

Interview with Shawn Goulart, commercial fisherman

Occupation: Commercial fisherman

Port Community: Gloucester, Massachusetts

Interviewer: Sarah Schumann

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Location: Gloucester, Massachusetts

Project: The Graying of the Fleet Part II: How and Why Young Fishermen Choose to Fish?

Transcriber: Sarah Schumann

[Start of interview]

[00:00]

Sarah Schumann [SS]: The recorder is on. My name is Sarah Schumann and today is April 26, 2019. We're in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Shawn, could you please state your full name?

Shawn Goulart [SG]: My name is Shawn Goulart.

SS: Alright. Could you spell that?

SG: S-H-A-W-N G-O-U-L-A-R-T.

SS: I just realized we're friends on Facebook, aren't we?

SG: Yeah, I think so.

SS: Ok, I didn't put two and two together until just now. What's your homeport, Shawn?

SG: I'm from Gloucester, Massachusetts.

SS: What age are you?

SG: Thirty-five.

SS: Let me get out my sheet here, because I'm forgetting the questions. Ok, could you state your occupation?

SG: Commercial fisherman.

SS: Is that a fulltime or a part-time occupation?

SG: Fulltime.

SS: Do you work on a particular vessel or many different vessels?

SG: I kind of jump around between many different vessels and do many different things.

SS: Ok, you can describe that in a minute. One last question before you launch into your story: what's your educational background?

SG: I dropped out of high school my sophomore year to feed my family.

SS: By fishing?

SG: Yes, ma'am.

SS: Do you want to start there? That seems like a good starting point. Or does it go back further than that?

SG: It goes back a little further than that.

SS: Alright. Where does it start?

SG: My young adolescent years, I got into rod and reel fishing. I was really into that. By eleven or twelve years old, I was real interested in the rod and reel side of everything. I kind of elbowed my way onto the party boats and did a little bit of guest work on the party boats, at like twelve, thirteen, fourteen years old. That got me into fishing and kind of opened a few doors for me. That got me into commercial fishing. I went from the party boat thing at twelve and thirteen, to lobstering at fourteen years old. It just snowballed from there. I've done everything, basically every commercial fishing there is out of Gloucester, at this point.

[02:12]

SS: Is that where you were born and grew up?

SG: Born and raised here.

SS: Does your family have anything to do with fishing?

SG: Believe it or not, fishing skipped a generation in my family. I'm the only one who fishes in my family. My family's not too fond of it.

SS: You did have a family two generations ago that were involved?

SG: Yeah. My great-great-grandfather was a schooner captain. That's the history of that in the family. Other than that, I started lobstering at fourteen years old. By sixteen it's like, "Look how much money I'm making." It was great. Everything was good, at that time.

SS: At that time, which was about when? Nineties?

SG: Late nineties. The groundfish was just starting to come back. We had a federal multispecies permit. We did some cod jigging on the side. They started upping limits and I started getting into different gear methods, started doing some gillnetting. It snowballed into dragging. I've done a bunch of tub trawl fishing with long lines.

SS: All kinds of stuff.

SG: Every way we can catch them up here, we've pretty much done it. Just trying to adapt to regulations and change. Some years, you get them in the gillnets. Some years, you got to fish the hooks. All that kind of got me into the dragging side, and the dragging side snowballed. That's where I am now.

SS: That's sort of your bread and butter?

SG: Yeah.

SS: But it sounds like you've done all kinds of stuff. It's pretty awesome to have that many kinds of experiences.

SG: A lot of times, in the summer, I concentrate on tuna fishing and try to get through the easier months with that. But that's gotten so hard because ninety percent of the fishery is less than five years old.

SS: The fish themselves?

SG: No, the fisherman. The majority of the fishermen have been involved in it for less than five years. They have no clue what's going on.

SS: Why is that?

SG: We could get into that and go on for days. Regulations, being an open access fishery. It's like the new thing to do.

SS: Oh. Tuna? Is that because of the Wicked Tuna TV show?

SG: I would say a big part of it's that. Let's face it. That show gives them big prices and gives a lot of people false hope.

[05:10]

SS: Alright, let's get back to your story. You had fishing in your family. It skipped a generation. You got interested in rod and reel as a kid, transitioned to lobstering around twelve—

SG: Around fourteen. I did two years of lobstering in the summer, in vacations from school. "Look at the money I'm making." I didn't do well in school to begin with. I had a lot of trouble. I got into a lot of trouble at school. I got into fishing, did two years in that, and it's like, "Geez, look at the money I'm making." At that point the family was struggling. I dropped out of school to fish full time.

SS: That was in part due to family circumstances and partly because you enjoyed it?

SG: Yup.

[06:09]

SS: You said originally your family wasn't too happy about that?

SG: My mother gets worried sick every time I'm out fishing.

SS: Just a safety issue?

SG: Yeah.

SS: Did that change?

SG: I don't think that will ever change.

SS: Your mom still worries?

SG: Yeah. I've been running boats for a while now, and it's hard to believe.

SS: Have you ever done any other kind of work?

SG: I worked at a factory two weeks. Couldn't deal with it.

SS: What is it about fishing that makes it the perfect fit for you?

SG: There's something about being out on the water and being your own boss. The harder you work, the more money you make. There ain't too many things like that nowadays. I don't know. There's just something about being on the water. It's almost like you can dictate your future.

SS: You said you've been running boats. Can you talk a little bit about stepping up the ladder from deckhand to captain?

SG: By eighteen or nineteen years old, I had been on the deck of a lobster boat for years, done a bunch of different fisheries. A guy that lived up the street from me that had a scallop boat. At the time, scallop boats rarely got off the Cape. I had done a couple trips with him. Kind of learned the ins and outs. One night, he couldn't go. He said, "Take the boat for a trip. See how it goes." I did what I could. I took the boat for a trip. I went out and did it, and it worked out. It snowballed from there, to the point now where I'm running boats for all kinds of different people, all over the place. I've done all kinds of stuff, from the Canadian border all the way to the Gulf of Mexico.

SS: Wow, not always out of Gloucester?

SG: Nope.

SS: Why is that?

SG: When I started fishing, there was probably the same size lobster fleet that there is now, which is probably a hundred boats.

SS: Out of Gloucester?

SG: Out of Gloucester. And at the time, there were probably two hundred or two hundred and fifty groundfish boats. Now, I think there might be twelve active groundfish boats that fish inshore, and maybe another eight or twelve that fish offshore. It's drastically cut the fleet.

SS: Yeah, it really has. And lobster boats are still the same?

SG: There's actually probably more than there were then.

SS: Wow. So the opportunities have really shifted away from groundfishing in Gloucester, it sounds like.

[09:48]

SG: I hate to say it, but the lobstermen aren't getting any younger. Every day, it seems like it's harder and harder on the body.

SS: A physical job.

SG: We don't get a retirement plan in this job, so I try to do easier things that will make the body last longer.

SS: Can you explain a little bit about why that drastic change occurred in the groundfishing fleet in Gloucester?

SG: It all started out with Amendment Thirteen. They went from regular counting one-on-one for days at sea, to where it was two-to-one in the Gulf of Maine. For every day that we fished in the Gulf of Maine, they charged us two days at sea. Then that snowballed. They said that wasn't working, that wasn't working. There was more fish when there was days at sea. We had trouble staying away from them sometimes. They switched it to catch shares. [It's] harder to find the fish. Yeah, they're still around. There's plenty of cod, and they say it's a choke species. Now it's just, I don't even know. They've really done a good job of consolidating the fleet.

SS: Has a lot of that consolidation occurred within Gloucester, or is it more about boats going out of Gloucester?

SG: I would say a big chunk. Gloucester's gone from almost a New Bedford, to now where we're more of like a tourist town.

SS: That's a crazy change. How has that affected the community at large?

SG: It's terrible. It put a lot of people out of business, caused a lot of hardship for a lot of families, lost a lot of money.

SS: It sounds like Gloucester has been particularly hard hit in that way, compared to other communities.

SG: We were really like the center of the groundfish community in the Gulf of Maine. I mean, yeah, you got New Bedford. It deals a lot with the trip boat stuff, but we had a very large day boat fleet.

SS: This was kind of the epicenter of that?

SG: Yeah. There ain't much of it left anymore.

SS: Do you think that if things had turned out differently with groundfish, you would be doing a lot more dayboat groundfishing?

SG: Yeah. That's what I'm trying to do now, but it's just hard. I'd like to be doing it as a captain, and I'm doing it as a deckhand, jumping from boat to boat. That's the challenge of my life. Just recently, we had a scallop boat come in. Twenty-four hours before the scallop opening, the guy that I'd been working with for over a year turned around and said, "I'm sorry, but I can't afford to pay you for the scalloping. I'm going to have to go by myself." I got two kids. It's kind of hard to live life that way.

SS: Yeah, a lot of uncertainty.

[13:26]

SG: It's tough turning around to the kids, and being like, "You know that vacation we were talking about going on? It's probably not going to happen. Things changed. We ain't scalloping this season."

SS: Yeah. Do you have a spouse as well?

SG: I'm engaged. It's tough. It's brought a lot of stress. When the girls were born, we could afford that she was a stay-at-home mother most of the time. Not so much now. It's gotten to the point where last winter, I spent in the Carolinas. The winter before that I spent in Delaware Bay, dredging blue crabs with one of my friends down there. It's tough being away from home, but it's what it's taken to make ends meet lately.

SS: I think you said this before the interview, but I ought to ask this question again with the audio running. You have two girls?

SG: I have two daughters.

SS: Eight and twelve?

SG: Eight and twelve, yes.

SS: I can see that that would be really challenging, both for you and for them, to be away like that.

SG: Very much so.

SS: But that's what you feel you have to do to make it work for you?

SG: Yeah.

[14:52]

SS: You've been around. Do you have the same feeling from other places? Do you think that the resilience of the fishing communities that you've spent time in outside of Gloucester or outside of the Gulf of Maine is different from it is here? Or do you see the same challenges?

SG: I think as of now, we're kind of one big community. I haven't been any place that hasn't been affected by it. And if they haven't been affected by it, it's because they were affected by it in the first place, meaning that small harbors had one or two boats, and people didn't really understand what it was that they were doing. It was just another boat coming and going from the harbor at the time. Every place I've been from here to Louisiana that's a fishing community has changed in some way, in some form, from regulation in the past year. It's getting tough. It's getting hard to be a commercial fisherman in this industry. It seems more and more like every day, they make it harder and harder. At one point in time, I thought I was going to own my own boat at some point.

SS: You don't think that anymore?

SG: No.

SS: Why not? That's completely out of the question?

SG: I think so. Honestly, I think I make more money running other people's boats than I could make on my own.

SS: Could you explain a bit about that financial picture? Are you saying that it would just be too cost-prohibitive to buy a boat, and better just to run other people's boats?

SG: Yeah.

SS: Why does it work out that way, financially?

SG: Just the wear and tear on it, fixing shit. A lot of the profit has been cut out of it. A big chunk of my fishing is the tuna fishing. I went from eight years ago, when Danielle was pregnant with Lexa, we had a hundred thousand dollar market tuna fishing. Now, if you can do a hundred thousand dollars for the whole season, that's a pretty good season. Fifteen dollars a pound for the season, to last year, I averaged six dollars.

SS: A lot of uncertainty is what I'm hearing.

SG: A lot of uncertainty.

[17:40]

SS: It winds up being too risky to buy in.

SG: Yeah. Down in the Carolinas last winter, I tuna fished that whole season. I caught twenty-two fish. I think I made three thousand dollars. That's a thousand miles from home. It's tough, especially on the relationships and the family and all that.

SS: Yeah. How long of a season is it to go down there and fish for tuna?

SG: I was away from home for probably three months. I did the bluefin thing and then I tried some other species down there. The bluefin worked out, but it's hard to make it work down there, without having the permits.

SS: You were fishing on other people's boats?

SG: Yeah, I was running a boat for another guy.

[18:47]

SS: What would you attribute that price change to? You said it went from fifteen to six dollars a pound.

SG: A big chunk of it is the exchange rate, because a lot of it is exportable fish. The other part of it is, it's just a huge, huge fleet of boats now that are doing this. It's like a crazy derby fishery. You have a limit for each day, but you get as many days in as you can. Anyone can afford a boat and rods is trying it—three or four hundred boats out fishing in the course of a day.

SS: Wow, I had no idea. That's crazy. If you roll back into your mind to when you were fourteen and you just started lobstering, you probably did a bit of fantasizing about where the future would take you. Are there things that have turned out differently than you expected in your fishing career? Things that caught you by surprise or maybe disappointed you?

SG: A lot has changed. I don't even know where to begin with this one. I mean, when I got into this, we used to go tub trawling in the winters for haddock. We used to get two-fifty, three dollars a pound. There was plenty of them around. Now they say there's more around than there was then. There isn't more around now than there was then. I mean, maybe there was, but there's different classes of fish. Now you got a lot more different types of pressure on the fish. We used to do really good catching the haddock right beside where the draggers towed. We were fishing the tub trawl gear for them. It was almost like they were plowing the bottom, plowing the field. Now you go out there, and you fish in the same spots, and the fish are still there. You still get one here and there. But it's almost like there's a big dead area. You set a million hooks and you might haul thirty or forty hooks out of that string and get nothing, or you get one. It's tough. A lot of people that aren't in the industry think that fishing's evil, that we just want to kill everything in the ocean. The way that it's gone now, we want to be able to sell what we catch and catch only what we sell, and not take more than we need to. Take enough to keep it a sustainable resource. That's the way I look at it. The key to everything now is keeping everything sustainable and managing it. If you can fish without being able to switch between multiple fisheries, I don't know how you do it. I jump between a little bit of everything, and it is still incredibly tough. To come from one fishery, and say "I do one thing year-round, and that's it," I couldn't imagine.

SS: Has that been a change? Did people used to do that more in the past, just stick with one fishery? Or have people always been diverse?

SG: You had the gillnet guys that would fish groundfish three quarters of the year, and then go monkfishing and stuff. But you'd never see a gillnet guy rig their boat over to go scalloping or go lobstering.

SS: Now you do?

SG: You see it all the time.

SS: A single boat gillnetting, scalloping, and lobstering?

SG: Mm-hmm. There's a boat in town that, within the last year, has gone monkfishing, groundfishing with gillnets, tub trawling, he tried beam trawling, and scalloping. That's a lot to do with one boat. That's how it is now. You got to be able to diversify to fill in the year. A lot of people would like to think so, but it's not a six-month-a-year job. It's a year-round job. You got to be able to do what you got to do to get by. It's definitely been tough on me and my family, since it's gone to catch shares, I will say.

SS: Can you explain that a little more?

[24:39]

SG: We went to more of like an IFQ system up here in the Northeast, for groundfish, which is incredibly crazy, thinking that the permit covers like thirteen or fifteen species. You got to keep track of what you got and keep your quota up for every one of those species, because if you run out of one, it shuts you down for all of them. With this multispecies permit, when I started, when I got into it, it was all smaller boat stuff. Pretty much less than fifty-five foot boats. We were home every night—pretty much every night. There was a handful of like twenty-four to forty-eight hour trips we'd do, but not too often. Nowadays, the last three to five years probably, fifty percent of the fishing I do is offshore fishing, where we're gone a week plus. It's gotten to the point, a couple years ago, I went swordfishing for a while, and we were doing forty-five day trips.

SS: Are those boats out of different ports, or are those trip boats also out of Gloucester?

SG: There's a few out of Gloucester. The only way to be in it now is to be flexible. Do what you got to do to get it done.

SS: That's just because the day boats kind of went away?

SG: Yeah. Gloucester is a large harbor. It's not like there's a couple boats here. A lot of the boats you see here now just sit here. They don't leave.

SS: They don't fish at all?

SG: No.

SS: Is there a reason they have to stay here?

SG: A lot of it is people leasing out the quota.

SS: Do they have to hold onto their boats in order to do that? Or they're holding onto them hoping that things will change and they'll be able to use them?

SG: They're holding onto them thinking that things will change and they'll be able to use them. It's kind of gone above and beyond at this point, to where a lot of these boats are hazards and really shouldn't be fishing.

SS: Because people haven't been able to keep up with them?

SG: They're like placeholders. Just something to put their permit on so they can lease out their quota.

SS: Hmm, a whole fleet of placeholders. You said Gloucester is turning into more of a tourist community?

SG: That's it. It's going the way of Newport. Newport used to be quite a large fishing town. Now it's nothing but a tourist town. That's where we're going. Every boat in town here used to have big steel boats tied up to it. Now half of them are sporty boats.

SS: Is there a tension between tourism and fishing, or do the tourists appreciate the ability to see commercial fishing vessels and eat local seafood?

[28:20]

SG: We have a large tourism community that's geared towards people coming to see an active fishing port.

SS: So it depends on the fishing.

SG: What's going to happen in another five years when we don't have an active fishing port? We don't have a tourist industry either, because people who are drawn to see an active fishing port want to see an active fishing port.

SS: That's what Gloucester is known for.

SG: Yup. They tried bringing in cruise ships and stuff. They still do it a couple times a year. But no one wants to come here. It's not a tropical paradise. We're a small island fishing community. It's tough.

SS: What are some of the solutions to this problem? Any ideas?

SG: Honestly, at this point, I'm just hoping they either up our quotas or go back to days at sea or something, because they got us to the point where the reality is you got one guy that's dictating leased-out codfish, which is a choke species for us, to the whole Gulf of Maine. One guy who's got the price up to two-fifty, two-seventy-five.

SS: To lease the quota?

SG: Yeah. A lot of the time, we'll lease it at two-fifty and we'll catch it at two dollars. It don't work out. It's not good for business. We're not even covering the fuel to bring it in. It's costing us money to catch it. There's days when, dragging, we'll catch two thousand pounds of cod to catch one thousand pounds of flounder. We're leasing that cod, not making a penny off it, to catch a thousand pounds of flounder. We have no choice about that. It's gotten so hard. It's to the point where I've thought about definitely getting out.

SS: Out of groundfishing or out of fishing altogether?

SG: Fishing altogether.

SS: It sounds like lobstering is doing ok, although that's harder on the body.

SG: That fishery isn't in a better place than the groundfishery.

SS: No? You said the fleet's still intact.

SG: The fleet's still intact.

SS: What's not going so well with lobstering?

SG: Their days are numbered. We have a whale crisis with fixed gear. It's not just lobstermen. It's all fixed gear. I mean, they're trying to reduce vertical end lines. It makes a hundred percent sense [sarcasm]. I don't know why you need to reduce vertical end lines in a fishery that doesn't really have an issue with entanglement of whales. They have one reported entanglement. This is what they're saying is right whale entanglements. I think there was one reported right whale entanglement on the whole East Coast of the United States, with fishing gear. Compared to how many traps are out there, that's nothing.

SS: Yeah, that's a very small percentage.

SG: If a person could swim far enough, you would definitely get entangled in lobster gear [laughter].

SS: [laughter] If you got out of fishing, do you have any ideas about what else you would do that would satisfy you?

SG: I have no clue. The few little things I've done that have been outside the fishing industry have been like boat building type stuff, that's geared toward the fishing industry.

SS: Yeah, it's all related.

SG: It's become all related and all snowballed into one. I really don't know what life would be without fishing.

SS: Why do you think fishing has such a hold on you?

[33:08]

SG: I don't know. You do something every day for twenty years. It becomes tough.

SS: Do you mind describing a little bit about how that would feel if you left fishing? I can tell it's emotional for you. I just want to make sure that other people reading this will understand that, too.

SG: Can we stop for a few minutes?

SS: Sure. I'll just shut this off for a minute.

[audio paused]

[33:43]

[audio resumed]

SG: The fishery's changed so drastically much in the last few years. I've thought about getting out of it. It's tough. My oldest daughter goes fishing with me all the time. She wants more and more. I can tell she wants into the business. There ain't no way in hell that I would let her be part of the business now, after what I've seen. It's gotten so tough. I just want better for my kids. It's not like there's an end in sight. Regulations keep getting tighter and tighter. Just how much this city's changed in the last ten or fifteen years is really drastic. You have places coming in, like that GM or GI or whatever is it is—that new research facility. Probably just more room to fight fishing.

SS: So you're talking about science and nonprofits and people who say they want to help?

SG: It was supposed to be some genetics institute.

SS: Oh, ok.

SG: Who knows? They don't do anything. They haven't done anything, as far as I know.

SS: Is that in Gloucester?

SG: Yeah. I don't even know. It's tough to say, but it's kind of becoming a joke around here. It ain't too much longer that it's going to last. There definitely isn't a future in it.

SS: There's no future in it?

SG: I would say the average age of one of the fisherman around here is between fifty-five and sixty years old. The first guy that I've seen buy a boat to go dragging—the first new guy that's gotten a boat to go fishing in ten years—bought a boat last year, and he don't seem like he's doing too good. He ain't that young himself. He's probably forty-five years old. He bought a dragger and decided he was going to be a dragger fisherman. But other than him, I don't see real hope for the future. Between all the imports and the farm-raised fish, they don't care about sustainable, wild-caught, U.S. fish anymore. It's almost like the government should start to put tariffs on imported fish. It ain't going to get any better.

SS: Are there other people your age and younger working here in Gloucester in the fishing industry?

SG: There's a handful. That's more in the lobster business than anything. I'm probably one of the younger guys on the groundfish boats. Tommy Testaverde who's got the Midnight Sun, he's my age. A couple of his deckhands are a couple years younger. There aren't that many people that's younger than us that are into it. Yeah, you'll get an eighteen, nineteen-year-old kid for a trip here or a trip there. They don't seem to last, and if they do, it's not somebody you want to last.

SS: What's your oldest daughter's name?

SG: Mackenzie.

SS: Can you tell me about a time when you took Mackenzie fishing and she showed you that it meant something to her? Is there a particular memory that comes to mind?

[38:28]

SG: Yeah, there's a lot of memories that come to mind. She comes tuna fishing with me quite a bit. She loves it. It kills me. She'll come out and get seasick, but she'll have the biggest smile on her face, begging to go. I don't know.

SS: Have you talked with her about the future of the industry?

SG: I've told her multiple times not to even look at it, because there's not a chance. She ain't going to be a fisherman.

SS: How does she react to that?

SG: She hates it. She hates it. It is what it is. This [interview] is a tough thing for me to do.

SS: I know. Are there other things that you'd like to talk about, to get on the record?

SG: I don't know. I don't think so.

SS: I'm trying to think of solutions or recommendations that you might have. I think you mentioned tariffs and regulatory changes.

SG: Change the imports. You got a country that's importing like ninety percent of the fish we eat. You probably have better numbers than I do, but I think it's like eighty or ninety percent of the fish we eat is imported. Then scalloping's got industry-based science. The groundfishery, we got nothing like that. You're relying on NOAA for your science. I got a few friends that work for NOAA on big research boats. One of them's a lead fisherman on one of these big research boats. He's made like two or three trips commercial fishing, and that's it. He's got no clue about fishing, no clue about what goes on with it. He knows what they've taught him, but is that necessarily right? I don't think so. Going by what they show for what's going on, it's not fucking close to what's true.

SS: Way off base?

SG: Yeah. It's tough. Don't think that that hasn't been a possibility, either. "Maybe I'll go work for them, and get into fisheries research." There ain't no chance in hell of doing that. Not with them.

[42:02]

SS: I'll mention for the audio that you and I both attended a class last night on net mending with Extreme Gloucester fishing training. When you look at programs like that, how does that make you feel? Supporting and training the next generation? Do you think that those things are helpful?

SG: Honestly, what Joe's doing is a great thing. It's taught me a lot. But there really isn't the interest in it that you'd think there'd be. Kind of a day late and a dollar short there. We can keep going with that forever, but is it going to bring the fleet back? No. Is there any hope? Yeah, a handful of boats might get a decent guy that can mend out of the program. But I don't know. Only the future will tell with that. I think it's a great thing, but it might be too late.

SS: It sounds like you think it might be planting a seed in something that's not very fertile ground. It won't grow because the conditions aren't right for fishermen to thrive.

SG: I guess if you plant enough seeds, one of them will grow. That's how it's got to be now. Hopefully, it gets a good return rate and produces a handful of good fishermen out of that class. It's tough. It's very tough that you go into a fishery... with the dragging, I guarantee that every one of these trip boats has got three or four guys on deck. There's at least two on every boat that can't mend. So, yeah, it's good. It's definitely helping out. But how much? Only time will tell. When I got into it, no one would teach me how to mend because I wasn't Italian. That was the big thing around here. No one will teach you. They were all scared that you were going to try to take their job from them.

SS: They would only teach fellow Italians?

[45:05]

SG: Yeah. And you had to be a fellow Italian and part of the family, something like that.

SS: That's an aspect we haven't talked about in Gloucester.

SG: It's a really tight knit community. When I got into it, if you didn't know somebody, you weren't getting on a boat. It's kind of changed now, but groundfishing's kind of like that still.

SS: When you started fishing, was it all Italian families?

SG: Pretty much. It's still very much like that here.

SS: What's your ethnic background?

SG: Scottish, Irish.

SG: So you didn't fit in?

SS: No.

SS: Did you eventually break in, just by working hard?

SG: Yeah. I proved myself and done what I had to.

SS: How did you learn stuff, if people wouldn't mentor you and teach you things?

SG: With the mending, I learned from Joe. I had seen it done for years and seen other people. There's been a few guys who tried to teach me here, teach me a little bit there. But we never really had time for it. So I sat down with Joe and I learned quite a bit.

SS: During this class?

SG: During the class.

SS: So just recently?

SG: Yeah. It's different.

SS: Do you think if you could go back to when you were twelve or fourteen, and live your life again, would you choose the same path or would you choose something different?

SG: That's hard to say. There's been a lot of good times in this fishery, and there's been a lot of downs. I don't know. It's a tough call. I think if I was going to get into it again, I would probably go in a different direction. I would go more to the rec side of it, the charter side of it. But at this point in my career, I'm so stressed out by it that I don't want to deal with them people. It's tough.

SS: Are there any other topics that you'd like to discuss?

SG: I don't think so.

SS: Nothing else? What's the best way to send you a copy of the transcript?

SG: I do not do email.

SS: Facebook?

SG: That's fine.

SS: Alright then, if there's nothing else to add, I'll turn this off. Are you sure there's nothing else?

SG: Yes.

SS: Ok, thank you very, very much for sharing your story. I know it's been emotional.

SG: It's tough.

SS: Ok, I'm shutting this off.

[48:53]

[end of audio]