

FILIPINO CREW COMMUNITY IN THE HAWAI'I-BASED LONGLINE FISHING FLEET

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The Hawai'i-based longline fishing industry has been heavily regulated with little analysis of the resulting social and cultural effects. In 2003–04, the NOAA Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC) studied fishermen in the Hawai'i-based longline fleet to develop a comprehensive sociocultural profile of industry participants. One focus of the study was the Filipino crew members, who comprised about three-quarters of the longline crew population working at the time. One researcher, with the assistance of a Filipino interpreter–community liaison, developed oral histories of 145 crew members. Consistent with ethnographic approaches, the oral histories were developed over time, with individuals and small groups, until each crew member's story was fully documented. Much data were collected through participant-observation, as the researcher and interpreter became regular fixtures on the docks for nearly two years. Many of the Filipinos had backgrounds in fishing and had substantial levels of related training, such as marine engineering. Their main incentives for working in the Hawai'i longline industry were the economic benefits and status provided by overseas employment, although most appreciated the fishing lifestyle. Job satisfaction was relatively high; salary levels were acceptable, and there was potential to earn additional income. Despite being confined to the immediate pier area because of their visa status, Filipino crew members derived benefits from several types of social networks and exhibited many characteristics common to communities. Keywords: Hawai'i longline fleet, Filipino fishermen, commercial fishing crew, sociocultural aspects of fishing, fishing crew communities

This article describes a subset of the results from a 2003–04 sociocultural study of fishermen in the Hawai'i-based longline fleet. Explored here are the perspectives and experiences of Filipino fishermen working as crew in the Hawai'i longline industry (see Figure 1).

The Hawai'i-based longline fishery, which lands the vast majority of Hawai'i's commercial catch, is a limited-entry fishery with 164 permits; 110–120 vessels were active during the time of the study. The fleet has traditionally targeted tunas (primarily bigeye tuna) and swordfish, although many other pelagic species are caught. The longline fleet consists of vessels ranging from about 50 to 100 feet in length, nearly all home ported at

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Figure 1. Interviewer Amy Gough enjoying the Honolulu sunset with Filipino crew members onboard a longline vessel.

one of three Honolulu piers. The vessels are U.S. flagged and are generally used for fishing by a captain and a three-to-five-member crew.

Interviews with longline vessel owners revealed that hiring and retaining qualified crew is a critical issue and one of the main barriers to sustainable fishing operations. Many vessel owners have begun using salaried Filipino crew members on one-year renewable contracts because of the lower expense compared to paying Hawai'i-based crew in shares. Owners and captains soon discovered that Filipino crew were dependable and reliable workers at sea and often possessed other skills and training that increased their utility. In addition, their visa status, which confined them to the immediate pier area where the vessel was docked, enabled them to watch the boat and ensured they were available to leave on the next fishing trip.

We wanted to learn more about the Filipino crew members, including their backgrounds, how they came to be involved in the fishery, the nature of their jobs, what they liked most and least about their work, perceptions of the industry, and comparisons with previous fishing experiences. We wanted to address social and cultural aspects of longline fishing and the meaning of those characteristics to their lifestyles, as well as their social networks and on-board dynamics with captains and owners of different ethnicities. We were curious about their perceptions of and experiences with fishing regulations because they are the fishermen who implement the regulations at sea.

We also explored job satisfaction and treatment on board as described by the crew in their own words (rather than using a scale of items; see for example Pollnac and Poggie 1988). A recent survey of Filipino seafarers (workers on fishing, cargo, and other ships) found relatively widespread examples of mistreatment, including lack of medical attention; nonpayment of salary or delays in remittances back to the Philippines; and discrimination based on nationality, religion, or age (International Seafarers Action Center 2004).

Thus, another reason for studying Filipino longline crew was to better understand working conditions and the workers' perceptions of how they were treated by boat owners and captains.

In the course of searching for relevant literature, we came across anecdotal accounts of foreign crewmen but did not locate any systematic studies that described experiences from a fleetwide perspective. Therefore, another purpose of the study was to encourage other systematic observations of issues and trends relevant to foreign fishermen and other fishing crew.

As described in the following section, we used ethnographic methods to conduct the study, a necessary approach given the population and our information needs. The combination of individual interviews and small group meetings, coupled with participant observation, yielded an abundance of qualitative and quantitative data that bridged the gap between anthropology and sociology.

RESEARCH METHODS

Oral histories were completed with 145 Filipino crewmen, about 65 percent of the Filipino crew population involved in the industry at that time. The oral histories were developed by the same researcher with the assistance of a Filipino interpreter–community liaison (see Figure 2). The interpreter was necessary for talking to fishermen who spoke little or no English. However, even fishermen who were fluent or conversational in English could communicate some sentiments more effectively in their native language.

The interpreter also functioned as a community liaison whose presence and interest in the fishermen helped to create a more comfortable atmosphere, even when interpretation was not required. This role was extremely valuable because of the nature of the



Figure 2. Interpreter–community liaison Daniel Isidro (standing, far right) with Filipino crew members.

research, which required fishermen to trust the researchers and speak openly. When fishermen were first approached to discuss their experiences, some were wary and would not answer particular questions. Over time, as they grew familiar with the researcher and interpreter, the fishermen spoke more openly about a wider range of topics.

The study began with frequent trips to the three pier areas in Honolulu, where longline vessels are docked between trips. After explaining the purpose of the research to available crew, the researcher and interpreter initiated discussions, typically in small groups. Through these group discussions, interview topics were identified and verified. As the fishermen became more familiar with the procedure and study goals, individual interviews were conducted. Because the study was ethnographic in nature and did not involve formal survey methods, the researcher and interpreter began with a general list of discussion topics and attempted to discuss most of them during the course of the interviews. This approach was consistent with the exploratory nature of the study.

Many of the interviews were not formal interviews but a series of “talk story” sessions conducted when fishermen were in port and available. As a result, the information obtained from individuals was continuously updated until all relevant topics had been covered and the accuracy and breadth of responses were deemed sufficient for analysis. Interviews with a single fisherman generally included supplemental information obtained through group discussions, in addition to the data collected during individual conversations. Similarly, many discussions were followed up with multiple contacts over time, increasing the accuracy and breadth of the responses.

Because Filipino crew were confined to the immediate pier area where the vessel was docked, they were essentially a captive audience. We did not have the problems that can occur when researchers attempt to contact the itinerant crew population characteristic of some fleets. Because the crew were responsible for working on the vessel during the day, interviews were conducted in the afternoon or evening. In many cases, previously interviewed crew members introduced the researcher to other crew, assuring them that the researcher “was OK.” Filipino crew who had already been interviewed also served as a conduit to newly arrived crew members.

Only a handful of Filipino crew refused when asked to participate; some were reluctant initially but then participated later. In several cases, crew members—working on vessels on which the owner did not approve of their being contacted—were interviewed while they were socializing on another vessel or after they left Hawai‘i and then returned to work on a different vessel. In most cases, longline vessel owners and captains were interviewed early in the study, while Filipino crew were contacted later. This process enabled the owners and captains to know when we were attempting to talk to their crew. This strategy was largely successful; nearly all owners allowed us to speak with crew on their vessels.

We also used participant-observation as a study method. Because the researcher and interpreter visited the dock areas approximately twice a week for nearly two years, they became well-known fixtures to the Filipino crew members. Over time, the researcher and interpreter came to be perceived by many crew members as part of the community because of their consistent presence and willingness to talk and socialize with the fishermen.

They were present for many social events and other pier-side happenings, expanding their opportunities to observe interactions among crew and other individuals.

During the course of the study, a number of Filipinos completed their work contracts, went back to the Philippines, and, subsequently, returned to the Hawai'i longline industry. Some fishermen returned to their initial vessel and location; others, however, returned to a different pier or vessel. Returning crew provided a unique opportunity to gather information, particularly of a retrospective and comparative nature. When individuals returned to work on a different vessel, they often gained a new perspective on their previous experiences. This new information was then added to their "story" and captured in study data bases.

LOGISTICS OF HIRING AND PAYING FILIPINO CREW

The process of hiring Filipinos, transporting them to Hawai'i, and managing their contracts is a lengthy and fascinating story in itself. Vessel owners interested in hiring Filipino laborers contact one of four manning agencies in the Philippines and pay a flat fee ranging from \$700 to \$1,500 per crewman. Filipino fishermen aspiring to work on a fishing vessel complete hiring documentation at the respective agency office in the Philippines. Crew working on a Hawai'i longline vessel receive a copy of their one-year employment contract stating the terms and condition of work prior to leaving the Philippines. Regardless of the issuing agency, contracts typically state the salary, work hours, benefits, and consequences of early termination.

In practice, the contract operates as a procedural tool, used mainly to place a fisherman on a Hawai'i longline vessel. The actual terms and conditions of work are determined not by contract language but, instead, by negotiations with the vessel owner, captain, and individual crewman, sometimes with assistance from a local agency representative. A number of crew commented on the discrepancies between the contract and actual employment conditions but typically viewed these differences as working in their favor.

The Filipino crew members were in Hawai'i on one-year transit (C1) visas. One purpose of this visa is to allow foreign fishermen to meet foreign vessels at a U.S. port, but since 2002 it has been accepted for Filipino fishermen joining Hawai'i longline vessels as long as they are detained aboard the vessel until their contract has ended. Even then, they must be transported through the airport until they are on the plane returning to the Philippines.

Their method of entry into Hawai'i varied widely depending on immigration policies and enforcement. In early 2003, Filipino fishermen intending to work on a Hawai'i-based longline vessel flew directly from Manila to Honolulu. After some were denied entry, many entered the United States through Los Angeles and then flew to Hawai'i. In late 2003, however, Filipino seafarers carrying C1 or C1-D visas were denied entry at Los Angeles. To overcome this obstacle, Filipino crew instead began traveling to Hawai'i via American Samoa, which accepted individuals carrying a valid C1-D visa. Longline vessels traveled to American Samoa to pick up the Filipino crew. Other variations included picking up crew in Mexico, Canada, or the Republic of Kiribati.

Under C1 visa status, Filipino crew are not permitted to leave the vessel (or, in practice, the immediate pier area); they live on the vessel and cannot receive a “shore pass” to leave the pier area. When Filipino crew arrived in Honolulu, Department of Homeland Security officials documented the name and assigned vessel of each individual fisherman. Similar inspections were performed on the arrival of a fishing vessel after each trip. If a crew member was absent during an inspection, the Department of Homeland Security issued a fine to the vessel owner. Vessel owners reported this fine to be \$5,000, although some noted that in mid-2005 the amount increased to \$6,500. If a crew member was required to leave the pier area for any reason, the vessel owner was responsible for purchasing a “parole.” Costing \$60, paroles allowed one crew member to leave the pier for a specified length of time under supervision of the vessel owner. Paroles were commonly used for medical or dental appointments, and in 2005 became standard when a crew member accompanied a vessel to dry dock (which required transport to another part of the island).

Each of the manning agencies specified the starting minimum salary for a crewman. The salaries stated in the contract often did not reflect the salaries actually received. Actual salaries reflected policies of the agency, norms of the vessel owner (often consistent within owner-ethnic groups), preferences of individual vessel owners, and any extra duties a crewman performed, such as being deck boss, cook, ice man, or mechanic.

Considering any base salary plus additional earnings opportunities, the monthly pay of Filipino crew ranged from \$360 to \$1,325, with an average (mean) pay of \$528 and a median of \$500. In total, 36 percent earned \$400 or less monthly; 34 percent earned \$450 to \$500; 11 percent earned \$530 to \$600; 5 percent earned \$630 to \$700; 8 percent earned \$725 to \$800; and 5 percent earned \$1,000 or more. We note that in 2003 the average annual income for a family in the Philippines was 148,757 pesos, totaling roughly \$2,700 USD (Philippines National Statistics Office 2004). At an average salary of \$528 per month, the average annual income of a Hawai‘i-longline fisherman was well over double that of the average for Filipino families. Even the lowest-paid crew members earned 62 percent more than the average income for families in the Philippines. In addition, crew did not pay for room and board because they lived and ate on the vessel at port.

Salary also depended on a crewman’s tenure. When fishermen completed a one-year contract, vessel owners either arranged for crew to return home or provided an opportunity to extend the contract. Standard extensions were for either six months or one year. In certain cases, owners arranged for shorter extensions to retain crew until the anticipated arrival of new crew. Negotiations between the vessel owner and the crewman determined the actual salary increase and the duration of the extension.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Thirty-eight percent of the Filipino crewmen reported growing up in a fishing area, with an additional 23 percent growing up in areas characterized by both fishing and farming. All were male; 77 percent were married and 98 percent reported they were Catholic. The crew members reflected a diversity of Filipino ethnicities, exhibiting different culture,

food, and language. A majority of crew came from areas outside of the urban, capital city area; only 18 percent reported being born in the capital region. Considerable homogeneity was evident for individuals from areas located geographically close to one another. These individuals often described themselves as neighbors, or explained that “my province is right next to his province.”

Filipino crew sampled ranged in age from 21 to 52 years old. The average age was 37, with 55 percent over age 36. A vast majority, 89 percent, reported completing high school. Nearly 30 percent also completed an associate or trade school degree (often focused on maritime studies), with an additional 16 percent completing at least some college coursework. Five percent reported completing college studies; many crew members had received more formal education than the vessel owners or captains. Crew reported being responsible for an average of five dependents (not necessarily children).

Many had an extensive background in commercial fishing, with an average of 11 years of experience (incl. time spent in Hawai‘i), most commonly including the Japanese longline fishery out of Guam but also Taiwanese, South American, and mainland U.S. fisheries. Younger individuals reported that they had applied for contract fishing immediately after high school because of the prestige and success associated with working in foreign fisheries. Some of the older fishermen reported hoping to continue fishing a few more years—often until their children had completed school—and then retire in the Philippines.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

The majority of Filipino crew was married, so the fishermen had left behind wives and families in the Philippines. The social circle of these workers has evolved to include a number of extended family and friends in Hawai‘i. Collectively, the Filipino crew exhibit many characteristics of a place-based community (Wilkinson 1991) with social structure (albeit loose and informal), a barter and cash economy, a system of mutual support, and some mechanisms for collective action. Three primary social networks have developed: (1) fellow crew; (2) friends and family residing in Hawai‘i and other friends within the Hawai‘i longline community; and (3) business–political and other connections to the local Filipino community.

The most immediate social network consisted of fellow Filipino crew on the same vessel, followed by crew in the same pier area. Little formal hierarchy occurred within this network. Interactions among Filipino crew in a given pier area were quite common, with crew gathering to celebrate birthdays, holidays, outside visitors, and farewells. One particularly popular social event was the arrival or departure of a crew member.

Gatherings consisted predominantly of Filipino crewmen, with occasional outside visitors. They spent time drinking alcoholic beverages, singing karaoke, gambling, and telling jokes. Some vessel owners purchased beer for their crew while most crew sent local friends or family to purchase beer and some crew purchased it themselves. Vessels with karaoke machines were the most popular for hosting an evening party. In the absence of karaoke, crew entertained with guitars and singing. The host vessel’s crew prepared

sashimi, cooked fish, and numerous Filipino dishes, with fish provided by the most recently arrived vessel.

Camaraderie was often expressed through discussing problems and laughing about the challenges seemingly unique to this group of crew. A common humorous topic was their lack of ability to exit the pier area. Many were amused by their limited understanding of Hawai'i and joked that they had to watch videos to accurately explain the islands to family and friends back in the Philippines. Crew often joked about their lack of social activity, constructing humorous fantasies of building bars and shopping centers inside the pier area. Many found humor in the dynamic relationship between foreign fishermen and the Department of Homeland Security, particularly in the element of the chase. Jokes often included fantasies of bypassing immigration laws, such as parachuting into Hawai'i.

Many social networks were enhanced through previous relationships among crew members. Fourteen percent of the sample noted that they had a family member—father, son, brother, cousin, or uncle—working on a Hawai'i-based longline vessel. As employed family members found the industry profitable, they often encouraged other family members to contact the same agency and request a contract in Hawai'i.

A second social network consisted of the local Filipino community. Hawai'i contains an above-average proportion of Filipino Americans; according to the 2000 Census, 14 percent of the population is of Filipino descent. Five percent of Filipino crew in the Hawai'i longline industry reported having a family member residing in Hawai'i. Family members of some crew frequented the pier area, often bringing additional friends to socialize. In some cases, the friends would bring beer, Filipino food, or other token items. In general, any variation to the daily fishing routine provided an opportunity for Filipino crew to develop new local social networks. Friends were met when the boat was dry-docked, when observers were present on board, when additional workers accessed the pier area, or when Filipino crew left the pier area.

Filipino women frequented the pier area as well, providing companionship for Filipino crewmen. Many Filipino crewmen developed long- or short-term relationships with local Filipinas. Some Filipino crew reported providing long-term girlfriends with significant sums of money, in some cases straining the financial situation of their families in the Philippines. Others reported receiving financial assistance from the women. A number of Filipino crew fathered children with local Filipino women in Hawai'i. Some crew reported being abandoned by their wives in the Philippines because of various relationship complications with Filipino women in Hawai'i.

Providing fish to local friends, local family, and fellow crew was a common occurrence. The Filipino crew placed great importance on having fish to supply to friends and family and were typically ashamed if they could not do so. Vessel owners who allowed crew to retain a portion of fish (usually fish that would be discarded or were too small to sell) were appreciated. In some cases, crew reported hiding fish from the vessel owners to have fish available to provide to social networks.

A third network consisted of formal and informal businesses or other entities catering to the Filipino crew. Shipping and remittance companies visited the docks on a daily basis. Filipino crew would send money back to the Philippines as desired, in some cases

waiting until the exchange rate was favorable and then sending larger sums. In other cases, in which individuals reported that their families required money immediately, remittance companies provided short-term advances. Some vessel owners transferred the salary directly to these companies, rather than the individual crewmen, based on a verbal agreement that the money had already been disbursed in the Philippines. Phone cards were perhaps the most commonly sold commodity within the pier areas.

A number of local Filipinos developed informal (unlicensed) businesses in the pier area, selling desirable items such as socks, T-shirts, soap, and other personal items. Some individuals sold larger items that Filipino crew might send to the Philippines, including computers, stereos, digital cameras, compact discs, perfume, lotion, and other goods. In most cases, transactions between fishermen and salesmen were cash based; as relationships developed, the salesmen were provided with fish as a gesture of goodwill. In other cases, informal businessmen would take cash and orders from Filipino crew and then leave the pier area to purchase the desired items. This was a beneficial system for the Filipino crew; in a limited number of cases, however, Filipino crew reported losing large sums of money.

In October 2005, a Hawai'i-based church began bible studies at Pier 17. The church group came Sunday evenings, and if a boat was available (with owner permission) they held a bible study. At one two-hour meeting, nine church individuals and about 25 crew members were present.

The researcher and interpreter–community liaison constituted a primary component of this network during the course of the study. After being interviewed, many crew would run and tell other crew that they too could be interviewed and then bring the crew member back. Many of these early visits were social visits with individuals who had already been interviewed, as we waited to talk with those who had not yet been interviewed.

Evening visits to the pier to “talk story” with crew members also provided an additional opportunity to become more closely associated with the Vietnamese American and Euro-American crew and captains; many lived on their boats and others came to the piers in the evenings to work or even socialize. One Vietnamese American fisherman told the researcher that he had noticed how much time she spent with the crew. To the fisherman, her interaction with them signified that “she really had the fishermen in her heart,” so he felt comfortable talking openly with her.

Some owners undoubtedly thought researchers were using the crew to get information about what really happens on board. Although that was not the intention, it created a side effect, and a very effective one: Many crew eventually opened up about shark finning, behavior of captains, or regulations violated by a captain. In rare cases, some crew members were close friends with the captain, requiring the researchers to befriend the captain to gain the confidence of those crew members.

JOB SATISFACTION

Nearly 70 percent of the crew members interviewed reported high or very high levels of job satisfaction. Nearly 80 percent said they earned a reasonable income and reported no problem with their workload or living conditions. Explanations of satisfaction were

often based on comparisons with conditions in previous fisheries or other jobs, both within and outside the Philippines. Reasons for high levels of satisfaction included income, status as a foreign worker, and ability to maintain a fishing lifestyle, as shown by representative quotes:

My father is here. Now (that I am here) I can work in Hawai'i and earn good money. I am very proud to be here; when I go home, I will be a hero in Philippines.

I waited 2 years with the agency (in the Philippines) to come to Hawai'i. Now I am very happy to come here and support my family.

I will have a very high status in the Philippines, and I am building my house there. For me, I am the oldest (sibling), so I am paying for my three siblings to go to school.

I like to fish everywhere; I can travel and I take pictures everywhere I work. I really love being a fisherman.

This is the life of a fisherman. I am very proud of this work; it is very good work. And now I raised a very good family in the Philippines and they have a very good house and income. I have many friends working (longline) in Hawai'i.

I'd rather work in the Philippines, but this is okay. This fishery is much better than Japanese or Taiwanese in Guam because the workload is much easier. There, we throw away all the fish except for very few that they keep. Also over there, there are so many crew, sometimes we have to fight before we can work.

One reflection of the crew members' satisfaction with their position was the intent to maintain their employment in the Hawai'i-based longline industry. A majority, 72 percent, reported that they would seek employment in the longline fleet under the same conditions. Another 21 percent said that they would still get involved with the fleet if they could work under different conditions, which usually meant working on a different vessel. Six percent were unsure if they would like to return to Hawai'i, and just 1 percent said they would not come back to Hawai'i at all.

In many cases, Filipinos reporting high levels of satisfaction also said they faced obstacles working in the Hawai'i longline industry. They then tended to downplay the importance of those obstacles, which often paled in comparison to difficulties faced while working in the Philippines or in previous fisheries. Some obstacles, such as bad relationships with a supervisor, were sufficient enough to prompt an individual to leave the industry (usually on completion of a contract), only to return on board a different vessel.

CONCLUSION

The ethnographic methods were particularly well suited to this project; the depth of information could not have been obtained through any other method. Repeat contact with crew members over time established the necessary levels of trust. During the course of the study, we were able to update project notes and databases with new information. Crew members were not only willing to talk more openly as trust developed but the ongoing dialogue also provided opportunities for crew to share their own learning experiences. Filipino fishermen would invite the researcher and interpreter to gatherings, or

just call to report in when their boat arrived. Some would call with an update on newly arriving crew (at times asking if we wanted to interview them), to tell the result of a particular story such as a dispute with a captain, to invite the researcher and interpreter to come and pick up fish, or just to say hello. Many fishermen invited the researcher and interpreter to the vessel for birthday parties, going away parties, or other functions, providing additional opportunities for observation as well as informal interaction.

The Filipino interpreter, in particular, became part of the community; some crew asked him for legal advice on divorces, some asked if they could receive mail at his house, and some asked him to buy specific goods (usually Filipino food). He regularly picked up little trinkets for the crew, such as hats (in bulk) that were preferred when working in the sun, lighters, and snacks.

The researcher and interpreter provided a nice mix of gender and age, giving crew members an opportunity to talk openly with whomever they were more comfortable. Some of the crew seemed more comfortable talking to a father figure while others preferred talking to a younger female. Utilizing two field workers who nearly always went to the docks together had several advantages. Once at the docks, they could split up if desired and talk with crew members on different vessels. Two researchers also provided a margin of safety, an important consideration given that much of the fieldwork was conducted at Honolulu docks in the evening hours, sometimes until midnight (although no safety-related incidents or even near incidents occurred).

A strong mechanism for coping with the confinement to the pier areas and with isolation from family in the Philippines was found in the crew members' social networks. Owners who allowed more extensive interactions with other crew, whether on their own or on other vessels, were therefore preferred and helped to improve crew satisfaction. In addition to associating extensively with fellow crew, many of whom had worked together in other fisheries, the Filipino fishermen created an extended social network reaching into Honolulu's broad Filipino community. The presence of numerous Filipinos in Hawai'i facilitated this network by reducing feelings of detachment from the Philippines.

Worldwide, laborers working overseas may be subject to a variety of documented mistreatments. Extensive interviews and observation over a two-year period found that this was not the case for Filipinos working on Hawai'i-based longline vessels. Over 70 percent of Filipino crew reported they would return to the Hawai'i longline industry; in fact, many did so throughout the duration of the study.

Crew provided much information not just about themselves but about vessel owners, captains, and other aspects of onboard dynamics and events that one could probably not learn through other avenues. Observers are another source of information, but it is already known that their presence changes on-board behavior. Continuing to check in regularly with the crew thus provided information not obtainable any other way. Much of this information is useful to fishery managers as they develop new regulatory mechanisms, so we hope that funding for at least a "maintenance" level of contact continues. The information should also be valuable to vessel owners; given their struggle with manning vessels, they would be wise to try to understand their Filipino crew and sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Even after the formal portion of the study ended, the researcher and interpreter continued to pay regular visits to all three pier areas. They heard more stories that illustrated key concepts learned, and new ones that provided hypotheses for future study. Ongoing visits also reflected the participant-observation character of the study; the researcher and community liaison were a source of support and information for many crew and provided a forum for discussion about fisheries issues. Just because the formal study has ended does not mean that the relationships and trust, developed carefully over time, should be abandoned.

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