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The Political Manifestations of Ethnocentrism: The French-Canadians in Waterville, Maine

Stuart H. Rakoff

Colby College

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THE POLITICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF ETHNOCENTRISM:
THE FRENCH-CANADIANS IN WATERVILLE, MAINE

by

Stuart H. Rakoff

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Senior Scholars Program

Colby College
1965
APPROVED BY:

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Reader

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Senior Scholars Committee, Chairman
Preface

The decision to undertake this project was made as a result of work done as part of the January Plan of Independent Study in 1964. During that month I was first introduced to the area of survey research through my experience at the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan. Working there, under the direction of Dr. Warren E. Miller, I realized the great contribution that survey methods could make to the understanding of political phenomena. My desire at the conclusion of that month was to gain further experience in survey techniques by preparing and conducting a survey project as part of a Senior Scholar program.

Upon my return to Colby, I began to look carefully for a specific study area. With the advice of Mr. Mike Gilbert I selected the French-Canadian ethnic group as a suitable subject. Hailing from heavily French-Canadian Manchester, New Hampshire, and attending college in equally French-Canadian Waterville, they provided an easily accessible subject which was also fascinating and exciting to me because of my involvement in local politics in both communities.

The experience of the past months spent in a concen-
trated survey study has supported by presupposition that
the method of surveying and collection of data used is a
valuable tool for the investigation of political phenome-
na. But beyond that, the interviewing process brought
me into contact with a number of real, live, different and
exciting people, none of whose emotions, psychoses or
thoughts can ever be accurately captured in a statistic.
Nor can their reasoning and decision making processes be
reproduced in a table of mean values. The survey research
method has a definite limit beyond which it no longer
yields a valuable insight into the political process, and
one of the successes of this project was the determination
of approximately where this limit lies.

Thanks are due to Colby, for the Senior Scholar Pro-
gram which has provided the opportunity for this study;
to Professor Marvin Weinbaum, my tutor, who encouraged
and pursued me during the crucial period; to Professor
Albert Mavrinac, my inspiration, who has provided the
basic framework of political analysis in which this study
is grounded; and to Mrs. Kevin Hill, Chairman of the Water-
ville Democratic Committee, who helped me meet many of the
important local politicians and city leaders. But especi-
ally, this paper is dedicated to the wonderful people of
Waterville, whose cooperation and assistance were respon-
sible for its inception and its completion. To all am I grateful, to none should responsibility for this thesis be assigned.

Stuart H. Rakoff
Waterville, Maine
May 1, 1965
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CHAPTER ONE

THE METHOD OF SURVEY RESEARCH
CHAPTER ONE

THE METHOD OF SURVEY RESEARCH

Introduction - The extensive use of survey methods in social science research dates primarily from World War II, and since that time the scientific collection and analysis of data has become an important tool in political, economic and sociological inquiry. One of the leading exponents of the survey method, and also its most important developer, has been the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center, established by Angus Campbell, formerly of the United States Department of Agriculture. At the SRC many of the most advanced techniques, such as aerial photo sampling and open-ended questions, have been pioneered and perfected.

My introduction to survey methods was provided as part of a January Plan of Independent Study in 1964. During that month I worked at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center under the direction of Dr. Warren E. Miller, director of the political studies bureau of the Center. Although my study at that time was primarily concerned with the relationship between a Congressman and his constituency, the general problems and aims of survey research were examined and considered. As a result of the
month, I felt myself capable of undertaking, at least on a modest level, a survey project of my own.

Survey research involves four major areas of activity, each of which involves its own special purposes and problems. Sample drawing, questionnaire construction, interviewing and analysis are the four parts of the process, and each will be discussed in detail below. But preceding these four components, is a general attitude and philosophy of survey research which should be stated and examined. For survey research is based upon the assumption that the political act is predictable, in a scientific sense of prediction, and that a large group can be evaluated in terms of a much smaller sub-group which is selected to mirror the characteristics of the larger group.

Predictability, in the scientific sense, must be differentiated from the non-scientific use of the term. It is concerned, in the technical medium, with the isolation of factors contributory to a certain behavior pattern. From a study of the various factors thus isolated, their relation to the act investigated can be determined. In an ideal situation, such as the laboratory of a physical or biological scientist, each contributing factor can be isolated and controlled in turn to determine its precise effect on the phenomena. However, in social science re-
s@arch, it is not always possible to remove or control important behavior determinants, such as a man's union membership as a factor in his electoral participation. Human beings can not, unfortunately, be as easily controlled (in the scientific sense) as chemicals or electrical charges, so this type of single factor analysis is often not possible.

This inherent difficulty in social science research has led to many forms of analysis, among which is the funnel of causality outlined by Donald Stokes in *The American Voter*. The funnel is taken as the physical representation of an individual act and its determining behavior factors. The act itself is designated to be the narrow end of the funnel, the apex of all the preceding behavior, which proceeds outward from it, losing importance to the final behavior as it gets further away from the origin point of the funnel, the act itself, and as it gets further from the center of the funnel on an axis through the apex. Thus, through a detailed and complex investigatory process, behavior factors can be qualitatively ranked in order of their prominence in an individual act decision process.

Speaking, then, of the predictability of political acts, does not mean that a political scientist can predict a man's vote for President or a Senator's vote on foreign aid. These he might be able to do; whether he should is an open question still hotly debated by professional political scientists and laymen alike. But aside from using the predictability of the political act to predict elections or convince the public, it can tell us a lot about the nature of the political act itself. It was in this sense that the present project was undertaken; the primary concern was not with the way the subject group voted or will vote, but was with the nature of the political act as conceived and participated in by members of the French-Canadian group.

The direction of this study was not toward explaining why French-Canadians hold certain views or vote for certain candidates or parties. It is, rather, to determine the role and influence of the ethnic group in the political process. The reader will not, therefore, find masses of voting data cluttering the following pages. Statistical evidence and data is used, but only as a basis for a more theoretical approach to the problem stated. In all, the aim is more to examine a factor impinging on the pol-

itical behavior of a certain group, and to relate the
nature of this factor to the political system as a whole.
It is hoped that by using the method of survey research
to collect basic data, that a statement of the role and
influence of ethnicity in the political act of an indivi-
dual, and its ramifications for the political system as
a whole can be reached. The conclusion will, I hope, con-
tribute to the growing understanding of the political and
social systems that behaviorism has made possible.

The Sample - Survey research, as a technique for the
study of political phenomena, is a technical device for
ascertaining opinions, attitudes and facts that will allow
analysis of a certain, predetermined community. Community
must be understood to be a variable term, which can refer
to a group the size of a city block or as large as the en-
tire population of the United States. The community is
understood as the group being studied, and the only char-
acteristic inherent in the application of a community in
survey research is that it be too large to make interviews
with every member of the community practical. The first
requirement of survey research is that the group examined
must be too large to permit individual interview sessions
with all its members.

The first problem of survey research then becomes to
select a sub-group from the community whose members can
be reasonably reached individually to be interviewed. There are many different approaches to this problem of sampling, many of which are easily implemented, others which require long and tedious hours of pre-planning and the use of computers and other types of data processing systems. Two of the most important sampling techniques will be discussed to indicate the development of sophisticated methods of research, and to give some background for the present study.

The aim of a sampling procedure is to divine out from the large community a sub-group which will be representative of it. In this manner, as in almost all scientific and non-scientific inquiry, by learning the characteristics of a small group, we can assume these characteristics as applicable to the larger community as well. For example, no scientist has ever, nor will ever, seek to examine every occurrence of element X atoms in the universe. To do so would be an endless and fruitless task. But because he can not observe every atom does not mean that he can never understand the characteristics and the behavior of the element. For by observing only a few atoms, he can generalize at a statement of the behavior of the X atom. In the same way, one does not have to
interview every Negro in the United States to know how Negros as a group feel about Civil Rights. Speaking to a few can indicate with great validity the feeling of the entire community, and when generalized to a statement of the community attitude, can be received with as much authority as a tabulation of every living Negro-American’s opinion. The concept of generalization is thus central to the survey method, and its acceptance is vital to the implementation of the techniques of sampling.

Given, then, that the concept of representativeness is the central motive behind the notion of sampling, the question becomes how does one go about achieving a representative sub-group from which one can generalize about the behavior of the entire community. There are, in general, two answers to this question. One may proceed through a systematic or a non systematic manner in achieving the representative sub-group desired. The terms, however, do not connote a careful procedure on the one hand.

3 The sampling methods available to the researcher as alternatives to the one used in this study are only referred to here briefly. For a more detailed description the reader is referred to Parten, Chapter 7 and Stephan and McCarthy, Chapters 2-5.
and a haphazard on the other. Both are scientific and accurate approaches to the problem of representativeness, both have professional pros and cons, both are used extensively in survey research and the choice of method is largely a matter of convenience and applicability to the study undertaken and the community being examined.

The systematic method of sampling proceeds by considering various groupings that the community can be divided into, such as male/female, homeowners and renters, income groups, racial or religious groups. It is usually used when data related to the purpose of the study can be obtained easily—without interviewing. Data of this type is most usually found in census materials, city directories, or local tax rolls. This information is easily accessible to the researcher and can often be useful. For example, in studying Southern attitudes toward civil rights, it might be useful to proceed systematically by dividing the Southern community into white and negro sub-groups, and then sampling those separately.

There are, however, often situations when there is no available index upon which the community can be pre-divided or which is relevant to the nature of the particular study being conducted. It is in this set of circumstances that the researcher will proceed with a non-systematic sample.
The sub-group will be drawn completely at random, with the only condition being that each member of the community be given an equal chance of being selected. In this way a sub-group representative of the community can be drawn from the larger group.

The present study used a non-systematic sample to obtain a representative sub-group of Ward 7 in Waterville, which is the community being studied. Ward 7 was selected because of its large French-Canadian population, which exceeds 90% of the 750 family units in the ward. There is a quite wide distribution, however, on the economic axis—housing units run from rather dilapidated multiple family houses to new single family dwellings in the fifteen thousand dollar and up class. Occupationally the area runs from unemployed and mill workers to white collar "junior executive" types.

Ward 7 was taken as an example of the lot of many French-Canadians both in Waterville and in New England. The community, however, does not include all the French-Canadian types to be found. The element which is not included here is the portion of the group that has made good, at least economically, and moved to other sections, usually
more desirable, of the city. This group will probably form the leadership element of the French-Canadian population, and its elimination from the sample community posed a few major problems, but in the end, considerations of practicality forced its exclusion. However, enough of the leadership element was included in the sample to tender some generalizations about the nature of the leadership element itself. The excluded group was also referred to by other respondents in questions about political leadership and social contacts.

After the selection of the research community, the problem becomes evident. With a population of 750 family units, the task of reaching every member becomes impossible, and sample technique is called into play. The selection of a sub-group sharing the characteristics of the community is the next step in the procedure followed. The method used in this procedure is that described by Parten as selection at regular intervals from a list. The list used in this case was the Waterville City Directory, 1964 edition, compiled and published by the H. A. Manning Company. Using the street listings of heads of households, and considering only streets in Ward 7, every twentieth name was drawn, beginning with the number drawn

Parten, op. cit., p. 266-7.
from a hat containing numbers 1 - 20 and proceeding alphabetically through the street names. In this way a sample of thirty-five names, representing 5% of the ward's households, was compiled.

The problem then became one of verifying the representativeness of the drawn sample. This was done by comparing two easily available indices also listed in The City Directory. First, surnames of the ward population and the sample population were compared. French names are easy to pick out, as are Anglicized French names. A comparison of the percentage of French and non-French names in both lists should prove to be a good check of the reliability of the sample. As a second check, the data on home ownership, also available in The City Directory was compared for the two groups. The results of the two verification operations are shown below in Table One:

**TABLE ONE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French Name</td>
<td>576 - 90%</td>
<td>32 - 90.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-French Name</td>
<td>74 - 10%</td>
<td>3 - 9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>- 99</td>
<td>- 97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Home</td>
<td>317 - 42%</td>
<td>15 - 43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not own home</td>
<td>433 - 58%</td>
<td>20 - 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>- 97.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen, the sample group, when compared with the entire community, has an accuracy of representation of 99% on the name index and 97.5% on the home-ownership index. These percentages are well within the most acute accuracy figures and, therefore, the sample can be considered a good representative group of the original Ward 7 community.

The Questionnaire - Once the sample has been drawn, the problem becomes to design a series of question stimuli to use in gathering the information desired from the people to be contacted. The writing of questionnaires is a long and involved process, which requires careful thought, so that biases or prejudices do not enter to wreak havoc with the gathered data. The questions must be as neutral as possible to allow the respondent to be free to make any type of answer he desires. The question must be phrased so that one answer does not appear to be desired—its wording must therefore be precise enough to yield the neutrality required. But on the other hand, the questionnaire must be flexible, so the interviewer can use it to gain as much information as possible. Striking a balance between these two objectives is the major problem of questionnaire writing.

The problem in this case was somewhat reduced because
all the interviewing was done by the person who wrote the questionnaire. However, other problems inherent in the community being studied were formidable hurdles to be cleared. The French-Canadians must be assumed to be of a low educational background, especially the particular group of French-Canadians being studied. This barrier to communication would be compounded by the language barrier, to whatever extent it existed. The problems faced, then, in the construction of the questionnaire were complex and essentially inherent in the inquiry itself.

With these considerations in mind, the following interview was written. It was designed to yield as much information as possible in a short period of time, since one could not hope to hold the respondent's attention for a long period of time. Each question is included because it should produce a desired piece of information. The specific rationale for each question will be discussed below, but first it might be wise to point out some of the basic theory of questionnaire writing. The technique used throughout this interview schedule is that of the open-ended question and free response. The individual question, and indeed the entire questionnaire, is used as a stimulus to the respondent to give the desired information, with no response suggested or categorized for
his answer. Thus, in general, the respondent is urged to react in any way he wants to the stimulus of the question. This method of open-ended questions and free responses is contrasted with an alternate type of questioning, in which the respondent is given a very limited suggestion and a list of alternates from which he chooses a response. Instead of transcribing the response made, or at least getting the sense of what the respondent has said, a box is checked, either by the respondent or by the interviewer. The response is thus limited by the forethought, or preconception, of the researcher. The former method was chosen for this study because of a desire to get as much insight into the personal motivations of the individuals interviewed.

Preparation for the writing of this questionnaire was of two parts. First, a rather thorough reading of French-Canadian history, especially in New England, was undertaken. The purpose of this was to get some idea of the things I would be looking for in measuring ethnic involvement. The sources used and the resultant conclusions will be discussed in Chapter II. For now, let the statement of the step taken in the process suffice. The second preparation was an inquiry into the technique of questionnaire writing itself. The major source used here was again Parten.
And, in addition, various other studies, from Berelson's *Voting* to The Survey Research Center's 1960 *Presidential Election Survey* were consulted. As a result of this preparation the following questionnaire, twenty-seven questions yielding fifty-four separate pieces of information was used. Each question will now be discussed individually, and its desired results explained:

1a. Do you speak a language other than English in the home?

b. If yes, what language?

c. About how much of the time does your family use rather than English in the home?

d. Do you ever speak outside of the home?

Yes No

e. If yes, where are you likely to use it?

f. How much of the time outside the home do you use?

The opening question is perhaps the most important in the whole interview, for the success or failure of the interview rests on removing any doubt or fear in the respondent's mind. It must have the result of relaxing the respondent completely, so that his answers will be completely free. In this particular case, it was felt that there would be a certain amount of inferiority felt by
the respondents, mostly poorly educated, faced with a college student. The response here is often one of inadequacy, so that the first question must convince the respondent that he does possess some information that he can contribute. The importance of the first question to the success of the interview cannot be overestimated, so great care must be taken in the selection of the interview opener.

With this preface, the reasons for the selection of the opening question are easily stated. First, its innocence should convince the respondent that the interview is to be trusted and that there need be no fear. Second, it asks for a piece of information that only the respondent can supply, thereby increasing confidence in his ability to contribute to the interviewer's study. And third, but not least, the question is designed to hit a streak of pride that runs through the French-Canadians in the United States. As will be noted below in Chapter II, there is a deep historic pride in the use of the French language. The question then will set up the interview by making the respondent feel comfortable and cooperative.

Apart from this very essential purpose of preparing
the respondent, the first question also is essential for the gathering of information about ethnic group characteristics. The extent to which French is spoken is a good indicator of the individual's involvement in the group. The question seeks to measure the use of French both inside and outside of the home, on the premise that it can tell something about the amount of ethnic influence on the individual.

2a. Are you a church member? Yes____ No____

b. Which denomination?____________________

c. How often do you attend services?

d. Do you participate in any other church activities?

e. Is a language other than English spoken in church?

f. What language?

Once some sort of rapport is achieved, questions less innocent can be tried. The second question, although not a big step in this direction, is somewhat more personal. The French-Canadian community has been historically oriented around the Roman Catholic church. A trip through Quebec will point this out very well: each village is centered around a magnificent cathedral, which is the equivalent of the American Town Square and Town Hall. All the activity
of the village is centered there, social and political as well as religious. One is not surprised, therefore, that the French-Canadians brought this central institution with them when they migrated south to New England. Sections "a" and "c" of the question are intended to measure involvement in the church's religious activities. Part "d" measures other social activity centered around the church. The question as a whole will aid in the evaluation of the importance of the church in the French-Canadian community.

3a. Could you tell me where you were born?

b. Where was your (wife, husband) born?

c. Where were your parents born?

It is a well known sociological fact that as the length of time in a particular community increases, the degree of assimilation into that community will increase. This question is designed to measure the length of involvement in the community, as a guide to evaluation of the degree of assimilation. The concern is primarily to find out how long the individual had been in this country, to aid in measuring his assimilation into the American culture.

4a. Do you remember the name of the school you last attended?

b. What was the last grade you completed in that school?
Interviewing experience has revealed that people often tend to exaggerate when answering questions, both to make themselves seem better than they actually are and to give the interviewer the answer they think he is looking for. This question on education is purposely designed to limit the amount of exaggeration possible, and is a widely used question for this purpose. By asking the name of the school first, the respondent is more likely to respond truthfully to section "b" of the question. Level of education is desired as a measure of political saliency, knowledge of politics generally increasing with education.

5a. Could you tell me how far your father went in school?

b. How far do you expect your children to go in school?

Once the respondent's educational achievement has been ascertained, that of the preceding and following generations may be determined. This question will be used to construct another index of assimilation, based on education and educational expectations. One can expect that as assimilation proceeds, expectations will increase. It would appear that educational expectations will follow this pattern. Having a measure of education finished for two generations, and educational expectation for a third, comparisons of expectation can be made as a measure of as-
6. What organizations, other than church groups, do you belong to?

This question serves the purpose of locating groups or influences which may have replaced the church as center of the community. These organizations can also be expected to play a role in the political orientation of the individual.

7a. How many of the people you work with share your nationality?

b. What about the people you associate with outside of work?

The intent here is to determine the extent of association with non-French people in the two situations. This, to an extent, will also be a measure of assimilation. Interaction with non-French will have the effect of changing the French group, aiding in the assimilation process. The question is in two sections to determine voluntary and involuntary association--part "a" will indicate voluntary, while part "b" will be concerned with voluntary social relationships.

8a. When you go on vacation, is there any place you usually go?

b. Is there any outstanding reason for going there?

Question 8 was included to find out the frequency,
if any, of trips to Canada, sensing that this would be an important manifestation of close ties still held with Canada. Part "b" would, ideally, indicate that the reason for travelling to Canada was to visit relatives there.

9. In general, would you say that the United States was a land of opportunity?

Up to this point, all the questions have been searching for factual information that the respondent would transmit. This question is the first to ask for an opinion. The question used is a classic interview question, used to get the respondent to talk about how he sees his lot in the United States. In practice, probes were used to get the respondent to talk freely about these considerations. What was being looked for were signs of discontentment with his situation, a sign of a lack of assimilation. When a person's membership in a group becomes stable, he is not apt to feel unhappy about his role. It is when he moves away from a secure membership that he becomes displeased with the group. The same holds true for assimilation into a culture. As long as his membership is not complete and secure, he will be easily disappointed by the way the group is affecting him.

10a. If you could live anywhere you wanted, where would you go?
10b. What has stopped you from moving there already?

This question is included as a check on questions 8 and 9. It measures degree of assimilation through disenchantment with the present life experience. It was included also to see what the group's effect, if any, was on mobility.

11a. Have you ever been discriminated against because of your religion or nationality?

b. When and where?

c. What was your reaction?

The problem faced in question 11 was how to get a person to talk about discrimination. It seemed out of the question to ask respondents if they discriminated against anyone, so this tact was tried. Discrimination is generally held to be a sign of insecurity, insecurity arising, we have seen, from a breakdown of group identification. By getting the person to talk about discrimination in situational, and not abstract terms, it was hoped to gain an insight into the degree of insecurity of the particular minority. And at the same time, the attitude of others toward French-Canadians, as the latter picture them, would be revealed. The question thus serves a double function, uncovering attitudes toward, and experience with, discrimination, with both serving as a measure
of assimilation.

12a. How many children were there in your parents' family?

b. How many in yours?

Family size has always been a good measure of the assimilation of groups into American society, with the size of the family declining with the acceptance of a new cultural standard. This question is intended to provide data to make an analysis along these lines.

13a. What (is, was) (your, wife's) occupation?

b. What (is, was) your father's occupation?

c. If you have any children presently working, what are their occupations?

Information on each respondent's occupation had previously been obtained from The City Directory, so comparable information for spouse, father and children, to give a three generation spread of occupations was desired. The use of this data as an index of assimilation should be obvious by this point. One would expect that as assimilation proceeds, there will be a tendency to move up the occupational level. The American ideology is quite clear on this point--the cobbler's son becomes a doctor, any boy can be President. Assimilation is expected to carry individuals and groups to higher economic and
occupational status. With the data made available by this question some comparisons of the occupations of three successive generations can be made, again with the purpose of examining the degree of assimilation into American culture.

With this question, the section of the interview dealing with the extent of ethnic involvement and degree of assimilation is completed, and the subject moves directly to politics. The following questions have one major purpose, which is to allow each respondent to be questioned on his political attitudes, opinions, and motivations. Concretely, this means not only his party and candidate preference, but also his basic participatory orientation and the degree of his political involvement. What is of interest here is not only the result of the individual's decision process, but the mechanics of the process. The questions here are, in practice, only an outline of what actually transpired during the interviews. Respondents were urged to talk freely about politics, and most were quite willing to do so. From their remarks, guided by the questions asked them, a view of the individual political decision-making and orientation can be had.

14. Do you consider yourself to be a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?
The first question in the political series asks for a basic party orientation. Actually what consists of party membership is not defined by the interviewer, but it is hoped that the respondent himself will provide this information in the course of his remarks.

15. For whom did you vote in the last presidential election?

This question is pretty straightforward, especially when it is remembered that Ward 7 went to President Johnson by better than nine to one. The problem here is one of truthfulness, people having a tendency to say they voted for the winner even though they did not. This is compounded by the silence that surrounded many Goldwater supporters, who were reluctant to admit their decision to others. And third, there is the danger that people who did not vote will say they did, it being almost subversive to admit not voting. The question is worded so that the danger is greatest on the third count, but the chance is taken in hopes that probes will uncover enough additional information to satisfy this uncertainty.

16a. What was your main reason for voting for __________?

b. Was it because of his personal appeal, the issues, his party, or some thing else? What else?

Question 16 provides the check on question 15 discussed
above, and in addition yields some important information
about the degree of political sophistication and saliency.
Part "b" of the question was used only as a probe, and
only if there was hesitancy in response to part "a". The
three categories listed are those considered by The Sur-
vey Research Center as the major determinants of the vot-
ing act. For a further discussion of these categories
the reader is referred to The American Voter.

17. What do you think is the most
important issue facing America
now?

This question continues the inquiry into the politi-
cal background of the respondent, particularly his sali-
ency of major issues of public debate. The question is
left completely open, with no probes used; no response
is more meaningful than a suggested response, for it in-
dicates the true character of the subject's political
thinking.

18a. Do you discuss politics with
your friends and relatives?

b. When was the last time you
discussed politics with any-
one?

c. Do you remember what the par-
ticular subject was at that
time?

d. How often do these discussions
take place?

5 Campbell, et al, op. cit.
18e. Where do they take place?

f. Do you usually agree or disagree with your friends?

Question 18 is, perhaps, the central question in the political part of the interview. It attempts to probe that mysterious area of political decision making by seeking to identify some of the contributory factors to the individual's thought processes. The question will tell us where he gets his information, how he reacts to discussions of politics, the frequency of such sessions with other people, and his solidarity in the group opinions. The separate parts of the question are supplied to guide, but not suggest, the respondent's discussion. Although it is the crucial question, no further explanation seems necessary, because of its simplicity.

19a. If a candidate for political office asked you to do some volunteer work for him, would you?

b. Have you ever had this opportunity?

Question 19 is included to measure political activity, and the respondent was guided to talk about his attitude toward politics as a profession or vocation as well. The subject is first presented with the hypothetical situation, and then asked about his actual political participation. The Survey Research Center has identified participation in politics as one of the most sophisticated re-
sponses to the political situation, and for this reason little experience is to be expected from most of the people interviewed.

20. Do you think that the Federal Government should do more, less, or about the same, to guarantee a job and housing and health care to every American?

21. Do you think that the Federal Government should give money to church supported schools?

22. Do you think that members of the Communist Party should be allowed to speak at public places?

These three questions are designed to give some idea of the opinion orientation of the respondent. The three issues presented are three which should allow a breakdown on a liberal-conservative axis, with 20 being the least liberal, i.e., most conservative of the three, and 22 being the most liberal if positive responses are made. In this way a sort of Guttman scale can be constructed, although it can only serve as an indicator as there is not enough information made available to justify placing any more faith in it. More information could be obtained only at the price of lengthening the interview even further, which was felt to be the greater of the two evils. As a result, only a rather inadequate series of questions on opinion could be included, but it was hoped that this
series would serve as an accurate indicator of the opinion spread.

**FACTUAL DATA**

23. Sex.

24. What year were you born?

25. How long have you been living in Waterville?

26. Do you have any children in the Waterville public schools?

27. Time of interview.

This, the last section of the interview, deals with factual data, as the subhead indicates. Question 23 is recorded from observation. Question 24 is intended to find out respondent's age, and should produce a more honest answer than asking for age in years. Questions 25 and 26 were included to measure involvement in the Waterville community. And finally, Question 27 is answered by the interviewer, providing data as to the length of the interview.

Following this last series of questions, I made it a point, in the interviews, to ask the respondent if he had anything to add or any comment to make. This procedure was intended to allow the respondent to finish anything he had not already exhausted, to ask questions of the interviewer, which were skillfully avoided, or to state his opinion on something that had occurred to him.
Here, from the most open of all open ended questions, the desire was simply to listen and record and to see how the technique worked.

The Interviews - With the completion of the questionnaire, seven test interviews were conducted. The purpose of these interviews was more to test the questionnaire than the respondents. Wordings were changed and several questions rearranged from the original drafts of the interview as a result of these test run-throughs.

At this point, the third stage of survey research procedure was begun. The sample and the questionnaire were combined in a series of interviews. These final interviews took place in the respondent's homes, appointments being made by phone as much as possible. Interviewer identified himself as a student at Colby College, but the true purpose of the survey was not revealed to the respondents.

In general, with only a few notable exceptions, the interviewer was well received and the respondents were very cooperative. One woman, however, insisted on using a hot iron to aid in suggesting that she did not want to be interviewed. Three other respondents could not be located, despite revisits to their homes and inquiries from neighbors. There was no language problem at all.
The respondents' remarks were at points lucid and fulfilled my hopes for information. When given the free talk period at the conclusion of the formal interview, respondents often launched into long speeches, the favorite subject being welfare payments. One lady offered me a cup of tea and some cookies, which I gratefully declined.

The survey process complete, the analysis of the data collected could begin. The responses were tallied and some were crossed, two scales were constructed, the first of assimilation, the second on political orientation. This data will be discussed in Chapter Three.

As has been stated above, the survey process can carry us only so far. Once the data has been collected, the organization of it into some sort of intellectual sense is a project that no machine or method can perform. Here is a truly creative problem, the shaping of raw data into understandable information that can shed some light on the problem.

The third chapter will introduce this most human of talents, as it presents a set of conclusions and understandings obtained by applying the mind to the data gained in the above-described process.
CHAPTER TWO

THE FRENCH-CANADIANS IN NEW ENGLAND
CHAPTER TWO

THE FRENCH-CANADIANS IN NEW ENGLAND

Introduction - The migration of the French-Canadians from Quebec to New England in the 1870's is a little known chapter in American history, yet its importance to the development of the six state region has been quite significant. Without the mass exodus of the Quebec farmers to the textile mills of the developing industry of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, it is doubtful that manufacturing would have achieved the high level of development that it subsequently did. Without the influx, the cultural, social, economic and political climate of New England might be vastly different from what it is today. And yet, for all its significance, the recording and analysis of the mass movement from Quebec to New England has been greatly neglected.

This paper is not designed as a history or a historical analysis of the migration. Rather, it uses the French-Canadian immigration and the resultant American ethnic group as the basis for an examination of the effects of ethnic groups on the American political system. This chapter, therefore, is not intended to be a precise or
definitive history of the French-Canadians in New England. What it is intended to do is provide a background for the analysis of the political behavior of the French-Canadians in Waterville which follows in Chapter Three.

**A Short History** - The intermingling of the Canadians of French origin with New Englanders can be traced back to Colonial times, especially in the period before the French and Indian War, when it was interrupted. But during the American Revolution, while the American colonists were overthrowing their English dominators, there was much support for the Americans among the French in Canada. Indeed, there is even some evidence that French-Canadians came south to join the armies of the colonies in the war, probably with the idea of pushing the English out of Canada at the same time. Whether any remained in New England after the war could not be determined, but if they did, their numbers would be so small that they would be insignificant, and have no real effect on the migration with which we are concerned.

Industrial development in New England was temporarily halted by the Civil War, but once the nation had begun to bind up its wounds, manufacturing could begin to take its place in the developing New England economy.
Now, with the availability of power and equipment, and with the introduction of the railroads, providing easy transportation, large manufacturing enterprises could reasonably be undertaken. Along the principal rivers of New England, mills, especially textile mills producing high quality cotton and woolens, began to spring up, using the easily available water power of the rivers. But the introduction of large machines, requiring a great number of unskilled workers, created a serious shortage of labor in the developing mill towns. It was thus with a sigh of relief that attention was turned to the rising cries of discontent of the French-Canadians to the north.

The years from 1865 to 1870 had brought hardship and political problems to the French residents of Canada, particularly those living on small farms along the St. Lawrence Valley in Quebec. A series of poor crops had cost many of the French their land, and the government, controlled by the British, and after the Dominion of Canada Act of 1867 by the British Canadians, was not very sympathetic to their lot. Against this background of poverty and discontent, it is not hard to understand the appeal that the New England mills' agents had for the French. The promise of jobs and money for all, men and women and children, easily lured many of the impoverished farmers
to the mills of New England. The most widely used technique was to send French-Canadians, who had settled individually in the mill towns during the Civil War, or had been recruited to fight in the war, back to Quebec to bring the message of a promised land to their brethren up north.

And so the exodus began. While no accurate figures of numbers of French-Canadian immigrants are available for the early period, the following information on the founding of French-Catholic parishes is a good indicator of the timing of the migration. This information, compiled by Jacques Ducharme in his admirable study of the French-Canadians in New England, *The Shadows of the Trees*, gives a valuable measure of the degree and speed of the movement. As can be seen from Table Two, the settlement of French-Canadian communities in New England, marked by the founding of a French-Catholic parish, began in 1868, reached a peak in the period from 1871-1872, quieted down somewhat for the rest of that decade, then picked up again in the 1880's. In all, from 1868 to 1890, a total of seventy-one French parishes were established in the five states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

### TABLE TWO

**Dates of Establishment of Franco-American Catholic Parishes**

1868 - Winooski, Vermont  
Pittsfield, Massachusetts  

1869 - East Rutland, Vermont  
Fair Haven, Vermont  
Holyoke, Massachusetts  
Lowell, Massachusetts  
Southbridge, Massachusetts  
Waterville, Maine  

1870 - Fall River, Massachusetts  
Worcester, Massachusetts  
Webster, Massachusetts  

1871-72 - St. Albans, Vermont  
Alburgh, Vermont  
North Adams, Massachusetts  
Ware, Massachusetts  
Indian Orchard, Massachusetts  
Manchaug, Massachusetts  
Fall River, Massachusetts  
Marlboro, Massachusetts  
Lawrence, Massachusetts  
Lewiston, Maine  
Biddeford, Maine  
Manchester, New Hampshire  
Nashua, New Hampshire  
Manville, Rhode Island  

1873 - Haverhill, Massachusetts  
Centreville, Rhode Island  

1874 - Pawtucket, Rhode Island  

1875 - Springfield, Massachusetts  
Salem, Massachusetts  
New Bedford, Massachusetts  

1877 - Suncook, New Hampshire  

1878 - Woodlawn, Rhode Island  
Providence, Rhode Island  

1880-90 - 37 more parishes

---
This data on the founding of new parishes is not only an indication of the times of the migration—it also provides a description of a major facet of the life of the French-Canadians once they had reached this country. When they arrived in the mill towns of New England, the French-Canadians found themselves in the midst of a strange and often hostile community. The first fact that strikes the observer is the language barrier—very few of the immigrants spoke anything but their peculiar French dialect, making communication a problem. Secondly, most of the French, we must remember, were farmers in Quebec. They had never seen towns the size of those they were now inhabiting, not to mention the inside of giant textile mills. These two factors, language and rural background, combined to force the French-Canadians into ghetto existence in the cities and towns they populated.

One factor, however, remained that could potentially serve to form a bond with another significant part of the community. For the most part, the French-Canadians who moved south were adherents to the Roman-Catholic religion. This aspect of their lives, which was a central part of their Canadian existence, they shared with another significant New England ethnic group, the Irish Catholics. Close association with this other, established, Catholic group
were, however, curtailed by two factors. The French desired to have bi-lingual parishes, with priests brought down from Canada, but the Irish and the Irish-controlled church hierarchy would not consent to this. Direct assimilation into Irish parishes was, therefore, prevented by the language barrier described above, plus the resentment of the pre-established Irish. As a result, the French-Catholic parishes listed in Table Two were formed.

But in addition to the language difficulties, questions of basic church organization aided in the creation of the French-Irish schism. The newly arrived French had become accustomed to a locally oriented and controlled parish, with a council of local laymen running the local church. The Irish, on the other hand, had developed a tight hierarchy, based on the Bishops, leaving no control on the local level. It was inevitable that the two would clash, as they did, and sometimes violently, as in the Danielsonville affair. The basic issue was who would make the financial decisions for the parish, the local "syndique" or the Bishop. The violence entered when the financial decisions also touched on other issues, such as the expenditure of parish funds for the construction on non-French schools. Religion, which was the only thing

\[ ^2 \text{Ducharme, op. cit., p. 77ff.} \]
the new immigrants shared with a considerable portion of the existing population, could not, therefore, serve as a catalyst to assimilation into the New England communities in which the French settled.

The slowness, in fact the resistance to, assimilation can be better understood, if, in addition to the religious situation, the circumstances of the emigration are considered. The French in Quebec were basically farmers with strong family and historical ties to their Canadian homes. Although burdened with economic hardships, these ties remained strong, as Ducharme so thoroughly states. Even the move south to the urban manufacturing centers of New England could not break the strong bonds to their Canadian homeland. In fact, many viewed the emigration as a means to remain in Canada. This apparent paradox is easily explained. The French were lured to the mills by pictures of riches; a quick fortune was pictured as waiting for them in the textile mills. Whole families, or at least all who could work, packed up and headed south, and with one end in mind. If a quick fortune could be made, the family could return to Quebec, buy back the repossessed

3 Ducharme, op. cit., p. 15ff.
family farm, and resume the old way of life. The more working, the faster the necessary money could be raised, and the sooner the family could return to Canada. The whole American adventure of the French-Canadians must, therefore, be seen as a temporary sojourn in a strange land—at least in intention.

Once in this country, however, the return to Canada was constantly being postponed. Fortunes were not as easily made as had been imagined, even with everyone over ten working fourteen hours a day in the mills. The depression of the early 70's cut off the wages of many French, and made the return to Quebec even more impossible. So gradually, the immigrants began developing ties to the communities in which they were living. By the time better economic times returned in 1873, this new French Canada was a securely established community in the New England urban areas.

The real key to this permanency that began to develop so soon was the working situation in the mills at the time. As noted above, children of the age of ten were welcome in the mills, and with the large families characteristic of the French-Canadians, this provided a good incentive for

Hansen, in The Intermingling of the Canadian and American Peoples, reports that nineteen out of twenty of the immigrants intended to return to Canada, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1940, p. 166f.
moving the entire family to the new, if temporary, com-
munity. But since a family could not be housed in the
barracks type housing the mills provided, the families
had to find more permanent housing, often pooling their
funds and building a small cottage. As a community of
French-Canadians began to develop, doctors, priests and
other non-mill workers began to move down from Canada to
fill the needs that the large French communities created.
As noted above, the church began to assume an important
role in their new lives, particularly educationally. Al-
though the dream of the return was still there, its real-
ity was being significantly challenged by the circumstances
of the French condition in the New Engeland textile centers.

The return to Quebec and their farms was becoming more
distant, but the immigrants still clung tenaciously to
their French heritage. The hostility of the Irish, and the
work and community situation made sure of that. The ex-
pression of these feelings of attachment to French Canada
manifested themselves in a movement to preserve the cultu-
ral integrity of the immigrant group. French newspapers--
at one time or another there have been almost three hun-
dred French language newspapers published in New England,
although only a handful survive today--along with the par-
ish priests, many of whom came from Canada, formed the

Hansen, op. cit., p. 167f.
early leadership in the struggle to preserve "la foi, la langue et les mœurs". Later these were joined by the national societies, which by 1900 numbered over four hundred, each a unique and independent group, primarily social, but still dedicated to the preservation of the traditional forms. The resultant confusion and competition led to the coordination and consolidation of the individual groups, this accomplished through the founding of L'Association Canado-Américaine in 1890, L'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique in 1900, and Société L'Assomption in 1903. The federated organizations, much more than social groups, provided insurance, scholarships and other benefits for their members, and all as part of their primary purpose—to keep the French culture alive and strong among the immigrants. They enjoyed a long period of great influence in the first thirty years of this century, but their impact on the French community has steadily decreased since that time.

The conditions were ripe, therefore, for an anti-assimilation attitude to develop among the French-Canadians. Originally seeing their stay as only temporary, they did not find it necessary to learn English, and this continuation of the language barrier was an effective
inhibitor to assimilation. By the time the dream of re-turning to Canada began to be discarded, the French-Can-
adian community had become so large and self contained,
that continued resistance to assimilation was facilitated.
Thirdly, the institutionalization of the group's identity
drive, especially in the large federated societies, kept
alive the desire for preserving the group distinction.
The hostility of the Irish, especially expressed through
the church controversies, served to set the group apart
from the rest of the community and to increase the in-
ternal cohesion of the group. Given these factors, the
non-assimilation, extending at times to overt resistance
to assimilation, of the French-Canadians can be easily
understood. It was a combination of these four factors
that is responsible for the uniqueness and separateness
characteristic of the French-Canadians in New England
today.

The French-Canadians in Waterville - The history of
the French-Canadians in Waterville has followed much the
same pattern as discussed above, and the resulting non-
assimilation is thus similar to that cited in the general
section. This section, therefore, will not dwell upon a
discussion similar to that above. Rather, a brief his-
tory of the settlement of the French-Canadian community
in Waterville will be undertaken, with the aim of providing an adequate background for the discussion of the present state of the group as revealed by the survey process.

Clement M. Giveen, in his admirable history of Waterville, identifies Jean Matthieu as the first French-Canadian emigrant to settle in Waterville, setting the date as 1827. The Reverend Edwin Carey Whittemore reports that Matthieu rebuilt a house which had been moved from Fairfield to the east side of Water Street. According to the Reverend Whittemore, Matthieu was followed to Waterville by Jean Marcou, who settled in Winslow, and in the 30's and 40's by about fifty more families. George Boardman Pepper, past president of Colby College, reveals that by 1835 there were about thirty French-Canadian families in town, mostly living in "The Plains", at the south end of town.

The Waterville situation thus closely paralleled the developments for the rest of New England, with one major exception. Until the arrival of the French-Canadians, Waterville had had no other Catholic citizens, therefore,

7 Reverend Edwin Carey Whittemore, Centennial History of Waterville, Waterville, 1902, p. 80.
8 Whittemore, loc. cit.
9 George Dana Boardman Pepper in Whittemore, op. cit., p. 248.
no conflict with the Irish existed. A priest was located in Whitefield, Maine, but there is no evidence that he ever journeyed to Waterville before 1840. In fact, Whittemore reports that a member of the community had to take his bride-to-be to Whitefield to be married. By 1841, however, the community had grown big enough to warrant a more permanent setup, and services were begun in the Matthieu house, with a priest from Bangor officiating. By 1851, the community had outgrown this arrangement, and a structure was built on Grove Street to serve as a chapel. It should be mentioned that the financial support of Waterville's Protestant population made the chapel possible. In 1857 the first full time priest was appointed for Waterville's French-Catholic population. Finally, in 1870-71, the present St. Francis De Sales' Catholic Church was erected on the corner of Elm and Winter Streets, and shortly thereafter parochial education was begun. The fantastic growth of the community, from about fifty families in 1851 when the first chapel was constructed, through the decades of the 70's is demonstrated by the fact that enrollment in the parochial school was over five hundred by 1900.

10 Whittemore, op. cit., p. 81.
11 Pepper, op. cit., p. 250.
The greatest influx of French-Canadians came with the opening of the first large textile mills around 1870. However, the largest Waterville mill, The Lockwood Company, did not begin operations until early in 1876. The mill operated on a twenty-four hour day, six days a week, but was so busy that a second building was constructed in 1880. With the completion of mill number 2, employment at Lockwood jumped to thirteen hundred, most of these French-Canadians who manned the plant's twenty-one hundred looms.

With the diversification of industry toward the end of the century, the French began moving into non-textile industries, such as paper and furniture. Many also began commercial enterprises, opening markets, dry goods stores or other business establishments. In addition, many having sent their children to school, the second generation began to produce professional men, such as doctors and lawyers, not to mention those who took their vows and became members of the Roman Catholic clergy. Dr. John L. Fortier was the first French physician in town, opening his practice in 1883.

With their numbers growing so fast, and their concentration in the area of "The Plains," it was inevitable that the French should soon play an important political
role in Waterville. Records since the division of the city into wards in 1888, show a steady increase in the occurrence of names like Belliveau, Nedeau, Pooler, and Rancourt in the lists of Councilmen, Aldermen and School Board members. It was not till well into this century that any significant French-Canadian electoral weight was felt, but now it is without a doubt a major factor in the local parties' selection process. One can hardly conceive of a non-French mayor of Waterville, as the 1963 case when a French Republican upset a non-French Democrat.

Except for the absence of the Irish, the French-Canadian development in Waterville closely resembles the general pattern of development in New England. This includes a national society, L'Union Lafayette, founded in 1890 and later incorporated into the international L'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste in 1900. In later years, especially as professionals and businessmen began to become successful, the French community began to lose its geographic solidarity. French can now be found in all sections of the city, but there is still a concentration in the south end. Ward 7, the area sampled for this study, is 90% French even today.

With this background, we can now profitably begin a
consideration of the data compiled in the survey process. Knowing something of the general characteristics of the French-Canadians in New England, and of their history in Waterville, we can proceed to consider them as they exist today. The central point of inquiry will be the development to the present time of the pressures toward non-assimilation which played such a prominent role in the early history of the French-Canadians in New England.
CHAPTER THREE

ASSIMILATION AND THE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR OF THE FRENCH-CANADIANS IN WATERVILLE, MAINE
CHAPTER THREE

ASSIMILATION AND THE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR OF THE FRENCH-CANADIANS IN WATERTVILLE, MAINE

Introduction - The sample survey undertaken as a major part of this study was designed to provide data concerning two types of phenomena hopefully found as characteristics of the French-Canadian ethnic group in Waterville. The discussion in Chapter Two stressed the role and development of assimilation in the history of the French immigrants, and was designed to serve as a background for the analysis of the current degree of assimilation among the French-Canadians in Waterville today. The procedure used was the construction of a series of coded scales based on the different indices of assimilation measured with the questionnaire.  Three different measures of assimilation have been selected for the analysis of the current role of assimilation, and a scale will be constructed which will include all three of these plus a standard composed of a composite of the three individual scales.

The second major concern of this study has been with

1 Supra, pp. 16-25.
the political behavior of the French-Canadians in Waterville. This general topic has been broken down into three sub-areas for the purpose of this analysis. The first sub-topic is political knowledge, measuring the respondent's acquaintance with the political sphere. The second is political participation, concerned with the way the individual expresses himself politically, both formally and informally. The third is political attitude, attempting to ascertain the issue orientation of the respondent. Separate scales will be constructed for each of the three, with the aim being the achievement of an understanding of the political personality of the French-Canadian.

The third and final section of this chapter will compare the two sets of indices prepared, with the aim of determining the effect of the degree of assimilation on the political behavior of the French-Canadians in Waterville.

**Index of Assimilation** - Questions numbered 1-13 in the interview schedule were all designed to provide data for the construction of a scale of assimilation. From these questions information in three separate sub-areas has been selected for the following analysis, each section supplying part of the total picture of the presence of assimilation among Waterville's French-Canadians.
Specifically, the three areas of inquiry are:

A. **Language** - The extent and degree of current usage of the French Language by the ethnic group members.

B. **Church Membership** - The extent of individual involvement in the Roman Catholic Church, and the importance of the church as a central institution of the French-Canadian community.

C. **Social Contacts** - The degree of freedom the individual has in going outside of the French community for social or business purposes.

When these three areas of inquiry were isolated, a code was drawn up to measure the degree of assimilation of each of the respondents in each of the three categories. This code is contained in Table Three below. The basic procedure here is to give the respondent's comments a numerical rating for each category, based upon the content and intensity of the respondent's remarks. For each topic, the respondent was given a rating of from 1, representing a high degree of assimilation, to 5, representing a low degree.

On the basis of the respondents' remarks, coded according to Table Three, the degree of assimilation of each respondent, on each separate index, could be determined. The result of this operation is to be found
TABLE THREE

Code for Index of Assimilation

A. Use of French Language:
1. French not used, or used rarely.
2. French sometimes spoken in home, but rarely outside.
3. Moderate use of French both in and out of the home.
4. French used most of the time in the home, and sometimes outside of home.
5. French used exclusively in the home, and usually outside of the home.

B. Church Membership:
1. Respondent does not belong to the Roman Catholic Church.
2. Respondent is a church member but rarely attends.
3. Respondent is a church member and attends Mass about once a month.
4. Respondent is a church member and attends Mass regularly.
5. Respondent is a church member, attends Mass regularly, and participates in other church activities.

C. Social Contacts:
1. All contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
2. Most contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
3. Some contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
4. Few contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
5. No contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
below in Tables Four through Nine. On each of these tables the coded rating is interpreted to signify a degree of assimilation as explained here:

1. High Assimilation.
2. High-Moderate Assimilation.
3. Moderate Assimilation.
4. Low-Moderate Assimilation.
5. Low Assimilation.

In the following tables, three non-French respondents are eliminated, because their inclusion lends no understanding to the analysis, and indeed, spreads the instance of specific ratings to distort the results somewhat.

As can be easily seen from Table Four, the use of French among the French-Canadians is still quite widespread. None of the respondents has an index of less than 3, indicating a relatively low degree of assimilation as a general conclusion of this analysis.

Table Five contains the distribution of responses, again indicating the high proportion of French-speaking, hence low assimilation, that prevails in Waterville's French-Canadian community.

As can be seen, a substantial majority of the French-Canadian community are still sufficiently un-assimilated to continue to use French as their principal communicating
### TABLE FOUR

**Extent of Use of French Language**

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<td>23--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8--5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>24--3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>25--3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>26--5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11--3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>28--3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>29--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>30--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15--3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>31--3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16--4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>32--3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to Code:**

3. Moderate use of French in and out of home.
4. French used most of time in home, sometimes outside.
5. French used exclusively in home, usually outside.

### TABLE FIVE

**Distributions of Assimilation Indices on Language Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. High-Moderate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low-Moderate</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
language. On the basis of this partial investigation, it must be concluded that the French-Canadian's remain relatively un-assimilated into the cultural traditions of the American polity.

As noted above in Chapter Two, the French-Canadian community was marked in its early period in the United States, and in its previous history in Canada, by a high cohesion around the Roman Catholic church. It is surmised, therefore, that the present degree of allegiance to the parish church will serve as an indicator of the amount of community solidarity that exists among the French-Canadians, and therefore of the resistance to assimilation that the group has exhibited. Tables Six and Seven provide the data from which an evaluation of church importance, and hence of the degree of assimilation can be determined. The result of this analysis can be taken as another measure of the degree of assimilation of the French-Canadian ethnic group in Waterville.

The results here, though not quite as clear as those for the language distributions, do demonstrate an unmistakable pattern of high allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. 66% of the respondents indicate church involvement at least as great as weekly attendance at Mass, while
### TABLE SIX

**Extent and Intensity of Church Membership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Code</th>
<th>Index of Assimilation</th>
<th>Respondent Code</th>
<th>Index of Assimilation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4 L-M</td>
<td>17-3 M</td>
<td>18-4 M</td>
<td>19-5 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 L-M</td>
<td>20-4 L-M</td>
<td>21-5 M</td>
<td>22-4 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 L-M</td>
<td>23-4 L-M</td>
<td>24-5 L</td>
<td>25-3 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 L-M</td>
<td>26-4 L-M</td>
<td>27-3 M</td>
<td>28-3 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-3 M</td>
<td>29-3 M</td>
<td>30-4 L-M</td>
<td>31-2 H-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-2 H-M</td>
<td></td>
<td>32-3 M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Key to Code:*

2. Respondent is church member but rarely attends.
3. Respondent is church member, attends about once a month.
4. Respondent is church member, attends Mass regularly.
5. Respondent is church member, attends Mass regularly, and participates in other church activities.

### TABLE SEVEN

**Distribution of Assimilation Indices on Church Membership Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. High-Moderate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low-Moderate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Low</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a third of these also participate in other church educational or social activities. None of the respondents indicates that he is not a church member. These figures are particularly significant when one considers them in comparison with the 25% of all American's that might be catalogued in the two, highest-participation categories.

This above average loyalty to the church, so much responsible for the successful establishment of the French-Canadian community in New England in the nineteenth century, thus continues as a fact of French life in Waterville today. Community solidarity, built up largely by the church in the beginning of the French migration continues, therefore, to be an important factor in the community's resistance to the pressure of assimilation. There can be little doubt that strong ties to the French church, with its now exclusive use of French in all services, has been a major force in the continuation of a viable French-Canadian community in Waterville, and, for this reason, offers a partial explanation of the non-assimilation of the French-Canadians into the more pluralist life of Waterville.

The third factor to be considered in this series of analyses of sub-systems of the assimilation syndrome is the amount of contact that the respondents reported as having with non-members of the French-Canadian group.
Data for evaluation of this item is presented in Tables Eight and Nine below. The assumption here is that a low contact person will be a low assimilated person, and one with higher contacts outside of the group will be more assimilated into the general community.

**TABLE EIGHT**

**Extent of Non-French Contacts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Code</th>
<th>Index of Assimilation</th>
<th>Respondent Code</th>
<th>Index of Assimilation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>17--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>18--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>19--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5--5--</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>21--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>22--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>23--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>24--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>25--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>26--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>27--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>28--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>29--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>30--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
<td>31--4--</td>
<td>L-M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32--3--</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to Code:**

3. Some contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
4. Few contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
5. No contacts outside of French-Canadian community.
### TABLE NINE

**Distribution of Assimilation Indices on Non-French Contacts Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. High-Moderate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low-Moderate</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables Eight and Nine reveal how self-contained the French-Canadian community in Waterville is even today. 58% of the respondents report few or no contacts with non-French Canadians as part of their daily routine of life. Most of them work, shop, and spend their leisure time with other ethnic group members. None report extensive contacts with non-French people. The closed and self-contained nature of Waterville's French-Canadian community is a sure sign that not much assimilation has taken place. It thus seems, quite ironically, that the very factor which originally created a French-Canadian community in Waterville, the need for consumer goods and services to supply the expanding mill-worker population, is today a major cause of the non-assimilation of the French-Canadians into the Waterville community. For it appears that as the French-Canadian population expanded

---

2 The danger here is that, because of the nature of the population sampled, the degree of closure of the community may be exaggerated.
and became more and more self-sufficient, it assimilated into itself the community of Waterville, instead of the opposite occurrence we should expect. In other words, by developing into an autonomous community at a very early date, the French-Canadians prevented, or at least postponed, their complete assimilation into the Waterville and American communities.

As a conclusion to this section on the assimilation of the French community, a composite of the three tables of assimilation indices, Tables Five, Seven and Nine, will be constructed. From this composite table a picture of the overall distribution of assimilation degrees can be drawn, and an overall index of the assimilation of the French-Canadians into the community can be constructed.

**TABLE TEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. High-Moderate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low-Moderate</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Low</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The composite table yields figures similar to those of the previous three distribution tables, as is to be expected, and shows that the bulk of the French-Canadian population of
Waterville must be classified in the moderate to low-moderate assimilation category. The individual characteristics of the extensive use of French, the high allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church, and the high occurrence of non-external activity, leave no doubt as to the validity of this conclusion. Living in a tight, virtually self-sufficient community, the French have thus far been able to resist much of the assimilation pressure that has caused most other American ethnic groups to disperse into the general population.

Index of Political Behavior - In addition to the phenomena of assimilation, and its complement, ethnocentrism, the major focus of this study has been on the political behavior of the French-Canadians in Waterville. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, this general topic has been broken down into three components, political knowledge, political participation and political attitude. Each of these will be discussed at length and the appropriate data will be presented. The aim in this section is to achieve an understanding of the political world of the members of the French-Canadian ethnic group.

The first area to be considered under political behavior is the political knowledge of the ethnic group members. This topic is concerned with the amount of information that
the respondent has about political affairs and personages, and obliquely with the sources of information he uses. The responses of each subject were evaluated and coded on a five point scale, with a rating of 1 indicating a high amount of political knowledge, 2 a high-moderate amount, 3 a moderate amount, 4 a low-moderate amount and 5 a low degree of political knowledge. Table Eleven below contains the distribution of values on the index of political knowledge.

**TABLE ELEVEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Knowledge</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. High-Moderate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low-Moderate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Low</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table indicates, the level of political knowledge is low for Waterville's French-Canadian community. This is peculiarly evident in the responses to the complete open-ended question Number 17, which asks for the most important issue facing America now. Only seven respondents answered that, the other twenty-five had no comment, which is in itself a significant comment upon their knowledge of political affairs. This same inability was also revealed in responses to Question 16, which sought reasons for supporting a particular candidate in the 1964 presidential election. Only five of those interviewed responded to this
question, again indicating the low level of political knowledge. The conclusion, then, must be that the political knowledge of the French-Canadians is best described as meager.

The second political behavior factor considered as part of this analysis is political participation, that is, the type and degree of the individual's response to the political situation. As considered in this study, five degrees of political participation have been isolated and identified. These five, coded from a high of 1 to a low of 5, represent the following types of responses:

1. High participation - Votes, discusses extensively, and works for a candidate or party.
2. High-Moderate participation - Votes and discusses extensively.
3. Moderate participation - Votes and discusses.
4. Low-Moderate - Votes.
5. Low - Does not vote.

On the basis of this code, the following table, showing the distribution of the various levels of participation, has been constructed. From it, the degree of political participation of the French-Canadian community can be evaluated.

As can be seen, the political act involves, for the bulk of the group members, little more than going to the polls on election day and registering a decision. There
is little evidence of formal activity in any large scale, even on behalf of friends and neighbors running for office. Local and ward politics have been reduced to an informal level, so that an oft heard remark is, "I voted for _____ because I recognized his name!" The indication is, that, on the local level, politics takes on a very ethnic quality, with the recognized names being French names. The limited non-French contacts of this large mass of votes serves to reinforce this ethnic familiarity effect. However, the indication is also, that beyond the local level, the French-Canadians are open to what are considered more traditional voting factors, such as war/peace, pro or con large government spending, party and personality.

**TABLE TWELVE**

**Political Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>High-Moderate</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The role of the party raises an interesting problem; the degree to which, on the local level, ethnic considerations cut across party lines. Over half of the French-Canadians do not identify with either party, the half that does is split about two to one Democratic. The importance of ethnic ties is best indicated by the political career of Waterville Mayor, Cyril Joly, Jr. A Republican and a Frenchman,
he swept heavily French Ward 7 against a non-French Demo-
crat in 1962. Yet in the State Senatorial elections of
1964, he finished fourth in a field of six, being beaten
by three French-Democrats. The French, it would seem, pre-
fer to vote for a fellow Frenchman, regardless of party, but
when faced with no such obvious choice, either because the
candidates are both French, or neither is French, tend to
make their decisions on what we regard as the usual criter-
on.

Above the local level, there seems to be no direct ap-
peal to French-Canadian support, and there is also a lack
of candidates or issues that the ethnic group can be strongly
identified with. On this level the low-income status of the
French-Canadians tends to push them into the Democratic col-
umn.

The third item considered in the evaluation of politi-
cal behavior of the French-Canadians is their political at-
titudes. Using the responses to the series of attitude ques-
tions at the end of the interview, a five point scale of
political attitude was constructed. The response to each
question was charted as liberal, moderate or conservative,
and ranked 1, 2 or 3 in that order. The scores were added
for the three questions, and the following code devised.

1. Liberal - Less than 4 rank points.
2. Moderate-Liberal - Score of 5 rank
points.

Supra, pp. 29-30.
3. Moderate - Score of 6 or 7.


On the basis of this code, the following table of attitude distributions was constructed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Attitude</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Liberal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Moderate-Liberal</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Moderate-Conservative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Conservative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen, the distribution clusters around the center of the political spectrum, with a slight lean toward the liberal side. This tendency is borne out by the large French-Canadian support for President Johnson in the last election, in which he received over 90% of the votes in Ward 7. It can also be explained from the nature of two of the three attitude questions, Medicare and Aid to Parochial Schools, both of which are favored and important to the French-Canadians.

The Effect of Assimilation on the Political Behavior of the French-Canadians in Waterville - The final task of this chapter is to examine the effects of differing degrees
of assimilation on the political behavior of the French-
Canadians in Waterville. Essentially, this involves the
comparison of the data of the first two sections of this
chapter, and will be accomplished by comparing, in matrix
form, the composite assimilation index with the individual
ratings on the three political behavior scales.

The first matrix will compare assimilation with politi-
cal knowledge. From it we can get some idea of the effect
of loose ties with the non-French political sphere, on the
obtaining and extent of knowledge of politics.

TABLE FOURTEEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation Level</th>
<th>Political Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Assimilation</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Moderate</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Red figures read down.

This matrix would seem to indicate that there is a
positive correlation between a low index of assimilation and
a low knowledge of political affairs. In other words, it seems evident that a lack of assimilation, that is a high group solidarity person, will be accompanied by a low level of acquaintance with political matters. Ethnic involvement, thus, serves to isolate the individual from traditional sources of political knowledge, and, to a degree, from the political world itself.

The second matrix analysis, of assimilation and political participation, deals with the problem in much the same manner. In this table, only the meaningful sections are reproduced here, the omitted possibilities being null sets.

**TABLE FIFTEEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation Level</th>
<th>Moderate Assimilation</th>
<th>Low-Moderate</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Participation -</td>
<td>M-H</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M-L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Assimilation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Red numbers read down.

The configuration of this matrix demonstrates a pattern of correlation similar to the previous one. Political participation takes a less sophisticated form as the degree of assimilation decreases. Thus, for most of the French-
Canadians, exhibiting low to low-moderate assimilation tendencies, the voting act is the only political participation engaged in. Here again, the conclusion is that high involvement in the ethnic group, and corresponding low assimilation, tends to isolate the individual from the political arena.

The third analysis is of the influence of assimilation on the political attitudes of the respondent. The aim here is to examine the resultant matrix to see if a correlation as above is also evident here.

**TABLE SIXTEEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assimilation Level</th>
<th>Political Attitude</th>
<th>Lib.</th>
<th>A-L</th>
<th>Mod.</th>
<th>M-Con.</th>
<th>Con.</th>
<th>Tot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Assim.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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This table illustrates a rather surprising tendency on the part of the French-Canadians. It would seem that as degree of assimilation increases, liberal tendencies increase also, while one would expect that it might bring a more conservative outlook. This difference can be explained in three ways. First, the difference between low and moderate assimilation is not really great enough for the conservative lean-
ings, usually associated with the middle class, to materialize, and the interaction between all the members of the group still being high, the suburbia effect noted by Lubell has not had time to set in. Secondly, the questions used may possibly not be a valid attitude-determination device, thereby challenging the accuracy of the figures. Or third, the less-assimilated French-Canadians may see the current liberalism, with its emphasis of equality, both social, economic and political, as a challenge to group solidarity and ethnic importance. This third reason, I believe, goes far to explain this noticeable conservative tendency of low-assimilated French-Canadians.

The effect of assimilation on the political behavior of the French-Canadians may thus be summarized as determining the extent to which the group member becomes involved in the political world. As assimilation increases, the Frenchman is likely to be more involved in politics, that is, to express himself in a manner that includes more than simply voting. A possible explanation of this phenomena will be discussed in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION: THE NEW ETHNOCENTRISM
AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM
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AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Introduction - The primary characteristic of the early French-Canadian community in New England, and Waterville, as noted in Chapter Two, might be said to be the high ideological content of its ethnocentrism. With the stay in this country being viewed by many as only temporary, making return to Canada and the farms along the St. Lawrence a strong possibility, and resulting in strong resistance to assimilation, and concomitant pressures to maintain their cultural heritage, the basis for such an ideologically oriented community was well provided. And even when the myth of return to Canada became unreal and was discarded, the same spirit continued as an attempt to establish a permanent French-Canadian community in New England.

Given this basic predisposition for an ideologically oriented ethnocentrism, an examination of the leadership of the early community will explain the reason that this psychic undercurrent manifested itself as it did. The central institution in the early French-Canadian community was the Roman Catholic church which was rapidly being staffed by clergy from Canada who were also of French background. The
sanction of the religious community, plus its obvious leadership potential, was thus added to the psychological proclivity which was latent in the French-Canadian immigrant. Eventually, the church was joined by the national societies, and their amalgamated federations, in spreading the message, with songs, slogans and other typical ideological appeals, of the necessity of cultural and community solidarity.

The type of ethnic group and the nature of its ethnocentrism which resulted is perhaps unique in the history of white immigrations to the United States. The usual American experience has been with non-ideological groups which dispersed quite rapidly into the general population, losing much of their past heritage as they assimilated. But in the case of the French-Canadians, the original temporary nature of their migration, the closeness of their original homes, and the immigration of leadership as well as working elements, created a much different type of situation; one most marked by the ideological appeal for the preservation of the culture of French-Canada, usually expressed as the command to "gardez la langue; gardez la foi; et gardez les moeurs."

With the passing of four generations since the great migrations of the post-Civil War period, the nature of the French-Canadian community has undergone a basic change. As
return to Canada became more remote and memories of the old St. Lawrence homesteads vaguer, the ideological content of their ethnocentrism began to be de-emphasized, and the institutions founded to proliferate French culture began to play a less central role in the community. The result is that today, the French-Canadians are almost completely cut off from Canada, with only some, usually weak, family ties keeping them connected with their former homeland. For the most part, they consider themselves Americans, usually preferring to be called Franco-Americans, an inaccurate if acceptable term. The national societies, once involving almost all French-Canadians in New England, have suffered similarly. The survey indicated that only about 10% of the French-Canadians in Waterville are still associated with any of these once powerful groups.

But saying that the French-Canadians have lost the ideological core of their ethnocentrism is not the same as saying that they no longer have an ethnic identity. The conclusion of Chapter Three can only be that the French-Canadian community today remains as a real and viable fact. The remaining task is thus to examine the existing group to determine the nature of its ethnocentrism, and then, to conclude with a statement of the importance of this phenomena on the political system.
The New Ethnocentrism - It is evident from the data discussed in Chapter Three, that the French-Canadian community is still with us, but a comparison of the nature of their ethnicity now with that eighty years ago leads to the conclusion that the main difference is the loss of the significance of ethnic group membership. Originally, group membership was a cherished possession which each French-Canadian took great pains to protect. Today however, instead of being united by a religious, almost mystic, bond of common heritage, the French-Canadians seem connected by the fact that they share a common situation—low income status in urban areas. Instead of joining together for the achievement of great cultural purposes, they appear to be thrown and held together by their common economic lot.

Ethnocentrism in this type of community might conceivably take on an economically based ideological form, but the survey shows that it has not. Instead, the ethnocentric bonds of the French-Canadians seem to be matters of convenience, making it easier for them to get along. It would appear that the French have just begun to reach the stage that most other ethnic groups reached upon settling in this country. United primarily by the desire to make life as easy as possible, they remain among old friends and relatives, and speak the French language they were taught as children. But
no longer are they held together by impulses of ethnic superiority or uniqueness. What is found now is the remnants of the old ethnic group attitude, most of the young generation not even sharing the little their parents have left to offer. There can be little doubt that with the passing of the present adult generation, the non-assimilation of the French-Canadians will be a matter of history. The next generation will have forgotten the French language and will be dispersed in the total population much more than they are today.

The Ethnocentrism of Convenience and the Political System - What remains is to determine the role that this new ethnocentrism plays in the political system, versus the role played by the formerly ideological ethnic personality. While little data is available, one could theorize that the ideological mood that dictated resistance to assimilation would also dictate non-involvement in the political world, or at the least, translation of all political issues into ethnic terms, much as in Hitler's Germany, where all issues were expressed in terms of the Fatherland. This latter alternative is quite outside the usual American pattern, which seeks to face the individual with overlapping group demands, so that his political decision cannot be simply made. This idea is implied by Madison in Federalist number 10, and is usually accepted as expressing the intent of the Founding
Fathers. The ideologically oriented ethnic group, by imposing a specific and exclusive world view on its members, runs counter to the demands of the American political system, which seeks to leave the individual open to many pressures and cross pressures, instead of categorizing him and making his political decisions easy or irrelevant.

It would appear, on the other hand, that the ethnocentrism of the present French-Canadian population of Waterville, and probably of New England, centered as it is on the convenience of the group members, does not offer this serious challenge to the workings of the political system. No longer concerned with the preservation of French culture, and stripped of its ideological significance, it has been reduced to a role more in keeping with American political tradition. No longer dominating the group members' lives, other traditional pressures are free to influence the political decisions of the group members. Thus, when trying to explain their reasons for supporting one of the two presidential candidates in 1964, none of those French-Canadians interviewed suggested that one of the two candidates or parties appealed to him in ethnic terms. Responses were always in terms of more traditional factors, such as: "He's for the working man"; or "He'd start a war." Ethnic influence, at least on the national level, would appear to be nil.

The exception to this pattern of secondary influence
is in local politics, in which ethnic considerations are quite important. Even on a non-ideological level, there is still some ethnic pride in the French-Canadians, and this is expressed by supporting Frenchmen for office. In addition, a candidate who can speak to the French in their own language is going to be more widely received, simply because more people still communicate more easily in French than they do in English. On the local level these ethnic considerations are apt to be more significant than on the national, where they are far overshadowed, and rightly so, by considerations of war and peace, or of jobs and national policy.

Conclusion - The process of acculturation, seen clearly in the development of the French-Canadians in New England, provides that as contacts to the homeland and ethnic group become more distant and weak with the successive generations, the individual will become more open to social pressures of the American genre. Politically this means that the ethnic pressures and views which may be prevalent early in the group's American history, will gradually weaken and disappear, being replaced by the traditional appeals of American politics.

This ability of the political system to break down and destroy foreign ties has been the central reason for
the ability of the system to assimilate such large numbers
of immigrants. This capacity for destroying an old myth,
and replacing it with the American myth, establishes the
closed system in which all can be understood, and in which
a larger unity overshadows the divisive effects of the sub-
groupings in society.

The history of the French-Canadians thus illustrates
the mechanism which the American political system has used
so successfully to transform congeries of people into a
nation.
ABBREVIATIONS


ABSTRACT

POLITICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF ETHNOCENTRISM: THE FRENCH-CANADIANS IN WATERVILLE, MAINE

By Stuart H. Rakoff

In order to obtain data for a determination of the effects of ethnocentric pressures and differing degrees of assimilation on ethnic group members, a sample survey process was followed, on a non-systematic basis, resulting in thirty-five interviews with French-Canadians in Waterville, Maine. The data collected can be categorized as: (1) That relating to the degree of respondent's assimilation; (2) That relating, conversely to number 1, to the respondent's degree of ethnocentric pressure; and (3) That relating to the political behavior of respondent.

After a short historical discussion, the data analysis yielded the following conclusions:

1. The French-Canadians in Waterville are generally in a low to medium assimilated class, with resulting high to medium ethnocentrism.

2. Their political behavior is generally unsophisticated.

An examination of this data indicates that the factor of low assimilation/high ethnocentrism is co-relational with
low political sophistication.

The evidence of this study would seem to support the Theory of Acculturation, but with one interesting difference. There is a significant difference to the respondent's political behavior on national as opposed to local matters. On local issues and elections, ethnic considerations are quite important, but on the national level, more traditional attitude determinants almost completely supplant ethnic considerations as behavior factors.