

Bowdoin College

Bowdoin Digital Commons

Honors Projects

Student Scholarship and Creative Work

2021

Jigs, Reels, and “Realness”: An Investigation of Ideas of Authenticity and Tradition in New England French Canadian Music

Lowell Ruck
Bowdoin College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.bowdoin.edu/honorsprojects>



Part of the [Canadian History Commons](#), [Celtic Studies Commons](#), [Community-Based Research Commons](#), [Cultural History Commons](#), [Ethnic Studies Commons](#), [Ethnomusicology Commons](#), [Folklore Commons](#), [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#), [Social History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ruck, Lowell, "Jigs, Reels, and “Realness”: An Investigation of Ideas of Authenticity and Tradition in New England French Canadian Music" (2021). *Honors Projects*. 275.
<https://digitalcommons.bowdoin.edu/honorsprojects/275>

This Open Access Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship and Creative Work at Bowdoin Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of Bowdoin Digital Commons. For more information, please contact mdoyle@bowdoin.edu.

Jigs, Reels, and “Realness”:

An Investigation of Ideas of Authenticity and Tradition in New England French Canadian Music

An Honors Paper for the Department of Anthropology

By Lowell Ruck

Bowdoin College, 2021

© 2021 Lowell Ruck

To Elaine Luthin, my first French teacher, who introduced me to Franco-American culture.

Et pis toi, mon ami, qu'est-ce que tu fais de ta soirée?

Éteins donc ta TV, faut pas rester encabané

Heureusement que dans' vie certaines choses refusent de changer

Enfile tes plus beaux habits car nous allons ce soir danser...

(And you, my friend, what are you doing with your evening?

Just turn off your TV, you don't have to stay inside

Luckily in life some things refuse to change

Put on your finest clothes, because tonight we're going dancing...)

— Mes Aïeux, “Dégénération” (2004)

Table of Contents

Abstract/Résumé	v
Acknowledgements	vi
1. Introducing Franco-American Culture and French Canadian Traditional Music.....	1
<i>Research Methods, My Role as a Researcher, and a Note on the COVID-19 Pandemic</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Outline of Chapters</i>	<i>5</i>
2. Academic and Popular Ideas of Authenticity and Tradition	6
<i>Authenticity and Tradition in Contemporary Academic Discourse</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Authenticity and Tradition Outside the Academy and in Musical Context</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Don Roy and Authentic Traditional Music in New England</i>	<i>14</i>
3. Immigration and Music in New England Franco-American Communities, 1840 - Present	18
<i>From Canada to New England: The History of Franco-Americans</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>The Historical Evolution of French Canadian and Franco-American Music</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Franco-American Music and Cultural Syncretism in New England</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Franco-American Music in the Late 20th Century</i>	<i>26</i>
4. Social and Subjective Authenticity and Community in French Canadian Traditional Music	29
<i>Family History, Cultural Heritage, and Social Authenticity</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Subjective Authenticity in Individual Experiences of Music</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Music and Social Dancing: Subjective Authenticity Meets Social Authenticity</i>	<i>39</i>
5. Multitemporal Authenticity and Cultural Preservation	45
<i>Preserving Old Tunes: Cindy and Lisa</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Modernizing Mémère: Robert</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Genre-Bending: Greg and John</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>Conversing with Québec: Cindy and John</i>	<i>55</i>
6. Conclusion, and Paths Forward	58
<i>Further Considerations</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Coda</i>	<i>62</i>
Bibliography	64

Abstract

Franco-American culture is increasingly recognized as an integral part of the heritage of Maine and New England, and has attracted growing academic attention in recent years. But while many scholars and cultural promoters focus on the French language in their work on this subject, few studies have considered the position of traditional music in Franco-American communities in the 21st century. This thesis examines French Canadian traditional music as it is played in New England and the ways in which musicians think about authenticity and tradition in their art. Using material from ethnographic interviews, it illuminates how musicians draw from individual, familial, and communal experiences and from past, present, and future conceptions of authentic tradition in their roles as cultural mediators. Ultimately, it suggests that players of French Canadian traditional music interact with this tradition in diverse ways, and that in doing so, they help to maintain the vibrancy of Franco-American cultural practices.

Résumé

La culture franco-américaine est reconnue de plus en plus comme partie intégrante de l'héritage du Maine et de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et attire maintenant l'attention académique. Mais même si beaucoup d'érudits et de promoteurs culturels ciblent la langue française dans leur travail sur ce sujet, peu d'études ont considéré la position de la musique traditionnelle dans les communautés franco-américaines du XXI^e siècle. Cette thèse se concentre sur la musique traditionnelle canadienne-française de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et sur les façons dont les musiciens conceptualisent l'authenticité et la tradition dans leur art. En utilisant des entrevues ethnographiques, elle illumine comment les musiciens tirent des expériences individuelles, familiales et communautaires et des idées du passé, du présent et de l'avenir dans leurs rôles comme médiateurs culturels. Finalement, elle suggère que les joueurs de la musique traditionnelle canadienne-française interagissent avec cette tradition de plusieurs façons, et ce faisant, aident à maintenir la brillance des pratiques culturelles franco-américaines.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my project advisors Sara Dickey and Krista Van Vleet, without whose guidance this thesis would never have been published. Your comments and encouragements, especially in such a challenging year for anthropological research and academic work in general, pushed me to keep going even when I least believed in myself. Thank you also to my academic advisor, Susan Kaplan, who helped to steer me toward this topic, and to the many other professors whose courses have informed my work. I never thought that I would undertake an honors thesis at Bowdoin, but with your help, I have found a way.

Finally, *merci beaucoup* to Cindy, Lisa, Greg, John, and Robert. This thesis is in many ways a retelling of your stories, and I hope that I have done them justice in these pages.

CHAPTER ONE

Introducing Franco-American Culture and French Canadian Traditional Music

Franco-Americans are one of the most demographically significant people groups in Maine. Including those who claim French Canadian, Acadian, Québécois, French, and Franco identity, Franco-Americans constituted around 23.9% of the state's population in 2011, second only to those of English ancestry (Albert et al. 2013, 5).¹ Though long subject to persecution, their contributions to Maine culture are now recognized by the state government, which holds an annual Franco-American day in their honor, as well as by numerous organizations which aim to celebrate and preserve their traditions. From La Rencontre in Lewiston, to L'École française du Maine in Freeport, to the Festival Acadien in Madawaska and beyond, institutions for the promotion of Franco-American culture, and particularly the French language, abound.

As Franco-American culture gains prominence in Maine and New England, however, it is necessary to examine the categories of culture which Franco-Americans and other non-Franco-American actors choose to elevate. A narrow institutional and academic focus on preserving and reviving the French language, following Whorfian ideas of linguistic relativity which see language as the key to culture, minimizes other aspects of the Franco-American experience which Franco-Americans themselves may value more than speaking French. Forty-six percent of Franco-Americans surveyed in a 2013 study by the University of Maine's Franco American Centre indicated that their history and culture were important to their experiences as Franco-

¹ Because of the diversity of identities it encompasses, "Franco-American" can be a rather unwieldy term, but it is at the very least useful for identifying Americans descended from francophone populations in Canada and its borderlands who have been shaped by their shared experience in the United States. Most people who fall under this description tend to use other names for themselves.

Americans, with sixty percent identifying more specific cultural markers such as family gatherings and food as important to their heritage, compared to only thirty-six percent who cited the French language as important (Albert et al. 2013, 44).

What can other elements of Franco-American culture tell us about the contemporary Franco-American experience? This question is at the center of this study, which seeks to understand music, not language, in terms of its significance to Franco-American culture. Furthermore, it considers music as a language of its own — part of what anthropologists of music have identified as a “unified framework of sound” in which language and music interact and assume similar social functions (Feld et al. 2007, 340). Music is a particularly productive site for cultural analysis, marked by the intersection of ethnic identity, personal experience, and trends of globalization and modernization. By analyzing the particular dynamics of Franco-American music, I hope to begin to answer the question: how do players of French Canadian traditional music² think about authenticity in the music they play? As I will detail in the following chapters, these musicians’ conceptions of authenticity are diverse, drawing on numerous social and historical referents. They also complicate ideas of tradition³ and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of Franco-American cultural preservation in the 21st century.

² Throughout, I use this term to identify the music played by my interviewees, which draws at least partially from a repertoire of tunes (jigs, reels, waltzes, and other song types) that mostly came together in French Canada (modern-day Québec) and which is still played in Québec, the Canadian Maritimes, and New England. Because it co-exists alongside music from French Canada in New England, I also include Acadian music in this description, though it is often considered a separate tradition.

³ In instances where I mention the term uncritically, I use tradition to mean “an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (such as a religious practice or a social custom)” (*Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “tradition (*n.*),” accessed May 10, 2021, [http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tradition.](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tradition))

Research Methods, My Role as a Researcher, and a Note on the COVID-19 Pandemic

When I began my investigating this topic in February of 2020, I had planned to conduct participant observation at La Rencontre, a French-language gathering in Lewiston, as well as with the Maine Folque Co-op, a Lewiston-based ensemble which plays a variety of different Celtic-influenced musical traditions. Through informal interactions at these field sites, I had hoped to show how different Franco-American cultural institutions were engaged in the preservation of tradition, linguistic and musical. In March 2020, following the World Health Organization's declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic, it became clear that in-person research would be unsafe.

In place of the less rigid interactions I had envisioned, I elected to collect data entirely through one-on-one remote interviews by phone, video call, and email, and shelved the portion of the project which focused on language. To begin, I conducted a phone interview with Cindy Larock, leader of the Maine Folque Co-op, whom I had met at a French immersion camp in high school. Through snowball sampling, I contacted three other musicians — Greg Boardman, a Lewiston fiddler, who wrote to me by email, John Cote, a Lewiston guitarist who I spoke to on the phone, and Lisa Ornstein, a fiddler who worked as an archivist and musicologist in Fort Kent and with whom I spoke via Zoom. In early 2021, I contacted another musician: Robert Sylvain, a Portland guitarist who I discovered through a virtual performance presented by the Maine Historical Society, and interviewed him via Zoom.⁴ Though the exact focus of my research was still unrefined in earlier interviews, each conversation was structured on questions specific to each musician. I was interested in collecting oral histories of my respondents' musical

⁴ My interview subjects have all agreed to the use of their names in this thesis. I have chosen not to identify them under pseudonyms in order to give these musicians full credit for their insights, and because several of them are associated with organizations which, I believe, deserve to be mentioned in the context of this study.

experiences, as well as more specific perceptions of the music they played, from their views on technology to the practices of sharing music with others. Later in my research, as my topic developed, my questions on these subjects focused more narrowly on ideas of authenticity in French Canadian traditional music.

Much of the interview time was also unstructured, devoted to informal conversation in which I played the role not only of an interviewer, but also of an amateur traditional musician. Since an early age, I have been interested in Irish traditional music, drawn in by the lilting rhythms of jigs I first heard on CDs at home and from the stages of the American Folk Festival in Bangor, Maine. In middle school, I began playing the tin whistle, a hobby which I have continued through college and which sustains me when I need a break from classical and jazz playing. Though the tin whistle is not a standard element of French Canadian traditional music, the proximity of this music to Irish tunes and my personal interest in North American French culture and language has made me an avid listener, and occasionally a player. My interactions with my interview subjects were all informed by this experience.

In addition to these interviews, I was also fortunate enough to take part in several socially-distanced “jam sessions,” organized by Cindy, during the summer and fall of 2020. While not ethnographic in nature, these sessions provided me with a better idea of the community with which I was working, and in many ways were a testimony to the power of music in times of social isolation. I am not Franco-American, but by the end of my research, I believe that the music spoke to me on a deeper level. More than a purely auditory experience, it was an escape from the monotony of quarantined living and of distance learning.

Indeed, as much as this study concerns itself with immaterial and ineffable concepts like authenticity, identity, and ethnicity, it is worth noting that it occurred in the material context of a

deadly pandemic which has upended much of our “old” lives. I often imagine how things might have gone differently for this project, but I also recognize that COVID-19 presents us with new ways of examining cultural practices that might otherwise seem mundane. For myself and for the musicians with whom I spoke, the disruption of normal routines has provoked deep reflection on the role of music in our lives. Paradoxically, then, though it has rendered many other activities impossible, the pandemic has also made this study possible. The responses of my interviewees and the conclusions which I have drawn from them are inseparable from the current moment, and while COVID-19 is admittedly a strange coauthor, I credit it here for its influence on my work.

Outline of Chapters

This thesis includes five further chapters. In Chapter Two, I discuss the origins of the concepts of authenticity and tradition and their influence on anthropology and related disciplines, before considering the specific ways in which the public — and in particular, players of Celtic-influenced traditional music genres — conceive of their music as “authentic.” In Chapter Three, I provide a brief history of the French Canadian and Franco-American experience in New England, followed by a more detailed history of Franco-American music and the cultural practices which surround it. In Chapter Four, I draw on ethnographic data from interviews to show how ideas of social and subjective authenticity influence players of French Canadian traditional music. In Chapter Five, I consider how discourses of authenticity express the tensions between past, present, and future. Finally, in Chapter Six, I offer some concluding remarks on authenticity and tradition in the Franco-American community and consider what implications my findings may have for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

Academic and Popular Ideas of Authenticity and Tradition

The constant remolding of culture is a defining feature of human societies. Cultural practices that have specific meanings for certain groups are continually modified as these practices move across time and space and are transferred from person to person. Despite this fluid nature, certain forms of culture, especially cultural practices characterized as “old” or “historic,” are often held to reflect a “purer” version of society which has been lost to time. These practices may be valued specifically for their authenticity, or the quality of genuineness or realness which they are believed to possess.

Ideas of authenticity first emerged in early modern Europe as a reaction to the dissolution of rigid feudal hierarchies and the dislocations between social and individual expressions of identity which accompanied it. These shifts were amplified by the Industrial Revolution, a period of rapid technological advancement and urbanization in Europe and its colonies which alienated many Europeans from the familiar conditions of rural village life (Handler 1986, 3). Enlightenment philosophers and their 19th-century intellectual heirs, unsettled by modernity, began to locate genuine culture in “those parts of the world... still untouched by the superficial conventions of Western society” (Theodossopoulos 2013, 342). Under their influence, the search for authenticity became a defining condition of modern existence, as well as a central object of study for the humanities and social sciences, including the nascent disciplines of anthropology and folklore studies.

However, despite their ubiquity, conceptions of authenticity today are neither universal nor absolute. Individuals who engage with certain cultural practices or who find value in

promoting or preserving them understand authenticity in diverse ways. This multiplicity of authenticities has important consequences for contemporary scholars of culture. Just as anthropologists have in recent years recognized that “there are no single, bounded, and self-contained cultures,” they have also begun to treat authenticity as a “plural, multidimensional” concept which encompasses different and sometimes contradictory ideas (Theodossopoulos 2013, 341). In recognizing the subjectivity of perceptions of cultural practices, anthropologists and folklorists have also begun to reconsider the meaning of tradition. Such theoretical developments are worth considering if we are to understand Franco-American culture, and more specifically its musical traditions, in the 21st century.

In order to assess the values which musicians assign to French Canadian traditional music, it is important to first examine the uses of concepts of authenticity and tradition in scholarly and everyday contexts. In this chapter, I will follow the assertion that authenticity is a multidimensional concept, and consider the usefulness and limitations of its applications in studies of cultural practices. First, I will present the debate on the meaning of authenticity and tradition in contemporary academic discourse. Second, I will explain how authenticity is expressed in popular contexts and in the more specific context of folk music, focusing on the Celtic-influenced musical traditions of the British Isles and northeastern North America, which are closely related to the New England French Canadian tradition and thus provide a useful point of comparison. Finally, I will discuss the application of concepts of authenticity to New England French Canadian music.

Authenticity and Tradition in Contemporary Academic Discourse

According to anthropologist Dimitrios Theodossopoulos, “the concept of authenticity encompasses diverse sets of meaning that range from genuineness and originality to accuracy and truthfulness,” and “in many respects... includes the expectation of truthful representation” (2013, 339). In particular, Theodossopoulos emphasizes that authenticity is not a fixed quality, and that it may hold different meanings for anthropologists, the people they study, and other scholars and laypeople (2013, 340). The geographer John Taylor affirms this diversity of definitions. “Over the past two decades the issue of authenticity, having been identified as a central orienting principle in the studies, has set the agenda for lively and diverse debate and analyses,” he notes. “As a result of these, there are at least as many definitions of authenticity as there are those who write about it” (2001, 8). While ideas of genuineness and truthfulness are generally associated with the concept of authenticity, definitions of the term are also highly dependent on the specific contexts in which they emerge, and studies of “authentic” cultural practices continually unearth new variations in our understanding of the concept.

In spite of this multiplicity of definitions, a few clear patterns have emerged in academic discussions of authenticity and tradition⁵ since the late 20th century. Scholars of culture have principally responded to authenticity and tradition in two different ways: first, by rejecting them as elite constructs, and second, by affirming their ever-present social meanings. In the first faction are postmodernist thinkers, who remain wary of the supposedly “authentic” nature of certain elements of culture. In his introduction to *The Invention of Tradition* (1983), postmodernist historian Eric Hobsbawm dismissed many of the cultural practices of modern

⁵ The concepts of “authenticity” and “tradition” are closely related, and their adjectival forms “authentic” and “traditional” can often be interchangeable in popular discourse. Here, I consider both as part of an analysis of “authentic traditions” which considers them as inherently inseparable ideas.

Western societies as the products of elite invention. What others might identify as an authentic tradition was in his view little more than “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (1983, 1). In this analysis, ideas of authentic tradition are predominantly tools for the construction of national identity, regardless of their actual historical basis.⁶

Other contemporaries of Hobsbawm were similarly skeptical of the validity of the concept of authentic tradition. In “Tradition: Genuine or Spurious?”, Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin argued that all traditions might be considered inventions, and proposed a more critical interpretation of tradition centered on the value of cultural practices in the present moment:

We suggest that there is no essential, bounded tradition; tradition is a model of the past and is inseparable from the interpretation of tradition in the present. Undeniably, traditional action may refer to the past, but to "be about" or to refer to is a symbolic rather than natural relationship, and as such it is characterized by discontinuity as well as by continuity... the ongoing reconstruction of tradition is a facet of all social life, which is not natural but symbolically constituted (1984, 276).

Handler and Linnekin also recognized the inadequacy of tradition as a descriptive term, positing that it could not be “defined in terms of boundedness, givenness, or essence” (1984, 273). In its place, they advocated for a more nuanced theory of cultural practice which would move beyond

⁶ Hugh Trevor-Roper’s chapter in the same volume — on the transformation of the Scottish Highland kilt into the emblem of an ancient mythical, clan hierarchy at the heart of Scottish nationhood — provides a relevant case study of this process and a further example of postmodern rejections of authentic traditions (Trevor-Roper 1983, 24).

the dichotomy of “traditional” and “modern” practices and consider culture in all of its expressions.

A second group of scholars, working mainly in the last two decades, have challenged postmodern skepticism toward the concepts of authenticity and tradition while still maintaining a critical stance toward the subject. Such theorists, while acknowledging the slipperiness of these concepts, recognize that they are still present in contemporary social situations, and are therefore useful tools with which to study cultural practices and the histories and relationships of power they reflect. Folklorist Gregory Hansen has argued in his writing on the fiddling tradition of Florida that authenticity’s true utility lies in its ability to distinguish between different categories of cultural production, even if it is an imperfect concept.

In working with a fiddler from Florida, I came to recognize that there is validity to discarding notions that a musician has to fulfill certain criteria to be considered a “traditional folk musician.” But more importantly, I also came to realize that it is equally valid to employ the biases, assumptions, and cultural constructions of folklorists that allow us to determine whether or not an aspect of culture is “an authentic tradition” and therefore an aspect of authentic folklore rather than fakelore, popular culture, or academic culture (1996, 70).

Hansen believes that authenticity’s exclusionary nature can be transformed into a tool which folklorists can use to assess the limits of cultural practices. For Theodossopoulos, however, authenticity is not only a means of establishing the boundaries of a tradition, but also a window into the value judgements which establish those boundaries. “I do not see the binary logic of authenticity as a trap, but as an invitation to change perspectives, compare one singular and essentialist view of tradition with another, and unpack the local meaningfulness and tactical

rhetoric such singular visions of tradition entail,” he argues (2013, 347). In the view of these writers and their like-minded contemporaries, authenticity and tradition must be considered critically, but this does not mean that they should be abandoned as objects of study.

Authenticity and Tradition Outside the Academy and in Musical Context

While scholars such as Theodossopoulos have argued for an attention to the multidimensionality of authenticity, some individuals in non-academic settings may deploy concepts of tradition or authenticity in narrower ways. Like anthropologists and folklorists of the late-19th and early 20th centuries, people external to a certain cultural setting may attempt to make sense of the cultural practices which they encounter through ideas of authenticity. Japonica Brown-Saracino has noted, for instance, that outsiders often adopt a position of “virtuous marginality” which “exists when people associate authenticity with, and highly value, characteristics they do not share, and consequently, out of a desire to preserve the authentic, come to regard their distance from it — their marginality — as virtuous” (Brown-Saracino 2007, 437). In her example, gentrifiers in communities such as Provincetown, Massachusetts and Dresden, Maine come to appreciate certain cultural practices which, in their minds, define the communities in which they now live. Because they view their own upbringings (largely in upper-middle-class suburbs) as lacking tradition or a sense of community, they place value on activities such as farming or fishing that suggest a deep, continuous connection to the land. However, in doing so, they tend to value only those who perform the activities which they deem representative of tradition, and overlook other members who may not be as highly visible but who are still integral parts of the community (2007, 441).

This middle-class prioritization of certain “bearers of tradition” and cultural activities may be extended to the context of Celtic-influenced musical traditions. In Ireland, many tourists who visit the small town of Doolin come to hear and see a form of Irish traditional music which they view as an ancient, time-worn practice. Though not all visitors are familiar with the history or nature of the pub session, many are disappointed to learn that musicians are paid to play (Kaul 2007, 711). Here, outside actors seek out traditions which, as with Brown-Saracino’s gentrifiers, they perceive to be characterized by a deep historical connection to place. As the Irish example shows, this preference for “old” traditions is often associated with a rejection of any perceived sign of modernity — in this case the suggestion that the tradition has been commodified and corrupted from an earlier, more spontaneous form.

Outside actors, such as gentrifiers and tourists, are not just consumers of tradition, however; they can also be directly involved in its production and preservation. In the case of folk music revivals, preservationists (who are not necessarily musicians or members of heritage communities) often play an important role in resurrecting or reinvigorating practices which they see as representing a more authentic way of life. Like other, mostly middle-class outsiders, they tend to prioritize traditions that seem grounded in a particular time and place. Unlike passive listeners or gentrifiers pursuing “virtuous marginality,” however, revivalists engage directly in the work of preservation. They may be ethnomusicologists or anthropologists who select players and tunes that they deem worthy of recording (Post 2004, 25).⁷ Alternatively, they may be musicians or dancers who seek out “old masters” that have learned music “the old-fashioned way” in order to learn from them. In either case, these individuals differentiate themselves from

⁷ Harvard folklorist Francis James Child, who collected ballads from rural New England in the 19th century, is an example of a scholar who deliberately selected tunes from his subjects. His work on these “Child Ballads” has since become a definitive source for other scholars and musicians, reinforcing their quality of authenticity (Post 2004, 25).

passive listeners in that their choices to preserve certain elements of the music have a significant impact on the continuation of the tradition. Over time, their recordings and transcriptions of songs and tunes become themselves a marker of authority and authenticity, influencing insiders and outsiders who interact with the tradition. In her analysis of staged *veillées*⁸ in early 20th century Québec, for example, Laura Risk describes how members of Montréal’s urban middle classes deliberately selected elements of the tradition — particular instrumentations and certain types of tunes — which for them were the manifestations of an unbroken musical tradition that symbolized Québec’s rural national character (Risk 2020, 48). Their choice to foreground these elements lives on in contemporary stereotypes of French Canadian music, reflecting the power that interventionists have over the development of ideas of authentic music.

Ultimately, however, the assignation of authenticity in music extends beyond the essentializing and sometimes reactionary impulses of outsiders. For those who practice certain musical traditions, authenticity is often more of a subjective feeling than an objective quality which can be measured. It can be both intensely personal and communitarian, and is highly dependent on the context in which a tradition is performed, consumed, or mediated. It is also subject to constant change, and refers to the present as well as the past. In Canada’s Magdalen Islands, for example, the highly improvisational fiddling style of players like Pascal Miousse is increasingly recognized as an expression of an authentically *madelinot* tradition, prized not for its historical value but instead for its innovative qualities (Forsyth 2020, 156). In nearby Cape Breton, some traditional music recordings are valued for their “polished” aesthetic, which may be seen as truer to the music than “raw,” mostly unedited recordings (Hayes 2020, 281). And in mid-20th century Québec as well as late 19th and early 20th century New England, players of

⁸ An evening gathering with dancing and music, from French *veiller*, “to stay up”.

traditional music had few reservations about borrowing tunes from contemporary popular music, country and western, and other genres. As one of Risk's Québécois respondents expressed, "Yes, that was folk music too. It was all folk music" (Risk 2020, 63). In these examples and others, it is clear that not all conceptions of authenticity are grounded in preservationist ideals — they can also emphasize the quality of "realness" which players and listeners may assign to a changing tradition.

Don Roy and Authentic Traditional Music in New England

Though academic literature on questions of authenticity in New England French Canadian traditional music is scarce, ethnomusicologist Tom Faux's 2009 article on Don Roy, a Franco-American fiddler from southern Maine, offers a compelling sketch of the competing ideas of authentic traditions in Maine. Don learned to play the fiddle from his uncle Lucien Mathieu as a teenager in the 1970s, and honed his craft at family house parties and at fiddling competitions across New England. Inspired by his uncle and influenced by several noted Franco-American and Québécois fiddlers, Don quickly became a respected musician in his own right, and an authority on Franco-American musical traditions (Faux 2009, 37).

In the late 20th century, music festivals became major sites for performances of Franco-American culture in New England. Capitalizing on increasing enthusiasm for "world music," festival organizers in Maine and beyond sought out Franco-American musicians in order to "maintain and display aspects of Franco-American culture while also satisfying a growing mainstream consumer market for regionally-based entertainment" (Faux 2009, 43). Don played at many of these festivals, and attained prominence as a representative of Franco-American musical cultures. But as Faux notes, festivals and the granting organizations which promote them

“may be irrelevant to, or even at odds with people’s lived experience” (2009, 43). Thanks to Don and other performers like him, Franco-Americans were represented on stage, but this representation was not enough to stave off the pressures of assimilation and social disintegration that the community faced.

In response to a lack of institutional support for Franco-American musical traditions, Don founded Fiddle-icious, a group which gathers together fiddle players to teach them the tunes and techniques of French Canadian traditional music and other related styles. Weekly workshops cultivate not only musical skills, but also a sense of togetherness — an especially important quality in the context of Franco-American communities, where traditional social gatherings such as church services have declined in importance (Faux 2009, 50). Don’s founding of Fiddle-icious thus provides an interesting case study in concepts of authenticity and its competing expressions in different musical settings. According to Faux, “Authentic cultural difference is valuable currency among presenters, who, in order to simplify messages of ethnic identity may display aspects of heritage symbolically” (2009, 50). But Franco-American musicians, in contrast to festival organizers and other promoters of culture, may prioritize other forms of playing which they hold to be more valuable in maintaining Franco-American cultural integrity.

The ideas of authentic transmission of musical traditions and the sense of community that animate Fiddle-icious extend the diverse understandings of authenticity discussed in the previous section of this chapter, and offer broader lessons for studies of French Canadian traditional music. Furthermore, they provide a brief preview of the discussion I will present in Chapter 4, in which I show that ideas of community and authenticity are closely intertwined in Franco-American contexts, and are particularly relevant to players of French Canadian traditional music in their efforts to preserve Franco-American culture.

As I have discussed in this chapter, definitions of authenticity in traditional music vary among those created by marginal outside observers, interventionist preservationists (who may come from inside or outside a tradition), and more “inventive” bearers of tradition. These definitions are not limited to musicians and listeners; they are also modified by various mediators — anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, journalists, recording artists, music festival organizers, and others — whose aesthetic decisions about how to present the music influence others’ perceptions of tradition. These actors may occupy multiple positions within the context of music-making, and their ideas of authenticity may refer to a number of individual elements within music and its social context that create a sense of genuineness, including the location, purpose, and audience of the music; the genre, instrumentation, mode, and medium⁹ through which it is conveyed; and the geographic origin and socioeconomic class of the musicians. All of these factors combine in different ways to produce different effects on participants in musical environments, such that one person interacting with the music might perceive it to be genuine while another might find it inauthentic. Those who define authenticity in traditional music do so in constant relation to these changing conditions — which at first may result in seemingly contradictory definitions, but which in fact points to the diversity of conceptions of the authentic and the various individual and communitarian meanings which they hold.

Even as scholars have deconstructed the concepts of authenticity and of tradition, individuals continue to mobilize these ideas in their everyday lives. Though marked by a variety of different and sometimes contradictory interpretations, authenticity is still an important social and cultural force. In studies of folk music, investigating authenticity provides a means of

⁹ By mode, I am referring to different types of transmission: music played through a speaker as opposed to music played live, for example. By medium, I am referring mostly to the distinction between music “translated” from notes on a page and music played “by ear.”

understanding the social context in which music is played and the nationalist, ethnic, geographic, and economic factors which shape its practice. As I will discuss in the following chapters, Franco-Americans and musicians who play French Canadian traditional music are particularly shaped by these factors, and investigations of authenticity and tradition are therefore essential to understanding their experiences. While the concept of authenticity is an important social force which shapes individual experiences of music, the ethnographic evidence I will present suggests that musicians recognize authenticity as dynamic and part of complex configurations of social practices.

CHAPTER THREE

Immigration and Music in New England Franco-American Communities, 1840-Present

In the mid-19th century, millions of immigrants came to work in the burgeoning textile and paper mills of New England. While at first dominated by workers of Irish descent, the region's industrial centers soon found themselves inundated with newcomers from the north. Nearly one million French Canadians migrated to the United States between 1840 and 1930, and they quickly became one of the most significant immigrant groups in New England (Choquette 2018, 1). Many of these people brought with them the distinct social structures and cultural practices of their native country, including a rich music tradition.

Though contemporary Franco-Americans — the descendants of immigrants from the francophone regions of eastern Canada¹⁰ — are in many ways very different from their ancestors, their experiences are still shaped strongly by this history. By tracing the Franco-American experience through time, and the evolution of Franco-American music in particular, we may begin to see how Franco-Americans create meaning in the present. In this chapter, I will briefly discuss the trajectory of French Canadians in the aftermath of the British conquest of New France, their migration to the United States, and their process of becoming Franco-American. Finally, I will provide a more detailed account of French Canadian and Franco-American music traditions, focusing on their development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

¹⁰ Including what is now Québec, some parts of Ontario, and parts of the Canadian Maritime Provinces, the last of which is often referred to as Acadia.

From Canada to New England: The History of Franco-Americans

Though French-speaking people have lived and traded in northeastern North America since the 16th century, the Franco-American story truly begins in the military conflicts between France and Great Britain in the 18th century. From the founding of Québec City in 1608 to the beginning of the French and Indian War in 1753, France had controlled a vast, resource-rich swath of North America, anchored by its settlements on the Saint Lawrence River. In 1759, after a British force scaled the cliffs of Québec and captured the city, New France fell into British hands. With this defeat, tens of thousands of French settlers in the Saint Lawrence River Valley became British subjects, allowed to maintain their language and Catholic faith but forced under the political and economic domination of a foreign power (Muller 2014, 44). Though French Canadians were able to demand some concessions from the Crown, many remained displeased with the arrangement, which granted a small British elite an oversized role in governing the new British province of Lower Canada. This discontentment would last for decades. In 1837, a group of impassioned *patriotes* revolted against their British overlords in hopes of gaining greater self-determination, but to no avail. As a measure to prevent further rebellions, Lower Canada was eventually merged with the predominantly anglophone province of Upper Canada (Vermette 2018, 34).

Faced with an assimilationist government and decreasing agricultural prosperity in rural areas, many French Canadians looked to the United States. From 1840 to 1935, nearly one million people relocated from French Canada to New England (Choquette 2018, 1). Rail lines carried immigrant passengers from Montréal, Québec, and other Canadian cities to Manchester, New Hampshire, Lowell, Massachusetts, and Lewiston, Maine, among other destinations (Allen 1972, 372). Most French Canadians settled in urban areas, where they could find paying jobs at

textile mills and shoe factories, but many were also dispersed throughout the woods of northern New England in lumber camps (Newton 2016, 12). As Leslie Choquette notes, French Canadians were not limited to just one kind of work; they also farmed the land, established businesses, and labored in quarries and on the railroad (2018, 4-5). Nor did they remain exclusively in New England; motivated by lingering family ties to Canada and cheap rail fares, French Canadians and frequently moved back and forth across the border for seasonal work and to visit family (Allen 1972, 376).

Initially, most French Canadian immigrants were clustered into urban ethnic enclaves. Dubbed *Petits Canadas* or “Little Canadas,” these working-class neighborhoods were often located near mills. As more and more French Canadians arrived in New England, Little Canadas developed institutions to support their populations. In the words of historian Yves Frenette, French Canadians “worshiped in French-language churches, sent their children to parochial schools, joined their own clubs, read their own French-language newspapers... played music in their own bands, celebrated their patron saint each year, and shaped a culture of their own” (Frenette 2011, 467). Spurred by this social cohesion, a distinctly Franco-American identity began to develop, rooted in French Canadian (and to some extent Acadian) culture but strongly influenced by its new environment.

Little Canadas did not exist in a vacuum, however. Franco-Americans competed with other ethnic groups like the Irish, whose control over the Catholic establishment in New England they resented, and with whom they often brawled in the streets (Frenette 2011, 469). Still, their greatest adversary was the Anglo-American elite. Though some New Englanders — millowners in particular — saw Franco-Americans as a necessary evil, others were convinced they had no place in the United States. “With some exceptions the Canadian French are the Chinese of the

Eastern States. They care nothing for our institutions... they are a horde of industrial invaders, not a stream of stable settlers” wrote Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics director Carroll Wright in 1881 (Wright 1889, 150-151, as cited in Vermette 2018, 206). Fears of divided loyalties and conspiracies to catholicize New England haunted Anglo-American perceptions of Franco-Americans for decades.

In response to these pressures, Franco-Americans stressed the importance of *la survivance*, or the survival of French Canadian culture in the face of anglophone hegemony. Based on the three pillars of *franco-américanité* — language, faith, and culture — *la survivance* was not only a defensive strategy, but a means of adapting to American culture. Even as they founded national societies and established their own churches and parochial schools, Franco-Americans were quick to emphasize the complexity of their identity. In Lewiston, Maine, revelers on the national holiday of St. John the Baptist’s Day hung both the Stars and Stripes and the French *tricolore* from their windows, and sang “O Canada,” “The Star-Spangled Banner,” and “La Marseillaise” in equal measure (Richard 2007, 213). French Canadian, American, and French identities were not mutually exclusive ethnic expressions in 19th-century francophone New England.

In the 20th century, as new waves of immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe reached the United States, anti-Franco-American sentiment diminished in New England. Nevertheless, Franco-Americans continued to assimilate to American culture. Many stopped speaking French or otherwise did not teach it to their children for fear that they might be teased (Albert et al. 2013, 63). Old stereotypes about “dumb Frenchmen” persisted well into the late 20th century, however, and Franco-Americans still struggled to find their place in American society.

The Historical Evolution of French Canadian and Franco-American Music

Just as the French language and the Catholic faith were important means of ethnic expression for French Canadians in New England, so was their folklore, including music. In Canada, music had been an integral part of the daily lives of French Canadians. Folk songs there, according to Canadian folklorist Marius Barbeau and his collaborator Edward Sapir, “seemed as familiar as barley-bread to the pioneer settlers of the St. Lawrence Valley,” and accompanied the everyday tasks and leisure activities of farmers, loggers, fur traders, and explorers (Barbeau and Sapir 13, 1925, as cited in Lane 1990, 377). Alongside songs, French Canadians also had a considerable repertoire of instrumental music. Both were practiced at *veillées*, informal gatherings devoted to music, dance, and socializing that were common in homesteads and lumber camps.

While Barbeau and other early folklorists largely saw the French Canadian music tradition as an extension of earlier French singing and instrumental traditions — evidenced by their resemblance to tunes from Normandy, Poitou, Vendée, and Saintonge — the music was not frozen in time, nor was it untouched by other influences (Lane 1990, 380). The instrumental music of French Canada was heavily influenced by the Anglo-Celtic repertoire of English, Irish, and Scottish settlers. It also included songs with shifting musical meter, a distinctly French Canadian innovation known as “crooked tunes.” Similarly, the singing tradition inherited from the French countryside was modified in the new environment and culture of French Canada, such that old tunes often took on new lyrics (Lane 1990, 381). Early French Canadian music was therefore marked by a considerable degree of cultural syncretism and inventiveness.

As French Canadians began to immigrate to the United States in the mid-19th century, their music once again adapted to reflect new social realities. “Songs of leaving,” centered

around the experiences of emigrants from French Canada, expressed both the pain of departing the mother country and promise of a new life in the United States. Different songs expressed the varied experience of French Canadian emigrants, with some describing Canada as a place of abject poverty and others depicting the United States as a strange and hostile land filled with exploitative mill bosses. Beyond their textual themes, these songs are notable in that they were often composed to the tunes of other popular French Canadian and American folk songs (Deschênes 1986, 61-65).

In New England, French Canadian music came to reflect diverse influences. According to Brigitte Lane, the singing tradition in New England's Little Canadas could be divided into a variety of categories: laments, patriotic songs, songs of immigration and exile, lumbering songs, songs describing mill town life, love songs, marriage songs, songs for holidays and other special occasions, occupational songs, and, finally, nonsense songs (1990, 385-86). Music also occurred in a variety of environments, including in the home, at church, in lumber camps, and occasionally in public settings. Most often, domestic *veillées* were the site of music-making, including both singing and instrumental music and marked by their informality. Such gatherings were often held on weekend nights, but they also acquired a special importance during the winter holidays. In particular, the week between New Year's Day and Epiphany was an important time for celebration in the home. Other holidays, including Christmas, Mardi Gras, and St. John the Baptist's Day, were also occasions for music, though often of a different nature; Christmas, for example, was celebrated with religious hymns, while St. John the Baptist's Day was marked with parades and brass bands (Works Progress Administration 1949, 17).

For instrumental music in particular, the fiddle was highly prized, and skilled fiddlers were the centerpiece of any good *veillée*, often accompanied by piano, harmonica, banjo, or

spoons (Lane 1990, 438). Dancing was also central to instrumental music, particularly the popular *quadrille* and the *gigue*, roughly corresponding, respectively, to American square dancing and the Irish jig. Both of these dances were performed initially in private homes and in the lumber camps (where men danced with each other) and learned mainly from family members. As domestic *veillées* became less important in the 20th century, dancing moved into public dance halls. It was here that “calling,” conducted in a mix of French and English and of spoken and singing voice, found its start (Lane 1990, 442).

Initially, the vocal and instrumental music of the French Canadians was marked by oral and imitative transmission, passed down in families from generation to generation. In the early 20th century, however, the rise of sheet music and traditional music orchestras shifted the ways in which the music was learned and performed among Franco-Americans. In Lowell, Massachusetts, the brothers Eusèbe and Philias Champagne were noted performers and composers, and many of the tunes in their repertoire were eventually transcribed and published by their brother, Octave. The popularity of Octave’s written arrangements, according to Lane, marked a transition “from a stage of oral transmission to the stage of Franco-American popular music” (1990, 440).

Outside these popular sources, Franco-American musicians in New England often relied on *chansonniers*, or songbooks, the most prominent of which was *La Bonne Chanson*, compiled and published in 1937 by a French Canadian priest. Specifically Franco-American songbooks were also produced; in the same year, the Union Saint Jean Baptiste d’Amérique, a Franco-American patriotic society, published a compilation entitled “Chants populaires des Franco-Américains” (“Popular Songs of the Franco-Americans”) (Lane 1990, 384). Both collections included lyrics and musical notation and were widely popular in Franco-American communities,

alongside homemade songbooks, which typically only included lyrics as an aid to the memory of the musicians (Lane 1990, 383).

Franco-American Music and Cultural Syncretism in New England

If the sheet music of the Champagne brothers and Canadian and American music compilations demonstrated a shift in how Franco-American music was learned and played, homemade *chansonniers* recorded another shift — namely, the blending of different genres and traditions in New England Franco-American communities. Songbooks were drawn from the diverse musical repertoire of French Canada, but also of Acadia, a culturally distinct francophone region in the Canadian Maritimes which was the source of a smaller but not insignificant number of immigrants to New England mill towns. Songs of Acadian origin were often written for only one singer, sometimes with fiddle or accordion accompaniment, while those of French Canadian origin were more often call and response songs (*chansons à répondre*). Additionally, while these songbooks were largely composed of tunes that could be traced back to Canada, they also included jazz standards, along with pieces of the hillbilly and country and western music that swept the United States in the 1950s and 1960s (Pelletier 1990, 2).

As these inclusions show, Franco-American music was syncretic, just as its ancestral tradition had been earlier in Canada. Mill towns like Waltham, Massachusetts, a destination for Acadian immigrants from Cape Breton, were important sites of cultural mixing. Living in close proximity in Little Canadas, Acadians exchanged songs with their French Canadian neighbors and sang in both French and English, reflecting their new American environment and dual identity (LeBlanc and Sadowsky 1986, 135). In rural areas, Franco-American musicians also exchanged music at contra dances with their Anglo-American neighbors, who played a different

but related style of music. This interaction introduced not only Anglo-Celtic tunes, but also fiddle and dance techniques, to Franco-Americans, who in turn influenced the music and dance of the Yankees (Post 2004, 102).

The presence of American popular music in these songbooks also indicates that, in the minds of Franco-Americans, music was not limited to “traditional” tunes derived from Canada. In fact, Franco-Americans were enthusiastic listeners and performers of American music genres, especially country and western. According to ethnomusicologist Clifford Murphy, performing country music provided a means for Franco-Americans and other immigrant ethnic groups to assimilate into Anglo-American society. By adopting “frontier” dress, personalities, and stage names, these groups could “build bridge[s] between traditions, reshape ethnic boundaries, and navigate or resolve the frontier tension between American and immigrant worldviews” (2014, 127). Even passively listening to the same music as their Anglo-American neighbors allowed Franco-Americans to claim their place in a country which did not always welcome their presence.

Franco-American Music in the Late 20th Century

As Franco-American music evolved new modes of transmission and absorbed new cultural influences in the first half of the 20th century, it was also increasingly shaped by assimilationist pressures. By the 1980s, immigration from francophone Canada had slowed, and Franco-American music as it had been played in the 19th and early 20th centuries was in decline. In 1986, Deborah Waldman described the extant French Canadian musical tradition of Woonsocket, Rhode Island as the property of “active bearers,” for whom the music was still living and an important means of interacting with the world, and “passive bearers,” for whom the

music formed an integral part of their memories but for whom it was not necessarily important in daily life (1986, 172). According to Waldman, active bearers were especially “those who [had] internalized the cognitive structures of the rural Québec of their youth and who still [found] occasions to experience the cohesive force of the relationship between interpreter and listener” (1986, 177). Both active and passive bearers drew from a “base repertoire” which still included many French Canadian tunes. However, Waldman recognized that Franco-American music traditions were constantly in flux, marked by processes of “dissolution and acquisition” that continually redefined the music (1986, 179).

Despite the growing academic interest in folk music traditions after the folk revival of the 1970s, there is a significant lack of scholarship addressing the evolution of Franco-American music in the late 20th century. Nonetheless, it can be stated that at the time of Lane’s research in the 1980s in Lowell, social dancing was no longer a public activity in that city and was confined to a few groups under the auspices of local Franco-American patriotic societies. Even in such a bastion of Franco-American *survivance*, the members feared that the traditions would soon be lost at the hands of a younger generation who saw little importance in the dancing. “In my opinion, it’s going to die!” remarked one informant (Lane 1990, 446).

French Canadians and Franco-Americans have historically occupied a marginal position in North America, surrounded by a “sea of anglophones”¹¹ hostile to their language, religion, and culture. Despite all odds, they have found ways to preserve their cultural traditions and to adapt to the dominant elements of Canadian and American society. A closer examination of Franco-American music reveals that these traditions are inseparable from this broader social and historical context; marked by dynamics of cultural homogeneity and syncretism, preservation

¹¹ This phrase (in French “*mer d’anglophones*”) is sometimes applied in francophone Canada to describe the geographic inferiority of North American francophone populations and the feeling of isolation that it creates.

and innovation, they mirror the experience of Franco-Americans in an uncertain and ever-changing world.

The sources consulted above provide an image of Franco-American music as it was played in the 19th and 20th centuries in New England. Now, in the 21st century, it is important to assess whether such descriptions are still valid. What does the musical tradition look like at a time when Franco-American national societies have faded in importance, when music no longer fills dance halls every weekend, and when few surviving Franco-Americans have any memory of or persistent connections to Québec or Acadia? How do current musicians refer to the past and assign value to it? The stories of contemporary players of French Canadian traditional music, which I will consider in the following chapter, may offer some answers to these questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

Social and Subjective Authenticity and Community in French Canadian Traditional Music

In the previous two chapters, I have explained the social and cultural construction of authenticity in folk music, especially as it pertains to Celtic-influenced genres like French Canadian and Irish traditional music. I have also presented the ways in which discussions of authentic traditions intersect with the specific historical experiences of Franco-Americans and their musical practices. In conversations with my interview subjects, I aimed to identify how these cultural and historical threads were woven into each subject's ideas of his or her music. Though the stories I encountered were by nature specific to each person, they also reveal certain common experiences and opinions which illuminate the values that players of French Canadian traditional music assign to their art. Conceptions of authenticity among these musicians were tied to various aspects of the social context in which Franco-American music occurs, from the location in which music is learned to the way in which the music is interpreted and reinterpreted. Some of these were expressed in response to direct questions about authenticity; others emerged in interviewees' narratives of their musical experiences, often conflicting with their explicit views of what counts as "authentic" French Canadian traditional music.

What ultimately emerges from these interviews is a multifaceted image of authenticity, an idea which, like the music it describes, is constantly being reinvented. Conceptions of authenticity span the realms of individual, familial, communal, and ethnic experience, stretch across time, and weave themselves between musical genres. In the following pages, I focus on the manner in which interviewees conceive of the traditions which they practice, and how they situate them within a larger musical and cultural community. In particular, the concepts of

subjective authenticity and *social authenticity*¹² — conceptions of authenticity centered on individual experience and on social relations, respectively — become useful in understanding how players of French Canadian traditional music think of the cultural practices in which they engage. The interplay between ideas of social and subjective authenticity is particularly evident in my interviewees’ conceptions of music as family history and cultural heritage, music as personal experience, and music as an element of social dances. In putting their ideas of authenticity into practice, I argue, these musicians come to occupy positions which move beyond the more simplistic categories of “revivalists” and “preservationists” often mentioned in discussions of music revivals.¹³

Family History, Cultural Heritage, and Social Authenticity

As discussed in the previous chapter, Franco-Americans in New England had by the mid-20th century begun to assimilate to the cultural norms of their adopted homeland. In a matter of generations, a large portion of the Franco-American population had given up its language and many of its cultural practices in an effort to adapt to Anglo-American norms and shield itself from ethnic violence. One of the casualties of this adaptation was French Canadian traditional music, which faded in popularity as Franco-Americans staked claims to more “American” genres like country and western music and jazz.

For the Franco-American musicians with whom I spoke, born either during or after this period of assimilation, French Canadian traditional music was therefore an object of recovery, a

¹² I borrow these terms from Johan Fornäs, who discusses them in his work on late modern cultural practices (Fornäs 1995, 276).

¹³ Tamara Livingston writes that “The ideology of authenticity, which combines historical research with reactionary ideas against the cultural mainstream, must be carefully constructed and maintained,” and that “knowledge and practice of this code has the added benefit of creating a strong feeling of cohesion among revivalists who become cultural insiders to the revived practice” (Livingston 1999, 74). I would counter that revivalists are not always motivated by exclusionary self-interest — in fact, they can be remarkably community-minded.

lost tradition that could be relearned and in turn conveyed to others. Interviewees were often motivated by a sense of individual, familial, and broader cultural loss which they sought to remedy by immersing themselves in the music of their kin. Implicit in their efforts is an emphasis on the family as the site of authentic cultural transmission, echoing the importance of traditional music in New England Franco-American households of the 19th and early 20th centuries (Post 2004, 82). However, even as they associate music closely with their heritage, the musicians I interviewed are also driven to share this music with the community at large, functioning simultaneously as keepers of family tradition and as promoters of Franco-American culture. Authentic French Canadian traditional music as it presents itself in these stories is twofold: it refers both to a private, familial sphere marked by a more intimate experience of heritage and to a public sphere in which this heritage is translated into a generalized Franco-American culture.

Cindy Larock, a self-identified “Franco-Yankee” from Lewiston and the first musician I interviewed, provides an example of this duality of perspectives. As she spoke about her childhood, she described her upbringing in a mixed French- and English-American family as lacking some of the elements of what might be considered “traditional” Franco-American culture:

I wasn't aware of there being much of anything in the way of traditional music and dance until I got up into my teens, and that was largely because even though I am half French — on my father's side — my mother was a Yankee, and she didn't really speak French. And my father was a small business owner and he was just more focused on succeeding in that aspect, and it's not all that unusual. It was kind of typical for people like him to just aspire to be an American, and live the American dream.

Even though this experience might be considered normal for Franco-Americans who came of age during the second half of the 20th century, Cindy still felt a sense of loss. Speaking of French Canadian traditional music, she lamented,

... I didn't hear it, and that's because I wasn't fortunate enough to be a part of a 100% Franco-American family where the music traditions happened really naturally, fifty years ago or so, in the homes, and for family gatherings, whether it be songs or fiddle playing, or accordion playing or whatever. That was going on in Lewiston, I've found out since — it went on for quite a while, [but it's] pretty much died out at this point.

For Cindy, homes and family gatherings are “natural” sites of musical practices, corresponding to the historical position of the *veillée* in the social life of French Canadian immigrants to New England. Also implicit in her account is the association of music transmission with heritage; she locates genuine French Canadian traditional music in fully Franco-American families, where musical skills could presumably be more easily transferred from parents to children.

Nonetheless, Cindy's work to revive traditional music in Lewiston has had a decidedly communitarian character. “I realized there was this wonderful cultural treasure that I personally enjoyed, but I was also able to observe all kinds of different people, all different ages enjoy it as well, participate as musicians or as dancers, and so it set me on a mission to try to expose as many other people to it as possible,” she told me. While Cindy's efforts to revive the music and dance traditions of her native Lewiston are certainly motivated by her own experience of lost cultural heritage, they are also driven by a desire to share this heritage with others.

Other musicians also took on similar roles in their efforts to preserve their family's traditions. Robert Sylvain, a Maine singer and guitarist who plays Acadian traditional music, grew up in a household where music was present, but was not directly passed on to him. His

father and grandmother were singers, but he only came to play the music of his ancestors later in life. Robert's work to recover family traditions is motivated not only by a desire to reconnect with his Acadian roots, but also to share his family's repertoire with other members of the community. Speaking of his childhood in Massachusetts, Robert recalled:

So, even though it was sort of in my family, and I was familiar with the French heritage through osmosis, it wasn't like deliberately handed down to me, if that makes any sense. You know, when we visited my *mémère*¹⁴ in Waterville, Maine, there was always music. They weren't musicians, but she was a singer also. But I was really too young to appreciate it, I guess. And/or it was something that my dad sort of downplayed because it was a liability for him — that is, being French.

Like Cindy, Robert regretted this lack of transmission. Nonetheless, in his adult life, he has worked to keep the music alive in his family. Robert's rediscovery of Acadian traditional music is closely tied into his work on "Mémère's Notebook," a songbook with accompanying recordings that attempts to recapture the music of his grandmother, an Acadian from the St. John Valley. Talking about the book, he noted the value of playing this rediscovered music with his children:

... the most rewarding thing for me has been sharing this music with my children. Because I think that was sort of what the point was, the intent was when my *mémère* wrote these songs down. She wasn't intending to publish a book, right? She intended to leave it for her progeny. She wrote those lyrics down so that she would have them handy to pull out to sing at a kitchen party. So the fact that my kids sang on this recording that I did is a source of great pride to me, that they're learning French as a second language, but

¹⁴ The word for grandmother in North American French, still commonly used in Franco-American families.

as a family language is really a source of pride for me. And when we sit down and sing them together, which we never do in public, we do that in private, that is I think what feels most natural to me and it's the most rewarding. To know that my kids are learning these songs that have been handed directly to me, for the express purpose of handing them down.

In his efforts to keep Acadian music alive in Maine, Robert privileges sharing music with close kin. But, crucially, "Mémère's Notebook" is accessible to anyone who is interested in the tradition, from other Acadian musicians and listeners whose families drew from the same repertoire to non-Acadians who are encountering the music for the first time. "When I started to dig into [the songs], I realized their power as a tool to sort of illuminate the past, and illuminate our culture as it was and as it is," Robert told me. In this manner, his work resonates beyond the bounds of family and serves as a record of the culture of the broader Acadian community.

Lisa Ornstein, the only non-Franco-American with whom I spoke, further emphasized the importance of family tradition during our conversation. Her lessons with Louis Beaudoin, a noted New England fiddler whom she met by chance one summer at the National Folk Festival in Alexandria, Virginia, in effect inducted her into the world of French Canadian traditional music, though she was not of French Canadian heritage herself. The friendly relationship she enjoyed with Beaudoin and his relatives in Vermont served as the setting for her learning.

And so it was just that personal relationship between me, which then very quickly became a relationship with the family, because I would get on the Greyhound bus and go up to Burlington and visit with [Louis], and fortunately for me he introduced me to Pete Sutherland and Karen and so I had a place to stay. But I spent a lot of time in Mr. Beaudoin's little music nook off his kitchen and got to know the family...

She continued,

... at that time in 1973, in a way I was sort of like the sixth Beaudoin kid in terms of the music being passed along. And so I was folded in. Louis treated me as if I was his daughter! He was very proud that I was learning these tunes — in fact he would take me to kitchen tonks and to the Northeast Fiddler’s Association meetings and say, “Go on, play some tunes!” And so I think that that was, you know it’s a combination of all those particular situations that were at play in the way in which the relationship developed. It was nothing predicated, there was nothing calculated about any of that. It just was what it was!

As an outsider to the Franco-American community who learned French Canadian music in the company of a musical family, Lisa inhabits an interesting space; her story suggests that ethnic identity is not a prerequisite for the acquisition of the tradition. At the same time, Lisa’s description of her experience with the Beaudoins prioritizes heritage transmission — her learning was only possible as an “adopted” family member introduced into the musical milieu of Burlington, Vermont’s *Petit Canada*.

Though she now teaches French Canadian traditional music to fiddle students across North America and the world, Lisa is aware of her place within this history of transmission. In her role as director of the Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, a position which she held from 1991 to 2007, Lisa felt motivated to preserve the musical heritage of the St. John Valley, but recognized the limits of her work. “You know when I think about it now — it was fraught for me to be there. I wasn’t from the community, it would have been I think, in an ideal world, someone from within that community,” she explained to me. Like the virtuous outsiders Brown-Saracino describes, Lisa situates herself here at the margins of the Franco-

American and Acadian cultures of her adopted community. But unlike passive gentrifiers in Dresden or Provincetown, Lisa has taken an active role in preserving the music which she learned from Louis Beaudoin, and is comfortable in her alterity. “[I] never thought for a second, nor will I ever think that I was an insider. I’m not! I’m an outsider. I’m not a French Canadian fiddle player, I am a fiddle player who plays French Canadian music. And I think that I felt absolutely comfortable being an outsider,” she told me. Lisa’s story suggests that newcomers to Franco-American musical traditions do not necessarily stand apart from their transmission and preservation; even if they hold Franco-American musicians to be more authentic bearers of tradition, they can also challenge these rigid roles through their participation in the music, and take ownership of it in their own way.

In each of these examples, musicians enter into a conversation with both their specific familial heritage and a broader cultural heritage. To them, authentic music is not only located in families — it also belongs to Franco-Americans more generally. In endeavoring to recover family traditions and to promote Franco-American culture, Cindy, Robert, and Lisa thus move beyond the narrow focus of revivalists and challenge previous conceptions of bearers of tradition. Above all, their stories suggest the important role of social authenticity in driving cultural preservation.

Subjective Authenticity in Individual Experiences of Music

Despite their distance from family traditions, the musicians who I interviewed all reported feeling a deep, intensely physical connection to French Canadian traditional music. Typically, this connection was associated with a strong sense of Franco-American heritage, and a

sense that music runs in the blood.¹⁵ However, while often colored by these musicians' family histories, this connection was also a profoundly personal experience, one which drew in players regardless of their ancestry. Ideas of subjective authenticity frequently emerged in the feelings surrounding these experiences. Above all, interviewees described the music as feeling “natural” to them, whether they conceived of it as a revival of an old family tradition or as the beginning of an individual passion.

Greg Boardman, a Lewiston fiddler distanced from his French Canadian heritage by two generations of language shift and assimilation, found in French Canadian music an expression of a lost cultural and linguistic milieu. Though his parents were fond of music, they did not play the *chansons à répondre* or jigs that he now enjoys. Nonetheless, his adoption of the genre feels natural to him:

The music fits perfectly with my memory of Nana, my grandmother, an immigrant from Trois-Rivières to Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and her relatives... the rhythms, melodies and phrasing of the old Québécois and Acadian tunes, I feel, are very closely aligned with the cadences of the [French] language, and scratching out the tunes in good time is a beautiful connection with that part of my heritage. I feel my blood responds in nostalgia and desire.

Greg's fiddling is motivated by an embodied connection to his ancestors, expressed through the metaphor of blood. Playing a French Canadian tune, in this context, is more than just the rediscovery of an aural expression of culture — it is a physical means of connecting with the past.

¹⁵ Ideas of blood transmission also appear in other Celtic-influenced traditions; ethnomusicologist Burt Feintuch has written, for example, that “In Cape Breton, people say that music is in the blood, and that it seems to travel along family lines” (Feintuch 2019, 216)

Greg's experience was not uncommon among other interviewees, who also approached French Canadian music in the spirit of rediscovery. Cindy Larock, reminiscing on her family's musical inclinations, offered a similarly heritage-based view of her own musical experience.

Ironically, my grandfather, my father's father, played fiddle! I did not know this until long after my father died and long after my grandfather died, but I found a photo of my grandfather, Stanislas, holding a fiddle, and a picture of him with a dance band that he was part of. And it turns out that his father, my great-grandfather, also played the fiddle and brought that down with him from Québec, and presumably taught my grandfather. Unfortunately it skipped my father in terms of being a musician, but I think it made its way [to me], it lives on in my passion for music. I'm not a fiddler, but I love fiddle music and I've always loved music.

Even when music was not a part of their family history, other musicians noted a particularly visceral response upon their first exposure to French Canadian music. John Cote, a Lewiston guitarist, felt that there was something special about French Canadian tunes, both in terms of their emotional effect on him and their association with Franco-American culture.

And it was really that that kind of blew open the doors of the cultural connection in the music and what my role in it [was], even though it may not have been in my own family. It was like "wow, this is a part of my culture!" Genuinely. And especially the Franco-American music, I knew it was part of the Lewiston-Auburn culture and Maine culture as well, so there was something about that — I loved the Irish music as well, but there was just something about the Franco-American or the Québécois music in particular that I liked. And the language, the songs that they had were kind of intriguing.

Furthermore, emotional responses to the music were not precluded by a lack of Franco-American heritage. Lisa's passion for French Canadian traditional music, for example, was kindled by her personal encounter with the music as an intern at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. There, she recounted, "I heard the first recording of Louis Beaudoin, and I was smitten! I just thought it was so beautiful and full of joy and really different than old time music. And it really struck me." When she met Louis Beaudoin at the National Folk Festival later that summer, the rest was history.

Players of Celtic-influenced musical styles often speak of their art in terms of its supernatural power, such that good music is said to "possess" those who play and listen to it (Quigley 1988, 110). From the moment they discovered French Canadian traditional music, the musicians I interviewed have been captivated by the genre. Such deeply personal experiences of music are another important locus for conceptions of authenticity, and also an important motivator to share this music with others.

Music and Social Dancing: Subjective Authenticity Meets Social Authenticity

If the musicians I interviewed often emphasized the familial, cultural, and personal dimensions of French Canadian traditional music, their stories also framed this music in terms of the larger New England community in which it circulates. From the historical *veillées* of New England's *Petits Canadas* to contemporary contra dances in grange halls, Franco-American music has always found expressions in public gatherings. These too are sites of intergenerational transmission and inspiration, as well as stages for conceptions of authenticity.

Ideas of public musical activities were important elements of the narratives which I collected and further reveal the ways in which Franco-American musicians understand cultural

practices to be genuine or inauthentic. In particular, these accounts focused on the role of music and dance as related practices. Describing the history of French Canadian traditional music, for example, Cindy Larock explained to me that the term “jigs and reels” (used to refer to the music popular among 19th- and early 20th-century New England French Canadians) “doesn’t refer to just the music, it’s sort of the whole milieu of the music and the dancing that would spontaneously erupt from the music, and the singing maybe too, mostly the fiddle music and the feet and all that.” In other words, music in this context is more than a collection of notes; it is a social activity that transcends mere listening.

Social dances, including contra dances, provide a particularly interesting case study for analyzing conceptions of authenticity in contemporary French Canadian traditional music. According to Dorothea Hast, New England contra dancing may be characterized as “a non-commercial associational collective, based on interest, ‘affinity,’ and experience rather than more traditional notions of the bounded community characterized by neighborhood, family relationships, ethnicity, and/or religious affiliation” (1993, 21). Furthermore, Rebecca Sachs Norris has discussed social dances as occasions for transcendent personal experiences in which individuals are able to lose themselves in the collective and “be danced” (2001, 120). Dances can thus be described as events which generate feelings of personal embodiment *and* communal participation, and which meld experiences of social and subjective authenticity.

Drawing on their own experiences of social dances, my interview subjects often situated “authentic” music within the dynamic environment of these events, which to them was emblematic of a thriving tradition. While they locate contra dances and *veillées* in part within their roots in Franco-American communities, their responses suggest that these events are also open for interpretation and participation beyond boundaries of heritage, and that their value as an

“authentic” practice can also derive from their shared, embodied nature. French Canadian traditional music may have a powerful effect on individuals, but in the context of a social dance, it can also animate a mass of musicians and dancers in new and interesting ways.

Cindy, who discovered French Canadian traditional music at dances in Lewiston, framed much of her own experience as a musician and caller in the context of the New England contra dance scene. Her understanding of authentic music is closely tied with her experience of the lively communal environment of the dances she has attended.

I never really wanted to perform, and I still don't, because I really believe that folk music and dancing is all about community, it's about sharing, it's not about performing. You put somebody on stage with a spotlight on them and the audience down below a distance away, and it becomes more kind of artificial. And the step dancing is kind of artificial because it's not social dancing, it's not a whole bunch of people of all different ages dancing together. [In social dancing] you have a partner but you also dance with your neighbors, and you can do it — you can learn how to do a good old French Canadian or New England or simple English contra dance. In five minutes you can be up there and doing it!

Lisa, remembering her days as a musician in Québec, also defined the music as part of a dancing environment. Speaking of the historical foundation of French Canadian music and other similar “traditional” styles, she emphasized that “in many of the fiddling traditions, the music was at the service of dancing! Within the family people enjoyed listening to the fiddle tunes. But it was really about getting people up and dancing, group dancing.” Though this statement in part reflects Lisa's academic expertise on fiddle music, it was also reinforced by her personal

experience at *veillées* in Québec City, which were marked by a high degree of group involvement. She recalled,

... the expression at these parties was “sing, dance, play, or show us your arse.” You don’t get to just go and sit there like a lump on a log. You’re part of the party and it’s your job to help make the party go... the value is on participation. You can’t have a party without food, you can’t have a party without drink, you can’t have a party without music, it’d be really nice if there was some dancing, and maybe there’ll be some singing. And I just — boy, oh boy, bring that on! Let’s have some of that. I love that. I love that because I’m fundamentally not a performer. I mean I have performed plenty. But I don’t thrill at getting out on the stage and having a bunch of people sitting like we were in church and going like this (applauds). That just doesn’t really do it for me quite honestly! I’d rather we be hanging around and dancing and having a drink and telling a joke.

Particularly evident in Cindy and Lisa’s responses is the value which they place on informality. To them, French Canadian traditional music is at its most natural when it occurs spontaneously within the context of a *veillée* or contra dance, not when it comes from a stage or from a recording. In such informal settings, the usual barriers between performers and audience are broken, and everyone becomes a participant in the music — a dynamic which both Lisa and Cindy see as an authentic aspect of French Canadian music and dance and which they are eager to share.

John Cote also expressed a similar opinion as he reflected on his discovery of French Canadian traditional music. Citing the sense of togetherness which he has experienced at dances, he explained that contra dancing held special value to him as an authentic practice, especially in contrast to other, more “popular” and “impersonal” forms of entertainment.

I was particularly excited with the contra dancing, because I do feel like that is a real genuine and continuous thread that goes way back in connecting people in the community... and so just going to a dance and having some live musicians playing and people out there dancing together, to me it just seems very genuine and such a tangible thing that people have to work on to make that happen. And with contra dancing it's very much like a community having to work together on the floor, it's not just two people dancing together and trying to show off skills or whatever, it's like a roomful of people all working together to make it happen.

John's enthusiasm for contra dances, like Lisa's for *veillées*, rests on a sense that they are fundamentally collaborative events. For him, the particular value of these dances lies in the interdependencies between musicians, dancers, and callers created in the moment at such events. Contra dances in this sense are not just a means of bringing communities together; they also create smaller-scale communities whose genuineness derives from their intimacy.

Social dances, and New England contra dances in particular, are interesting sites from which to consider conceptions of authenticity. Though their attendees and musical repertoire are often ethnically mixed, they provide players of French Canadian traditional music a space to play tunes, move together in time, and create community. The musicians I interviewed saw these functions as closely linked, and even inseparable. Their assessments of authenticity demonstrate the importance of both personal experience and social context to French Canadian traditional music, and also illuminate these musicians' deep desire to share their music with members of the community.

The experiences of the musicians introduced here — fiddle players and dancers, Franco-American and non-Franco-American — indicate the influence which ideas of social and

subjective authenticity hold among players of French Canadian traditional music. As their stories demonstrate, these musicians often connect concepts of authenticity with the sense of familial and cultural heritage and personal and communal belonging which the music conveys. These multiple, mutually inclusive formulations of what it means to be authentic reveal the diverse ways in which players of French Canadian traditional music assign value to their craft, and suggest that their engagement with the tradition has multiple social foundations. In the subsequent chapter, following this theme of diversity, I will discuss how these musicians' conceptions of authenticity are also temporally heterogeneous, referring to past, present, and future interpretations of music.

CHAPTER FIVE

Multitemporal Authenticity and Cultural Preservation

If the idea of family provides a productive framework for analyzing the meaning of authenticity in social structures, the divide between preservationist and innovative musical practices is also a useful lens for investigating the construction of systems of meaning. In the interviews I conducted, the musicians with whom I spoke frequently combined a respect for more “traditional” elements of music with a recognition of more “inventive” trends in contemporary Franco-American and French-Canadian music. Their understanding of authenticity is layered; they place value on the transmission of music within Franco-American families and communities but are also eager to share their craft with non-Franco-Americans, prioritize historical modes of transmission and playing but are willing to experiment with new genres, instrumentation, and even language. My interviewees, I argue, are therefore engaged in the construction of a *multitemporal authenticity*, a worldview marked by often contradictory opinions that expresses the tensions between past, present, and future versions of the music that they play. In this chapter, I will consider the expressions of these opinions.

Preserving Old Tunes: Cindy and Lisa

One of the primary motivations my interviewees mentioned for their work as musicians was the preservation of Franco-American traditions. For some, more specifically, their goal was to keep the “jigs and reels” of the earliest French Canadian and Acadian immigrants alive. Cindy Larock’s Maine Folque Co-op, which creates a space for musicians to share folk music tunes of all sorts, from Irish jigs to French Canadian reels and even Finnish waltzes, provides a good

example of these preservationist impulses. For Cindy, traditional music holds a particular value as a connection to the past and as an artifact of Franco-American culture.

This perspective especially was evident in Cindy's discussion of a singing group for Franco-American women in Lewiston which she founded. Though initially focused on songs which the women knew from their childhoods, the group's repertoire shifted toward popular music as it moved forward, a source of exasperation for Cindy.

In fact, I would roll my eyes increasingly in recent years, as some of the older women who knew the more traditional songs passed away or went into nursing homes and weren't able to participate, that the repertoire ended up being more American pop songs sung in French. It just bothered me! And so there's a whole — I had this whole love/hate relationship with this group, I mean I started them and I was in the audience [at the sing-alongs] every month, cheering them on. But I watched it evolve to be less and less traditional and more and more American schlock in French.

Cindy did recognize that this development could have different implications for Franco-American culture. Nonetheless, she remained focused on the preservation of older Franco-American musical practices. She pondered,

Is this Franco-American music? I stand back and I ask myself... Cindy, they're Franco-Americans, they're singing it, it must be Franco-American music. And it's like well, it is, and some of those songs I think are fun, too. But we really need to be focusing attention on the older traditional tunes and songs that will die out forever unless somebody tries to pass them on to the younger generation.

This drive to preserve old tunes was also present in other narratives from the musicians I interviewed. Recalling her experience learning from Louis Beaudoin, Lisa Ornstein mentioned

Louis's negative opinion of patter calls, a mid-20th century square dancing innovation which incorporated pop songs into music and dance:

And that was the hot thing, that's what people wanted to dance, and Louis just hated it! It just wasn't — you know he'd grown up with all this wonderful family tradition of playing for reels and *sets carrés*, you know? And he was one of the kindest men I ever met, and the only negative thing I think I ever heard him say was what he had to say about singing calls. He really didn't appreciate them!

Though she is not Franco-American, Lisa's view of contemporary Franco-American music in some ways reflects similar judgements. In her former position at the Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, she was engaged in promoting the music of the St. John Valley through her work as an afterschool fiddle teacher and as an organizer of community *galas* (fiddling competitions). Having learned French Canadian traditional music in Vermont and Québec, Lisa was particularly interested in promoting the older music of the region. Like Cindy, she was disappointed to find that the Franco-American music she heard was shifting genres.

And you know in the St. John Valley, I got there a generation too late. There were a couple of fiddle players playing, but mostly they were — whatever had been regional had disappeared, it was gone. So it was kind of mainstream bluegrass or Don Messer, contest fiddle playing kind of you know, "Orange Blossom Special," "Mockingbird," showpieces and that stuff.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that both Cindy and Lisa's views on traditional music are not exclusively preservationist; neither advocates for a return to the "original" methods of playing and transmitting French Canadian music. Lisa, for example, has found that virtual lessons and sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic have actually created new ways of sharing

the music. Speaking of a French Canadian music class which she offered in the spring of 2020 — attended by players everywhere from Prince Edward Island to Australia — she remarked:

It's so interesting, we're at this very interesting, ferment-y [point in time] ... I mean there's an awful lot of bad things happening out in Zoom-land and on the internet, just like really bad stuff happening. And then there's some truly lovely, wonderful, interesting, creative stuff happening out there, and so I think you know it's just finding your people.

Lisa did contrast this method of playing with what she had experienced with the Beaudoins, but characterized it as a parallel process of exchange rather than a replacement for an obsolete older method. “That’s a very different experience than having a kitchen tonk in a family that has been playing this music for generations, you know, it’s just different. But one does not invalidate the other, and they’re just different,” she told me.

Likewise, Cindy has found new ways of sharing traditional tunes through the Maine Folque Co-op. Most of the tunes the group plays are available on the Folque Co-op website, listed in the form of sheet music and recordings for players to play along with the music. According to Cindy, these accommodations reflect the diverse composition of the group, from classical violinists-turned-fiddlers to others who have learned their craft by ear. Though this at first might seem to conflict with romantic images of oral transmission between teacher and student and fiddlers drawing tunes from their mental libraries, Cindy feels that this approach is in fact quite genuine. “It’s amazing how well it’s worked, and it’s very folky if you think about it,” she told me. “You make do with what you have for resources, right? And it’s like throwing whatever you have available into the stew for supper. And if you stir it up right and put the right spices in there and let nature take its course, it’s going to be delicious.”

Even as Lisa and Cindy focus on preserving tunes, their approach to teaching and mediating music reflects their adaptability to the contemporary realities of playing. Unlike the preservationists of 20th-century Montréal or “virtuous” outsiders in Dresden, Maine, both locate the authentic not only in historical practices, but also in present innovations that allow for these practices to continue. Like players of Irish traditional music and other Celtic-influenced genres, musicians like Lisa and Cindy creatively draw from a range of technological tools which, above all, present new ways of creating community (Hutchinson 2019, 76).

Modernizing *Mémère*: Robert

Though in the previous section I have focused on the values which surround traditional tunes, it is important to note that the musicians I interviewed did not view these bits of music as disembodied entities or as relics of a generalized French Canadian or Franco-American culture. Instead, tunes were often closely tied to the memory of a specific person — an “old master” whose knowledge of the tradition was marked for preservation. My interviewees spoke of specific musicians who taught them to play French Canadian music, influenced their style, or motivated their preservationist efforts. In the case of Robert Sylvain, Acadian guitarist and singer, the master was his grandmother, a resident of northern Maine’s Saint John Valley and the author of a songbook that was passed down to Robert through his family. Robert’s project to resurrect the songs his grandmother wrote down, entitled “*Mémère’s Notebook*,” reveals further subtleties in how Franco-American musicians define “authentic” musical practices.

Robert’s work on the songbook began with a set of lyrics to a collection of Acadian folk songs which his *mémère* recorded. Reviving the music his grandmother had heard, however, was not as simple as performing the songs that she preserved for posterity. “I was presented with sort

of a conundrum — I only had the lyrics,” Robert recounted. “And so my initial goal was to find... the melody that my *mémère* heard when she wrote it down. So it’s the melody in the place of that time, when she wrote it down.” This motive brought Robert to seek out archival versions of the tunes, often preserved on wax cylinders from early field recordings. Though he consulted these sources, Robert made an effort to present them in a new and original manner. Ultimately, the final product has been as much of a continuation of his grandmother’s musical knowledge as a contemporary interpretation which reflects Robert’s background as a musician and his choices in presenting tunes. He described this effort to me as the result of conscious selection:

And so I wasn’t always able to find the autochthonous melodies — sometimes I found variations. I mean in some cases there were six or seven different variations of a melody, or a song theme that was clearly related to one of these songs. And so there were definitely a lot of puzzle pieces to put together, and sometimes I had to jam them together. But I also was not interested in making a museum piece so much as I was interested in making a work of art that was relevant to myself and my peers and my family. Something that would, you know... not necessarily have a modern sensibility, but [that] would make sense to a modern person. And sound old, and sound traditional, but also not be unlistenable...

While Robert is still animated by the desire to produce faithful, historically minded renditions of tunes, for him the authentic nature of his music lies not in the reproduction of musical “artifacts” but in the process of reinterpretation itself. Robert’s modifications and stylistic choices are therefore not deviations from a fixed historical standard, but authentic expressions of culture *by virtue of* their inventiveness. As Robert put it to me, the music “changed organically throughout the generations. And there wasn’t anybody writing it down or recording it to dispute that, right?”

And you were expected to put your own generation's spin on things because that's how oral tradition works, you know." Here, individual variation, contrary to more strictly preservationist modes of interpretation, represents not the loss of a tradition, but its continuation.

"Mémère's Notebook" is, at the same time, more than an individual project focused on the musical history of a single Acadian family. It is also an offering to the broader community of Acadians and Franco-Americans in Maine, a reminder of the past, present, and future vibrancy of their culture. This objective has also influenced Robert's stylistic decisions. In an effort to make his music more accessible to others, for example, Robert chose to record the Acadian songs of his ancestors in English, not French. On the surface, this might seem to conflict with Franco-Americans' historical conceptions of linguistic preservation as a pathway to cultural sovereignty. For Robert, however, this breach with the francophone past is in fact a way to reaffirm the relevance of Franco-American culture in a setting where French is no longer the mother tongue of the community. He remarked,

...for my generation of Franco-Americans, the language is essentially lost, there are no mother-tongue speakers of the French language in my generation... so the point is that if we're going to make Acadian and Franco-American culture relevant to the next generation, we have to find the parts of the culture that transcend language — of which there are many! — and bring that, in English, to them. And that's sort of what I've tried to do with my kids, and that's sort of what I've tried to do with this project. I've translated the lyrics into English and you'll find that they don't lose their character at all.

Something is lost in translation, but not the essence or the character.

Like Cindy's and Lisa's adaptations to new modes of transmission, Robert's choice to record in English reflects an understanding of the social space which contemporary Franco-American

music occupies. His ideas of the authentic transcend a simple focus on the complete preservation of past cultural practices, and situate his music as much within the frame of historical “veracity” as they do in the context of current realities.

Genre-Bending: Greg and John

A further example of multitemporal authenticities is evident in my conversations with Greg Boardman and John Cote, two Lewiston musicians whose musical styles reflect the diverse cultural fabric of that city. Both have played extensively on the Maine contra dance scene, which, as I explain in Chapter Three, already incorporates multiple stylistic influences, drawing tunes from English, Anglo-American, Irish, Scottish, and French Canadian sources. In many ways, then, it is no surprise that both musicians are open to change. Greg wrote fondly of playing and learning from Somali friends in Lewiston, whose traditional music has influenced his own playing and also accompanied it. According to Greg, practices like these — despite the occasional rhythmic challenges of combining very different styles of playing — are already entrenched in contemporary contra dances.

Everything is in flux, as I have heard it said, and traditional folk music is no exception. There are some who strive to play the tunes exactly the way they heard the old masters play them, while others wildly innovate. Accompaniment has changed more than the tunes themselves. I hear more and more creativity with the chord patterns and rhythmic emphases, along with instrumental colors. Contradancing requires definitive phrasing of tunes, but the musicians are finding a whole lot of nuance with which to present the tunes for dancing.

A veteran of the 1970s folk revival, Greg studied with many of Maine's master fiddlers at a time when many still played the traditional tunes of their youth. Greg's response, however, reveals that while these musicians have shaped his personal style, his playing is an amalgam of different cultures, time periods, and instrumentations. He credited the impact of his Somali friends, but also "untold other influences, from Jimi Hendrix to Keith Jarrett to Yehudi Menuhin [sic] to Dave Swarbrick to Otto Soper and well beyond, including every musician of all ages and backgrounds I have had the privilege of sharing the gift of music." In his experience, it is the porosity of his personal style that is its most genuine quality; as in Robert's case, it is in the individual inventiveness of his playing that he finds its authenticity.

In my conversation with John Cote, many of the same themes surfaced. Raised on jazz and classical guitar, trained briefly in film scoring, captivated by Anglo-Celtic and French Canadian dance tunes, and spurred on by Ghanaian rhythms provided by a friend in Lewiston, John has absorbed many different musical influences in his career. Of all the settings in which he has performed, however, contra dances are by far the most important to him. Though John appreciates contra dances for their historical value, their particular magic for him is in the present. More precisely, their power derives from the moment when the music of the band and the dancers enter into a conversation, when notes and rhythms trade with steps and movements. John's efforts to innovate in his music are strongly shaped by this belief, which also encodes ideas of authenticity.

And so we were constantly trying to push the envelope as well, but to say, how does this work on the dance floor? To me, if it works on the dance floor, then it is authentic and it is true, because it all comes from a heritage. And what the expectations are for people

who come out to dance and pay money to come and dance, they want to have a good time! They want to feel the energy, and all that.

Here, the music John is referring to does not belong to a single musician, but to an entire set of dancers and players who decide, collectively, whether it works or not — whether it is, in other words, authentic. This interpretation allows for the introduction of diverse stylistic influences that, as long as they carry the dancers and fit into the patterns of meter required in this type of dance, are valid expressions of the contra dance tradition. In contrast to a narrow focus on preserving tunes, this emphasis promotes the preservation not of artifacts of the tradition, but of the process of tradition itself. Innovation is not a denial of the past, but its continuation, as John explains hopefully:

And so I feel like if that process is always ongoing, then the possibilities for the music are [endless], you can keep evolving too! And then that can influence the choreography. And so where we're going to be in twenty years from now, maybe we won't just be doing guitar and fiddle and banjo, maybe there'll be a drummer! And an electric guitar! I don't know, I mean these are things that I constantly think about, and I can always kind of draw it back and say, "you know it actually comes from traditional music in some way."

Because I'm thinking about this environment, this traditional dance environment, and what is serving that.

John's and Greg's experiences demonstrate that musicians need not look exclusively to history to find music that is genuine. Instead, their narratives suggest that authenticity may also be situated within subjective experiences of the present and future and, ultimately, in practices which create the authentic in the present. Furthermore, they indicate the increasing influence of "fusional"

styles, which draw from various “world music” traditions, in genres like French Canadian traditional music (Baumann 18, 2001).

Conversing with Québec: Cindy and John

A final instance of multitemporal authenticity may be found in Cindy and John’s discussions of their interests in the music and dance of Québec. Québec and other francophone regions of eastern Canada loom large over French Canadian traditional music in New England, and their influence finds ample expression in the interviews which I conducted. In her work as a cultural promoter and director of the Maine Folque Co-op, for example, Cindy frequently invites dancers and traditional musicians from Québec to perform and give master classes in Maine. This interest in Québec can be traced to Cindy’s early exposure to Québécois artists in Lewiston, which set her on a mission “to find out as much about [French Canadian traditional music] as possible, by going to Québec and taking dance workshops and so on and so forth,” and to share her knowledge with her students. John Cote, similarly, was captivated by the music he heard at festivals in Maine. “[At] some of the Franco-American festivals that we were having both in Lewiston, Biddeford, up in Augusta — they would bring in some artists from Québec, and you know the singing, the call and response, the *chansons à répondre* that they do, it really just kind of blew my mind,” he told me.

Both Cindy and John implicitly refer to Québec much in the same way that preservationists in 20th century Montréal referred to rural areas of Québec itself: as the hearth of French Canadian traditional music and the social environment in which it was situated (Risk 2020, 50). In doing so, they draw on ideas of a Franco-American and French Canadian past

located in *La Belle Province*.¹⁶ However, both musicians also recognize the value of contemporary Québécois traditional music, and the ways in which it converses with the French Canadian traditional music of New England. Innovative music practices in Québec often have implications for musicians on this side of the border — groups like La Bottine Souriante, which blend traditional music with jazz and other styles, have served as influences for musicians like John, who is always looking for ways to push the boundaries of contra dance. Sometimes, cultural influences also travel in the opposite direction. John discovered this in a conversation with a member of La Bottine Souriante, which he described to me in our interview:

So I said, “what was the influence in your guitar parts, the harmonic decisions behind those melodies?” Because to me it had a very unique flavor from a lot of New England music. And he says “I was just a big James Taylor fan! I loved the stuff that James Taylor did on guitar when I was in college, I couldn’t get enough of it!” So it kind of goes in a circle, like “man I just love that Québécois music!” It’s like well, this is a New England songwriter! I thought that was great.

While Québec may serve as a historical model for Cindy and John’s conceptions of authentic French Canadian traditional music, it is also a partner in their music-making. This cross-border sharing of culture extends beyond a simple valuation of past music traditions and considers contemporary culture as an equally important source.

Music cannot be confined to a specific moment; it is by nature fleeting, a set of sounds projected into the air, only to disappear within seconds. Locating music within the past, present, or future is a similarly slippery task. Yet this is a central concern in defining authentic music, as my interviewees’ responses demonstrate. Traditional musicians like Cindy, Lisa, Robert, Greg,

¹⁶ “The Beautiful Province” — a French-language nickname for Québec.

and John are constantly situating their craft within broader temporal narratives. Different elements of their music find their power in different time periods, and different attitudes toward historical, contemporary, and future expressions of music define their perceptions of authentic music. Above all, these experiences reflect the multitemporal nature of authenticity, which allow Franco-American musicians to both situate their work within a broader narrative of history and to appreciate its value in the present.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion, and Paths Forward

What does it mean to be “authentic” in the 21st century? How can we conceive of authentic traditions, musical and otherwise? How do conceptions of authenticity and tradition manifest themselves in expressions of ethnic and cultural identity, and what do these expressions mean for Franco-Americans more specifically? These are the questions at the heart of this study, and at the heart of the narratives which I have collected. My interviews with Cindy, Lisa, Greg, John, and Robert encompass individual, familial, communal, and ethnic histories, as well as a wealth of opinions which illuminate particular cultural values. Through the stories of these five musicians, we may begin to understand what it means to be a player of French Canadian traditional music in the current moment.

When Deborah Waldman wrote of Franco-American musicians as “bearers of tradition” in 1986, she described a world in which memories of Québec and Acadia were still fresh in the minds of musicians and listeners, and in which both “active” and “passive” bearers carried the memory of tunes with them (1986, 172). Now, at a time when immigration from francophone Canada to New England has slowed dramatically, and when many people of French descent have assimilated to American cultural and linguistic norms, the landscape of French Canadian music traditions is dramatically different. But just as many Franco-Americans are engaged in reviving and relearning the French language, some have also dedicated their energy to keeping the music of the community alive. Influenced by revivals in Canada and motivated by the increasing recognition of Franco-American culture in New England, players of French Canadian traditional music are sharing the tunes of their ancestors with Franco-American and non-Franco-American listeners alike. Increasingly, their performance of musical traditions is mediated through

multicultural events, primarily contra dances and folk festivals, but it retains value as a specifically Franco-American cultural practice.

Throughout their history in the United States, Franco-Americans have had to define themselves against various, sometimes hostile others. Surrounded by Anglo-Americans, Irish-Americans, and other immigrant ethnic groups, and increasingly following a separate trajectory than the francophone populations of eastern Canada, Franco-Americans have crafted an identity of their own, characterized by tight ethnic bonds and ideas of language, religion, and cultural traditions. This identity has always been in flux, however, and different groups have developed different conceptions of what it means to be Franco-American. Sometimes, this diversity can lead to disagreements. In a continent dominated by anglophones and a country which has only recently learned to accept them, Franco-Americans must contend with the uncertainties of their existence. Clashes over identity are inevitable.

But while uncertainty may breed conflict, it also produces creativity. Ultimately, ideas of authenticity and tradition are the products of dislocations. The transition to modernity, with all of its disruptive transformations, forced scholars and laypeople in Europe and America to search for genuine culture in places beyond the realm of bourgeois society. This same soul-searching lives on today among Franco-Americans, who are particularly attuned to questions of tradition and community by virtue of their historical experience. In engaging with cultural practices and considering them in terms of their authenticity, they are not, as Hobsbawm might argue, grasping at a past which never truly existed — rather, they are critically considering the meaning of cultural practices in their past, present, and future expressions to Franco-American communities. Musicians who play French Canadian traditional music are in constant dialogue with these

expressions, and in performing this music carry on traditions which are not “invented,” but “inventive.”¹⁷

In this study, I have followed Dimitrios Theodossopoulos’s argument that authenticity is multidimensional, encompassing multiple perspectives and circumstances (2013, 340). In the case of players of French Canadian traditional music, I have argued, this multidimensional authenticity is most apparent in three forms: first as social authenticity, which includes familial, and communal elements of the music, second as subjective authenticity, which emerges from individual experience, and third as “multitemporal” authenticity, which refers to past, present, and future manifestations of the music. These three manifestations of authenticity are closely related, and often intertwine in the narratives of the musicians I interviewed. The prioritization of family traditions which many of my interviewees mentioned, for instance, might be considered in terms of the historical importance of domestic *veillées* in Franco-American families. But even in this one example, concepts of authenticity take on different functions; one might also consider family traditions as a cultural practice enacted in the present, made authentic by their immediacy.

French Canadian traditional music and those who play it today sit at the intersection of different historical and social worlds. Instead of thinking in terms of the “preservationists” and “innovators” often present in discussions of music revivals, we can begin to think of revivalist musicians as preservationists *and* community activists, or as innovators who *also* draw from historical referents. Referring to a musician as a “preservationist” or an “innovator” becomes reductive when we consider the stories gathered here. None of the musicians I interviewed could be described as consistently backward- or forward-looking, nor are they exclusively inward- or

¹⁷ Here, I borrow from Marshall Sahlins’ idea of “inventiveness,” which according to Theodossopoulos “recognizes that ‘invention’ is constructed, but is more sensitive to agency and appreciative of indigenous creative accomplishments” (2013, 350).

outward-looking. Instead, they draw creatively from a range of social, individual, and temporal values and develop conceptions of authenticity which are at times self-contradictory, but which ultimately give them a deeper stake in the mediation of tradition.

Further Considerations

While this project has focused on the perspectives of musicians, it is important to recognize that music is also an activity which involves numerous others, including passive listeners, dancers, festival organizers, and recording artists. Even if the interviews collected here illuminate aspects of this complex system, they cannot describe all of it. Furthermore, due to the limitations of ethnography during the COVID-19 pandemic, the testimonies I have collected here are largely separate from the environment of music-making. Though I have collected interviewees' descriptions of contra dances and other music events and gathered an idea of them from secondary literature, my analysis is not based in direct experience. Future studies on French Canadian traditional music, grounded in participant observation in sites of music-making, may have more to say on this topic than I have been able to gather here.

This study also leaves unanswered questions of French Canadian traditional music's importance to the broader Franco-American community. Do Franco-Americans still value this music, or do they see it as old-fashioned? Has a renewed interest in Franco-American language and culture in Maine and New England sparked a similar curiosity for Franco-American musical traditions? More research is required to address these gaps in our knowledge. Further investigations might also undertake a more general analysis of Franco-American music, focusing not on French Canadian traditional music but on other styles music played by Franco-Americans — a subject which I have addressed briefly in relation to Franco-Americans' adoption of country

and western, but which I have not thoroughly explored. Much remains to be learned here, and I recognize that I have only scratched the surface in these pages.

Coda

I end here with one last story from my interviews. John Cote, I should note, is not only a contra dance musician, but also an instructor at Maine Fiddle Camp, an annual gathering which brings together generations of musicians to play different varieties of folk music. Though French Canadian traditional music is part of this environment, it is only one of many styles practiced there. John told me enthusiastically about the sort of genre-mixing which happens at Fiddle Camp:

So for example, there's two brothers out in Belfast, really great songwriters, and they play, they produce, they do their own videos — you know it's amazing! And they grew up in an environment of being around contra dancing. Because their parents played fiddle tunes, and they loved the old timey tunes and the French Canadian tunes, and so that was their environment but they also loved the Jackson 5, and whatever else. So you just keep feeding that stuff into it, and before you know it you've got this other product that came out of that that's really brilliant!

According to John, these sorts of musical collaborations blur the lines between conceptions of distinct folk musics, a process which also makes it difficult to identify where this music belongs.

In considering this point, he mused,

... it's really hard to identify it as even being Maine music, even though they're Maine-based bands, I don't even know what Maine music is. It comes from, there's a lot of stuff that comes out of it. And in some ways, you know, French Canadian culture in Maine... I

don't know, how do we identify it today? Because as much as I want to be able to tangibly point to something and say, that comes out of Franco-American culture, it's like, in some ways you know people bring in so many elements that there is something moving forward but it doesn't have that stamp on it that's as clear anymore.

What is Franco-American culture? This question, I feel, runs through each of the interviews that I conducted for this project. Even if the answer is not clear, examining musicians' ideas of authentic cultural practices provides us with one way forward. In considering how players of French Canadian traditional music conceive of genuine music in social and historical contexts, we can begin to develop better ideas of contemporary Franco-American cultural practices — and crucially, to explore the vital role which music plays in maintaining Franco-American cultural integrity in Maine and New England.

Bibliography

- Albert, Jacob, et al. 2013. *Contemporary Attitudes of Maine's Franco Americans*. Orono, ME: Franco American Centre Publications.
- Allen, James P. 1972. "Migration Fields of French Canadian Immigrants to Southern Maine." *Geographical Review* 62 (3): 366-83.
- Baumann, Max Peter. 2001. "Festivals, Musical Actors and Mental Constructs in the Process of Globalization." *The World of Music* 43 (2): 9-29.
- Brown-Saracino, Japonica. 2007. "Virtuous Marginality: Social Preservationists and the Selection of the Old-Timer." *Theory and Society* 36 (5): 437-68.
- Choquette, Leslie. 2018. "French Canadian Immigration to Vermont and New England (1840-1930)." *Vermont History* 86 (1): 1-8.
- Deschênes, Donald. 1986. "Le Rêve d'une vie meilleure dans les chansons de départ vers les États-Unis." In *Le Patrimoine folklorique des Franco-Américains*, edited by Claire Quintal, 51-104. Montréal: Imprimerie la Renaissance.
- Faux, Tom. 2009. "Don Roy, Fiddle Music, and Social Sustenance in Franco New England." *The World of Music* 51 (1): 35-54.
- Feintuch, Burt. 2019. "Cultural Integrity and Local Music in Cape Breton and New Orleans." In *Cultural Sustainabilities: Music, Media, Language, Advocacy*, edited by Timothy J. Cooley, 210-219. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Feld, Steven, Aaron Fox, Thomas Porcello, and David Samuels. 2007. "Vocal Anthropology: From the Music of Language to the Language of Song." In *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*, ed. Alessandro Duranti, 321-345. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Fornäs, Johan. 1995. *Cultural Theory and Late Modernity*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Forsyth, Meghan. 2020. "Improvising on the Margins: Tradition and Musical Agency in Les Îles de la Madeleine." In *Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada*, edited by Anna Hoefnagels, Judith Klassen, and Sherry Johnson, 145-176. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Frenette, Yves. 2011. "Ethnic Enclaves." In *Maine: The Pine Tree State from Prehistory to the Present*, edited by Richard Judd, Edwin Churchill, and Joel Eastman, 467-470. Orono, ME: University of Maine Press.

- Ham, Lesley. 2012. "The end of a revival: contemporary New England contra dancing and fiddling." In *Routes and Roots: Fiddle and Dance Studies from around the North Atlantic*, edited by Ian Russell and Chris Goertzen, 121-131. Aberdeen: The Elphinstone Institute.
- Kaul, Adam. 2007. "The Limits of Commodification in Traditional Irish Music Sessions." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13 (3): 703-19.
- Handler, Richard. 1986. "Authenticity." *Anthropology Today* 2 (1): 2-4.
- Handler, Richard, and Jocelyn Linnekin. 1984. "Tradition, Genuine or Spurious." *The Journal of American Folklore* 97 (385): 273-90.
- Hansen, Gregory. 1996. "The Relevance of 'Authentic Tradition' in Studying an Oldtime Florida Fiddler." *Southern Folklore* 53 (2): 67-89.
- Hast, Dorothea. 1993. "Performance, Transformation, and Community: Contra Dance in New England." *Dance Research Journal* 25 (1): 21-32.
- Hayes, Ian. 2020. "Holy jeez, I can hear *everything*: Liveness in Cape Breton Fiddle Recordings." In *Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada*, edited by Anna Hoefnagels, Judith Klassen, and Sherry Johnson, 275-304. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. 1983. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 1-14. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hutchinson, Patrick. 2019. "'Tis the Company: Irish Traditional Music as Social Medium in the Age of Social Media." In *Cultural Sustainabilities: Music, Media, Language, Advocacy*, edited by Timothy J. Cooley, 174-182. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Lane, Brigitte. 1990. *Franco-American Folk Traditions and Popular Culture in a Former Milltown: Aspects of Ethnic Urban Folklore and the Dynamics of Folklore Change in Lowell, Massachusetts*. New York: Garland Publishing.
- LeBlanc, Barbara, and Laura Sadowsky. 1986. "La Survivance par la chanson et la danse: Chéticamp, Nouvelle-Écosse et Waltham, Massachusetts." In *Le Patrimoine folklorique des Franco-Américains*, edited by Claire Quintal, 105-150. Montréal: Imprimerie la Renaissance.
- Livingston, Tamara E. 1999. "Music Revivals: Towards a General Theory." *Ethnomusicology* 43 (1): 66-85
- Muller, Hannah Weiss. 2014. "Bonds of Belonging: Subjecthood and the British Empire." *Journal of British Studies* 53 (1): 29-58.

- Murphy, Annie. 2014. "In Maine, a Little French Goes a Long Way." PRI's The World, Public Radio International, 13 Mar. 2014.
- Murphy, Clifford. 2014. *Yankee Twang: Country and Western Music in New England*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Newton, Jason L. 2016. "'These French Canadian of the Woods Are Half-Wild Folk': Wilderness, Whiteness, and Work in North America, 1840-1955." *Labour / Le Travail* 77: 121-50.
- Norris, Rebecca Sachs. 2001. "Embodiment and Community." *Western Folklore* 60 (2) 3: 111-24.
- Pelletier, Susann. 1990. "Keepers of the Song: the Franco-American Songbook Tradition" In *Franco-American Music Traditions*, by Susann Pelletier, James Bau Graves, and Madeleine Giguère, 1-5.
- Post, Jennifer. 2004. *Music in Rural New England Family and Community Life, 1870-1940*. Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England.
- Richard, Mark Paul. 2007. "Negotiating Ethnic Identity: St. Jean Baptiste Day Celebrations in Francophone Lewiston, Maine." *Voyages: a Maine Franco-American Reader*, edited by Nelson Madore and Barry H. Rodrigue. Thomaston, ME: Tilbury House Publishers.
- Stokes, Martin. 2004. "Music and the Global Order." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33: 47-72.
- Risk, Laura. 2020. "*Le bon vieux temps: The Veillée* in Twentieth-Century Quebec." In *Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada*, edited by Anna Hoefnagels, Judith Klassen, and Sherry Johnson, 43-86. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Taylor, John. 2001. "Authenticity and sincerity in tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 28 (1): 7-26.
- Theodossopoulos, Dimitrios. 2013. "INTRODUCTION: Laying Claim to Authenticity: Five Anthropological Dilemmas." *Anthropological Quarterly* 86 (2): 337-60.
- Trevor-Roper, Hugh. 1983. "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 15-41. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Quigley, C. 1988. "A French-Canadian Fiddler's Musical Worldview: The Violin is 'Master of the World.'" *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology* 7: 99-122.
- Vermette, David. 2018. *A Distinct Alien Race: The Untold Story of Franco-Americans: Industrialization, Immigration, Religious Strife*. Montréal: Baraka Books.

Waldman, Deborah. 1986. "Tout le long de la rivière: la survivance de la chanson canadienne-française de tradition folklorique à Woonsocket, Rhode Island." In *Le Patrimoine folklorique des Franco-Américains*, edited by Claire Quintal, 171-194. Montréal: Imprimerie la Renaissance.

Works Progress Administration. 1949. *Festal Days, Songs and Games of the Franco-Americans of New Hampshire*. Manchester, NH: Granite State Press.