# Franco-Americans In Vermont

A CIVIL RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE

May 1983

—A report of the Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights prepared for the information and consideration of the
on. The report will be considered by the Commission and the Commission will make public its reaction. In the meantime, the material in
should not be attributed to the Commission, but only to the Vermont Advisory Committee.

## THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, created by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is an independent, bipartisan agency of the executive branch of the Federal Government. By the terms of the act, as amended, the Commission is charged with the following duties pertaining to denials of the equal protection of the laws based on race, color, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin, or in the administration of justice: investigation of individual discriminatory denials of the right to vote; study of legal developments with respect to denials of the equal protection of the law; appraisal of the laws and policies of the United States with respect to denials of equal protection of the law; maintenance of a national clearinghouse for information respecting denials of equal protection of the law; and investigation of patterns or practices of fraud or discrimination in the conduct of Federal elections. The Commission is also required to submit reports to the President and the Congress at such times as the Commission, the Congress, or the President shall deem desirable.

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ATTRIBUTION

All material in this report represents the interpretations and conclusions of the Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and as such is not attributable to the Commission. This report has been prepared by the Vermont State Advisory Committee and will be considered by the Commission in formulating its recommendations to the President and Congress.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Vermont Advisory Committee to
the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

May 1983

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Dear Commissioners:

The Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, pursuant to its responsibility to advise the Commission on civil rights issues in Vermont, submits this report on Franco-Americans in Vermont: A Civil Rights Perspective.

The Advisory Committee undertook this project in view of the Commission's growing interest in ethnicity -- as evidenced by its consultation on Euro-Ethnics in December 1979 and its "Statement on the Civil Rights Issues of Euro-Ethnic Americans" in January 1981 -- and out of long-standing concern with the status of Vermont's Franco-Americans.

The report presents an historic overview of the French-Canadian presence in Vermont over the past 300 years, a discussion of the size of the State's Franco-American population, and the different definitions and techniques used in identifying Franco-Americans. In the chapter on Status, data are presented which demonstrate statistical disparities between Franco-Americans and the Anglo population in education and employment.

Societal attitudes reflected in scholarly works and in fiction are surveyed as well. Franco-Americans have been the victims of anti-Catholic, anti-foreign sentiment in the past, and of negative stereotyping in much of the 20th century. To determine whether these attitudes result in actions (discrimination), which in turn result in the observed disparities, is a formidable process, requiring additional historical research and analyses of educational and employment practices. Through this report the Advisory

Committee hopes to identify directions for future study. The framework for such studies has been suggested by two Commission efforts: Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women and Affirmative Action in the 1980s: Dismantling the Process of Discrimination.

The Vermont Advisory Committee is also concerned about the lack of detailed statistical data with regard to ethnic groups and joins with the Commission in urging the Bureau of the Census to improve the quality and quantity of ethnic group information available. New census data as well as additional research should shed more light on the condition of Franco-Americans; and whether, and to what extent, they are victims of discrimination.

It is our hope that the Commission will encourage further exploration of this subject, and that it will view this effort as a useful contribution to the study of the "denial of equal protection...because of...national origin."

Respectfully,

PHILIP H. HOFF
Chairperson
Vermont State
Advisory Committee

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# Preface

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights was created in 1957 with the responsibility for studying and collecting information concerning the "denial of equal protection of the laws under the constitution because of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap or national origin." In addition, it serves "as a national clearinghouse for information" in these areas.[1] Clearly the most critical denials associated with race and ethnicity have been suffered by black and Hispanic Americans, and this has been the focus of much of the Commission's attention.

In 1979 the Commission held a consultation in Chicago on "Civil Rights Issues of Euro-Ethnic Americans," the Commission's first effort to deal with the concerns of white ethnics. Although the emphasis of the consultation was on "Americans from, or descendants of, persons from eastern and southern Europe,"[2] Euro-ethnics include, as well, nationality groups from every part of Europe. The Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, which has the responsibility to inform the Commission about civil rights issues in the State, has long been concerned about the status of Franco-Americans, the State's largest national origin group. Franco-Americans, the subject of this brief report,

> ...are the descendants of the explorers and settlers who came from France during the 17th century to establish New France in what is today Canada. Although some migrated southward from New France to the English colonies before the American Revolution and during the half-century after, the majority came to the United States between 1845 and 1895. Nearly two-thirds of the latter migrants settled in the six New England states.[3]

Of course, Franco-Americans have settled in Louisiana and the Midwest, but the purpose of this report is to provide a better understanding of the Franco-American population of Vermont. It is clear that Franco-Americans share a common and distinctive culture. What is not clear is whether they share equally in all the benefits of, and are full participants, in our society.

Determining whether disparities are the result of discrimination is a formidable process, and is not the purpose of this report. Nor does the information presented prove discrimination or argue for affirmative action or governmental intervention.

The report presents a historical framework of the treatment of Franco-Americans in Chapter I, surveys potentially prejudicial societal attitudes in Chapter III, and examines statistical disparities and measurements of differential representation in

Chapter IV. The size of the Franco-American population in Vermont is discussed in Chapter II, which, stressing methodology, surveys different definitions and techniques for identifying Franco-Americans.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights long has stressed the importance of reliable information about racial and ethnic groups. It is only when we have accurate data that we can do more than speculate about the meaning of differences in condition among groups. In view of the imminent availability of important new data and tentative but suggestive findings of current research on Franco-Americans, the Vermont State Advisory Committee believes it timely to assess the available research and establish a framework for further study.

The report that follows was prepared by A. Peter Woolfson, chairperson of the Franco-American subcommittee of the Vermont Advisory Committee, and Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Vermont. It was reviewed and edited by the staff of the New England Regional Office of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights under the supervision of its regional director, Jacob Schlitt.

## Notes to Preface

1. Civil Rights Act of 1957, as amended, 42 U.S.C.A. s. 1975(e) (West 1981).

2. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Civil Rights of Euro-Ethnic Americans in the United States: Opportunities and Challenges, December 3, 1979, p. ii.

3. Stephen Thernstrom, Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1980), p. 388.

CONTENTS

## Chapter I: History

The past several years have seen the publication of both popular and scholarly accounts of Franco-American history including Robert Perreault's One Piece in the Great American Mosaic[1] and the six-volume Franco-American Overview[2] published by the National Assessment and Dissemination Center. This chapter draws upon some of these recent publications, as well as earlier and less-accessible materials, to sketch briefly the history of French-Canadians as it has contributed to the development of a permanent Franco-Vermonter population.

### Colonial Settlers

Actual French settlement of Vermont did not begin until 1665, some 57 years after Samuel de Champlain's explorations.

> Champlain became the first white man to explore certain portions of the New England area, claiming mountains, rivers, lakes, and bays....Vermont received its name from Champlain's remarks about the magnificent monts verts, the Green Mountains. Lake Champlain is but another of the many discoveries attributed to the renowned explorer.[3]

Sieur de la Motte founded Fort Ste. Anne in 1665 on what is now Isle la Motte in Vermont. Fort Ste. Anne was established ostensibly to ensure French sovereignty in the region. Concurrently, the soldiers made a gradual transition to habitants (farming settlers) -- first by cultivating small gardens and then by building summer homes on their allotted plots. The French authorities encouraged the soldiers to stay on as settlers since they provided a readymade line of defense in areas where military movement was difficult. When a soldier reached the age of retirement he was urged to settle upon and cultivate the land. Each discharged soldier was given a piece of land, as well as cows, tools, and assistance in building a house. These soldiers, more skilled in the art of fighting than farming, became Vermont's first European settlers.[4]

From the beginning, explorers and soldiers were aided by a dedicated priesthood. A chapel erected for the soldiers at Fort Ste. Anne is purported to be the first religious edifice in the New England area.[5]

In this period, the French established two forts in Vermont: one at Colchester Point and the other at Mallets Bay. This early colonization of Vermont was, however, short-lived. The defeat of Montcalm by Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 and the subsequent Treaty of Paris of 1763 led the colonists to gather what belongings they could and retreat to safer soil on the other side of

the Richelieu River.

## Political Refugees

The second period of immigration came about as a result of the American Revolution. Talk of independence in the American colonies was a hopeful sign to the conquered French living in what had become British North America. The Continental Congress even translated some of its tracts into French in the hope that the French-Canadians would join in the rebellion against the Crown.[6] This tendency was countered by Monsignor Briand, the head of the Church in the conquered area, whose authority depended upon the English. His determination was reinforced by his awareness that the Americans were not friendly toward the Catholic Church. Indeed, one of the grievances of the American colonists against the British was that they had granted religious concessions to the French in Canada, concessions they saw as threats to the survival of their own Protestant faith in America.[7]

Nevertheless, the majority of French-Canadians were in sympathy with the Americans, so much so that the English Governor hesitated to raise a force of Canadian troops lest he provide training and arms for those who might join the American rebels.[8] In fact, Colonel Moses Hazen of the Continental Army was able to recruit two companies to fight on the side of the Americans. In addition, James Livingston, an American officer under the direction of Colonel Benedict Arnold, recruited another French-Canadian troop of 100 to 150 men. There were others:

> ...Immediately after the war broke out, Henri Laurent, Benjamin Huge and Daniel Hory organized battalions made up of recruits from the province of Quebec...Among the best known French-Canadians who joined the American forces were Major Clement Gosselin, Captain Philippe Dubois, Lieutenant-Colonel Pierre Regnier, Lieutenant Colonel Jacob Bruyere and Jacques Rouse, after whom Rouse's Point, New York was named. Ethan Allen had a number of French-Canadians among the ranks of his Green Mountain Boys, including Augustin Loiseau.[9]

With the collapse of the invasion of Quebec by the Americans and their French-Canadian supporters, these Frenchmen, many from the Richelieu Valley, were forced to flee. They received land grants, called the Refugee Tracts, on both sides of Lake Champlain. Few refugees actually settled in Vermont. The census of 1790 shows only 29 French families in Vermont, an estimated 153 persons out of a population of 80,000.[10]

It was not long, however, before this small group of settlers was joined by others. A number of factors led to this new immigration. Even in this early period, the once-abundant crops

began to fail, a problem exacerbated by overcrowding on the original tracts, the seigneurial allotments, as a result of an ever-burgeoning population. An additional push was the anti-French reign of terror initiated by Governor James Craig in Lower Canada -- now modern Quebec. According to one historian, "Three hundred French-Canadian families crossed the border into Vermont in 1808; and the arrival of immigrants was reported at Winooski, Vermont, in 1814..."[11]

During the 19th century, the French-speaking population of Vermont was greatly affected by the political climate in Canada. Following the open rebellion of 1837, French Canadian refugees streamed into Vermont. In that year, the British Parliament declared that the colonies could have neither self-government nor an elective legislative council. Taxes could be levied without the consent of the French-controlled assembly. The French reformers became incensed; they talked of revolution. Joseph Louis Papineau, Speaker of the House, demanded a more equitable system of government -- more like the model presented by the American democratic system. With the spectre of history repeating itself, the British government hastily disbanded the elected legislative council and forbade any attempts at self-government.[12]

Papineau's followers, calling themselves Les Patriotes, organized Fils de la Liberte' associations, modeled on the Sons of Liberty of the American Revolution. English-speaking Lower Canadians, in retaliation, organized their own paramilitary groups. The rebellion, when it did occur, began "almost accidently on November 6, 1837, in a street brawl in Montreal."[13]

Several riots ensued. It is estimated that 2,000 Patriotes, armed with little more than clubs, pitchforks, and the occasional hunting rifle, fought 8,000 English troops led by Sir John Colborne. Though the rebels, incredibly enough, won the first battle at St. Denis, the rebellion was soon put down. A small number of the Patriotes fled across the borders of New York and New England.[14]

Many of the leaders came to Vermont: Louis Perrault to Middlebury, Thomas Storrow Brown to St. Albans, Etienne Rodier, Wolfred Nelson, and Ludger Duvernay to Burlington. A few of the towns and cities in Vermont organized public meetings in support of the Patriotes: Swanton, St. Albans, Montpelier, and Middlebury. The people of Middlebury "issued a declaration to the effect that they considered themselves obliged to greet and protect those who, fleeing from the exactions of their own government, were seeking refuge in another land..."[15] The rebels, in this hospitable Vermont climate, set up Loges des Chasseurs, so-called "hunting lodges," along the border as launching sites for another major attack against their English enemies in Lower Canada.

Of the Patriotes who came to Burlington, Duvernay is of

particular importance to the history of Franco-Americans. He was a newspaper editor with strong political convictions. He had been arrested in Lower Canada for publishing an article in his newspaper, La Minerve, denigrating the English-controlling oligarchy. While in exile in Vermont, he took up his pen again in defense of French-Canadian independence and liberty. Le Patriote in Burlington, Vermont, became the first French-Canadian newspaper in New England, established in 1838. The newspaper was widely distributed throughout the United States, but it was short-lived, a mere six months. Many of the Patriotes returned across the border in 1842 when the Canadian government granted them amnesty.[16]

## Economic Opportunity

The 1840s saw more and more immigrants from Lower Canada cross the border into Vermont. But it was not political persecution that compelled these people to leave; it was a simple matter of survival. The population of Lower Canada continued to grow steadily but the land was unable to support this new and burgeoning population. It became more difficult to support one's family on the farm or in the woods. Harve Lemaire writes:

> The lack of scientific agricultural information, the subsequent impoverishment of the soil, the lack of roads and of markets, the lack of education, the work shortage in rural districts, these were certainly among the principal causes of the new exodus to the United States. The French-Canadian farmer found it difficult to realize a modicum of comfort and security for his large family. Nothing could persuade his son to stay on the farm.[17]

The trek across the border began tentatively, as French-Canadians crossed into Vermont as temporary migrant workers come to harvest the crops. Some single French-Canadian men spent their summer working in New England mills and impressed the impoverished French-Canadian farmers when they returned in the fall "wearing fine looking factory-made clothes and perhaps carrying a gold watch or other piece of elegant jewelry."[18]

Not all of the immigrants to Vermont were employed in the mills. There is evidence that some French-Canadians came to New England to enlist in the northern army during the American Civil War, though not all who joined the Union Army did so willingly. Robert Perreault writes:

> ...The Civil War...attracted many young men from Quebec for military purposes. Some came voluntarily, living up to the reputation of the French-Canadians as seekers of adventure. Others were tricked into joining the Union Army, falling prey to military agents' promises of "a

> well-paying job, mostly outdoor work." These agents, much like the mill agents, forgot to tell their prospective recruits exactly what they meant by "outdoor work." Young men, eager to earn a few extra dollars, signed Army contracts which they most likely could not read.[19]

It is estimated that approximately 20,000 French-Canadians fought in the Civil War. The impact on the immigration to Vermont, however, was negligible. Although we do not know the exact number of French-Canadian veterans who returned to live in Vermont, Ralph Vicero estimates that fewer than half of all men who served in Vermont came back to live permanently in the State.[20]

Even as the mill towns of New England burgeoned, many French-Canadians came to Vermont to do the work they knew best: farming. Vicero, in describing employment among the French-Canadians of Vermont in 1860, writes, "Large numbers were engaged in agriculture, a few apparently operating their own farms, but the majority consisted of hired farm laborers."[21] By 1860, a majority of the French-Canadians in Vermont were classified as day laborers. Even in Burlington in 1860, the majority of French-Canadians were not employed in the mills -- the Burlington Cotton Mill employed only 330 workers in all, while the city's French-Canadian population by then exceeded 1,000. In 1880, almost 30 percent of French-Canadian workers in Burlington were listed as tradesmen, and nearly half of these were carpenters.[22]

However, in Winooski, more than half the French-Canadians were employed in the local mills. The attraction of both the Burlington and the Winooski mills was apparent:

> After 1880, the importance of manufacturing to the French-Canadians in these two centers increased considerably. This stemmed principally from the construction of three textile mills in the area. The added employment which was created produced substantial increases in population. During each of the two decades after 1880 the combined French-Canadian population grew by 25 percent and reached approximately 7,600 persons at the end of the century.[23]

Some mills were established in Burlington explicitly because of cheap, non-union, French-Canadian labor. As Joseph Amrhein notes, "The main reason given for starting the Queen City Cotton Mill in 1894 was the cheap labor and the lack of unions."[24] Workers in the Burlington and Winooski mills received lower wages than those in other parts of Vermont, or elsewhere. In 1850, the average annual salary of a worker in manufacturing in Burlington was $192.84, the average salary in Vermont was $260.78, and the average nationally was $247.38. By 1900, the salaries of workers in manufacturing in Burlington had risen to $338.09, but this did not keep pace with salaries elsewhere. The average salary in Vermont that year was $458.82.[25]

In order to make ends meet, whole families of French-Canadians often worked in the mills. In 1867, for example, the woolen mill in Winooski employed 75 to 100 children in a work force of 600. The Queen City Cotton Company built company homes for its workers. Amrhein writes:

> The boarding house system found in early 19th Century Lowell was not duplicated in Burlington for a very simple reason. While the Lowell workers were often single girls, the Burlington employment system depended heavily upon hiring whole families of Irish or French-Canadian workers, hence the need for buildings to accommodate family units.[26]

Often it was the father who first went to the mill towns to seek work. Once he had accumulated enough money, he would rent lodgings enough for his whole family. Then, when he was assured that he had made the right decision he would send for the rest of his family. It was not long before everyone who could find work in the mill was doing so.

These workers and their families faced dilemmas typical to immigrants:

> Would he sell his farm, figuring this was a permanent move? On the other hand would he keep it, hoping to return to Canada in order to revive his run-down farm with money earned in the factories? Some French-Canadians wanted to return, but few actually did.[27]

After 1890, the French-Canadians had to compete with new waves of immigrants from Portugal, Poland, Greece, and Germany who sought work in the mills, often taking employment away from the French-Canadian women and children. French-Canadian families suffered severe economic hardship as a result.[28]

But farm work remained the least disruptive type of employment for French-Canadians emigrating to Vermont. This was especially true in the period following the First World War. Mildred Huntley writes:

> The French were attracted by the high prices that the farmers of the United States were receiving for their produce. Fifteen hundred families left the province of Quebec from April 1922 to April 1923.[29]

The French-Canadian farmers were also motivated by a hunger for fresh, fertile land, since Quebec's once-rich soil had become exhausted and there was little farmable land to be opened up in the province. Huntley reported in 1940:

> Better land and opportunities for better farming have drawn the majority of Canadian French to Franklin County [Vt]. It is one of the best dairy regions in the world and is particularly attractive to the Canadian Frenchman who has been cultivating rather unsuccessfully a worn-out soil. The county has more cows, hay, and maple syrup than any other in the State. Its farms average 21 head of cattle compared with 6 to 12 or 15 in Quebec. It has more than 1.6 times as many cattle as people. The opportunity to make a better living here is evident.[30]

Those who could not afford to buy new farms were often able to rent them or to carry on farming on shares.

The last significant wave of French-Canadians to enter the State took place shortly after the Second World War. By this time, the majority of the mills in the Burlington area had shut down. The American Woolen Mill in Winooski became, in 1954, the last to close. Moreover, it had become increasingly difficult for French-Canadians to buy farmland in Vermont, and even for those who had it to maintain their small, family-run farms. After 1965, the immigration of French Canadians into Vermont slowed to a trickle and has remained that way.

## Discrimination and Disadvantage

Franco Americans were among those menaced by strong anti-Catholic, anti-foreign sentiment among Yankee "nativists" in the early 1800s, culminating with the Know-Nothing movement which swept New England during the 1850s. Mason Wade writes:

> To the old eighteenth-century hatred of Catholics and foreigners have been added the new hatred bred by the nativist movement which grew steadily from the 1820's onward, feeding on fear of the immigrant, not only as a Catholic, but as a menace to the economic, political, and social structure which Americans had reared with such care.[31]

The Know-Nothing movement died at the end of the 1850s, but not before it had established its own political party dedicated to producing legislation that discriminated against Catholics. In addition:

> Followers of this movement went about creating riots wherein they assaulted and murdered Catholics. In these riots, the Know-Nothings often stoned or burned the homes, churches, schools, and convents of the Catholics.[32]

The French Canadian immigrants, with their different language and cultural tradition, made a highly visible target for the nativists. And anti-Catholic, anti-foreign sentiment did not die with the Know-Nothing movement -- the Ku Klux Klan burned crosses on the lawns of the French national churches in Vermont in the 1930s.[33]

Moreover, as Elin Anderson described in We Americans: A Study of Burlington in the 1930s, economics operated to separate French-Canadian workers from predominantly Yankee management. According to Anderson, the rate of economic progress of the French-Canadians in Burlington, Vermont, was "halting and slow." Contrasting the Yankees and the French-Canadians in 1937, she writes:

> In relation to the position of the majority of their members, two ethnic groups -- the Yankees and the French-Canadians -- stand in the main at opposite ends of the economic ladder. Their place in the economic life of the city forms the design of two inverted triangles; the French-Canadian triangle rests upon the broad base of 75 percent of the householders as laborers and rises to the point at the top where 2 percent are in the professions, while the Old American triangle roughly presents the reverse picture -- the broadest base being in the professions and white-collar occupations of the community, and the apex in a small representation among the unskilled laborers. The other ethnic groups fill in the remainder of the design.[34]

Anderson maintains that these two inverted triangles led to prejudice and discrimination which result "economically to prevent the individual from being judged on his own merit in seeking a job."[35] Clark Johnson, an anthropologist, observed that the economic situation in Burlington in 1969 had not changed appreciably for the French-Canadians:

> To this observer, there is no evidence in Burlington that the business and professional middle and upper classes, the white and blue collar working classes and the hard-core poor are any less estranged than in 1937 in life styles, nor less differentiated in life chances.[36]

Conflict existed within the Catholic Church, a crucial cultural and organizational resource for immigrant groups, between the Irish and the French. As Mason Wade noted:

> Though looked down upon by the Yankee as a foreign "papist," [the Irishman] spoke the language of the country and soon made himself at home here. The Irishman tended to look down in turn upon the more recent French-Canadian migrant, who was still more

> foreign because he spoke another language, and who also represented an economic threat to the Irishman because of his willingness to work harder and longer and for less pay. Though Irish and French-Canadians shared the same faith, their differences of religious customs and parochial habits of language and temperment, were such as to cause Father Audet, the founder of the French parish of Winooski, to speculate whether God was going to separate them in Heaven.[37]

Irish Catholics opposed the establishment of the French church in Burlington in 1841 and Irish priests pressed for the assimilation of their French-speaking parishoners. According to Lemaire, "America's Bishops wanted to destroy the image that Catholicism was a religion of foreigners."[38]

The most bitter conflicts grew out of basic differences in church management, such as when "American Bishops attempted to channel Franco-American parish funds to other diocesan charities."[39] It was particularly galling to the Franco-Americans to have their parish funds diverted to building high schools where only English would be taught.

Attempts to restrict the use of the French language were seen as a particularly disturbing form of discrimination by Franco-Americans. After the end of the First World War, there was a systematic movement to eradicate all non-English usage in the United States. The following program was established by the Americanization Department of the United States Bureau of Education in 1919:

> We recommended urgently to all States to prescribe that all schools, private and public, be conducted in the English language and that instruction in the elementary classes of all schools be in English. But our office does not oppose the conduct of church services in other languages, and also not the instruction in other languages as long as thereby the right of the child to acquire an elementary knowledge of the English language and to receive his education in it is not violated.[40]

School laws differed from State to State. Whereas much of the language legislation in the Midwest was designed to stem the teaching of the German language, in New England most of the school laws were designed to restrict the use of French in the parochial schools. Rhode Island passed a bill in 1922 which required all private schools to teach all subjects in English, except for foreign language instruction or those subjects which were not regularly taught in the public schools, such as religion. In New Hampshire, regular school subjects, including music and art, could only be taught in English according to a 1919 law, although one non-English language could be taught and prayers in a language other than English were permitted.

Legislation was introduced in Vermont and Connecticut to restrict the use of French in the Catholic schools, but did not pass. In Maine, the laws forbade the teaching of all subjects, except foreign language instruction, in a language other than English, and this ban was extended in the period after World War II:

> Gradually the French language was completely banned from the school grounds in the St. John Valley (Madewaska, Maine). This was pushed to such an extreme that both students and teachers were forbidden to use French even during recess, creating problems of morale in the process. Teachers have admitted that the children would revert to French under the influence of a strong emotion.[41]

While this restriction on language usage took hold in the public schools, there was no longer any restriction on the French-English bilingual parochial schools in the area.

Summary

In many ways, the experience of Franco-Americans resembles that of other immigrant groups -- they were reviled for their religion, disadvantaged by their language, relegated to the least attractive jobs.

However, in some crucial respects their historic circumstances were different. For many European groups, the distance and expense of their relocation meant there was no going back, while for Franco-Americans, particularly in Vermont, return to Canada was a reasonable expectation. This expectation made it possible for Franco-Americans to defer the accommodations -- learning English, organizing politically -- made by some other groups to improve their status. Moreover, despite their mill jobs, Franco-Americans in Vermont remained a rural population, unlike the European groups concentrated in the coastal cities. Thus, they had less interaction outside of Burlington, Barre and Winooski, and less need to accommodate to the power structure, and lacked the urban "critical mass" of political power.

## Notes to Chapter I

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7. Ibid., p. 27

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16. Perreault, p. 11.

17. Herve' B. Lemaire (unpublished manuscript on the Franco-Americans, 1958), p. 8.

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22. Ibid., p. 303.

23. Ibid., p. 306.

24. Joseph Amrhein, "The Economic History of a Northern New England City" (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1958), p. 71.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., p. 244.

27. Perreault, p. 12.

28. Vicero, p. 237.

29. Huntley, p. 30.

30. Ibid., p. 32.

31. Mason Wade, "The French Parish and 'Survivance' in 19th Century New England," in A Franco-American Overview, vol. 2, p. 242.

32. Perreault, p. 151.

33. Charles Morrissey, personal communication.

34. Elin Anderson, We Americans: A Study of Cleavage in an American City (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), p. 61.

35. Ibid., p. 62.

36. Clark Johnson, "Burlington Since the 1930s: Change and Continuity in Vermont's Largest City," Vermont History, vol. 27 (1969), no. 1, p. 61.

37. Wade, "The French Parish and 'Survivance' in 19th Century New England," p. 237.

38. Lemaire, p. 10.

39. Ibid., p. 11.

40. Kloss, p. 70.

41. Ibid., p. 170.

## Chapter II: Presence

What is the size of the Franco-American community in Vermont? There is no lack of estimates of the dimensions of the group's presence, historically or currently. However, these counts vary widely according to the definition of Franco-American and the measuring devices used. While the accuracy of past population and immigration counts is of mostly academic interest (and indeed was of little interest to policymakers in the past), the accuracy of current counts is pertinent politically and economically.

### Immigration Estimates

Chapter I provided some picture of the movement of French Canadians into and out of Vermont communities. These movements were part of larger ones. Gustave Lanctot, a former national archivist in Ottawa, estimates that the French-Canadians left Canada in a number of waves: 35,000 between 1840 and 1850; 40,000 between 1851 and 1857; 125,000 between 1861 and 1871; 200,000 from 1870 to 1890; 150,000 from 1890 to 1910; 70,000 from 1910 to 1920; and 104,000 from 1920 to 1930.[1]

Yolande Lavoie has calculated higher estimates: between 1871 and 1881, 90,600 Canadians from Quebec went to the United States; between 1881 and 1891, 147,500; between 1891 and 1901, 121,700; between 1901 and 1911, 46,600; between 1911 and 1921, 128,400; and between 1921 and 1931, 158,400.[2]

As Lavoie cautions, American immigration statistics did not consider immigrants who traveled to the United States on land before 1855, and after that date such data were collected only on an irregular basis. It was not until 1908 that the United States published complete and identifiable data on migration by land to the United States, including the nationality of these immigrants. In addition, immigrants were not listed as Canadian in these data, but were categorized as French, English, Scottish and so on.

How many of these Canadians came to Vermont is difficult to assess, but the number of mills that opened and the number of French national parishes that were established provide some indication of this influx. The Burlington Woolen Mill opened in Winooski in 1835, the Colchester Mill in 1885, the Queen City Cotton Mill in 1895, and the Champlain Mill in 1912.[3] The recognition of the growing French Catholic population in Burlington was demonstrated when the See of Burlington was established in 1853 with Louis de Goesbriand named as bishop. By 1891 there were eight Franco-American parishes in Vermont.[4] The bishop of Burlington was reportedly so impressed by the number of immigrants he observed that he thought the population of his diocese had doubled between 1855 and 1868.[5]

It has been estimated that the French-Canadian population of

Vermont was 16,580 in 1860; 29,000 in 1870; 33,500 in 1880; 38,000 in 1890; and 45,000 in 1900.[6] In the mid 19th Century, 60 percent of the French-Canadians in New England lived in Vermont, but by the 1860s Vermont was being bypassed in favor of the more abundant employment opportunities in the Southern New England mill towns. The percentage of French-Canadians in New England who lived in Vermont had dropped to 43 percent in 1860.[7]

## The Importance of Population Statistics

In a number of reports issued in the past decade, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has discussed the use and importance of statistical information about population groups in determining their status as well as for setting political district lines and targeting government programs and benefits. These studies include the 1974 report, Counting the Forgotten: The 1970 Census Count of Persons of Spanish Speaking Background in the United States and the 1973 study, To Know or Not to Know: Collection and Use of Racial and Ethnic Data in Federal Assistance Programs.

In its statement accompanying the proceedings of its Euro-ethnic consultation, the Commission observed:

> ...one of the major problems cited by the participants at the consultation is the lack of detailed statistical data on the many groups of Eastern and Southern European background. No accurate statistical profile exists of the size, let alone the educational, housing, employment, income, health, age and other characteristics of the group. Data indicating disparities between these groups and whites of non-Eastern and Southern European background are the best available signs that discrimination may be occurring. Due to the lack of such data, it has not been possible to assess the extent of the discrimination experienced, much less its varied forms or dynamics. Without this information, the need for programs tailored for these groups cannot be determined.[8]

Both social scientists and civil rights advocates have continued to raise these concerns as the potential effects of budget cuts on Federal data-gathering, -analysis, and -reporting activities have become clear.[9] The quality of the census reports also has been a point of concern to those interested in the status of ethnic groups. In 1970, the data reported by the census for the State's very small (2,469) Spanish language population were more detailed than those for the State's large (42,193) French mother tongue population.

## Problems of Definition

In the past two censuses, minority group spokespersons have alleged that the census-takers failed to count large numbers of minority citizens. While these charges (and related lawsuits) have been widely reported, there has been a less-known but equally long and lively debate about the validity of the Bureau's definitions of certain racial and ethnic groups. The Vermont Advisory Committee expressed concern, for instance, that the 1970 U.S. Census of Population may have severely "undercounted" the Franco-American population in the State because the definition of "Franco-American" was too narrow.

Such definitional questions have been considered by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights with regard to the Nation's Hispanic population. In Counting the Forgotten, the Commission made this assessment:

> In 1970, the [Census] Bureau made five measures of the Spanish speaking background population.
>
> a. Four of these, surname, language, birth or parentage, and heritage, while providing important data about that population, are correlated only indirectly with membership in that group.
>
> b. The fifth measure, Spanish origin self-identification, is the preferred method [emphasis added] but was asked only of 5 percent of the United States population.[10]

In a comprehensive study of the occupational and educational distribution of Franco-Americans in New Hampshire, Ashley Doane notes that "while there exists no definitive conceptualization of ethnicity, it is possible to extract common elements from the complex of available definitions." Doane goes on to say:

> Such characteristics as sense of belonging, common history or descent and the use of shared symbolic elements (language, religion, beliefs, customs, etc.) for identification and differentiation all receive sufficiently broad usage to form a basis for discussion...While an all encompassing definition of "Franco-American" remains an elusive quantity, we can focus upon French origins and Quebec descent, identification with the French-Canadian/Franco-American cultural and historical tradition, and relevant of shared symbolic elements.[11]

Doane specified two elements capable of providing "working boundaries for Franco-American ethnic identity." The first, language use, while problematic, can generate a kind of baseline figure which assumes that "those persons having primary contact with

the French language have retained more of their cultural heritage..." Second, following the lead of previous researchers (Lopata, 1976; Vicero, 1968; Porter, 1965), Doane sought to complement the mother tongue data with estimates of population size based on French surname.

Though self-identification is the preferred method of measurement according to the Commission, the surname establishes the Franco-American's visibility and identity to others.

1. Language (mother tongue)

To establish the "mother tongue," the 1970 census asked:

> What language, other than English, was usually spoken in this person's home when he was a child?
>
> Spanish _____, French _____, German ____, Other _____, Specify _____.

Thus, the 1970 Census did develop a statistical profile of Franco-Americans -- or rather, of certain Franco-Americans.

On the one hand, the question did not specifically require the person to be able to speak, read, or write the language; that is, to use the language functionally. On the other hand, since many second- and third-generation Franco-Americans grew up in homes in which French was not spoken, the Census question did not begin to get at the number of people who were of French-Canadian descent.

For its 1976 reports, the Census Bureau changed its policy on the language question, using a question with a significantly narrower thrust: "What is the language a person usually speaks at home?" This question required actual usage of French as the dominant language in the home if the respondent were to be regarded as Franco-American.

This example shows clearly how important the definition of terms is in determining the outcome of something seemingly so simple as counting. As a result of changing definitions, the "French population" recorded in Vermont by the census dropped from an overall State figure of 42,193 in 1970 to less than 29,000 in 1976.

2. Country of Origin

Beyond "mother tongue," the only other applicable enumeration category of the 1970 Census is "country of origin of the foreign stock by nativity and race." Yet here another problem arises, for the figure reported for France was merely 759 persons while the figure for Canada was 46,176. This latter figure obviously includes a sizable but unspecified number of French-mother tongue persons. It is close to the French mother tongue figure and supports the

inference that approximately 90 percent of those in Vermont whose country of origin was Canada were from French-speaking families.

3. Surname

The possession of a French surname is still another measure of Franco-Americans. However, the first difficulty encountered in enumerating surnames is that a French surname is not automatically French-Canadian: there are French-surnamed immigrants in the United States from all over the world, although the majority of French-surnamed immigrants do come from Canada.

Another difficulty is name change; many French names have been anglicized beyond recognition. Sometimes the changes are phonological, such as Choiniere or Choiniard becoming Sweeney, Brindamour becoming Brown, Paquin becoming Perkins, Phaneuf becoming Farnum. Other Franco-Americans translated their names into English: Dubois became Wood; Boisvert became Greenwood; Roy became King; Beauchamp became Fairfield; Boisvin became Drinkwine; Courtemanche became Shortsleeve. With the exception of Shortsleeve and Drinkwine, these changes make the clear identification as French impossible. Some names still maintain some possibility for identification as French: for example, Sentibear is St. Hubert, Benway is Benoit, and Bushey is Boucher.

Another group of names difficult to recognize includes those names common to both languages: Martin, Lambert, Gilbert and Robert. These names have to be excluded entirely. Because of these factors, it is necessary to have systematic and consistent means of identifying names. Doane's study of New Hampshire relied heavily on a list of Franco-American names developed by University of Maine Professor Madeleine Giguere from which he deleted all names about which there was doubt. This procedure tended to "reduce the percentage of Franco-Americans in a research population."[12]

In 1975 the Vermont Advisory Committee conducted its own tabulation of Franco-American population in four key counties based on surname data:

> The 1970 Census indicated that the majority of mother tongue French resided in the northern part of the State. And so, Franklin, a northwestern Vermont border county, and Essex, a northeastern border county were chosen as representative of northern communities. Chittenden, as the most populated and industrialized county in Vermont was chosen because of these factors; and Windsor was added because it was a southern county with low French mother-tongue representation...and thus would provide a negative balance to the sample.[13]

Based on computations using the 1970 Census, the percentage of French mother tongue population for the four counties were:

Chittenden - 12.8 percent; Essex - 25.8 percent; Franklin - 17.6 percent; and Windsor - 4.4 percent. More than half of the State's French mother tongue population resided in these four counties. (See Table 1.)

Table 1

French Mother Tongue and Surname
Population Estimates in Four Vermont Counties

| County | Pop. | Surname Estimate | Surname % | Mother Tongue % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chittenden | 99,131 | 20,653 | 20.8 | 12.8 |
| Franklin | 31,282 | 9,691 | 31.0 | 17.6 |
| Essex | 5,416 | 1,179 | 21.8 | 25.8 |
| Windsor | 44,082 | 2,176 | 4.9 | 4.4 |
| FOUR COUNTY TOTAL | 179,911 | 33,699 | 19.6 | 11.5 |

Source: Madeleine Giguere, Number and Percent of Persons with French Mother Tongue (Portland-Gorham: University of Southern Maine, n.d.); surname estimates compiled by the Franco-American Subcommittee of the Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1975.

Reviewing telephone directories for 1975, the Committee recorded every name that could be identified as French (business phones were ignored unless they were also clearly identifiable as residences). Each surname was assumed to represent a household. In order to turn these names into a population estimate, an estimate of size of household was necessary. Average family size estimates for the towns and counties of Vermont were calculated by Mary Deming, University of Vermont demographer, using the Vermont Data Bank. An assumption was made that each household multiplied by average family size would provide the Advisory Committee with a workable population figure for Franco-Americans in these four jurisdictions.

This study yielded comparative data on the mother tongue populations of the four counties and surname counts. The surname estimate for the four counties is 46 percent greater than the 1970 Census enumeration of the French mother tongue population, despite the fact that the surname estimate is a conservative one. In

addition to the methodological consideration already mentioned, Franco-Americans tend to have larger families than the figures for average family used, and many of the farm families do not have telephones.

In terms of the individual counties, Chittenden and Franklin clearly show the greatest variation. This is significant because it suggests that the "undercount" effect is not limited to rural areas, but occurred in the State's largest, most urbanized county as well.

The results in Essex County, also in the northern border region, are at first glance surprising. The surname estimate is actually lower than the census count. It is important to note that Essex County has by far the smallest population and the possibility exists that the loss of language is slower under such circumstances. A similar hypothesis may serve to explain the near equivalence of surname estimate and mother tongue count in Windsor County, the control area. That is, given the very small proportion of the county's population represented by Franco-Americans, it is possible that those few have remained attached to the language (and conversely, those who have lost the language may very well have "anglicized" their names).

These figures are at best provisional. The "official count" was undertaken in the 1980 Census, which utilized self-identification, and which will be discussed below.

4. Self-Identification

Doane attempted to test his surname method by drawing a random sample from a municipal directory, estimating the ethnicity of the names, and asking the respondents to confirm their ethnic identity. This test, which drew a sample of only 51, found that 54.9 percent "described themselves as Franco-American, while surname identification defined only 41.18 percent as Franco-American."[14]

Although this finding by Doane is preliminary, such a disparity supports the conclusion of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that the preferred method of ethnic identification is self-identification by the respondent.[15] The 1980 Census attempted to use self-identification to enumerate Americans by heritage. The following instructions appeared in the 1980 Guide:

> 14. Print the ancestry group with which the person identifies. Ancestry (or origin or descent) may be viewed as the nationality group, the lineage, or the country in which the person or the person's parents or ancestors were born before their arrival in the United States. Persons who are of more than one origin and who cannot identify with single group should print their multiple ancestry (for example, German-Irish).

> Be specific; for example, if ancestry is "Indian" specify whether American Indian, Asian Indian or West Indian. Distinguish Cape Verdean from Portuguese, and French-Canadian from Canadian.[16]

The fact that the term "French-Canadian" was used as an example in the Guide was helpful. However, many Franco-Americans do not refer to themselves as "French-Canadian," but use "American," "Franco-American," "French," "Acadian" or "Canadien." Thus, the possibility remains that even self-identification undercounted the Franco-American population in 1980.

According to the 1980 Census, 57,160 Vermonters identified themselves as of French ancestry. An additional 87,368 identified themselves as having "French and other" ancestry. Thus we see, as a result of self-identification, a sharp increase in Vermont's Franco-American population.

In 1970, the census counted a French population of 42,193 using mother tongue as the measure. In 1980, we have a total of 144,528 persons of French, and "French and other" ancestry in Vermont, using self-identification. In percentage terms, the Franco-American population in Vermont, based on mother tongue identification, was 9.5 percent in 1970; in 1980 using self-identification, 11.2 percent of Vermont is of French ancestry, and 28.3 percent is of French or "French and other" ancestry.

## Notes to Chapter II

1. Olivier Maurault, "Newcomen Lecture on the Franco-Americans" (Middlebury, Vt., 1951), p. 13.

2. Yolande Lavoie, "Mesure de l'emigration des Canadiens Aux Etats-Unis Avant 1930" (Canadian Association for American Studies, n.d.), p. 7.

3. Joseph Amrhein, pp. 70-75.

4. Mason Wade, "The French Parish and 'Survivance' in 19th Century New England," in A Franco-American Overview, vol. 2, pp. 235-60.

5. Ralph D. Vicero, "French Canadian Settlements in Vermont Prior to the Civil War," The Professional Geographer, vol. 23 (1971), no. 5, p. 291.

6. Ibid., p. 275.

7. Ibid., p. 291.

8. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "Statement on the Civil Rights Issues of Euro-Ethnic Americans," January 1981, p. 2.

9. Ann Crittenden, "A World with Fewer Numbers," New York Times, July 11, 1982.

10. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Counting the Forgotten, 1974, p. 102.

11. Ashley W. Doane, Jr., Occupational and Educational Patterns for New Hampshire's Franco-Americans (Manchester: New Hampshire Civil Liberties Union, 1979), p. 5.

12. Ibid., p. 11.

13. Vermont Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "A Preliminary Report," 1975, p. 2.

14. Doane, p. 11.

15. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Counting the Forgotten.

16. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Guide to the Census, 1980," Form D-4, p. 11.

## Chapter III: Image

The Franco-Americans of New England have been an "invisible minority." They rarely surface in the national consciousness as do Hispanic-Americans or even such ethnic groups as Irish-Americans or Italian-Americans. A case in point is The World Almanac of 1981 which only lists English, Italians, and Germans as ethnic groups in Vermont.

### Invisibility

Although there has been a resurgence of interest in ethnicity, there is a noticeable lack of ethnographic material on Franco-Americans. Researchers often fail to utilize "Franco-American" as a statistical category for Americans of French-Canadian descent, combining them with French-speaking Americans from France, Belgium and Switzerland. A leading authority on ethnic groups, Andrew Greeley, observed in 1974, "About the French-American community, very little is known."[1] Dyke Hendrickson, while noting the group's invisibility to the Nation, points out that Franco-Americans are:

> ...not [invisible] to themselves, of course. Over the years they have clung together with remarkable cohesiveness, and are quite aware of their own culture. But for a group that ranks as the largest minority in northern New England, and a major tenant in industrial communities of every New England State, they have not achieved the visibility and power of other ethnics.[2]

The invisibility of the Franco-American is nowhere more apparent than in the social studies material used in the schools of Vermont and New Hampshire. A typical example of this "lack of history" can be seen in Perspectives: 76, a 380-page workbook of activities designed for schools to use in their celebration of the American Bicentennial. It has a section devoted to ethnic contributions to the history of Vermont and New England entitled "Scots, Irish, Scotch-Irish, French and...." After relatively extensive discussions of Scotch-Irish, Scots, and Irish appears a section on "Others," which includes the following:

> In northwestern Vermont, French settlement along Lake Champlain had been abandoned in the 1750s during the French and Indian Wars; toward the end of the century, French-Canadians were crossing into northern Vermont towns, the beginning of a migration that expanded tremendously in the 19th century.[3]

This brief statement is all the historical treatment given the French-Canadian experience in Vermont and New Hampshire.

That Franco-Americans have tended to be overlooked in the literature on ethnic groups in America sometimes has been interpreted as a sign of successful assimilation. However, as occurred with racial minorities in the 1960s and white immigrant groups in the 1970s, the differences and distance of Franco-Americans from the mainstream society are becoming increasingly apparent. Franco-Americans are becoming more active in forming associations which foster pride in their distinct heritage and language: the appearance of a new organization in Vermont, La Soci'et'e des Deux Mondes, in 1977 attests to that greater sense of identity and pride.

The State of Vermont is beginning to acknowledge officially the distinctiveness of its Franco-American citizens. In 1974, State Senators Robert V. Daniels and Russell Niquette introduced a bill in the Vermont Senate creating a Cultural Exchange Commission for French whose subsequent membership was primarily made up of Franco-Americans. In 1981, Governor Richard Snelling proclaimed the fourth Sunday in June as Franco-American day in recognition of the achievements and contributions of the Franco-Americans to Vermont. In 1982, Mayor Bernard Sanders of Burlington named the third week in June Franco-American Week.

Such developments in and of themselves transform the image of Franco-Americans. They raise the awareness of the presence of Franco-Americans for the general public and strengthen the self-image of Franco-Americans.

## Stereotyping

Franco-Americans have been the victims of stereotyping which has gone beyond the simple-minded generalizations of uninformed individuals and has found its way into textbooks as well as novels. Stereotyping is ascribing to an individual all of the characteristics associated with the group to which he or she belongs. It can prevent us from getting at the truth about both the individual and the group.

Walter Lippman, the American journalist who has been credited with introducing the concept of stereotypes, explained that stereotyping serves as "the guarantee of our self-respect; is the projection upon the world of our own sense of values, our own position, of our own rights."[4] And according to Howard M. Bahr, et al., "ethnic stereotyping is undesirable [because] stereotypes frequently are used to justify discrimination."[5]

It should be noted that, while many stereotypes are negative, and, as Bahr indicated, ethnic stereotyping is undesirable, some group generalizations are true. However, because negative generalizations can be damaging, great care and documentation must be used. Only then can the observations of social scientists be reliable and not merely reliable, but valuable, for such research often contains the approach to correct the problem studied.

Negative stereotypes of Franco-Americans have appeared in standard American history texts. Willis Mason West, for example, provided this explanation of the weakness of French colonization in his book American History and Government:

> New France was not a country of homes or of agriculture. Except for a few leaders and the missionaries, the settlers were either unprogressive peasants or reckless adventurers. For the most part they did not bring families, and they remained unmarried or chose Indian wives. Agriculture was the only safe basis for a permanent colony; but these colonists were averse to regular labor. Instead they turned to trapping and the fur trade, and tended to adopt Indian habits.[6]

Although this was written in 1913, such an orientation toward the French in North America persists. In her famous "Little House" accounts of farm life, Laura Ingalls Wilder has the father of the boy Laura eventually marries describing the role of the different groups in the New World. "The French", he explained, "were fur-traders, wanting to make quick money."[7] The two French-Canadian characters in the novel who work as hands on the farm were called "French Joe" and "Lazy John."

Stereotypes of the French-Canadian appear in New England's literature. Rowland Robinson, one of Vermont's most famous authors, was noted for his ability to capture dialects and his skill at poking fun at Vermonters of any background. In Uncle Lisha's Shop, Robinson takes aim at the French-Canadian, depicting him as reluctant to become an American citizen and a prolific breeder of children.

> "Why Antwine, you haint a legle voter in school meetin' ye see, don't ye? It 'ould be a diabolishment of parlaramentery rules to 'low you to vote or speak. Ye haint never ben nat'ralized, ye know."
>
> "Wal, Ah don' care 'f Ah don' nat'ral lie, so much you do, Ah'll show you jes' many chillun for go school anyboddee, bah gosh! More of it all a tam, evree year, evree year."[8]

Robinson also characterizes Antoine as cowardly, quoting Lisha:

> "I done the fightin an' you done the runnin'. You larnt how to du that in the Pap'neau war, an' ye larnt it well Ann Twine; ye don't need no more lessons."[9]

Robert E. Pike, another humorist who frequently writes about northern Vermont and New Hampshire, perpetuates other stereotypes of the French-Canadians and Franco-Americans in his book, Spiked

Boots: Sketches of the North Country. One common stereotype of the French-Canadians is that they accept authority, any authority, blindly. Pike writes:

> "What's the sheriff for?" I inquired. "He's for moral support," said Alf. "He doesn't have any warrant, or anything like that, but he has a badge, and it is good psychology to flash a badge at these wild Frenchmen."[10]

French-Canadians are also portrayed as docile and lacking initiative.

> I know a Frenchman down in Milan and he was being supported by the town. He has thirteen kids and he lives on an old back road up on a mountain and one winter there came a hell of a fall of snow and this bird waited for 'em to come and plow him out, but they didn't come. So he sent a boy down to the nearest neighbor to phone to the poormaster that he couldn't get out to get provisions for his starving family and furthermore his kids could't get to school.[11]

Another dimension to the stereotype of dependence on authority and docility, is the peculiar values of the French-Canadians and their relation to their priests. Pike relates that having discovered that his..."wife, his two offsprings, his rifle and worst of all his new sweater, had all migrated to Milan to live with the new foreman, [Napoleon commented,] 'That sweater was brand new, and besides, what will the priest say to me when he finds my kids are up there in Milan with that dam' Protestant.'"[12]

One could argue that Robinson and Pike were simply poking "good-natured fun" at the French-Canadians, but such prejudicial attitudes were incorporated into an official report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor in the 1880s, reprinted in Sister Florence Marie Chevalier's dissertation:

> With some exceptions, the Canadian French are the Chinese of the Eastern States. They care nothing for our institutions, civil, political, or educational. They do not care to make a home among us, to dwell with us as citizens and so become part of us; but their purpose is merely to sojourn a few years as aliens, touching us only at a single point, that of work, and when they have gathered out of us what will satisfy their ends to get them away whence they came and bestow it there.

> They are a horde of industrial invaders, not a stream of stable settlers. Voting, with all that it implies, they care nothing about. Rarely does one of them become naturalized. They will not send their children to school if they can help it, but endeavor to crowd into the mills at the earliest possible age. To do this they deceive about the age of their children with brazen effrontery. They deceive also about their schooling declaring they have been to school the legal length of time, when they know they have not, and do not intend that they shall. And when at length they are cornered by the school officials, and there is no escape, often they scramble together what few things they have, and move to some other place where they are unknown, and where they hope by a repetition of the same deceits to escape the school entirely and keep the children at work right on in the mills. And when, as is indeed sometimes the case, any of them are so situated that they cannot escape at all, then the stolid indifference of the children wears out the teacher with what seems to be an idle task.
>
> These people have one good trait. They are indefatigible workers and docile. All they ask is to be set to work, and they care little who rules them or how they are ruled. To earn all they can and by no matter how many hours of toil, to live in the most beggarly way so that out of their earnings they may spend as little for living as possible, and to carry out of our country what they save: this is the aim of the Canadian French in our factory districts. Incidently, they must have some amusements; and so far as the males are concerned, drinking, smoking, and lounging constitute the sum of these.[13]

Several of these traits were given a somewhat different treatment by Elin Anderson, a sociologist who did a study of Burlington, Vermont, in the 1930s:

> In Burlington those of French-Canadian descent form a bloc of nearly 10,000 people. Although individually volatile, they are as a group unassertive, concerned primarily with maintaining what they have in the way of national integrity -- their religion, their language, their customs. They have never had to fight for these in the same way as the Irish. The right was granted them by the British at the time of the conquest and they have preserved these characteristics by constant passive resistance to outside influence whether British or French. Even in Burlington they seem less perturbed than others by the course of outside events; they put their faith in God and quietly produce the future population of the city.

> In contrast with the old Americans and the Irish, however, as one of their number said, "The French don't stick together. They act as if they felt inferior and ashamed of their nationality. They don't speak up for themselves, and they have nobody to speak up for them. If they had strong leaders, they would be proud of being French; and that would be good." Their spokesmen in America, sensitive to the fact that the French-Canadians have by comparison with other groups contributed but little to America in terms of material success, in all their newspapers point out that the French Canadians have a very special contribution of spiritual rather than material wealth.....Admitting that the group will probably never have much of material wealth or power, they point out that the way of poverty is the way to heaven, and the spiritual mission of the French-Canadians is to show materialistic America a way of life which is the way of Jesus.[14]

Anderson also gives us some insight into attitudes of Burlington "Yankees" toward the French-Canadians as workers:

> Differences of opinion among employers in regard to the French-Canadians are marked. On the one hand, one employer of some 100 French-Canadians said "I never saw a more hard-working group of people. They are willing to work long for very little pay, and they are as thrifty as any Yankee." On the other hand, the foreman in another factory explained: "The French are just happy, easy-going; they are glad to earn enough for today and don't worry much about tomorrow. They never think about getting a better job. They take it for granted that they are going to do this kind of laboring work all the time." A banker justified his unfavorable estimate of the race with the explanation that "they intermarried with Indians in early days and so became irresponsible."[15]

A report on attitudes towards the Franco-Americans in Greenville, New Hampshire, in 1974 prepared by Marron Fort, presents the following characterization:

> In the Mascenic Valley region, the Franco-American is characterized as an individual without any ambition beyond material gain. Hampered by generally low intelligence, he is basically concerned with the $3.00 per hour he can earn in a factory. He has none of the positive characteristics of someone who is "really French."
>
> As a worker he is relatively diligent at performing

> mechanically various menial tasks, but he is "dumb" and incapable of serving in a position of authority. As a parent he sets no goals for his children and has no ambition for them beyond the factory. Graduation from high school is his highest educational expectation for them. If one of his children attends a State college, it is a miracle; a private "prestige" college is unthinkable.
>
> The children of the Greenville Franco-American are considered passive, unable to learn, almost retarded. If one child in a Franco-American family is a poor pupil, the teacher may assume that all the children of the family will perform poorly in school. A class where the great majority of the children are Franco-Americans is often assumed automatically to be a "dumb" class.
>
> The Franco-Americans are largely felt to be deserving of their low status. They feel inferior, it is said, and are treated as such. They are happy with second best and are content with their lot.[16]

Similarily, in an article on "Race, Ethnicity, and the Achievement Syndrome," Bernard Rosen states:

> Among the Southern Italians (the overwhelming majority of American Italians are of Southern Italian extraction), French-Canadians, and Negroes, the tradition [of rewarding achievement] seems to be quite different.
>
> More often than not they came from agrarian societies or regions in which opportunities for achievement were strictly curtailed by the social structure and where habits of resignation and fatalism in the face of social and environmental frustrations were psychologically functional. Under such conditions children were not typically exhorted to be achievers or urged to set their sights very high. Of course, children were expected to perform tasks, as they are in most societies, but such tasks were usually farm or self-caretaking chores, from which the notion of competion with standards of excellence is not excluded, but is not ordinarily stressed.[17]

## The Franco-American Self-Image

Franco-Americans have argued against the negative stereotypes and have cited a number of "achievements" in the American sense of the word. Their sense of adventure and courage is attested by their wide-spread exploration of the North American continent; they

colonized 23 of the 50 American states. Maurault writes:

> They have explored and trailed and settled in this continent, from the Alleghanies to the Rockies and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Three thousand geographical names still printed on the atlas of the United States are eloquent witnesses of their audacity and courage.[18]

There have been outstanding Franco-American business people. They not only worked in the textile and woolen mills, they also ran them: Arthur Moreau, was President of Amoskeag Industries, one of the largest, if not the largest, textile mill in New England.

Their interest in education is attested to by the fact that Franco-Americans founded 264 colleges, high schools, and primary schools. They produced scholars of international reputation like Will Durant and writers like Jack Kerouac and Grace Metalius. They have also published over 200 newspapers, and created 10 mutual societies and 24 credit union banks, a French Canadian invention.

More than 60 percent of all Franco-Vermonters live in rural areas constituting more than a quarter of Vermont's rural population, and nearly 20 percent of Vermont's total farm population. French Canadians continue to come to Vermont to take over farms Yankees left years ago. Nat Worman writes: "It is [a] commonplace in Franklin county--the leading dairy county in New England--that the farms were saved by the arrival of the French."[19] But a large number of French mother tongue Vermonters live in urban areas. Chittenden County, Vermont's most urbanized county, contains more than a quarter of the total mother tongue French population of the State.

These urban Franco-Americans are found at all strata of Vermont society: doctors, lawyers, accountants, teachers, secretaries, custodians, taxi drivers, and factory workers. Nowhere is their urban presence felt more than in the hundreds of small shops and businesses that dot the urban landscape: Michaud's Market, Boutillier's Art Supplies, Emile Dupont and Sons Roofing, Lawrence and Leclair Furniture, Plouffe's Pharmacy, Provencher Mattress, Desautel's Electric Service, LaBarge's Flower Shop, LaPierre Camera Shop, Fremeau's Jewelry Store, Dion's Locksmith Service, Benoit Plumbing, Girard Baking Co., Rocheleau's Cabinet Shop.

The positive self-image of the traditionally-oriented Franco-American male comes from being a productive worker who does quality work. His frame of reference is his family, especially in his efforts to ensure its financial security and survival -- la survivance; and to protect it from interference from the outside world -- l'independence. Franco-Americans are very individualistic

but unlike other Americans they see their individualism in terms of their family and their roles, as head of the household, being maitres chez nous -- masters in their own homes. Franco-American women, whether they hold jobs outside the home or not, highly value the role of motherhood -- a role they believe is their primary vocation.

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## Chapter IV: Status

Statistical disparities among population groups raise questions about the reasons for these disparities. This chapter summarizes research that has sought to identify such disparities between Franco-Vermonters and other Vermonters in the areas of education, employment, and political participation. In addition to presenting the findings of this research, the techniques utilized to obtain them are described.

Some of the limitations on applying current data to this purpose were described by Doane in his study of Franco-Americans in New Hampshire:

> Under ideal circumstances, application of the surname identification methodology would be based upon the premise that statewide Franco-American representation in occupations and institutions should be equivalent to their incidence in the general population; or more accurately, the incidence of Franco-Americans in the labor force and in the school age population. Unfortunately, the absence of accurate population data for Franco-Americans precludes this as a possibility, excepting rough comparisons with population estimates. Following Porter (1965:76) however, it is possible to establish proportioned Franco-American representation within the occupational and educational hierarchies and by this internal comparison to discover the degree to which overrepresentation or underrepresentation exist.[1]

Despite these limitations, the Advisory Committee is hopeful that this review of quantitative research will be useful. The framework for this review -- that is, the perspective against which different types of analyses were judged to be worth including -- was provided by the types of equality measurements identified by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights in its 1978 report, Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women, and by the early findings of the Advisory Committee in its own surname survey discussed in Chapter II.

Data for these comparisons came from student-faculty directories at the University of Vermont and four state colleges: Johnson, Lyndon, Castleton, and Vermont Technical College. In addition, the Vermont Year Book for 1980 -- a directory of officials, schools, clubs, societies, manufacturers, and wholesalers as well as a commercial and business directory of trades, professions, and institutions for every town and city in Vermont -- was used. Standard and Poor's most recent Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives was used to determine the presence of Franco-Americans in the administration of 87 corporations that do business in Vermont.

Also, the Alpha Locator for State employeees and a printout of all public school teachers in the State were examined. Census data for 1970, as interpreted by Madeleine Giguere of the University of Southern Maine, were also used.[2]

## Educational Attainment

A major indicator of success in American society is the degree of educational attainment. The importance of education was underlined in the landmark desegregation case of Brown v. Board of Education in 1954:

> In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the State has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.[3]

A look at the educational attainment of Franco-Americans in Vermont may help establish whether they have enjoyed equal educational opportunity. Of particular interest is whether the language difference has been an obstacle to educational opportunity.

In a survey of children who live in homes where another language is spoken, the Vermont State Department of Education recorded more than 3,000 children in Vermont with limited English proficiency who came from homes where French was spoken.[4] Several districts -- Burlington, St. Albans, and Alburg -- with significant Franco-American populations did not respond, so the report cannot be considered a totally accurate portrayal of limited English proficiency in the State. Gerard Asselin, former director of the Division of Federal Assistance of the Vermont State Department of Education, writes:

> The information has not been verified and does not give a true count of children with limited English proficiency. However, if we were to discount half the numbers presented we would still be left with significant populations to serve.[5]

In a memorandum to the State Department of Education, on bilingual education in Vermont, Michael Conley, former State Minority Language Director, linked the language barrier and other types of disparities:

> In Vermont the need for bilingual education programs is most likely to occur in six northern and central counties because of the concentrated Franco-American population in these areas. The northernmost counties also maintain the highest poverty ratio and highest percentage of persons over 25 years of age with less than 12 years of education in the State.[6]

1. Dropout Rate

A 1973 proposal for Federal Title VII Elementary and Secondary Education Assistance (ESEA) funds submitted jointly by the superintendents of schools in Colebrook, New Hampshire, and Canaan, Vermont, described the particularly high dropout rate of Franco-Americans in northeastern rural Vermont:

> In the Canaan-Norton district, the dropout rate for Franco-Americans is in excess of 30 percent. The dropout rate for Anglos is less than two-thirds of this amount. The Franco-American students' failure in dealing with the traditional education system would appear obvious.[7]

Certainly one possible factor underlying this dropout rate is school difficulties arising from limited English proficiency.

2. Performance in School

Specific effects of the limited English proficiency of children in northern Vermont also were reported in the 1973 Title VII (ESEA) proposal described above:

> In both the public and non-public schools, it has been documented that those children retained for one or more years in the same grade levels are from homes where the dominant language (often the only language) is French. They are also the majority of those children participating in the Title I reading program (below-grade reading levels).[8]

In contrast to that characterization of the school-age population, the 1970 Census presented a mixed picture with regard to the education levels of Vermonters over 25 years of age. (See table 2.)

The mother tongue French population over 25 years of age had a higher percentage completing grades 9 through 12 than the mother tongue English population. Fewer mother tongue French never attended school than English mother tongue people over the age of 25. More French mother tongue people, especially females, had grade 8 or less education. On the other hand, more French mother tongue people had an education from grade 9 through 12 than mother tongue English people. The French mother tongue population, especially female, was more poorly represented at a post-high school level than English mother tongue population.

Success in school is often a result of the positive feelings children have about themselves in the school setting:

Children's self images are affected by the manner in which teachers relate to them, decide what is expected of them, and by the success they experience with subjects. The manner in which textbooks portray members of their cultural group also affects the developing self concept.[9]

Table 2

Highest Grade Attended
French and English Mother Tongue Populations
25 Years and Older, by Sex, Vermont, 1970 (%)

| | Male | | Female | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | French | English | French | English |
| Never Attended | 2.5% | 5.8% | 1.1% | 5.8% |
| 8th grade or less | 37.8 | 36.9 | 36.9 | 30.6 |
| 9th-12th grades | 43.6 | 39.1 | 49.5 | 43.4 |
| More than 12th grade | 16.2 | 18.1 | 12.5 | 20.2 |
| (N) | (204) | (1,659) | (184) | (1,779) |

Source: Madeleine Giguere, Social and Economic Profile of French and English Mother Tongue Persons (Portland-Gorham: University of Southern Maine, n.d.).

As was recounted in Chapter III, Franco-Americans are rarely mentioned in the texts used in the schools, and further evidence exists that, when mentioned, Franco-Americans suffer from negative stereotypes. No systematic study of teacher-student interaction and ethnicity in Vermont has yet been done.

3. Higher Education

Rates for the participation of Franco-Americans in higher education can be obtained by tabulating French-surnamed students in the universities and colleges of Vermont.

Table 3 shows that in 1979-80 French-surnamed students at the University of Vermont and the three state colleges accounted for less than 10 percent of the aggregate enrollment of these schools. Lyndon State College had the largest percentage of Franco-American surnames at 11.8 percent. Although the 1970 Census showed that fewer mother-tongue French women than men had more than a 12th-grade education, the surname counts show that Franco-American women in every institution outnumbered Franco-American men.

Table 3

Number and Percent of French-surnamed Students in the University of Vermont and the Vermont State College System, 1979-80

| School | Male N | Male %* | Female N | Female % | Total N | Total % | Total Enrollment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| U. of Vt. | 399 | 3.96 | 554 | 5.5 | 953 | 9.46 | 10,070 |
| Johnson | 42 | 4.2 | 46 | 4.7 | 88 | 8.8 | 985 |
| Lyndon | 57 | 5.2 | 68 | 6.25 | 125 | 11.8 | 1,088 |
| Castleton | 188 | 2.9 | 298 | 4.7 | 486 | 7.6 | 6,303 |
| TOTAL | 686 | 3.72 | 966 | 5.24 | 1,652 | 8.95 | 18,446 |

*percent of total enrollment

Source: Compiled from Castleton State College, registration printout; Johnson State College, "Faculty, Staff, Student Directory," 1979-80; Lyndon State College, "Student Directory," Spring 1980; University of Vermont, "Faculty, Staff, Student Directory," 1979-80.

The percentage of French-surnamed students was dramatically higher at Vermont Technical College, an institution offering a two-year associate's degree. The school also showed the highest ratio of French-surnamed males to females of any of the public institutions of higher education in the State. Of 795 students in 1980, 139, or 17.5 percent, were French-surnamed. Of these, 118 were male and 21 female (14.8 and 2.6 percent of the total, respectively).[10]

At the graduate level, the French-surnamed students constituted 5.6 percent (see Table 4), whereas they were 8.95 percent of the State's undergraduate students.

This brief survey of French-surnamed enrollments in public institutions of higher learning in Vermont reiterates the findings of Ashley Doane in New Hampshire:

> Results of the analysis found that French-surname representation was inversely related to educational level, with the lowest proportion found among graduate students and the highest among vocational, technical college students.[11]

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Table 4

French-surnamed
Graduate Students In Vermont Public Institutions

| School | French-surnamed (N) | % | Total Graduates |
|---|---|---|---|
| U. of Vermont | (63) | 7.0 | 900 |
| Lyndon | ( 6) | 10.0 | 60 |
| Castleton | (90) | 4.8 | 1,884 |
| TOTAL | (159) | 5.6 | 2,844 |

Source: Castleton State College, registration printout (1979-80); Lyndon State College, "Student Directory" (spring, 1980); printout of graduate students at the University of Vermont (spring, 1981).

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Although such patterns raise questions about access to education, it should be noted that they also represent an encouraging trend. In 1975, only 7 percent of the student body at the University of Vermont had identifiable French surnames. Four years later, the figure had increased to 9.4 percent.

If one considers only French-surnamed in-state students as a proportion of all in-state students, the percentage of French-surnamed students rises to 15.6 percent: 883 of 5,347. Since half of the in-state undergraduate students at the University of Vermont were from Chittenden, Franklin, and Essex Counties, the figure still suggests underrepresentation: the estimated French-surnamed population of these counties is 23.2 percent. Nevertheless, it appears to be the case that more Franco-American students are entering Vermont's largest university.[12]

## Employment

Presenting a picture of Franco-Vermonters at work is even more difficult than for education. Data from private industry are not available. While there is some mandate for the collection of data on Franco-Americans in education, no similar mandate covers private employment. Education, however, is the largest industry in Vermont.

The following analyses attempt to assess the status of Franco-Americans in job-related areas that the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has identified as indicators of equality -- unemployment, occupational prestige, occupational mobility, and occupational segregation.[13]

### 1. Occupational Distribution

Table 5 presents the distribution of male and female French and English mother tongue Vermonters by occupation in 1970. Table 6 is derived from table 5, and merely displays the percentage point differences between concentrations of Franco-Americans and Anglos in each occupation.

Table 6 shows that the largest differential between French and English mother tongue workers was in what may loosely be called the most prestigious category, "professional, technical and kindred workers." This holds true for both sexes, with French lagging behind by 8.7 percentage points and 6.7 percentage points for females and males, respectively.

A perfect distribution would show zeroes for all three columns; in contrast, the most blatant differential would be a linear decrease. That is, a severe pattern of prestige differential would show French mother tongue workers increasingly concentrated as one moves down the "prestige" list. Table 6 shows no such clear pattern. However, breaking the occupational distributions into two rough groups of "white collar" and "blue collar" -- the first four categories versus the remainder -- does show a general relationship. While nearly 45 percent of the English mother tongue workers were found in these four "white-collar" categories, only 37 percent of the French mother-tongue workers were found there.

Table 5 shows that the French mother tongue percentages of managers and administrators exceeded those of the English (by .6 percentage points). However, the census did not specify the size or kind of businesses being managed or administered.

Table 5

Occupation Distributions of French and English Mother Tongue, by Sex, Vermont, 1970

| Occupation | Female | | Male | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | French | English | French | English | French | English |
| Prof., tech. & kindred workers | 7.6% | 16.3% | 6.6% | 13.3% | 7.1% | 14.5% |
| Mgrs. & admin. | 4.2 | 3.3 | 11.4 | 10.7 | 8.5 | 7.9 |
| Sales | 5.1 | 7.8 | 6.6 | 4.7 | 6.0 | 6.0 |
| Clerical | 31.4 | 29.0 | 3.4 | 7.3 | 15.2 | 16.4 |
| Craftsmen | 2.5 | 1.6 | 16.2 | 21.6 | 10.6 | 13.3 |
| Operatives, transp. | 17.8 | 12.1 | 19.8 | 16.3 | 19.1 | 14.5 |
| Laborers | -- | 0.9 | 7.8 | 7.8 | 4.6 | 4.9 |
| Farmers & farm mgrs. | -- | 0.5 | 7.8 | 3.3 | 4.6 | 2.1 |
| Farmworkers | -- | 0.9 | 4.8 | 5.4 | 2.8 | 3.6 |
| Service | 22.9 | 21.0 | 13.8 | 9.7 | 17.7 | 14.5 |
| Household | 8.5 | 6.1 | -- | -- | 3.5 | 2.6 |
| TOTAL | 100* | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| (N) | (118) | (882) | (167) | (1,233) | (285) | (2,115) |

*May total more or less the 100% due to rounding.

Source: Madeleine Giguere, Social and Economic Profile of French and English Mother Tongue Persons (Portland-Gorham: University of Southern Maine, n.d.)

## 2. Prestigious Professions

Tables 5 and 6 use limited data to present a relatively imprecise picture of the occupational structure. Surname-based analysis of specific occupations and smaller-scale data bases are more definitive. For instance, such an analysis of the list of public school teachers and positions in Vermont revealed that while 10 percent (800) of the State's 8,000 teachers are French-surnamed, only 8.1 percent and 6.6 percent of the high school principals and superintendents, respectively, are French-surnamed.[14]

Table 6

Percentage Point Differences in Occupation Concentration Between French and English Mother Tongue Persons, by Sex, Vermont, 1970

| Occupation | Female | Male | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 prof/tech | -8.7* | -6.7 | -7.4 |
| 2 mgr/admin | +0.9 | +0.9 | +0.9 |
| 3 sales | -2.7 | +1.9 | 0.0 |
| 4 clerical | +2.4 | -3.9 | -1.2 |
| 5 crafts | +0.9 | -5.4 | -2.7 |
| 6 oper/trans | +5.7 | +3.5 | +4.6 |
| 7 labor | -0.9 | 0.0 | -0.3 |
| 8 farm mgr | -0.5 | +4.5 | +2.5 |
| 9 farm work | -0.9 | -0.6 | -0.8 |
| 10 service | +1.9 | +4.1 | +3.2 |
| 11 household | +2.4 | 0.0 | +3.5 |

*This value may be read as follows: "The percentage of working Franco-American females who are professional/technical workers is 8.7 percentage points lower than the percentage of working Anglo females who are in this occupation group."

Source: See Table 5.

A similar picture exists regarding institutions of higher education in Vermont. The University of Vermont, which employs 3,500 persons, is the largest educational institution in the State. According to a surname analysis of the University's 1979-80 "Student/Faculty/Staff Directory," 317 or nine percent of the employees were French-surnamed. Table 7 includes data on the faculty of the University of Vermont and three other State colleges.

The table clearly demonstrates a linear pattern: moving down in position, the percentage of French-surnamed faculty increases. Two of the colleges have no French-surnamed full professors. In the four institutions covered, there are but five French-surnamed full professors out of a system-wide total of 360 (1.4 percent). At Vermont Technical College, with an enrollment of 17.5 percent French-surnamed students, French-surnamed representation on the faculty is 4.4 percent.

Table 7

French-surnamed Faculty
University of Vermont and Vermont State Colleges, 1979-81

| Position | University of Vermont Total Faculty | French Surname (N) | % | Castleton State College Total Faculty | French Surname (N) | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Full Prof. | 318 | (4) | 1.3 | 27 | (1) | 3.7 |
| Assoc. Prof. | 273 | (8) | 2.9 | 33 | (1) | 3.0 |
| Asst. Prof. | 353 | (18) | 5.0 | 30 | (1) | 3.3 |
| Instructor | 141 | (8) | 5.6 | 16 | (1) | 6.3 |
| Lecturer | 124 | (4) | 3.2 | -- | | -- |
| TOTAL | 847 | (42) | 4.9 | 106 | (4) | 3.7 |

| Position | Johnson State College Total Faculty | French Surname (N) | % | Vermont Technical College Total Faculty | French Surname (N) | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Full Prof. | 9 | (0) | 0.0 | 7 | (0) | 0.0 |
| Assoc. Prof. | 22 | (1) | 4.5 | 16 | (1) | 6.3 |
| Asst. Prof. | 15 | (1) | 6.6 | 16 | (1) | 6.3 |
| Instructor | 8 | (0) | 0.0 | 7 | (0) | 0.0 |
| Lecturer | 18 | (0) | 0.0 | -- | | -- |
| TOTAL | 72 | (2) | 2.7 | 46 | (2) | 4.3 |

Source: Castleton State College, "Bulletin," 1980-81; Johnson State College, "Faculty,Staff,Student Directory," Spring 1980; University of Vermont, "Faculty,Staff,Student Directory," 1979-80; Vermont Technical College, "Bulletin," 1980-81.

The Vermont Year Book, 1980[15] provides the basis to tabulate surname distributions in four selected "prestige" occupations: medicine, law, accounting (C.P.A), and dentistry. Table 8 presents the percentage of French-surnamed persons in these professions.

Table 8

French-surnamed Representation
in High-Status Professions, Vermont, 1980*

| Profession | French Surname (N) | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Physicians | (38) | 7.0 | 541 |
| Lawyers | (34) | 6.3 | 536 |
| Dentists | (22) | 12.0 | 181 |
| Accountants | ( 7) | 6.9 | 101 |
| TOTAL | (101) | 7.4 | 1,359 |

*For all towns over 4,000 population.

Source: Vermont Year Book, John D. Henneberger, ed. (Chester: 1980).

French-surnamed representation in the four professions ranged from 6.3 to 12 percent. Overall, French-surnamed persons represented 7.4 percent of the total (101 of 1,359). These findings for Vermont are consistent with Doane's in New Hampshire:

> In the high status professions, those requiring more training and having greater economic and social reward, French surname representation ranged from 4 to 15 percent, clustering between 6 and 8 percent. Dentists, at 14.69 percent, had the highest degree of representation, while state university faculty at 4.03 percent were below the mean.[16]

To these data on professionals can be added more detailed surname data on the higher rungs of the corporate ladder in Vermont. Table 9 shows that in 1981 4.5 percent of the officers, 4 percent of the presidents, 2.7 percent of the directors, and none of the chairmen of 87 corporations doing business in Vermont were French-surnamed.[17] Closer scrutiny reveals that French-surnamed corporate officials are found in banking, insurance, and railroads, activities in which Franco-Americans have been long associated.[18]

Table 9

French-surnamed Corporate Officers and Directors, Vermont, 1981*

| Position | French Surname (N) | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Officers | (15) | 4.5 | 337 |
| Chairmen | ( 0) | 0.0 | 26 |
| President | ( 3) | 4.0 | 75 |
| Vice President | (13) | 5.6 | 229 |
| Secretary/Clerk | ( 3) | 6.9 | 43 |
| Treasurer | ( 1) | 4.3 | 23 |
| Director | (13) | 2.7 | 487 |
| TOTAL | (48) | 3.9 | 1,220 |

*Of 87 major corporations.

Source: Standard and Poor Corporation, Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors, and Executives (New York: Standard and Poor, 1981).

3. Income Distribution

In addition to information on the occupational distribution of Franco-Americans, the Advisory Committee reviewed data on income distribution, again utilizing both census data for mother tongue and within-State surname data. While the census data are again inconclusive, the surname data suggest a differential between the French-surnamed and the rest of the population.

Table 10 shows no clear trend. In fact, French males appear to have done better than their Anglo counterparts except in the $10,000-plus bracket. Among females, the picture, though still not conclusive, shows a somewhat larger differential in the higher-income brackets. There were no French mother tongue females among those surveyed by the census earning more than $10,000 a year.

Table 10

Percent Income Distribution
of French and English Mother Tongue Persons, by Sex, Vermont, 1970

| Income range | Male | | Female | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | French | English | French | English |
| $1,000-1,999 | 12.8 | 12.4 | 18.1 | 30.3 |
| 2,000-2,999 | 8.1 | 9.6 | 28.4 | 20.8 |
| 3,000-3,999 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 13.8 | 11.5 |
| 4,000-4,999 | 9.9 | 6.5 | 11.2 | 11.2 |
| 5,000-5,999 | 9.9 | 9.8 | 12.1 | 8.1 |
| 6,000-6,999 | 7.0 | 9.2 | 3.4 | 5.4 |
| 7,000-9,999 | 20.4 | 19.6 | 4.3 | 4.9 |
| 10,000 & above | 16.3 | 18.3 | -- | 1.3 |
| (N) | (172) | (1,083) | (116) | (866) |

Source: Madeleine Giguere, Social and Economic Profile of French and English Mother Tongue Persons (Portland-Gorham: University of Southern Maine, n.d.).

Table 11 provides an idea of the income distribution of State employees, using the 30-level pay scale for State employees. On the one hand, French-surnamed classified employees in 1960 were a sizable proportion of the total -- 14.5 percent, or nearly one seventh. This is somewhere between the French mother tongue census count of the State's population and the Advisory Committee's surname estimate. There was, however, a very clear trend of declining percentage of French surnames as rank increases. There were no French surname employees among the 44 employees from the 25th to the 30th level.

Furthermore, the median for the State -- that category below which half the State's employees fall -- was the ninth level: 50.7 percent of the State's classified employees were level nine and below. In contrast, 61.2 percent of the French-surnamed classified employees fell below the ninth level; for the French-surnamed, the median fell within the eighth category.

Table 11

Salary Distribution of French-surnamed Vermont State Employees, 1980

| Pay Scale | Salary Range* | French Surname (N) | French Surname % | Total Employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | $124-192 | ( 3) | 23.0 | 13 |
| 02 | 127-201 | ( 69) | 27.0 | 255 |
| 03 | 131-211 | ( 26) | 15.8 | 164 |
| 04 | 136-219 | (146) | 18.2 | 803 |
| 05 | 143-232 | ( 53) | 14.4 | 368 |
| 06 | 150-243 | ( 46) | 14.6 | 313 |
| 07 | 160-258 | ( 58) | 19.7 | 295 |
| 08 | 168-271 | ( 74) | 16.3 | 455 |
| 09 | 177-285 | ( 87) | 16.1 | 539 |
| 10 | 186-298 | ( 52) | 18.3 | 286 |
| 11 | 197-313 | ( 57) | 13.4 | 426 |
| 12 | 209-333 | ( 53) | 13.8 | 385 |
| 13 | 223-357 | ( 49) | 10.2 | 480 |
| 14 | 236-377 | ( 57) | 11.3 | 502 |
| 15 | 251-401 | ( 22) | 10.2 | 216 |
| 16 | 266-422 | ( 28) | 10.2 | 274 |
| 17 | 278-451 | ( 6) | 5.3 | 114 |
| 18 | 294-481 | ( 10) | 9.6 | 104 |
| 19 | 311-512 | ( 7) | 8.4 | 83 |
| 20 | 329-541 | ( 10) | 9.6 | 104 |
| 21 | 348-576 | ( 0) | 0.0 | 23 |
| 22 | 370-610 | ( 5) | 9.0 | 55 |
| 23 | 391-650 | ( 2) | 11.8 | 17 |
| 24 | 414-688 | ( 1) | 5.5 | 18 |
| 25 | 439-735 | ( 0) | 0.0 | 6 |
| 26 | 463-777 | ( 0) | 0.0 | 4 |
| 27 | 491-827 | ( 0) | 0.0 | 6 |
| 28 | 519-869 | ( 0) | 0.0 | 0 |
| 29 | 550-920 | ( 0) | 0.0 | 10 |
| 30 | 582-970 | ( 0) | 0.0 | 0 |
| (N) | | (921) | | (6,318) |

*Weekly salary ranges, rounded to the nearest dollar.

Source: State of Vermont, Alpha Locator of All Current Employees, Oct. 24, 1980.

## Appointed and Elected Leadership

Still another indicator of status and acceptance in a community is election or appointment to office. As one might expect, Franco-Americans usually hold local office in those towns and cities that have substantial Franco-American populations. Table 12 reports data from a survey of 21 towns and cities in Vermont with populations over 5,000 people.

Table 12

French-surnamed Town and Municipal Officials, Vermont 1980

| Position | French Surname (N) | % | Total Officials (N) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Clerk | (0) | 0.0 | 21 |
| Town Manager | (1) | 5.9 | 17 |
| Justice | (29) | 10.0 | 287 |
| Tax Collector | (1) | 11.1 | 9 |
| Auditor | (5) | 13.2 | 38 |
| Mayor | (1) | 14.3 | 7 |
| Selectman | (11) | 17.7 | 62 |
| Treasurer | (2) | 18.2 | 11 |
| Police Chief | (4) | 22.2 | 18 |
| Fire Chief | (7) | 35.0 | 20 |
| TOTAL | (61) | 12.4 | 490 |

Source: Vermont Year Book, John D. Henneberger, ed., (Chester: 1980)

French-surnamed town and municipal officials in 1980 range from nearly a quarter (22.2 percent) of the police chiefs and over a third (35.0 percent) of the fire chiefs, to no French-surnamed clerks and 5.9 percent of town managers.

On the State level, 11.3 percent of the members of the the State house of representatives (17 of 150) and 10 percent of the State senators (3 of 30) were French-surnamed. At the same time, Franco-Americans seemed to lag in their appointment to administrative and advisory agencies within the state; they occupied but 6.9 percent (17 of 245) of such positions.[19]

## Notes to Chapter IV

1. Ashley W. Doane, Jr., Occupational and Educational Patterns for New Hampshire's Franco-Americans (Manchester: New Hampshire Civil Liberties Union, 1979), p. 11.

2. Madeleine Giguere, "Number and Percent of Persons with French Mother Tongue" (Franco-American files, University of Southern Maine at Portland-Gorham, n.d.).

3. Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

4. Gerard Asselin, Director, Division of Federal Assistance, Vermont State Department of Education, letter to Ilene Durkee concerning identification of bilingual children, January 17, 1980 (survey printout accompanied letter).

5. Ibid.

6. Michael Conley, Director, Minority Languages, Vermont State Department of Education, "Report on Bilingual Education in Vermont," in-house memorandum, 1978, p. 7.

7. Andrew Stewart, New Hampshire State Department of Education, Office of Equal Opportunity, "Linguistic Differences and Equal Opportunity in New Hampshire," n.d., p. 8.

8. Ibid., p. 8.

9. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, A Better Chance to Learn, 1975, p. 30.

10. Vermont Technical College, Student Directory, Fall 1980.

11. Doane, p. 34.

12. University of Vermont, "Faculty, Staff, Student Directory," 1975-76; 1979-80.

13. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women, 1978.

14. Peter Woolfson, "Study of Computer Print-out of Names of Teachers in Vermont" (unpublished).

15. Vermont Year Book, John D. Henneberger, ed. (Chester: 1980.)

16. Doane, p. 46.

17. Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives (New York: Standard and Poor).

18. Rosaire Dion-Levesque, Silhouettes Franco-Americains (Manchester: L'Association Canada-Americaines, 1957), pp. 921-25.

19. Vermont Year Book.

## Chapter V: Conclusion

Our analysis of the data indicates that if one accepts 12.2 percent as a baseline figure for French surnames in the State, or 11.2 percent based on self-identification, the Franco-Vermonter is represented differentially in institutions of higher education, in certain aspects of employment, and in the centers of power and influence.

Underrepresentation may be the result of discrimination or of other factors which have been discussed. With regard to underrepresentation in prestigious jobs, some observers believe that working-class Franco-Americans try to find a "good job" as early in life as possible. They do not, as a rule, measure occupational status in terms of educational achievement. Laurence French, a Franco-American from a mill town in New Hampshire, provides us with one experience:

> Our family was a typical working class one with both parents working in the mills. We had 9 children during a 13-year span and my mother left school at 12, which was quite common then, and my father never finished high school. In fact, I was the first in my extended family network to finish high school, and this was against their wishes.[1]

Traditionally, high occupational status was associated with church-related positions. It is no surprise, then, that a larger percentage of those Franco-Americans who hold high prestige occupations are products of Catholic seminaries and made career changes after they had begun their advanced religious training.[2]

Josaphat T. Benoit, a former mayor of Manchester, New Hampshire, suggested that unagressiveness is a partial explanation of Franco-American underrepresentation in political office:

> First, as a consequence of several centuries of rural life...the Franco-American has shown a timidity and modesty which is inconsistent with public life. Qualified Franco-Americans -- whether in government, teaching or the professions -- do not play an activist role, and wait to be solicited by others. Generally a Franco-American seeking political office will simply put forward a rather bare outline of his qualifications, and will not be inclined to a full mobilization of his friends and resources on his behalf.[3]

Although Benoit's characterization of the Franco-American borders on cultural stereotyping, it does point out an area where Franco-Vermonters may differ from other Vermonters: an inhibition to push themselves.

It is also pertinent to consider whether the status of Franco-Americans vis-a-vis centers of power and influence may be part of a more general condition. Russell Barta studied the extent to which members of minority communities were directors or officers of the 106 largest Chicago area corporations. His findings for these groups mirror the Franco-American statistics reported here:

> If one compares the percentage of officers and directors whose backgrounds are Polish, Italian, Latin, or Black to the percentage distribution of these four groups in the population, it becomes clear that all four groups were grossly underrepresented on the boards of directors and in the executive positions of Chicago's major corporations.[4]

Studies will take very different directions depending on whether one's concern is the status of Franco-Americans or of immigrant groups generally. Certainly there are similarities with other immigrant groups -- they are viewed by the majority population as speaking a "different" language, and attending a "different" church. But there are differences with other immigrant groups as well -- their proximity to Quebec, and a history and set of circumstances that are uniquely Franco-American.

Speculation about the causes of differential representation today may range from ongoing discrimination, to the present effects of past discrimination, to an employer's selection of "one's own kind," to not being part of a "network," to the self-limiting effects of the group's own cultural values and traits, or to a combination of these factors.

Findings of statistical disparities raise rather than settle questions. They certainly do not prove discrimination. Why such disparities exist can only be ascertained by additional historical research and by analyses of educational and employment practices, and societal attitudes. We have outlined some of this by surveying Franco-American history, by looking at stereotypes of, and attitudes toward, Franco-Americans and by summarizing studies of their education, employment, and political status.

This report attempts to mark more clearly lines of inquiry for future research. New census data and additional research may support broader inferences about whether Franco-Americans suffer from discrimination, and whether government action is appropriate.

Franco-Americans do enjoy protection from discrimination on the basis of national origin. Civil rights laws have been enacted prohibiting discrimination due to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age and other designations.

However, with regard to certain groups, the government has acted not only to prohibit such discrimination but to counter its effects. The inadequacies of "neutral" protections against discrimination, because of the severity of past practices, have led to the development of affirmative action, which most commonly has

been applied to blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, women, and the handicapped. (Some programs very much like affirmative action have been used to facilitate access to education and jobs for veterans, the young, the untrained, and other targeted groups.) Affirmative action generally consists of efforts to remove specific discriminatory barriers or to help victims of discrimination surmount those barriers.

A special program targeted at Franco-Americans and other language minorities is bilingual education, which has been aimed at those whose upbringing in non-English speaking homes has left them less proficient in English than is necessary to compete effectively in America's schools and workplaces. In other words, bilingual education seeks to create equality of opportunity by remedying a specific disadvantage of language minorities.

There are those in the Franco-American community who are striving to preserve their heritage and language and to stimulate pride in their identity. Organizations have been formed throughout Northern New England to articulate the concerns of Franco-Americans. They include La Societe Des Deux Mondes, ACT FANE (Action for Franco-Americans of the Northeast) and the AFA, the National Association for Franco-Americans. They express the point of view of their group, oppose actions which may be harmful, and press for programs which they believe are beneficial.

According to an article in the Boston Globe[5] "...people whose ancestry is all or partly French make up more than 25 percent of the combined population of New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine." This fact notes the Globe, is stimulating both pride and an awareness that "in Northern New England, the power is still concentrated in a certain elite that is non-Franco."

As we have already indicated, studies to determine exactly why this is the case have yet to be undertaken. It is our hope that this report will stimulate such studies by academic institutions, government agencies and Franco-American organizations themselves.

## Notes to Chapter V

1. Laurence French, "The Franco-American Working Class Family," in A Franco-American Overview, vol. 3, p. 173.

2. Peter Woolfson, private survey.

3. Norman Sepenuk, "A Profile of Franco-American Political Attitudes in New England," in A Franco-American Overview, vol. 3, p. 217.

4. Russell Barta, "The Representation of Poles, Italians, Latins and Blacks in the Executive Suites of Chicago's Largest Corporations," in Civil Rights of Euro-Ethnic Americans in the U.S., p. 423.

5. Boston Globe, February 6, 1983.

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