Voices of the Borderland: The Social Impact of International Travel Restrictions in Northern Maine Interviews

MCC-00533

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Voices of the Borderland: The Social Impact of International Travel Restrictions in Northern Maine Interviews (MCC-00533)

Shelf List Number: UM-533, AJ-533

Collection Overview

Creators

Boudreau, Nicole;
Bourgoin, Louise;
Collins, Lise;
Daigle, Doug;
Daigle, Linda;
Dumond, Darlene;
Dumond, George;
Lacroix, Patrick;
LaJoie, Peggy Akerley;
Levesque, Donald;
Hammond-Michaud, Dian;
Pelletier, Lise;
Raymond, Don;
Soucie, Madeline;
Thibodeau, Gert

Dates

2022-06-07- 2022-08-31

Extent

13 oral interviews with audio recordings and transcriptions.

Provenance

This project was undertaken by archives staff in 2022 with financial support from a Maine Humanities Council grant.

Language

English
French

Conservation Notes

Audio recordings have been burned onto CDs and require proper care to preserve their form. Transcripts are typed versions of oral interviews.

Conditions Governing Access and Use

Restrictions

Access:

Consent and deed forms restricted until 2094

Physical:

No restrictions

Technical:

Specific equipment required to play audio records as well as video recording of forum. Equipment available in house.

Rights Statement

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Recommended Citation

Voices of the Borderland: The Social Impact of International Travel Restrictions in Northern Maine Interviews, (MCC-00533). Acadian Archives/Archives acadiennes, University of Maine at Fort Kent.

Collection Description

Historical and Biographical Information

Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, Canada and the United States halted non-essential traffic across their shared land border in March 2020. The border closure had profound effects in the St. John Valley. Until the pandemic, many residents of the region—American and Canadian—crossed the border regularly to work, shop, obtain professional services, attend events, and visit friends and family. They enjoyed economic, cultural, and familial ties with the other country. International travel restrictions created disruptions and hardships that were as significant as the pandemic itself.

In order to capture this landmark moment in the history of the St. John Valley, the Acadian Archives launched an oral interview project that would enable local residents to share their stories. The Archives received a cash-match monetary grant from the Maine Humanities Council ($2,314.00) to support this work in March 2022. The project would create a public discussion about culture in this borderland region and elevate the voices of underrepresented groups in Maine, including rural and francophone residents. The MHC grant enabled the purchase of new recording equipment and notably covered the cost of travel and advertising.

The Archives issued a call for participants in April 2022. During the summer, director Patrick Lacroix and archivist-cataloger Madeline Soucie interviewed thirteen current or former Valley residents who had personally experienced travel restrictions and who had come forward to discuss their changing relationship with the border and with the other country. The director transcribed the oral interviews in the fall of 2022. The project concluded with a community forum held at the University of Maine at Fort Kent on the morning of Saturday, December 3. Dr. Lisa Lavoie, an assistant professor of Behavioral Science, discussed her research on borderlands and mental health; Patrick Lacroix and Madeline Soucie presented their findings. Amber Rankine, the executive director of the Greater Fort Kent Area Chamber of Commerce, was scheduled to speak but ultimately could not attend due to a last-minute personal commitment. During the course of the discussion, attendees shared their experience with travel restrictions. Videographer Don Raymond recorded the presentations and provided the Acadian Archives with a copy (see separated materials).

The interviews reflected a specific moment in the gradual reopening of the border to non-essential traffic. In 2021, Canada and the United States had restored travel to nationals who were vaccinated and who showed proof of vaccination and a negative COVID test (though the U.S. government never required a negative test for people entering the country by land). Individuals crossing into Canada were expected to fill a screening form on the ArriveCAN application. The Canadian government discontinued the testing requirement on April 1, 2022 and the use of ArriveCAN on October 1, after which travelers no longer needed to provide proof of vaccination.

Nicole Boudreau was born and raised in Nova Scotia. She is a former educator and the former dean of Arts and Humanities at UMFK, a position she left in January 2022. She now lives in Fredericton, New Brunswick, and works for the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.

Louise Bourgoin grew up in Edmundston, New Brunswick, and Madawaska, Maine, and is fluently bilingual. She worked in drug and alcohol counseling and has now been a nurse for more than twenty-five years. She lives in Fort Kent.

Stephanie Chick serves as a student advisor at UMFK, the second position she has held at the institution. Although still living in Fort Kent, she was in the process of moving in with her husband in Edmundston at the time of the oral interview.

Lise Collins grew up in a large, French-speaking family in Edmundston. She married an American in 1986 and became a U.S. citizen in the 1990s. She is a long-time resident of Caribou, Maine, and was involved in French-language education in local schools.

Doug Daigle and Linda Daigle are husband and wife. They have both worked at the Twin Rivers Paper Company mill in Madawaska for more than thirty years. They live in Madawaska. Both have dual citizenship.

Darlene Dumond was born and raised in Allagash, Maine, and pursued a career in other areas of the Northeast before returning to the Upper St. John Valley in 2005. She has two children, one of whom lives in Nova Scotia. She operates Two Rivers Lunch in Allagash, which closed temporarily during the COVID-19 pandemic.

George Dumond is from New Canada (formerly Daigle), Maine. He is a U.S. Air Force veteran and a financial advisor. He was a co-president of the 2014 World Acadian Congress organizing committee. He currently lives in Fort Kent with his partner, Kelly Martin.

Peggy Akerley LaJoie grew up in Saint-Léonard, New Brunswick, lived in Caribou, and now resides with her husband in Van Buren, Maine. She has been a dual citizen since the 1980s. She retired to take care of her grandchildren in 2019. Her first language is French.

Donald Levesque, a native of Grand Isle, Maine, served in the U.S. armed forces in Vietnam and studied at UMFK. He was a journalist and then the editor of the St. John Valley Times, where he worked for twenty-five years. He is now retired. A Canadian permanent resident, he lives in Edmundston.

Diane Hammond-Michaud teaches Grade 8 mathematics and elementary school French in Van Buren. She has lived in Edmundston and in Hamlin, Maine.

Lise Pelletier grew up in Clair, New Brunswick, the daughter of a customs officer. A former teacher, she led the Acadian Archives as director for thirteen years before retiring in 2021. She lives in Fort Kent and continues to serve as president of the Maine Acadian Heritage Council.

Gert Thibodeau is originally from Clair and has lived in Fort Kent for more than fifty years. She worked at the Northern Maine Medical Center. An accomplished artist with numerous exhibits, she also taught art in schools in various Valley communities.

Scope and Content

All documents pertaining to this project (consent and deed of gift forms, questions, and transcripts) were translated into French and English (note that the information was exactly the same for both versions). Participants were offered to conduct their interviews in either language depending on their preference and given documents in the

corresponding language they chose. All oral interviews were transcribed in the language they were conducted. All documents written or transcribed in French are noted accordingly on the front page.

Arrangement

During the process of transcribing and compiling data from the interviews for the public forum, Patrick Lacroix put the interviews in alphabetical order by the participants' last names. This arrangement was kept by the processing archivist.

All the consent and deed forms signed by participants are kept in their own folder separate from the rest of the materials as these are **restricted until 2094** due to the sensitive nature included in these forms.

The oral interview questions (containing notes made by interviewers during the interview process in case recordings were lost or damaged) were put in folders with the corresponding transcript of each interview.

Separated Materials (If Applicable)

Voices of the Borderland: The Social Impact of International Travel Restrictions in Northern Maine. Lacroix, Patrick (ed.), et al. 2022. Acadian Reference DVD F27 .A7 .V53 2022.

Subject Headings

Border crossing
Canadian-American border region
Clair, N.B.
COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020-
Digital audiotape recorders and recording
Edmundston, N.B.
English language
Fort Kent, Me.
French language
Interviews
Madawaska, Me.
North America, french speaking
Travel restrictions

Related Materials

Borders and Borderlands: The Acadian Experience in Maine Collection, (MCC-00537). Acadian Archives/Archives acadiennes, University of Maine at Fort Kent.

Craig, Beatrice. *Family, kinship and community formation on the Canadian-American border: Madawaska 1785-1842.* Thesis. 1983. Acadian Reference F27 .S3 C7 1983.

Cyr, Freeman & Rose, Molly. *Retour aux origines / an analysis of post 9/11 security measures on the Maine Franco-American community.* Thesis. 2015. Acadian Reference PC2065 .F74 R4 2015.

Herlan, James J., Hornsby, Stephen J., & Konrad, Victor A. (eds.) *The Northeastern borderlands: four centuries of interaction.* Canadian-American Center, University of Maine. 1989. Acadian Reference E183.8 .C2 N67 1989.

Judd, Richard W. & Turpie David C. (eds.) *The Maine Borderlands.* Maine Historical Society. 2013. Acadian Reference F27 .B7 T87 2013 v.47 no.1.

Lavoie, Lisa M. *The effect of 9/11 on a borderlands community: Fort Kent, Maine and Clair, New Brunswick / a project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (in interdisciplinary studies).* Thesis. 2015. Acadian Reference JC 323 .L38 E44 2015.

Lecker, Robert (ed.) *Borderlands: essays in Canadian-American relations.* ECW Press. 1991. UMFK Stacks F 1029.5 .U6 B67 1991.

Nicol, Heather N. & Konrad, Victor. *Beyond walls: re-inventing the Canada-United States borderlands.* Ashgate. 2008. Acadian Reference E183.8 .C2 K66 2016.

Price, Joseph Edward. *The status of French among youth in a bilingual American-Canadian border community: the case of Madawaska, Maine.* Thesis. 2007. Acadian Reference PC3680 .U7 S83 2007.

Collection Inventory

Series I: Consent Forms

Box	Folder	Description	Date
1	1	*Restricted until 2094* Consent and Deed of Gift Forms.	2022-06-07 to 08-31

Series II: Transcriptions

Box	Folder	Description	Date
1	2	Boudreau, Nicole: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in French).	2022-08-31

Box	Folder	Description	Date
1	3	Bourgoin, Louise: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in English).	2022-08-15
1	4	Chick, Stephanie: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in English).	2022-07-27
1	5	Collins, Lise: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in English).	2022-06-30
1	6	Daigle, Doug & Linda: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in English).	2022-07-31
1	7	Dumond, Darlene: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in English).	2022-07-20
1	8	Dumond, George: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in English).	2022-08-23
1	9	LaJoie, Peggy: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in French).	2022-07-01
2	10	Levesque, Don: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in French).	2022-08-10
2	11	Michaud, Diane: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in French).	2022-07-15
2	12	Pelletier, Lise: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in French).	2022-07-13
2	13	Thibodeau, Gert: Oral interview questions and copy of transcript (in English).	2022-06-07

Series III: Recorded Interviews

Box	Description	Date
3	Recording of Nicole Boudreau's interview conducted in French.	2022-08-31
3	Recording of Louise Bourgoin's interview conducted in English.	2022-08-15
3	Recording of Stephanie Chick's interview conducted in English.	2022-07-27

Box	Description	Date
3	Recording of Lise Collin's interview conducted in English.	2022-06-30
3	Recording of Doug and Linda Daigle's interview conducted in English.	2022-07-31
3	Recording of Darlene Dumond's interview conducted in English.	2022-07-20
3	Recording of George Dumond's interview conducted in English.	2022-08-23
3	Recording of Peggy LaJoie's interview conducted in French.	2022-07-01
3	Recording of Don Levesque's interview conducted in French.	2022-08-10
3	Recording of Diane Michaud's interview conducted in French.	2022-07-15
3	Recording of Lise Pelletier's interview conducted in French.	2022-07-13
3	Recording of Gert Thibodeau's interview conducted in English.	2022-06-07

Series IV: Separated Materials

Location	Description	Date
Acadian Reference, DVD F27 .A7 .V53 2022	Recording of the Voices of the Borderland Forum	2022-12-03