encountered several variations on the "windfall" theme in the field: the sources of windfalls included the lottery,

cockfighting, and other sorts of gambling, as well as on-the-job injury claims. Some fishers reported that they had to fish secretly because they had claimed back and other injuries and were receiving disability payments.[9] In one case, a former policeman claimed an injury, was caught fishing, and was forced to return to the police force. While invested windfalls may account for only a small percentage of fishing households, their existence is telling in suggesting that people from fishing backgrounds seek ways to abandon wage labor in order to fish full-time. As in a number of cases recently documented in medical anthropology and political economy (Ong 1988; Taussig 1980), the injury claims emerge out of more general cognitive contrasts between the social relations of capitalism and native systems of meaning and production, contrasts that in Puerto Rico associate wage labor with injury and fishing with therapy, beauty, tranquility, and other healing qualities.

The cases of Ruperto and Juan also illustrate the domestic character of trap fishing in Puerto Rico: it is based, fundamentally, on kinship (including affinal and consanguineal, close and more distant ties) and tends to be the fishing style of choice among older full-time fishers. While it is among the most productive fishing styles in Puerto Rico, trap fishing has a number of drawbacks that preclude its being undertaken, at least on a large scale, by part-time or socially isolated fishers. Apart from the time required for trap construction and maintenance (as much as two to four hours per day), one of the principal problems with traps is that they and their catch are susceptible to theft. A fisher must be able to trust the crew to keep his traps' locations a secret, a factor that not only tends to keep trap fishing in the family but also constrains expansion.

In terms of class analysis, these cases indicate that Puerto Ricans from fishing backgrounds will leave wage labor to return to fishing even if it means substituting one form of subordination for another. Juan's withdrawal from wage labor only facilitated his taking on a *proel* role in his cousin's operation. He was, nevertheless, substituting a class-based subordination for one in which culture and class both participate. Taking the *proel* position provided a basis for Juan's political and social action, a kind of action that Williams refers to as "lived":

> Cultural work and activity are not now, in any ordinary sense, a superstructure: not only because of the depth and thoroughness at which cultural hegemony is lived, but because cultural tradition and practice are seen as much more than superstructural expressions—reflections, mediations, or typifications—of a formed social and economic structure. On the contrary, they are among the basic processes of the formation itself and, further, related to a much wider area of reality than the abstractions of "social" and "economic" experience. [1977:111]

Despite his cousin's having quit the new association, Juan not only maintains his membership but has assumed the position of treasurer, a fact suggesting that he isn't willing to divorce himself from a class-based form of action. Indeed, certain of the goals listed in the new fishing association's charter quite consciously place the association's membership within a broader group of rural producers: "To defend the rights and interests of the productive classes that live in the rural areas and constitute the classes of fishers of Puerto Rico. . . . To work for the strengthening of the country's fishing resources and for the material and social needs of the entire Puerto Rican rural population."[10]

More abstractly stated, Juan's behavior shows that deproletarianization is not necessarily a uniform process of shedding one's class affiliations to join the petty bourgeois of Puerto Rico. *That* form of deproletarianization seems closer to Ruperto's course. As owner of his own fish market, Ruperto has to maintain good relations with the households that supply him with fish; much of his political activity can be traced to his attention to the market for fish. As noted above, Ruperto and Juan's community has two associations, one of which is currently fighting with the DNR over access. The association fighting with the DNR was founded not only in order to deal with the access question, however, but also to break from and circumvent the market dominance of the other, CODREMAR-built association. Ruperto, originally with the renegade association, quit after the association was only a few months old, despite the fact that his cousin was and still is one of its officers. His joining the renegade association was understandable, in

that his fish market competed with the market controlled by the other association; his quitting suggests that he wasn't able to use the association as a resource for his market and that the association maintained its integrity instead of submitting to market dominance by a single individual.

It is also noteworthy that Ruperto's cousin remains an officer of the new association, maintaining a "lived," or cultural, class affiliation with other fishers and, more abstractly, with the rural proletariat in general. *His* deproletarianization is thus more nearly reproletarianization, or an attempt at merging cultural experience with class as a basis for political action. All of these market-related tensions, finally, are driven by the commoditization of marine resources, which constitutes yet another way that capital participates in the formation and disruption of community alliances.

proletarianization Our sample selection procedures precluded us from encountering households that did not fish. Nevertheless, we can "view" a process of proletarianization—or of withdrawing completely from fishing to become part of the rural proletariat—occurring over generations in some households. Most of the proletarianizing households in our sample are from fishing communities, but they now have little to do with fishing and their children do not fish at all. They are semiproletarian households, yet they will not be so for long: their future generations are likely to be fully proletarian. Those with weak attachments to fishing, moreover, often regard it as a subsistence or recreational enterprise or, more pertinent here, as a therapy.

case 3: Hector Muñiz In his mid-seventies, Hector has had a complex labor and small-scale producer history, one in which fishing has played a small but significant part. His main fishing gear consists of hook and line, although in keeping with his general economic strategy he also uses a few crudely constructed traps and nets. He fishes, usually alone, primarily for subsistence, selling little of his catch. Although there is a fishing association in Hector's town, he isn't a member and the association itself is not very active. He now lives with his wife; their five children have left home without any intention of expanding Hector's fishing enterprise.

Hector began work as a laborer in the sugarcane fields of Puerto Rico, an occupation from which he never fully escaped. Between seasons in the cane fields, however, he worked in construction in his home municipality, labored on *fincas* (farms) in New York and Florida, and washed dishes in a restaurant in Miami. After years in the States he returned to the Puerto Rican cane fields, a decision guided by one of his sideline economic activities and the central love of his life: raising cocks for cockfighting. That raising gamecocks is his passion is clear from a tour of the space of his work, an attached garage filled with cages, cocks, and tools of his craft. There, he keeps cocks at all stages of development, none of which are for sale. With nipped combs and punctured heads and beaks, their spurs wrapped with adhesive tape and their feathers thinning, the birds look as though they have fought plenty. In a locked box he keeps a small leather case with spurs taken from dead birds; these he polishes and sharpens to look like small translucent yellow, red, and tan antlers. If a cock's spurs aren't well developed, he fastens dead cocks' spurs to the stubs. Despite all Hector's enthusiasm, care, and attention to his gamecocks, his wife reports that the cocks don't do well; when they lose, he brings them home and she makes soup out of them.

The garage also houses the tools Hector's wife uses to tend a small vegetable garden just across the road from their house. She grows vegetables primarily for home consumption. Among her tools and his gamecocks are the crude fish traps and other gear with which he fishes.

Unlike Ruperto and Juan, Hector didn't return to a fishing community when he came back to Puerto Rico from his stay in the United States. Instead, the community is a dense cluster of homes in the central town of a rural municipality surrounded by sugarcane fields; fronted by small concrete or dirt yards, the houses in Hector's barrio sit almost one on top of the other. One of his neighbors cooks tubers in a big pot and mashes them into a paste for sale in the

street. From neighborhoods like these come not only street vendors and others who engage in the informal economy but also laborers for public works, for sugarcane production, and for migration to the eastern seaboard of the United States.

Hector's case differs from the deproletarianizing cases in three important ways. First, when Hector returned to Puerto Rico after his labor migration it was not to a fishing community but to a heavily proletarian, small-scale producer community in which fishing is only one of many survival strategies. A second feature differentiating proletarianized households from deproletarianized ones, obviously, is their marketing behavior. Hector sells very little of his catch and hence has none of the burdens of marketing that Ruperto and Juan have. Nor does he expend any political energies for marketing.

Finally, the space he devotes to his fishing enterprise is smaller than that typical among full-time fishers; cluttered with the paraphernalia of a number of domestic producer operations, it is dominated by his gamecocks but also houses his wife's gardening tools. Both the size and the character of such work spaces tend to distinguish full-time artisanal fishing households from those that fish on a more casual basis. In contrast to Hector's small garage, Ruperto's yard is largely devoted to gear construction and maintenance. Structurally, Ruperto's work space is sounder than the space in which he lives, the former being enclosed in concrete and the latter made of wood. Ruperto's fish market is also made of concrete, nicely painted and decorated, with bars over the openings. These fishing work spaces are central features of artisanal fishing on the island; they generally resemble garages at service stations, for they are oily, dirty, sour-smelling, solid, and cluttered with tools, lubricants, and equipment. Hector's garage, on the other hand, resembles an Old McDonald's barn at a children's petting zoo. The garage's appearance, moreover, reflects the way in which Hector and his wife combine various subsistence activities, as well as the way in which these activities fit into their otherwise proletarian existence. Although the gardening, cockfighting, and fishing provide some food and a modest income, they also double as recreation. In this regard, fishing and the other activities act as therapeutic remedies to the effects of hazardous, difficult, and tedious jobs without entangling Hector in political thought and action *as a small-scale producer*. Other cases of proletarianized households lead us to similar conclusions.

case 4: Carmen María Vero In Puerto Rico, fishing is primarily a male enterprise, and in fact Carmen's original attachment to fishing and to the fishing community derived from her husband's experience as a fisherman and from her kin ties to male fishers in the community. A life-long wage worker, Carmen's husband fished only on weekends, for recreation; Carmen would occasionally accompany him. When Carmen's husband died, however, she got rid of the fishing equipment because it evoked too many memories of him.

Although bound by kin ties to households of fishers, Carmen and all but one of her children (a nine-year-old son) have, like her husband, spent the bulk of their economic lives in wage labor jobs. They are clearly proletarian. One of her daughters and all of her elder sons live and work in New York, another daughter lives in Boston, and two others live in Puerto Rico; all work in factories. One of her sons attempted to launch a career in fishing, but eventually gave it up and moved to New York for wage work as his brothers had done. Carmen herself worked as a domestic servant in San Juan; she was recruited to this job as part of a government program to locate and place rural women in domestic service jobs in the metropolitan area.

Like Hector's complex mix of subsistence and recreational activities, Carmen's fishing, wage work, and collecting of disability and social security checks have been supplemented by other, informal economic activities, including the coordinating of festivities for the local fishing association and other businesses. In addition, Carmen is skilled as a *bruja,* a witch. She uses her craft to protect some neighbors and avenge others.

Despite Carmen's and her husband's economic and cultural activities, their fishing at one time became far more important than simple recreation: she and her husband began fishing

together *specifically as a therapy* after her husband, a heavy equipment operator, suffered an on-the-job injury. Jumping from a huge vehicle, he injured his spine so badly he could no longer do any heavy work. After the injury her husband received disability payments, yet they began to fish more regularly than they had done before, *"como una terapia"* ("as a therapy"). Their primary gear consisted of a gill net, a 14-foot boat, and a six-horsepower motor, which they used full-time together between her husband's injury and his death in 1988, after which she gave up fishing forever.

In this case, fishing served both a rehabilitative function, occupying Carmen's and her husband's time with an activity that did not require excessive strength, and an economic one, supplementing his disability payments. The fact that Carmen sold all the fishing equipment and quit fishing after her husband's death indicates that their becoming fishers had not implied joining a society of fishers, an enduring basis for political action, a class. This is especially interesting in light of Carmen's many kin ties to fishing households and her active involvement in the fishing association as a caterer or organizer of social functions. While she has had ample opportunity to involve herself in the politics of artisanal fishing, she has not done so. Instead, Carmen and her husband appropriated the notion of fishing as therapy not as a means of locating themselves in a broader group united by common suffering or by a shared struggle but as a model for rehabilitation in the aftermath of injury. Using fishing explicitly as a form of therapy following an injury, Carmen and her husband used it in much the same way Hector did: as an escape from the hazards and difficulties of low-wage jobs.

In its broadest features, proletarianization reveals little that we couldn't have easily predicted: for proletarianizing households, the opportunity to make a living from fishing doesn't exist. Either they perceive the resource to be insufficient or their means of exploiting it are constrained. They haven't been able to draw on the kinship and network ties that underlie domestic operations like large-scale trap fishing, and their children become wage workers. Ironically, the job opportunities that allow individuals to survive without extensive or meaningful network or kinship ties also undermine such ties, fragmenting communities and production operations and thus reducing the range of economic opportunity. More concretely, in these cases we are witnessing a process whereby artisanal fishing comes to play a progressively less important role in the household's overall survival strategies, taking its place alongside a number of domestic producer activities. Each of these contributes to the household's income, but none emerges as a specialized economic activity capable of sustaining the household. Thus, none motivates political activity, a fact that accounts for the low levels of association membership among cases like these. Political energies are expended instead on getting and keeping jobs in the public sector (through political patronage) or on more traditional working-class-based political activity, such as joining trade unions or soliciting the aid of state or nonprofit agencies that support the rights of labor.

semiproletarianization Most of the households in our sample had the weak links to the proletariat that characterize semiproletarianization, links developed either through their own experiences or through close relations with other people.[11] In fact, with the exception of two or three fishing communities on the west coast of Puerto Rico, most fishing communities in Puerto Rico are semiproletarian.[12] Again, we emphasize that semiproletarianization is important not only because it is so common but also because it is the trajectory most likely to generate the contradictions that the injury/therapy distinction attempts to resolve.

case 5: Julio "Marty" Seba A part-time net fisherman on the southeast coast, Marty fishes with his brother, who, like him, has a complex occupational history and devotes around one-third of his working time to fishing. Marty served for a year as a ticket writer in the cane and then came to the United States, where he worked on a farm and later in a turkey processing

plant in New Jersey. Following this he worked in construction for three years and then, from 1974 to 1986, he had a job in the local fishing association. He eventually landed a position in local government.

Marty's occupational history, like his brother's, revolves around local political developments and fishing. At the time we conducted our research, he was awaiting the outcome of an election because his clerk job for the municipality depended on political connections. His brother worked as a mason on construction projects for the municipality; he too was awaiting the election's outcome. If their candidate lost, they intended to migrate to the United States again to seek work.

Marty and his brother both live with their mother and both have children living with them from marriages that didn't work out: Marty has a 17-year-old daughter in high school and his brother has an eight-year-old son. For the past 16 years, Marty and his brother have used nets as their principal gear, although their use varies over the year as various species migrate through the bay where they fish. Recently Marty bought a 150-foot gill net, an expensive type of gear that is made more expensive by the fact that it is usually repaired by someone other than the fisherman. During one of our discussions with Marty, he remarked, *"Decidí pescar porque le gusta y porque considero esta actividad un 'hobby' o una terapia"* ("I decided to fish because I like it and because I consider this activity a hobby or a therapy").

Marty and his brother have their busiest fishing season between January and May. Rarely do they fish every day; more often, they fish two to three days per week, on weekends or in the afternoon after they are through working. As is common among fishers using the gill net, Marty receives half the catch because he owns the net and the boat that they use to set it; the remainder is divided among those with whom he fishes, usually his brother, the young nephew who lives with them, and a friend. The division of the catch changes from time to time, because sometimes the brother helps pay for net repair and maintenance. While Marty used to sell fish through the association and was in fact one of the association's principal market people, he now sells fish in the street, usually disposing of at least 85 percent of the catch.

Marty, like the "deproletarianized" fishers portrayed above, lives in a fishing community and has been active in the fishing association, both as a founding member and as an employee. This community has only one association, which was strong and to which most of the community members belonged until the year before our research. During that year, however, the association fell apart when a dispute between the president and CODREMAR led to a change in leadership. It is currently all but defunct, with one family operating a restaurant on the top floor of its facilities.

Significantly, Marty's association membership, which included a paid position, preceded his work for the municipality. He evidently benefited from the political skills gained during his tenure with the fishing association, for he obtained a job in the public sector through political ties. In the cases mentioned above, on the other hand, political skills learned via wage labor experiences aided in the development of leadership skills to be deployed in the fishing associations' political struggles. Fishers have, in short, used their associations in multifaceted ways.

The interplay of political skill between fishing and the formal economy is all the more important when we consider that neither Marty nor his brother has ever been a full-time fisher; moreover, neither intends to fully divorce himself from fishing. Further, Marty's nephew is learning artisanal fishing skills, being prepared to use fishing either as a supplement to other income or as his principal means of earning a living. These preparations may serve to reproduce the household's social condition.

Marty's own characterization of fishing as a hobby or therapy makes his case all the more complex, suggesting that fishing can relieve the tensions of wage work while simultaneously serving as a basis for political activity. Marty's use of the association—as a tool of political patronage and as a means of becoming more deeply entrenched in the fishing community—

differs from that of Juan, for whom the association served as a vehicle for class-based action in the dispute over access to the sea (see Valdés Pizzini 1990 for a similar case). Yet this is further evidence that fishing assumes a complex, "lived" role that draws upon both culture and class. Here again Williams' observations are relevant:

> People seeing themselves and each other in directly personal relationships; people seeing the natural world and themselves in it; people using their physical and material resources for what one kind of society specializes to "leisure" and "entertainment" and "art": all these active experiences and practices, which make up so much of the reality of a culture and its cultural production, can be seen as they are, without reduction to other categories of content, and without the characteristics straining to fit them (directly as reflection, indirectly as mediation or typification or analogy) to other and determining manifest economic and political relationships. Yet they can still be seen as elements of a hegemony: an inclusive social and cultural formation which indeed to be effective has to extend to and include, indeed to form and be formed from, this whole area of lived experience. [1977:111]

This is not to say, however, that economic and political relationships do not play a fundamental role in the way in which Marty approaches fishing. Their role is reflected in, for example, Marty's choice of fishing gear. The seasonal and afternoon use of the gill net, the way in which the rewards are divided, and the fact that the catch is landed daily (unlike the catch from traps) all fit well with Marty's wage work; by the same token, however, his fishing operation is constrained by his employment and by his lack of a substantial kin network with which to attempt expansion. Although his fishing depends on consanguineal ties (his brother and his nephew), these ties have not resulted in the formation of the separate-yet-linked households that characterize the "deproletarianization" cases discussed above. In our sixth and final case, however, separate-yet-linked households have been combined in such a way as to give semiproletarianization another face.

case 6: Esteban Rey Esteban lives in a small, bare, concrete block unit in a new government-subsidized resettlement project, having been forced inland a few miles from the south coast of the island when flooding destroyed his previous home. He's 36 years old and married, with three small children; his mother and father live near the coast and one of his brothers lives in New York, where he works in a factory.

Esteban has worked in the formal economy both regularly and sporadically—on farms (tomato harvests) and in a cannery (where his mother worked for a number of years)—but, with one exception, has never lasted long at any one job; the one exception was an 18-year part-time job at a pharmacy. He belongs to no fishing association, reporting that he was too busy at the pharmacy to take time to join.

Esteban's mother and the brother in New York control the bulk of Esteban's participation in artisanal fishing. Like Ruperto's, Esteban's mother's escape from wage labor into artisanal fishing was based on a windfall: she won $50,000 in the island lottery, money which she used to buy coastal property and traps and to establish herself as the matriarch of the family fishing operation. Playing the lottery was consistent with his parents' other gambling and risk behaviors; his father shoots pool and plays cards for a portion of their income, leaving the mother to assume primary control of the fishing enterprise.

The family's principal gear is the fish trap, of which they have over 100. Esteban, the primary fisherman, sets traps one day a week for his mother and one day for his brother, diving around the traps for lobster, conch, and octopus. The mother sends money from the sale of the fish to the son living in New York. For his part, Esteban receives part of the catch, has access to the family's fishing equipment, and gets to earn money from an activity he obviously thoroughly enjoys. Indicating that fishing is more than just a job to him, Esteban has a habit of describing his diving experiences with great animation, telling of the dangers of the deep and gesturing wildly as he recounts tales of wrestling octopi from reefs, avoiding sharks, and spearing fish. In other accounts he characterizes his experiences underwater in terms of quiet and tranquility.

The family sells nearly all of their catch at a small stand near the water; Esteban sometimes cleans the catch for extra cash, earning $10 per hundredweight of cleaned fish, although usu-

ally the fish are sold whole. While he tends not to fish, Esteban's father supervises the sale, since he does most of his gambling at night.

This case shows, first, that fishing households can be considered semiproletarianized by virtue of their relations with other households. Three separate-yet-linked households are involved in the fishing operation: Esteban's, his parents', and his brother's, even though the brother lives in New York. It is telling that, while working full-time in the formal economy, the New York brother makes production decisions that affect Esteban and his parents. The brother occupies a position structurally similar to that of his mother, particularly in relation to Esteban's household. This case shows too that the semiproletarian condition need not necessarily constrain decisions regarding gear, *as long as* households are within kin networks that include individuals with the time to man the kinds of gear that require more time and effort than others. The integrity of the fishing enterprise remains, including its entertaining and rewarding features and its ability to contribute to the maintenance of wage workers' households. Finally, this case underlines the importance of gambling in Puerto Rican fishing households, showing that "windfalls" such as lottery winnings are often what is required to shift from one trajectory to another. As in Ruperto's case, before the windfall the family seemed to be on a proletarianizing path, whereas now they are on one that successfully combines full-time participation in the formal economy with artisanal fishing.

conclusion: injury and its therapy

Puerto Rico occupies a unique position in the international division of labor as well as in the history of North American anthropology. As Spanish-speaking U.S. citizens, as citizens without voting rights or full political representation in Congress, as a people culturally distinct from other U.S. minorities, as objects of discrimination, Puerto Ricans remain second-class citizens, a people apart from, yet a part of, the advanced capitalism of the United States. Since the United States appropriated the island from Spain in 1898, and especially since it granted Puerto Ricans "free" access to the U.S. labor market in 1917,[13] Puerto Rican society has served as a source of labor for low-wage sectors of the U.S. labor market, providing workers that could be both easily recruited for U.S. jobs and almost as easily "repatriated" during times of recession and depression (Bonilla and Campos 1981; Steward, Manners, Mintz, Padilla, Scheele, and Wolf 1956; Wessman 1977). Thus, a number of social groups in Puerto Rico, including artisanal fishers, have been incompletely incorporated into advanced capitalism, engaging in struggles for improved terms of trade between their households and capitalist markets or against unequal terms of trade.

It is therefore no coincidence that some of the first and most influential anthropological studies of the participation of capitalism in community formation were conducted in Puerto Rico, as part of a project headed by Julian Steward in the years following World War II (Steward et al. 1956). Steward himself produced a typological profile of Puerto Rican communities, employing his "levels of sociocultural organization" to address the role of communities in larger political and economic processes (1956:6–7). Yet Steward's concept wasn't designed to explain interactions among the levels (Roseberry 1978:28), nor was it a radical departure from standard paradigms—traditional/modern, folk/urban—or from typological work that inaccurately viewed increases in wage labor among small-scale producers as a symptom of a general transition from preindustrial to industrial society (see, for example, Dalton 1971; Redfield 1947; Rogers 1969; Tonnies 1955). However, others who participated in the *People of Puerto Rico* project, particularly Mintz and Wolf, made some of the earliest contributions to the idea that capitalist expansion could participate in the formation, maintenance, and reproduction of "traditional" social, cultural, and technological adaptations (Roseberry 1983; Sider 1986;

Steward et al. 1956). Speaking of Wolf's and Mintz's theories in a recent review article, Roseberry notes:

> Unlike later world-systems theories, the goal of historical investigation was not to subsume local histories within global processes but to understand the formation of anthropological subjects . . . at the *intersection* of local interactions and relationships and the larger processes of state and empire making. . . .
>
> Even as their objects of inquiry changed . . . the interest in the formation of anthropological subjects at the intersection of deeply rooted local and global histories remained. [1988:163–164]

The trajectories we have outlined demonstrate the heterogeneity of the responses of households, communities, and domestic production operations to the influence of capital's demand for cheap, willing, and readily available labor. This heterogeneity, moreover, is what one would expect if capitalist expansion resulted in intersections of "deeply rooted local and global histories." Beyond this, however, the trajectories themselves are important critiques of the metaphor of "intersections." The term "intersections" connotes very specific interactions between local and global histories, as though small-scale, domestically organized production processes met and influenced one another in only a restricted range of settings or times. In the recent works of both Mintz (1985) and Wolf (1982), what emerge are descriptions and analyses not of intersections but of diffuse and continuous interactions between capitalist and domestic processes. In the trajectories discussed here, too, we have seen that the settings and times of interactions between capitalist and domestic processes are diffuse and continuous, permeating material and ideological realms. These processes do not intersect so much as they interweave, continually drawing upon one another at very real, human points of interaction, such as migration or the commoditization of the sea, the coastal zone, and fisheries products; they further influence one another through symbolic reflection, as when fishers appropriate concepts such as "therapy" from capitalist-based systems of meaning and then invest them with new meanings.[14]

The heterogeneity and intricacy of the trajectories, moreover, complicate the logical consequences of political consciousness (that is, class formation) by involving a variety of concrete manifestations, such as gear types, relations within and among fishing households, uses of social and cultural time and space, and degrees of involvement in organizations, such as fishing associations, that sometimes serve as vehicles of political consciousness and tools of political dispute (Valdés Pizzini 1990). Perhaps most important, however, each of these trajectories involves different *uses* of artisanal fishing itself: as *primarily* an economic activity, *primarily* a therapy, or *primarily* a therapeutic supplement to the household's full range of (mixed) economic activities. A household's or individual's attempt to shift from one trajectory to another, to use artisanal fishing differently, however, encounters difficulty precisely because some kinds of fishing gear work more effectively with specific social units and specific allocations of time and space than others, or require greater levels of dexterity, experience, and technical knowledge; yet these "optimal" social units, time and space allocations, or necessary skills may be precluded from forming by virtue of an individual's or a household's participation in the formal economy and its place in relation to other households engaged in the same or similar domestic producer operations.

The last point is crucial. A *community* of fishers—or at least a network of separate-yet-linked households—is a necessary mechanism for shifting from one trajectory to another in a way that will improve a household's terms of trade. The linking of separate households may be understood as a creative means of dealing with a changing international division of labor that relies extensively on internal and international labor migrations. As we see in many studies of labor migration (Griffith 1986; Massey et al. 1987; Portes and Bach 1985), the contours of the domestic unit tend to approximate those forms most useful to advanced capitalism, compensating for shortcomings by modifying their articulations with the formal structures of advanced capitalism. We see this in the case of Esteban, whose extended family spans three separate yet interdependent residential units. The domestic unit has been able to maintain its integrity as an

extended family by substituting benefits deriving from residence (labor, skills, emotional and political support, and technical knowledge, for example) for remittances from the mainland, at the same time anchoring its incorporation into advanced capitalism in household-based, small-scale fishing in Puerto Rico.

In such cases, class formation is compromised as domestic units, social networks, associations, and other social forms meet specific needs such as reproduction, health care, protection, and social security; these social forms undermine the perceptions of common struggle that help classes form and develop. These social forms also serve critical cultural purposes as vessels of value and myths that can either envelop advanced capitalism in a protective symbolic skin (the notions of risk and the free market, for instance) or criticize its consequences as contrasted with those of domestic production (the notions of injury and therapy, for example). Among Puerto Rican artisanal fishers, we have discovered a pervasive desire to reduce the dependence on wage labor, a desire that leads some of them to portray wage labor in terms of injury and sickness and fishing in terms of therapy and healing.

notes

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[1]Our use of the word "artisanal" is designed to situate this study in the literature on small-scale, domestically organized fisheries, which are similar to peasant operations in a variety of ways: in their combining of subsistence production with production for markets, in their low level of technological development, in their reliance on homemade, handcrafted tools, in their reified passing down of technical knowledge and skills from generation to generation, in their reliance on kin-based and other nonwage relations of production, and in their use of the fishing or seafaring way of life as a means of identifying themselves in relation to their neighbors, kin, and friends. The "domestic production" aspect of these operations is central: that is, production is organized primarily around the growth and development of the household in relation to other, similarly situated households (see Chayanov 1966; Deere and de Janvry 1979; Sahlins 1972; Scott 1976).

[2]The case material for the arguments developed in this article came from fieldwork in Puerto Rico conducted from 1987 to 1989. Life histories were elicited from a sample drawn from an islandwide census of fishers conducted in 1987, less than a year before we began collecting data. The census, conducted by CODREMAR (García, Rosado, and Caraballo 1988), surveyed 1731 fishers throughout the island; CODREMAR project directors estimate that they missed fewer than 50 fishers. Our sampling strategy was both purposive and random: we chose seven municipalities for study because they were home to (1) the largest fishery; (2) the most politically active fishing association; (3) the most highly developed tourist region; (4) a poor, rural region of incipient tourist development; (5) an outer-island fishery; (6) a cane-producing area with many new industries; and (7) the most urban area of Puerto Rico (San Juan). Within each of these, we selected 15 cases at random from the CODREMAR census. We then randomly selected 15 more municipalities from all the remaining coastal municipalities and, within each of these, selected from the census three cases, of whom CODREMAR had classified one as a full-time fisher, one as a part-time fisher, and one as a crew member, or *proel*. This procedure resulted in 102 usable life-history interviews. As is usual in ethnographic research, we supplemented these data with repeated and in-depth interviews, our own observations, and documents produced by and about fishers in Puerto Rico, including CODREMAR records and publications.

[3]One might object that commercial fishers who consider fishing a sport are in reality sport (recreational) fishers and hence should not be included in a discussion of artisanal fishers. However, Gutiérrez (1982) used *villas pesqueras,* where commercial fishers gather, as his sampling frame, interviewing association members. Members of such associations, even if technically sport fishers, are clearly part of the "culture" of fishing in Puerto Rico and thus contribute to the prevailing ideologies. Further, those who characterized fishing as a sport added such things as "It keeps your mind occupied with useful things," "It is a distraction," "It keeps you from using drugs," "It is good and healthy," and "It clears the mind."

[4]This and all subsequent translations are by the authors.

[5]It is interesting to note that in rehabilitation centers both senses of the term "therapy" are often clinically translated into minute, detailed, sometimes monotonous and painstaking tasks, such as weaving, painting, and crafts production. Tasks such as these are similar to the myriad tasks that accompany fishing, and they demand the same kind of close, meticulous attention that weaving and repairing nets, tying lures, painting and repairing boats, and constructing traps do.

[6]We hope that no one will confuse this assertion with the quite different assertions of modernization theory that attribute poverty and associated social ills to "backward" production processes or "suspicious" attitudes. Clearly, in this case the decision to remain in the informal economy derives from a quite objective and conscious estimation of the dangers of participating in the formal economy.

[7]On the north coast, for example, industrial development has created many employment opportunities in a region characterized by rough seas and few natural harbors or sheltered areas (with the exception of San Juan Harbor) where boats could be launched or stored; the ecological character of the north coast inhibited the development of fisheries as viable as, say, those of the west coast, which is home to technologically sophisticated, politically powerful, and economically stratified fisheries.

[8]All names, as well as any specific identifying characteristics, have been changed to protect informant confidence.

[9]Operating a large-scale fishing operation in secret is possible only when one has ties to others who are both a part of the operation and live with or near one, since the business of fishing clutters yard and work spaces. With kin or partners nearby, one can fish, keep equipment, and fish secretly, claiming that all the evidence of an active fishing operation is from one's partner's operation and that one's only interest is as an owner of the gear.

[10]"*Defender los derechos e intereses de las clases productoras que en el campo viven y constituyen las clases pesqueras de Puerto Rico. . . . Trabajar por el fortalecimiento del la riqueza pesquera del país y de las consideraciones materiales y sociales del toda la población rural en Puerto Rico.*" To maintain the confidentiality of the association and its membership, we refrain from naming the association.

[11]Unfortunately, we cannot be very specific about the actual number of cases that seem to be on a semiproletarian trajectory; we estimate that between 50 and 83 percent are moving in this direction, with the wide range due to the fact that, first, trajectories shift with such things as windfalls and household crises and, second, as with all ethnographic research, some cases were inadequately explored and developed in the field. We are certain that at least 47 percent of the cases follow this path; the other 36 percent seem to follow a proletarian trajectory, and the remaining 17 percent seem to be oriented toward deproletarianization.

[12]The west coast has both a peculiar history and an exceptional marine resource base, which have combined to make the fisheries there more technologically sophisticated and more internally differentiated. Interestingly, west coast fishermen tend *not* to talk about fishing as a therapy.

[13]Between 1898 and 1917, Puerto Ricans were granted access to the U.S. labor market only under contract, as migrant indentured servants similar to the Jamaicans and Mexicans currently brought in under H2a and H2b regulations (see Griffith 1984; U.S. Congress 1986).

[14]Taking concepts from capitalist society and reworking them in terms of domestic production processes is not the only way in which people move concepts back and forth between the two realms. For example, U.S. employers draw upon the Puerto Rican concept of the *jíbaro* (a strong, virtuous, peasant farmer, a vessel of the work ethic; the concept is similar to our notion of the yeoman farmer) to justify using Puerto Rican rather than black or native white labor in the agricultural harvests of the eastern United States (Griffith et al. 1990).

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