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Abenaki Sociality and the Work of Family History

Roy, Christopher Alan

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ABENAKI SOCIALITY AND THE WORK OF FAMILY HISTORY

Christopher A. Roy

A DISSERTATION

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY

OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Advisers: Lawrence Rosen and Rena Lederman

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is about family history and the constitution of the social among the Abenaki, an aboriginal people often associated with the Odanak reserve in southern Quebec. It is an ethnography of belonging among a people whose status as aboriginal people is legislated by the Canadian government, and whose residence is (and has been) largely off-reserve, often in the United States. Of particular importance to this study is an engagement with family and lay history, largely grounded in my collaborative genealogical/historical work with (primarily off-reserve) Abenaki. My informants and I engage with complex histories of residence and membership, their representations, and the sociolegal contexts in which aboriginalities are formed.

To begin my dissertation, I take my cues from an e-mail exchange with a family historian who had recently learned of her Abenaki ancestry and posed a series of very thoughtful questions to me. Chapter One explores her themes – documentation, family, and culture – analyzing the role of identification cards, family names, genetic testing, and the reserve as important factors in contemporary Abenaki life.

Chapter Two turns to Abenaki conceptualizations of culture and history throughout much of the 19th and 20th centuries, presenting histories of Abenaki guides, Indian Encampments, lecturers, and informants. These predecessors of my 21st century informants came to conceptualize the Abenaki past in new ways as they interacted with clients, tourists, audiences, and scholars, and they in turn led their interlocutors to rethink their historical understandings.

In Chapter Three I investigate contemporary historical practices, ranging from genealogical research to obituaries and eulogies. Particular attention is devoted to the creation of historical facts and the processes by which aspects of the past become meaningful in the present. How is significance attributed to Abenaki history?

Attention to questions of home and homeland structures the next two chapters. In Chapter Four I consider the ways in which knowledge practices and regimes of expertise have been instrumental to the delineation of Abenaki territoriality and the reconstruction of historical migrations. The following chapter queries the means by which Abenaki have imagined home in the past and in the present. The imagination of the reserve is central to my discussion here.

The dissertation's concluding chapter summarizes recent developments in the lives of some of the family historians with whom I have worked and identifies the aspects of their projects which differentiate them from those of more highly politicized indigenous historical research and the genealogical activities of non-native people in North America. In the end, I highlight the importance of theorizing Abenaki sociality and historical practice as mutually constitutive and call attention to the historical dilemmas being faced by all Abenaki people today.

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Unfortunately, I cannot thank everyone by name. In this dissertation, I have provided the names of some of the family historians with whom I have worked; the historically-grounded nature of their endeavors necessitated it. In these cases, these individuals have read drafts of the relevant chapters as this dissertation was in progress. In other instances, people's identities have been masked: names were not employed and personal details may have been altered. No matter how small Abenaki country may seem at times, no one individual could possibly account for all of the people with whom I have been in contact, particularly given the length of my fieldwork – full-time and part-time – on- and off-reserve.

Other debts I have accrued are easier to make public, although it would be impossible to do them justice here. I would like to express my gratitude to my advisers, Lawrence Rosen and Rena Lederman, from whom I have learned so much and without whose guidance and patience this dissertation would not have been completed. I am also indebted to my readers, Jim Boon and Carol Greenhouse, each of whom has shaped the way that I see our discipline and the world.

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Bethlehem, PA, October 2011

Chapter One: Documentation, Family, Culture

This is a dissertation about belonging, territoriality, politics and the work of family and avocational historians in Abenaki country. The Abenaki, aboriginal people whose ancestors inhabited much of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts, as well as adjacent portions of Quebec and New York prior to the 18th century, are today associated with the Odanak and Wôlinak First Nations, whose reserves are located in central Quebec, as well as the Penobscot Nation, situated in Maine.[1] My research has been chiefly focused on Abenaki often considered to be "Western Abenaki" and associated with Odanak, although, as I will explain, I am uncomfortable with both of these propositions.[2]

In the pages which follow, I will argue for an approach to Abenaki sociality as ever-emerging, as exceeding exercises to model it, and as necessarily comprehended and instantiated by ways of knowing grounded in the exigencies of experience, regimes of

---

[1] The Odanak and Wôlinak First Nations are "federally recognized," meaning they have government-to-government relations with the Canadian state, as framed by the *Indian Act*. The Penobscots are "federally recognized" in the U.S. As such, these aboriginal polities are able to exert a limited sovereignty over territories designated "reservation" or "reserve" land, "enjoy" certain rights reserved for them by the settler state, and receive (or apply for) certain funds to support educational, social service, natural resource, and other programs. Importantly, "Western Abenaki" are not recognized by the U.S. government, and as such are considered to be "Canadian Indians" with no aboriginal rights in the U.S. despite their continued occupation of ancestral territories and adjacent regions south of the border. On federal recognition, see B. Miller (2003); on the federal acknowledgment process see also M. Miller (2004) and Cramer (2005). Tolley (2006), Klopotek (2011), and Obermeyer (2009) provide important case material and analyses of the recognized/non-recognized divide. On the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy land claim settlement that resulted in federal recognition, see Brodeur (1985) and Rolde (2004).

[2] In this dissertation the term "Abenaki" is used to refer to individuals and families whose unambiguous Abenaki ancestry can be established since at least the turn of the 19th century. Thus, my interlocutors include people registered with a federally-recognized aboriginal government (i.e. the Odanak First Nation) as well as non-Status Abenaki whose families may have been exogamous for several generations. This working definition is undoubtedly too restrictive for many "race shifters" (Sturm 2010) with undocumented claims to Abenaki ancestry or those whose indigenous ancestors who married non-natives in the 17th or early 18th century, but whose families immediately or gradually left aboriginal social networks and have not claimed aboriginal identities until the late 20th century. On the other hand, it is too undoubtedly too inclusive for many Abenaki and other aboriginal people. Regarding the former, rigorous historicism was a necessary component of this work. Regarding the latter, an ethnographic openness was equally crucial, as questions of belonging and the elicitation of groups (Wagner 1974, Tsing 1993:127-153) are themselves central to my study.

objectivity, and the quandaries of cultural and political difference characteristic of a settler colonialism cloaked by multiculturalist policy. (see Povinelli 2002a) Of particular interest will be the work of aboriginal lay historians in eliciting socialities past and present. These Abenaki draw our attention to questions of belonging, presence, and rights at the same time that they draw our attention to the mutual implication of bureaucratic regimes of management and everyday practices of knowledge production both within and beyond the academy.

To introduce many of the issues I will be describing and analyzing, I turn to my first e-mail exchange with Jane Barber, an informant[3] whose family history research led her to her great-great-grandfather, Pierre Lagrave alias Peter Braziel[4], and to some ethnographic materials that relate to Jane's three themes – documentation, family, and culture.

Jane's Questions

In October 2006, Jane Barber posted on the "NA-ABENAKI" list on Rootsweb (http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~vermont/ABENAKIS.html), looking for more information about her great-great-grandfather, Peter Braziel, of Oppenheim, NY. Working with old census records and consulting information posted on-line by Ne-Do-

[3] As Peter Metcalf has pointed out, "So bland a word [as informant] has always made ethnographers uneasy; it sweeps far too much under the rug" (2002:43). He also points to the unfortunate fact that is little to distinguish the English language terms "informant" and "informer." Although some anthropologists have adopted the term "consultant" in lieu of "informant," I will continue to employ it, allowing it to gloss a variety of different relationships, the character of which I will describe in more detail below. Let me here state that my informants include aboriginal people and non-natives, men and women, from a variety of socioeconomic and educational backgrounds and with a remarkable diversity of residential and employment histories. Most of my informants are older than I am (not unusual for family historians – see Nelson 2008a:255), and I have had consistently amiable relationships with almost all of them.

[4] Both "Lagrave" and "Braziel" are spelled numerous ways in the records. The same holds for many other names in this dissertation, particularly those whose origins lie in Algonquian languages. I make no attempt to standardize orthography here, instead following the preferences of my informants and the particulars of relevant documents.

Ba[5], she had learned that Peter was Abenaki, and that he was known as Pierre Lagrave at Odanak. She was hoping to learn more.

I replied[6] directly to Jane in early November after consulting the list archives, identifying myself as an anthropologist, asking about the success of her post, and offering to share any information I had about her ancestors. I laid out a little bit about Peter Braziel:

> Let me know what type of information you're looking for. In the meantime, at the risk of telling you what you already know, I can tell you that Peter was baptized Pierre Lagrave at Odanak 17 June 1832; he was born the previous day to Francois Lagrave and his wife Ursule Wasamimet. Ursule was Abenaki, Francois was a French-Canadian[7]. Peter's godfather was Pierre Wawanagit, and his godmother

---

[5] According to their website (http://www.nedoba.org/), Ne-Do-Ba is an organization based in western Maine which purports to use "genealogical and historical research to show the Abenaki People are still in place, participated in history, helped build a regional identity, and contributed to the genetic make-up of the interior Northeast." One major contribution of this organization is to collect and post a tremendous amount of information on their website, some of it accurate and contextualized, some of it not. They have collaborated with a number of historically-known Abenaki people, including some of my informants, and a number of self-identified Abenaki (for more on this distinction, see below). Ne-Do-Ba's founder and research director, Nancy Lecompte, has recently published *Alnôbak: A Story of Indigenous People in Androscoggin County* (2003) in conjunction with the Androscoggin Historical Society.

[6] I would have been unable to write this chapter had Jane not responded to my urgent plea for help in June 2007 after technical problems resulted in the loss of several months of correspondence (and a few dozen pages of this dissertation). Jane had saved our correspondence and was able to forward it to me.

[7] It should be noted that not everyone agrees with my assessment of François Lagrave. A descendant of François and Ursule's son Francis argues that identification of Lagrave as Indian in various census records, the reported blood quantum of a grandson in another census record, and other documents and circumstances indicate that he was, in fact, of native ancestry. His case is well considered and compelling, but a study of a much larger sample of Abenaki-related records leads me to respectfully disagree. For instance, it was not unusual for spouses to be identified as white or Indian on census records, in spite of their own family histories or racial subjectivities. And there are numerous examples of French Canadian men involved in the basket trade after marriage to Abenaki women (ie. the Marshall family of Sharon Springs, NY; the Glandon and Reeves families of Saint-Dominique, PQ, Saratoga Springs, NY, and Lakewood Village, NY; and several families who moved between Odanak, Lake George, and the Thousand Islands, such as Denis Gill and Cecile Nagazoa; Clétus Gauthier and Hermine Paquette; and Gilbert Rainville and Catherine Msadokous). This family historian also cites the advantages of Indians passing as white – citizenship and property rights – as well as "conditions of his time" which required him to hide his identity, a common assertion in the Northeast, but highly problematic for discussions of the 19th century.

Important to this discussion are François Lagrave's baptismal and marriage records. He was baptized 6 September 1809 at Saint-Pierre-de-Sorel, having been born the same day to Bazile Lagrave, day laborer from that parish, and his wife Agathe Mandeville. Importantly, François's father was identified by his occupation rather than any sort of racial or ethnic term, which is typical for French Canadians of the time. Compare the baptism of Thimothé Saziboet 15 August 1804 in the same parish, where Thimoté was listed as 7 months old, the son of Joseph Louis [Saziboet] Abenaki and Marie Helene [Otôdoson]. The same pertains for parish records later that century: Marie-Angelique Otôdoson, 4 days old at her baptism 29 September 1847, was clearly identified as a "sauvage abénaquise," as were her parents (RSPS).

> was Marie Wasamimet, his maternal aunt. He was the third of 8 children; his father also had 5 children with his second wife, Lucinda Annance, also Abenaki, and a relative of the Wasamimets.
>
> The next time I have track of Peter is in 1850, living with his family in Sharon Springs. Like many of the Lagraves, he seems to have spent most of his life in the U.S. I have four, possibly five children for Peter and 1st wife Emma, including your great-grandfather John P. Braziel. I lost track of John and Rosa in 1910 when they were living on South Bridge St. in Poughkeepsie.

Jane replied promptly:

> First of all, thank you for responding at all. I am sure you are busy and have many other avenues to pursue. We have a lot of questions, some may pertain to your studies, some may be too specific. As I might have said, we were unaware of the Abenaki in our history until this winter. My mother had no idea, not even a hint, and is now wondering how much her father knew (William Martin Braziell). He never told her although they were very close. He was an architect, and a great storyteller according to my mother. He grew up very poor in Poughkeepsie, his mother was German, his father John P. Braziell from Sharon Springs or there abouts. One of his mother's sisters, or half sister, never had children of her own, but she and her second husband liked my grandfather and paid for his education at Cornell.
>
> She then presented her questions, grouped into three general categories:

documentation, family, and culture. I was flabbergasted by the thoughtfulness and attention to detail evident in these questions, and by how they spoke to my ethnographic concerns with family history and Abenaki sociality. Let me take each category in turn, beginning with documentation.

> Do you have documentation? We do not. I am assuming that if we were to go to Odanak, we could make copies of things. Or does someone there do that? Or is there a way to get copies for a fee that you know of, a person to contact?
>
> Outside of having the information for the family records, one could weigh the decision if one wanted to apply for citizenship, as the Koasek (Cowasuck) invite

---

Furthermore, both of Lagrave's marriages at Odanak (RSFdL) support the conclusion that he was a French Canadian man, originally from Sorel, marrying an Abenaki woman.

Finally, in the late 19th century, it was common knowledge at Odanak that François Lagrave was French Canadian, which led to one of many disputes about rights and voter eligibilty (RG 10 Vol. 2783, File 156,468).

> people to do.[8] This would require more thought and learning. Why would one do this, who would it benefit? Who are the Abenaki anyway, why would this be important to them or us? Do they really want a lot of people applying? Are they really interested in working to reclaim the earth, or just out to build more casinos? I know reconnecting does not [always] go smoothly [...]
>
> We have information from several US Census and the Ne Do Ba website. Ne Do Ba seems very accurate, is that true?

Jane's historical practice was grounded not only in documents, but in the archives. First she queried her fellow researcher, indicating that her own archive lacks the documents in question, and then how she might locate a probable archive at Odanak. This is an assumption made by many of my informants, and speaks to a now taken-for-granted conflation of historical and bureaucratic practice that positions archives at the center of the imagination of polities at the turn of 21st century North America.[9]

But Jane not only sought to locate the archives at a center of Abenaki government, but she also had questions about archival practice – about access to and reproduction of documents. She wanted to know how she might enter the archive and how she might be

---

[8] The Koasek are one of a number of self-identified Abenaki groups currently operating in New England and Quebec (see Roy 2003). Such groups claim Abenaki ancestry (and rights based on aboriginal ties to territory) despite a lack of evidence linking organizations and members to historically-known aboriginal groups and ancestors. Many of my informants oppose – a few actively – these organizations; some are supportive of them. The vast majority of Abenaki people seem agnostic about the issue, their skepticism tempered by the limits of their own historical knowledge and the support self-identified Abenaki receive from some scholars, technocrats, and politicians. Additionally, most self-identified Abenaki organizations include historically-known Abenaki family members who are ineligible for Status under the *Indian Act* or enrollment at Odanak or have longstanding personal relationships with high-profile self-identified Abenaki advocates.

After completing my B.A. at the University of Vermont in January 1995, I spent some time working and volunteering for one of these groups in my hometown, and briefly self-identified as Abenaki myself before disproving one family story of aboriginal ancestry and learning enough about Abenaki history to no longer consider the other such story credible. This personal history and my skepticism about claims to Abenaki ancestry has resulted in periodic accusations and rumors that my research is merely a front for agitating against self-identified Abenaki; at least one Abenaki individual with whom I have worked believes this. On the other hand, a couple of Abenaki have accused me of secretly working on behalf of the self-identified groups I came to know after college. It is my hope that this dissertation and future presentations and publications will put such rumors and accusations to rest.

[9] For more on this history of the archives and the nation-state, see Dirks (2002), Milligan (2005) and Robertson (2005).

able to expand her own. Taking notes and making copies are critical elements of the work of Abenaki family historians in establishing their own archives.

This concern with "family records," however, quickly gives way to questions about belonging. Jane had done some research on-line: one group claiming to be Abenaki invites people to apply for membership (importantly coded as citizenship). Why would such groups be looking for members? And why would families like Jane's wish to apply for membership? Jane knew there were questions to be asked, and immediately framed belonging in terms of interests. What might be the benefits of such a formal association be? Is this a question of casinos, or "reclaim[ing] the earth"? She turned to analogous stories of kinship – an acquaintance who returned to her country of birth to visit family after an absence of more than two decades – to consider the challenges of belonging and rupture, here framed in terms of "reconnecting."

> Questions of belonging and reconnecting led right to the next category, family:
>
> Are there Lagraves that want to communicate with other Lagraves? Do they get together? Do they have stories? Do they have photographs?
>
> Is there any other research on Ursula/Lucy Wasamimet/Emmett? There is some about the Wasamimets on Ne Do Ba...It sounded in your email that you think Francois Lagrave was not Abenaki. Is that what you came up with, or did I misunderstand? A census from 1850 Sharon, Scholharie, NY gives him as "Colored" or "Cop" and as a basketmaker; wife listed as Lucy; children as Mary, Peter, Margaret, Charley, Jane, Susan, Elisa.

Jane is not just concerned with belonging to a First Nation, to a people, but also with belonging to a family. Are Lagrave descendants in touch with each other? Do they have family reunions? Are there artifacts of shared history, such as stories or photographs? In other words, (how) is this family a family?

Other questions concerned the lives of Jane's apical ancestors. Might we know more about Lucy Emmett's life or ancestors? And was François Lagrave Abenaki? (See

note 5.) This consideration of family and aboriginal history on- and off-reserve, set up Jane's questions about culture, defined quite broadly.

> There is a lot here to wonder. As I said before, I am doing some reading of books that were recommended by the Ne Do Ba as being more historically accurate in painting a picture that is not entirely European history.
>
> 1. Why did the Lagrave/Braziels leave Odanak?
> 2. How and why they assimilated? Or the ones that did, not all did.
> 3. Did that cause a split amongst them?
> 4. Were the Abenaki's more likely than other tribes to assimilate and blend into the European fabric in the Americas?
> 5. Is the story in "Aunt Sarah" that talks about how dirty they thought the Europeans were, true? Did they really believe when they came to a point and decided not to fight anymore, believe that the Europeans would die in their own filth? Or is this a little wishful rewriting of history?
> 6. Are there genetic type health/diet issues? Psychological issues?
> 7. Is there, by any chance, a strength in mathematics, design, patterns? The math and design genes in our family seem to come from that side. My grandfather was an Architect, I am a Graphic Designer, my daughter is studying Architecture. Math and puzzles have been favorite studies and pastimes.

In addition to looking for documents relating to her ancestors and contemplating what this meant for her and her family, Jane was doing secondary research, working first from a suggested reading list developed by Ne-Do-Ba. She was posing sophisticated questions of me and of the books she was reading, for instance questioning the hygiene discussion in Trudy Parker's biography/historical fiction, *Aunt Sarah* (1994). Importantly, she articulated two groups of questions of particular concern to this study. First, she thought about genetic inheritance, such as health and diet issues (diabetes in native communities has received significant press attention over the past decade or so) and "math and design genes" which seem manifest in family proclivities for design work, mathematics and puzzles. The second set of questions took up assimilation and social dynamics – community fissures, for instance – and reveals an imagination of Abenaki history as one in which people "leave Odanak." Already the reserve is being configured

as the root of aboriginality, a place her ancestors left rather than a place where her ancestors briefly dwelled.

> If I can do anything for you or your research let me know what that might be.
>
> Thank you again, we are most interested….I suspect that [my parents] do not have anything or not much regarding John Braziell and earlier, since this is all news to them and they are very organized with their records, pictures and things. But it is always worth another look.

Jane concluded this first exchange with a generous offer of assistance and an indication that she and her family were very interested in what I had been (and continue to be) learning. And she indicated a return to the archives, this time her family archives. Her parents "are very organized with their records, pictures and things." She once again drew my attention to the work of historical practice in the imagination of belonging in Abenaki country.

Documentation

Abenaki lives are awash with documents and other artifacts of bureaucratic power, some of which are peculiar to their status (or lack thereof) as aboriginal people. For instance, many of my informants carry a Certificate of Indian Status (CIS or "Status card"), "an identity document issued for administrative reasons by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to confirm that the cardholder is registered as a Status Indian under the *Indian Act*, the legislation governing aboriginal rights within the Canadian settler state. (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/br/is/scs/faq-eng.asp, last accessed 31 March 2009) Versions of the card issued during the 1990s and the first decade of this century state that it "is to certify that [said individual] is an Indian within the meaning of the *Indian Act*, chapter 27, Statutes of Canada (1985)," and identify the card holder by name; photograph; physical details such as height, weight and eye color; date of birth; band or

registry group; and Registry Number, the first three digits of which are the numbers assigned to the band where the individual is enrolled. The card also includes the holder's signature and the signature of the issuing officer, the date of issue, and instructions that should anyone find this card, would they "please return [it] postage free to INAC" at the address provided. Status Indians are not required to obtain a Status card, but INAC recommends it (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/br/is/scs/faq-eng.asp, last accessed 31 March 2009).

I have not often seen my informants' Status cards when they were not specifically being discussed, but I have heard them referenced in numerous conversations. They often stand for an individual's status rather than confirm it; I have heard people refer to their "card" as though they were talking about their status or their rights. Status cards' powers of verification clearly exceed their materiality, although at times they are superceded by personal knowledge. At Odanak I have witnessed people providing their band number (to exercise their freedom from taxation on meals or gasoline, for instance) without producing the card which confirms it.

Nevertheless, the very materiality of the CIS is extraordinarily productive. Not only do my informants use their cards as identity documents, or keep them like a driver's license on their persons, but they also invest a certain amount of time in obtaining them. Here the quest for a document can only come to fruition through other documents. In addition to any paperwork they may have had to fill out to obtain Indian status (to be discussed in later chapters), Abenaki and other aboriginal people enrolled under the *Indian Act* are required to complete an "Application for Certificate of Indian Status" to receive their Status card.

The application is literally framed by the settler state, with INAC's bilingual logo in the upper left-hand corner, and the Canadian government's in the lower right; the form's labeling information – INTER 83-009 E 2007-03-27 – is located in the bottom left-hand corner, along with the information for the version française (83-009 F), and the top right is marked "PROTECTED **A**."[10] This last feature is likely in reference to the privacy concerns addressed twice on the document: In a statement marked by bold italics and printed in a slightly smaller font than the rest of the instructions, indicating that the information the applicant will "provide on this document is collected under the authority of the *Privacy Act* for the purpose of issuing a Certificate of Indian Status and will be stored in personal information bank no. INA/P-PU-110."; and in a declaration in the middle of the page which the applicant is expected to affirm pursuant to their having read the privacy statement and that they have willingly provided their signature and photograph for their CIS. (The statement also attests to the accuracy of the information provided.) While the provisions of the *Privacy Act* are not made clear in the document, neither is the significance of personal information bank no. INA/P-PU-110: Such statements address legal concerns at the same time that they hail the status Indian as a subject of the Canadian state in a manner even more subtle than the boxes for family name, date of birth, name of band, registration number, etc. The applicant provides personal information while the government protects its own powers. The "citizen plus" of Canadian settler-aboriginal politics is instantiated in bureaucratic process.

Status Indians may fill out applications for Status cards several times during their lifetimes, and the "FOR OFFICE USE ONLY" section of 83-009 E provides six reasons why this is the case: first card, lost card, personal information change, renewal of card,

[10] My approach in this section is inspired in large part by Brenneis (2006).

replacement card, and stolen card. INAC mandates the renewal of Status cards every five years, and status Abenaki enrolled at Odanak are contacted by the local registrar when the times comes. For instance, one Abenaki woman received a letter in May 2008 requesting that she send the following items to the band office: photocopies of two identity documents indicating both name and date of birth; a recent passport-size photograph (required for all individuals once then reach 8 years of age); the previous Status card held by the individual in question; and, in cases of children under the age of 18, a photocopy of a parent's identity document. "Upon reception and verification of these documents," the registrar will then send the form discussed above and a new card to be signed. This periodic exercise in bureaucracy is seen as essential to Odanak and other First Nations governments, as it helps ensure up-to-date personal information that may be needed for the band list or the federal Indian Registry; current contact information for a mostly-off-reserve population can have tremendous political implications for elections and referenda. However, the work of such rituals of renewal and their associated documents of identification in forming "status Indians" and Abenaki should not be overlooked or underestimated. It has been particularly intriguing to me that several of my informants have kept older Status cards rather than relinquishing them per the renewal procedures, and some even have old Status cards which belonged to deceased family members.

Most recently, the CIS has been redesigned as the Secure Certificate of Indian Status. According to INAC:

> The current version of the Status card is a laminated paper document that is not protected from forgery or counterfeiting. It can easily be misused through alteration or illegal reproduction. This has caused problems in accessing benefits for some legally entitled First Nation individuals and has led to significant

> pressures to replace the current card with a card that incorporates the security features of a modern identification document. (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/br/is/scs/faq-eng.asp, last accessed 31 March 2009)

Not only the politics of security but the politics of diversity are addressed by the new CIS. Among its security features is as a hologram depicting an outer circle punctuated with four smaller circles representing "First Nations from the North, South, East and West," and an inner circle containing a "stylized image of the medicine wheel used among many First Nations and easily recognizable to most members." A three-dimensional illustration within the hologram depicts seven icons representing "seven generations of First Nations people[,] a concept used among many First Nations to reflect the importance of past and future generations. These icons are also meant to represent the large youth population among First Nations" (http://ainc-inac.gc.ca/eng/1100100032387, last accessed 9 October 2011).

The multiculturalist iconography has not entered into the initial conversations I have been aware of among my informants, although I have not been well positioned to witness much of the activity and informal discussion of the Secure CIS during the much-delayed roll-out process. What I have heard, however, are concerns from off-reserve status Abenaki about border crossing and requirements for obtaining the card. The latter is a worry for American residents, some of whom have difficulty traveling to Odanak let alone the closest INAC service center issuing the new CIS – Gatineau, Quebec. While there has been talk of a "mobile unit" which may visit the branch of the Obomsawin family centered in Sudbury, Ontario, as yet there has been no news of a similar visit to other residential concentrations such as Waterbury, CT, or Albany, NY.

Frustration about crossing the border to obtain a secure Status card is ironically compounded by the issue of documentation required at the border. As originally planned,

the new CIS was to be available in the spring or summer of 2009, and INAC had announced that "after June 1, 2009, older versions of the Status card will no longer be considered valid documents for crossing the Canada-US border" (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/br/is/scs/faq-eng.asp, last accessed 31 March 2009). June 1, 2009 was the date of implementation for the United States Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), which requires passports or other costly documents for crossing the border. As the Secure CIS is still not available to most First Nations communities, the U.S. and Canadian governments are still accepting the original identification card at the border. In 2009, however, some Abenaki were faced with investing funds in a form of identification which they would need to cross the border to obtain another form of identification which would allow them to do the same thing for free. The economics and logistics of this situation presented (and continue to present) a challenge for some, particularly given desires to visit family or friends on-reserve during the summer months, and confusion still exists about the Secure CIS among off-reserve Abenaki.

All of this is only one layer of bureaucratic practice characteristic of the lives of many Abenaki. Having a Status card means having "status," or being listed on the Indian Registry maintained by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) as required by the *Indian Act*. Aboriginal people in Canada must have status to be considered aboriginal by the state, and there are criteria for inclusion on the Registry. Indeed, most status Abenaki can tell you instantly the part of the *Indian Act* which describes their eligibility for status, usually telling you the section and subsection – 6(1) or 6(2). These portions of the law become designations: I have heard people refer to themselves or others as 6(1) or 6(2), sometimes further specifying the relevant sub-subsection of the law.

Abenaki often can and do readily explain the judicial or legislative event which led to their acquisition of Indian status. One of my informants gained status as a result of the *Martin* decision (1983 S.C.R. 1), which granted status to illegitimate male children of registered aboriginal fathers and non-native (or non-status) mothers. (Whenever I have asked him about this he has recalled thanking plaintiff John Martin, a Mi'kmaq from Gesgapegiag, personally when they first met.) More frequently, one hears reference to "C-31," the name of the 1985 bill amending the *Indian Act*, notably by changing the criteria for inclusion on the Indian Registry.[11] It is not uncommon to hear "C-31" used to refer to someone, as many Abenaki have their status by virtue of this legislation.

This bureaucratic language is hard to escape in Abenaki country, and very effectively captured by a montage in Alanis Obomsawin's film *Waban-Aki* (2006) which cuts between various Abenaki reciting the labels which define their or their loved ones' status, bookended by Diane Nolett first comparing the Abenaki plight to being in prison and then stating: "If one is Indian, one is Indian. We're not numbers. [Pause.] But it follows us even so."[12] It is also quite powerfully captured by stories of young children using such designations to refer to each other, sometimes invoking a language of authenticity designed to hurt others.[13]

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[11] Bill C-31 was primarily designed to address a gender inequity in the law. Prior to 1985, aboriginal women lost their status under the *Indian Act* upon marriage to a non-native man (or at least someone lacking status himself). Importantly, her children would not be eligible for Indian status. Exogamy posed no challenges for aboriginal men, however, or his children.

After 1985, however, an endogamy requirement was introduced to the law. Basically, the law now requires an endogamous union every two generations in order for children to be enrolled as status Indians with the Canadian government.

[12] I have provided my translation of the original French. The film's subtitles read "As Indians, we're Indians. Not numbers. But we carry the label." In French, she stated, "On est indien, on est indien. On n'est pas des numéros. Mais ça nous suit quand-même, ça."

[13] I have not witnessed this myself, but quite a few individuals have told me these types of stories.

Perhaps the most obvious way in which the *Indian Act* and Status cards operate as mediating institutions is that they ensure that some aboriginal people are ineligible for Indian status, and thus are unable to exercise their aboriginal rights or participate fully in the lives of the First Nations with which they are associated. They structure and index *belonging*, tangled up here in notions of citizenship, membership, and identity, and operating in bureaucratic regimes informed by an archival imagination.

Here we return to the perspective afforded by Jane's questions about documentation. Her concern with the archives (and its documentation), both official and personal, led to her questions about belonging posed in the language of the state (citizenship). How is an anthropologist to study such linked phenomena, belonging as it is legally structured and grounded in the documentary imagination?

Family

There are other forms of belonging at work in Abenaki country, and many of my informants often employ a rhetoric of family when speaking about Abenaki life. Many have noted that when Abenaki people meet, they often try to establish common ground by asking about who their family members are and how they might be related (including affinal ties). I have witnessed people doing this in a variety of contexts, even facilitating the process at times (knowing already which great-grandparents, uncles, aunts or cousins the two individuals shared). When immediate connections cannot be established, family names can sometimes signal a common history.[14]

Abenaki family names are particularly important in interrogating histories of kinship, particularly as they exist in very complex relationships with the bureaucratic regimes of belonging introduced above. For instance, from 1869 to 1985, the *Indian*

[14] See Ackley (2009) for an analogous Oneida example.

Act[15] based Indian status on a model of patrilineal descent that has yielded a relatively small set of recognizable Abenaki names[16] still in use or in recent memory at Odanak – Annance, Benedict, Capino, Dauphinais, Degonzague, Denis, Gill, Hannis, Lagrave, Laurent, Masta, Msadokous, Nagazoa, Obomsawin (also Robert), Panadis, Paquette, Paul Denis, Portneuf, Tahamont, Wasamimet (Emmet), Watso, Wawanolett (Nolet) – even though my informants' genealogies and Abenaki history both on- and off-reserve contain many more. Family names like Joseph, Otôdoson, Pakigan, and Toxuse are no longer recognized by many of my informants, although they were well known to earlier generations of Abenaki people.[17] The same goes for many family names which entered Abenaki country through exogamy, such as Camp, Burlett, and Reeves.

This emphasis on recognizable family names has continued despite changes in the law. For instance, many individuals I know or know of who have non-native fathers have taken their mother's surname in spite of a general expectation of patrilineal naming practices. For many this is non-problematic, an act of identification, although I have heard some puzzlement expressed by my informants.[18] And while this practice does not

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[15] The *Indian Act* was first passed in 1876, but legislation passed in 1869 first introduced the logic of patrilineal descent. See Chapter 3.

[16] Some names on this list – Gill, Lagrave, Masta, and Paquette – which originated with non-aboriginal men are also found within non-native families. The same is true of the names derived from baptismal names, or names of unknown origin such as Portneuf. There are also some large families with non-native surnames derived in the 20th century from a non-native man who married an Abenaki woman – Hoff, for instance – or an aboriginal man from another First Nation who married an Abenaki woman – Sioui, for instance – which is often used in conversation as an Abenaki name in need of no further explanation.

[17] One historical Abenaki name no longer found in Abenaki country which many of my informants knew of was Metallic; this is likely due to its frequency among the Mi'kmaq of Listiguj (Restigouche), a First Nation whose reserve is located in the Gaspé region of Quebec. These Metallics descend from Antoine Metallic, an Abenaki who spent some time at Odanak during the mid-19th century. Of note, some of these modern Metallics descend from Antoine's oldest son, Xavier, and Xavier's wife, Angelique Obomsawin. There have been several Listiguj Metallics who have been quite prominent in recent years, serving in various leadership roles, sometimes during instances of crisis (Obomsawin 1984, 2003). Another prominent family member has recently served as chief redactor for *The Metallic Mìgmaq-English Reference Dictionary* (Metallic, Cyr & Sévigny 2005).

[18] I have also witnessed one informant who typically uses their mother's surname challenged by a self-identified Abenaki woman who seemed to indicate that deviating from the patrilineal norm was

typically seem to be a rejection of one's father or his family – indeed, it is not uncommon for such Abenaki to use their father's surname as a middle name – I did once hear an older Odanak resident expressing disapproval of one young Abenaki's use of their mother's surname as disrespectful of the individual's father, who she stated was "a good man and good father."[19]

The patrilineality of the pre-1985 *Indian Act* operated within a local context of bilateral kinship patterns,[20] although Abenaki-language kinship terms reveal more discriminating histories of relatedness.[21] Very few Abenaki remember these older terms and practices, although in a recent conversation with one Abenaki elder about her mother's father's sister, she noted that she always employed a term when referring to her which was distinct from the term by which she knew other aunts (mother's matrilateral kin).

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disingenuous. Importantly, this woman's claims to Abenaki ancestors was being called into question at the time. Perhaps she was trying to make my informant uncomfortable with the act of interrogating her identity and its implication of bad faith by signaling that she felt that this choice could also be construed as an example of bad faith.

[19] I have seen no indication that the informant in question did not share her assessment.

[20] As will be discussed below, some writers have attributed patrilineal structures or dynamics to pre-*Indian Act* Abenaki, however the complex population movements and various ancestors of the contemporary Abenaki lead me to resist modeling historical Abenaki kinship practices so simply. Regardless, by 1869 there is no indication of patrilineages in operation at Odanak or elsewhere in Abenaki country.

[21] The classic study of kinship terminology as it relates to the language spoken by Abenaki historically associated with Odanak is Hallowell's 1928 article, "Recent Changes in the Kinship Terminology of the St. Francis Abenaki." As the title suggests, Hallowell's aim was to compare kinship terminology recorded in 18th century sources ("Old Abenaki") and 19th century sources ("Modern Abenaki"), vocabulary elicited by Frank Speck from Maude Benedict at Lake George in 1908, and more extensive data that resulted from Hallowell's work with a number of Abenaki speakers at Odanak in the early 1920s (he named Nicholas Panadis, Peter Emet, H. L. Masta, Louis N. Obomsawin, and Jos. Paul Denis, as well as Eli Wawanolet and Thomas Msadoques, but stated that he also "discussed the terms with…some of the [oldest] women."). Hallowell also consulted François Neptun at Wôlinak.

Haviland & Power concluded, on the basis of Hallowell's work, that "Old Abenaki" kin terms represent a bifurcate collateral-Hawaiian system corresponding to cognatic kinship, and that "Modern Abenaki" terminology is indicative of a nascent patrilineality arising from fur trade as well as close contact with Iroquoian peoples. (1994:297-299) Such an analysis is compelling, but does not take into consideration the array of collectivities which contributed to the formation of the people we know today as Abenaki, nor does it correlate the data collected and the specific sources of the data. (See my discussion of language and speech communities in Chapter 2.)

While bilateral kinship practices may operate in ways quite similar to white American and Canadian practices, the ways in which they are understood can be quite different.[22] Of particular importance to this study are the ways in which bilateral kinship patterns give way to unevenly distributed tendencies to reckon aboriginal and non-aboriginal relations as different types of kin, with different sentiments associated with each. Here the politics of belonging, charged by histories of limited resources unevenly distributed, give status, blood and other mechanisms of distinction purchase in everyday family life. Non-native (or non-status) family members may be viewed quite differently than aboriginal kin, either due to affect related to one's autochthonous ancestry or a presumed understanding shared among certain relatives and not others. Non-native family members may also be seen as diminishing one's claims to belong to a First Nation, at least given the logic of North American settler colonialism which constructs aboriginality as an object imagined as pure, pristine, and different.[23] They may also be seen as less interested in the transmission of practices and beliefs which have been identified as Abenaki or are associated with community history. I have particularly witnessed such pressures surrounding group membership when various informants have

[22] For a powerful example of similar (and heightened) tensions among the Mohawks of Kahnawake, see Tracey Deer's 2008 film, *Club Native*.

[23] Although as Povinelli points out, this difference cannot offend liberal sensibilities (2002a, particularly Chapter 1). This difference must serve nostalgic ends: aboriginality domesticated as multiculturalism. Other types of difference which confuse Western notions of rights face a similar challenge – consider Palmié's analysis (1996) of U.S. Supreme Court action regarding Santería practitioners' rights to sacrifice animals as part of their religious activities – however, aboriginality presents a different challenge to the state given its appropriation as national heritage and aboriginal subject's identification with the local context rather than a diasporic formation or world religion.

discussed their (often unfulfilled) desire to find a status spouse or partner or to see their children do so.[24]

The question of status is particularly important, and I have heard people refer to relatives with whom they share aboriginal ancestors as "white" in the absence of status, often the result of a single extra exogamous generation. And some informants whose families have not resided at Odanak for one or two generations (or longer) have reported that some distant relatives they have met have not been ready to accept them as Abenaki, perhaps suspicious of potential claims on community resources.

This restrictive sense of kinship is inconsistent, or in tension with, affective relations with non-native kin and more inclusive views of belonging in Abenaki country. Family historians' reckoning of kin, however, trends to inclusivity. After all, researchers like Jane look for relatives. Genealogy, and my own historical research, conceive of kinship as expansive, if perhaps still approaching aboriginal and non-aboriginal ancestors differently. For instance, one informant has commented on occasion about a non-native cousin who insists that she follow her lead and join the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) based on their shared ancestral connection to a (non-native) soldier. She has no interest in joining the DAR, and has done no research on that side of her family. On the other hand, she has spent years assembling considerable information about her Abenaki ancestry, has been in touch with a number of distant Abenaki relatives, and has applied for aboriginal status. There are exceptions to this trend, but I have been struck by how many Abenaki family historians have only researched their aboriginal ancestors and relations, and perhaps their non-native spouse's ancestors. Typically if

[24] One poignant example of this is provided by Deny Obomsawin in the film *Waban-Aki* (Obomsawin 2006). His wish to see his daughters marry Abenaki men are met with "Tu rêves, père." – "You're dreaming, dad."

they know about their non-native ancestry, it is because a non-native relative has "done their family tree."

Not only do Abenaki family historians typically look for relatives – in the past and/or the present – but they indicate a sense of completion when kinship is established lineally or laterally. In the present, meeting cousins and establishing genealogical connections inspires enduring affection in some cases, and names on family trees in others. Either way, a hitherto unknown relationship has been achieved. There is a similar dynamic at play when informants are able to link Abenaki they know only from the documentary record. Several informants have inquired about possible genealogical connections between Sabael Benedict and Mitchell Sabattis, two well-known and much-storied figures in Adirondack history.[25] Having read newspaper accounts of Abenaki model and basketmaker Annie Jane (Paul Denis) Fuller (aka Falling Star) which identify Mitchell Sabattis as her great-uncle, one lay historian has stated on more than one occasion that "it would be nice" to identify the relationship.[26] And many Abenaki have discussed connections between the Benedict and Panadis (an Abenaki-language rendition of Benedict) families in Abenaki country,[27] and between the Abenaki Benedicts and the

[25] Abenaki family historians are not alone in this. Aber & King wrote in 1965 that "Local historians have tried, without complete success, to establish a relationship between Sabael and Captain Peter Sabattis [Mitchell's father], the earliest settler at Long Lake. Lewis Elijah [Sabael's son], who guided the Henderson party to the iron ore at North Elba, was a cousin of Mitchell Sabattis, Wallace declares." (23)

[26] Fuller's step-father, Louis St. Denis, and Mitchell Sabattis were parallel cousins. Whether this reference to Sabattis as a great-uncle was due to the employment of Abenaki-language kin terms (parallel cousins and siblings are addressed by the same term, however step-fathers and father's brothers are also known by the same term – see Hallowell [1928]) or extensions of the English-language kin term "uncle" requires further research on my part.

[27] As Day (1981:77) notes, Benedict and Panadis appeared interchangeably in old records. For instance, Thomas, Robert, and Sabael are all identified on an 1806 list under the name "Benedick." (RG 10 Vol. 487:4281-4284) I know of no patrilineal descendants of Thomas' among today's Abenaki population, but most branches of Robert Panadis' family employ the surname Panadis, while all of Sabael's patrilineal great…grandchildren are Benedicts. My research has uncovered no information linking these three individuals, but I would not rule out a connection either.

Mohawk Benedict family from Akwesasne.[28] One researcher was quite interested in the Benoit surname in historical records pertaining to the Maliseet – Benoit is a French gloss of Benedict – as well as the Penewit surname – an Abenaki gloss of Benoit found historically among the Penobscot (see Speck 1997[1940]:228) – even going so far as to make a research trip to New Brunswick to search for possible connections in provincial archives.

This sense of completion is particularly evident when considering fosterage and adoptions, as are the conflicting dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. Adopted individuals and their Abenaki families are aware that their lack of "Abenaki blood" is always a challenge to their right to belong, an ability that may assert itself in moments of conflict within the community or even between individuals, including long-time friends.[29] That almost every Abenaki person I know descends from Samuel Gill, a white child taken captive in the early 18th century and raised by Abenaki at Odanak[30] points to a long, complicated history with aboriginality and adoption. The intricacies of such relationships

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[28] News that there are Mohawk Benedicts circulates among Abenaki – family historians or not – as do stories that the Mohawk Benedicts have Abenaki origins. I have not been able to pursue this topic. Contributing to this knowledge has been the reputation of Ernest Benedict, a well-respected Mohawk political leader and activist associated with his work establishing the North American Indian Travelling College and advocating for border-crossing rights enshrined in the Jay Treaty (see Hauptman 2008, Chapter 10). His wife, Florence, a skilled basketmaker, and their daughter Salli have also become well known in New York and elsewhere (see Mundell 2008). Also, some Abenaki have met Benedicts from Akwesasne through their work with regional aboriginal organizations.

These Benedicts should not be confused with Abenaki Frank Benedict, son of Solomon Benedict and Mathilde Obomsawin, who married Elizabeth Tiakenhion-Konwathense at Akwesasne in 1891 before moving to Michigan.

[29] And I have heard more than one rumor of illegitimacy (and white "biological father") while in the field, *problematizing but never dismissing* the claims to status or belonging of the person in question.

[30] Maurault (1969 [1866], Chapter 11) provides an account of Samuel Gill's captivity as well as the subsequent genealogy of his progeny. There are errors in his both parts of the chapter, as well as valuable information unavailable in other sources. Maurault views the story of the Gill family as a success for religion and country: "Si l'on faisait une étude, comme celle que nous venons de faire, sur toutes les familles anglaises qui ont été emmenées en Canada par les Abénakis, on serait certainement étonné du grand nombre de Canadiens qui doivent à ces sauvages le bonheur d'être aujourd'hui catholiques, et l'avantage d'être Canadiens. Nous pouvons donc dire, sans crainte de nous tromper, que les Abénakis ont bien servi la Religion et la Patrie." (377)

are evident in a number of historical and contemporary cases of fosterage as well, including cases in which children were informally adopted by their foster parents, be they grandparents, step-parents, or cousins.[31]

Family historians' struggles with these relationships are revealing. Consider the question of where a foster child might fit into a family tree, and how that might obviate histories of affect regardless of lived experience. Furthermore, the doubled kinship generated by adoption (and some foster relations) is evident in family historians' quests to account for both birth and adopted genealogies. Here the incomplete character of non-blood relations presents a surplus of meaning rather than a lack of connection. Efforts to complete these genealogies entails accounting for adoptive genealogies as well as "biological families." Elaine Ricard, for instance, made an impressive effort to find Robert Paquette's non-native birth family as well as that of Francoise L'allemande, who, according to her marriage record, was born circa 1786 to Joseph L'allemand et Marie Joseph Ouimin, both foreigners ("L'allemand" signifies "German"), and adopted three years later by "la nation [abénaquise]" (RSFdL 1806), despite her lack of descent from the latter (the apical ancestress of the Pktalomagus family). For researchers like Elaine, a complete genealogy requires a doubling when the logics of grids and trees are exceeded by histories of affiliation and care. This doubling allows the genealogical imagination to

[31] Nettie (Royce) Miles described fosterage to folklorist to Jane Beck in the context of her own family history. She recounted that after her grandmother died, "My grandfather took the children and put them with other relatives as they were quite apt to do after a death in the family at that time. My mother [Elvine Obomsawin] was the youngest, and as he took her door-to-door in the small village trying to find someone to take her in, several of them said they just could not take another child. And when he came to my mother's aunt's house, she said she just couldn't possible take another child in with her own. My mother turned to her and said, 'If my mother was alive, I wouldn't be having to go from house to house looking for a place to live.' And when my aunt heard that, tears came to her eyes, and she said, 'Leave her here Simon, I will take care of her.'" (in Beck 1996:14) Of note, the deceased Celina Obomsawin was also raised in fosterage for at least part of her youth. Her mother, Marie-Anne Portneuf, died while she was within two years of her birth and in April 1871 she was living with her maternal grandmother, Angelique Annance. (1871 Canadian Census)

reconcile expectations of American (and Canadian) kinship as relationships of "enduring diffuse solidarity" (Schneider 1980:52-53) based on ties of "blood" (23-25) or marriage with customary or legal arrangements which supersede "blood" by embracing Western notions of culture and nature as dually important historical objects.[32]

Culture

This attention to nature and culture as objects implicating collectivities is common among the family historians with whom I have worked, within Abenaki country more broadly, and within North America more generally. This is not an anthropologist's concept of culture,[33] but one which is still doing intellectual work for family historians and others as they imagine commonality and difference, settlers and autochthones,

[32] This ethnographer has also been involved in such doubling efforts, thinking of it explicitly in terms of providing additional historical context. That I imagine such an approach to yield further understanding is also indicative of an estimation of excess kinship, implicitly grounded in the same frame of understanding possessed by my informants.

[33] The phrase "anthropologist's concept of culture" belies some important diversity within the discipline itself, even if "culture theory" has not received much sustained disciplinary attention in recent decades (see Handler 1997). Simply (!) put, "the concept of culture allows anthropologists to deal with human phenomena in a way that is at once (ideally) descriptive, holistic, and comparative" (Boon 1973:1); such "human phenomena" involve social acquired "recurrences in both thought and behavior that are not contingent but structurally conditioned and that are, in turn, structuring" (Trouillot 2003[2002]:99).

For John Hartigan Jr., "culture, as an analytical perspective, treats collective dynamics of belonging and differentiation, the assignation of social meaning to arbitrary biological traits, the naturalization of certain orders of inequality or dominance, the forms of etiquette or decorum that discipline bodies and behaviors, the styles of narrative that organize each of these into tangible forms of meaning that people encounter in a multitude of reinforcing or challenging circumstances, and finally the forms of performance in which categorical identities and more fluid constructions of self are reproduced or revised. Each of these dynamics informs the interpretive work of cultural subjects in making sense of their world and negotiating the uneven social terrains that shape their individual and collective identities" (2005:558).

Similarly, Richard Handler has recently written that "Thanks in large part to the work of Franz Boas and his students, we know, and have known for a long time, the mysteries of culture. We know that culture is not a thing, but 'it' allows people to make and use things, including concepts like 'thing.' We know that culture cannot exist apart from the humans who make and use it, while humans cannot exist without culture. We know that culture is both singular and plural – that 'it' is (or depends on) a human faculty, emergent (as Alfred Kroeber put it) from human evolution; that 'it' is global, globally diffused and diffusing; but also that 'it' exists only in its diversity, that is, in historically and geographically particular processes. We know that the diversity of culture is endless, but that cultured humans act ceaselessly to make sense of diversity – that they are interpreters, translators, people who at once make new meanings (mostly humdrum, though occasionally startling) and struggle to understand the newly made or newly encountered meanings of others. It might even be true to say that they (as individuals and as members of groups) struggle as much to understand their own meanings as those of others" (2004:488).

Abenaki and others, in the past, present and future. As I noted earlier, Jane's e-mail drew attention to two particularly powerful discourses – biosocial concerns[34] and group historical dynamics, framed in part by the *reserve* – which require more introductory consideration.

Aboriginality as/and Genetics

In the late spring of 2003, as I was sitting in a coffeeshop in Burlington, VT, writing up fieldnotes, I overheard a conversation which ripped my attention away from the task at hand. A man and a woman were visiting at the table next to mine, both seemingly middle-aged and white. The woman had recently sent a DNA sample to a lab to be tested for genealogical purposes. It was expensive, but she thought it would be interesting. She told her companion that her sister had done a lot of family history work, but her genealogy still had "holes." Nevertheless, she expected the results to come back "100% lily white."

She reported that the results were 91% White, 9% Native American. She expressed her surprise and said that she immediately called her parents, both of whom denied it was from their side of the family and now teased each other – "joking" about which one is Indian, poking fun at their respective families. They both planned to take the same test to see which family had the native ancestry.

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[34] Introducing biosociality, Rabinow writes that "it is not hard to imagine groups formed around the chromosome 17, locus 16,256, site 654,376 allele variant with a guanine substitution. Such groups will have medical specialists, laboratories, narratives, traditions, and a heavy panoply of pastoral keepers to help them experience, share, intervene, and 'understand' their fate" (1996:102). This formulation has been particularly productive for medical anthropologists; for an ethnographic illustration see Rapp, Heath & Taussig (2001). Note that Jane also turned to the genetics of disease in her e-mail, followed by culturally patterned psychological concerns (also an area receiving attention in contemporary anthropology – see the recent *Ethnos* issue devoted to the "Cultural Politics of Mental Health in Native North America" [Gone 2008]). Biosociality need not be bound up in disease, as my discussion of "geneticized genealogy" (C. Nash 2004) indicates.

After discussing a number of unrelated topics, suddenly the woman said, "So, I'm an Indian." She again referred to her parents' plans to submit their own DNA samples. Then she half-jokingly declared that as she was an Indian she wanted her share of the casino profits. She stated that she was 9% and "they" only have to be 1/16.[35] I scribbled this bit of the conversation in my notes quickly and then wrote that it was "a moment of truth, of belief in science, of customer satisfaction, and of objectification." Aboriginality became race, race became biological (involving genes other than those that code for skin color), biology was knowable, and knowledge could be acquired for a fee (or an investment?). Her self-understanding seemed unsettled, although it could be argued that in fact her self-understanding had been re-settled in a new twist on an old colonial project to domesticate aboriginality in order to legitimate and ground subjects' identification with the settler nation-state.[36]

Bolnick et al. have recently reported that "At least two dozen companies now market 'genetic ancestry' tests to help consumers reconstruct their family histories and determine the geographic origins of their ancestors. More than 460,000 people have purchased these tests over the past 6 years, and public interest is still skyrocketing" (2007:399). When I originally drafted this chapter, the most recent issue of *Family Tree Magazine*, a popular genealogy magazine, devoted cover space to announce a story on genetic genealogy (Gamber 2009) and the cover story featured in the latest issue of a similar publication, *Ancestry*, describes new scientific tools such as facial recognition

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[35] The couple then returned to other topics, and while I went to get a refill and was considering approaching them to discuss the topic further, they left.

[36] See Deloria (1999) on the history of U.S. settler society appropriating aboriginality for various ends. Parkhill (1997) explores this theme in his study of Charles G. Leland and the Gluscap story.

Upon reading a draft of this chapter, one informant suggested that "surprise, [the] thrill of the chase," and popular tropes of self-discovery are important to consider in this case and others.

software which are portrayed as potentially helpful, if "a bit more subjective than DNA." (Burgess 2009:23)[37]

Increasingly, anthropologists and other scholars have been drawn to new genetic technologies which seem to reinvigorate concepts of race rejected as scientifically meaningful years ago.[38] Particular attention has been focused on the intersection of race, medicine (often pharmacology) and new genetic research (for example, Fullwiley 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Whitmarsh 2008), however social scientists have also begun to study the deployment of DNA science in overlapping realms of species history, population history and family history. The Human Genome Diversity Project has received considerable attention (see Barker 2004 and Reardon 2005), as have the Genographic Project (TallBear 2007) and the International Haplotype Map (Hamilton 2008), and recent ethnographic work has analyzed the use of DNA technology to identify the bodies of Bosnian Muslims massacred in Srebrenica in 1995 (Wagner 2008).

Scholars have also engaged with commercial genetic genealogy testing. Catherine Nash (2004) has critiqued gendered understandings of/produced by mtDNA and Y-chromosome testing, as well as the way in which it subtly races British identity. And Bolnick et al. (2007) have drawn attention to disturbing claims made by many firms

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[37] Note the full-page advertisement on *Ancestry*'s inside back cover is for ancestry.com's Y33 test: Under a black-and-white photograph of a sign for "KISSES 5¢" is the text "Sharing your DNA hasn't been this exciting since the good old days. Or this affordable. Share your DNA with us and we'll help you discover your ancient origins. Search for genetic cousins. Grow your family tree. And hold onto more of your hard-earned money." The offer to create new family relationships by "sharing DNA" plays with what Schneider (1980) referred to as the "biogenetic substance" at the root of American understandings of kinship, humorously allowing science and capitalism to appropriate the reproductive role formerly associated with sexual intercourse.

[38] Much of this work is due to increasing interest in medical anthropology and the science studies, although American anthropology's "unchosen contexts" (Lederman 2005) are also important to consider. An anthropological approach to culture is historically grounded in a Boasian rejection of race as behavioral/social explanation. A renewed emphasis on the explanatory powers of biological heredity, grafted as it is onto the stock of Euroamerican popular notions of race and kinship, demands attention from anthropologists.

offering genetic testing services. They argue that "both scientists and consumers should approach genetic ancestry testing with caution because (i) the tests can have a profound impact on individuals and communities, (ii) the assumptions and limitations of these tests make them less informative than many realize, and (iii) commercialization has led to misleading practices that reinforce misconceptions." (2007:399)[39] A number of problems with the claims associated with such tests are highlighted by the authors, which they contend may yield "paradoxical results."

> For instance, the AncestryByDNA test suggests that most people from the Middle East, India, and the Mediterranean region of Europe have Native American ancestry. Because no archaeological, genetic, or historical evidence supports this suggestion, the test probably considers some markers to be diagnostic of Native American ancestry when, in fact, they are not. (2007:400)[40]

Tony Frudakis, Chief Scientific Officer at DNAPrint Genomics, the company which markets the AncestryByDNA test, responded to Bolnick et al. maintaining that this does not invalidate the test results:

> Native Americans are derived from southwestern Siberia and central Asia, an area of the world that likely also contributed through population expansions and migrations to many other populations. Numerous "Native American" Y and mtDNA haplogroups have been found in Europe and Central Asia. The confusion lies in the choice of the term "Native American." Naming parental populations with descriptors based on modern-day populations might lead to misinterpretations, but DNAPrint Genomics makes every effort to explain this complex topic to a lay customer base. (2008:1039)

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[39] In fact, the authors conclude their essay by encouraging the American Society of Human Genetics "and other professional genetic and anthropological associations to develop policy statements regarding genetic ancestry testing." (Bolnick et al. 2007:400)

[40] This harkens back to blood group research conducted in the first half of the 20th century, which "created random artificial associations between the Poles and Chinese, and among the peoples of New Guinea, West Africa, and Southeast Asia." (Marks 2001:357)

Bolnick et al. concurred, underscoring that "because the shared alleles predate the divergence of these populations and likely originated in Central Asia, it is misleading to use them as markers of 'Native American' ancestry" (2008:1040).[41]

This case clearly underscores an unfortunate confusion of terms, where the science of genetics is construed as answering questions of a very different order than the aboriginality of one's ancestors. "9%" was the result of modeling based on probabilities, sampling, and the distribution of alleles across populations. Certain mutations occur more often in certain populations than others. Companies such as DNAPrint Genomics and consumers of genetic genealogy testing services attribute meanings (and labels) to these mutations and the frequencies with which they are distributed across the globe (or throughout a series of DNA samples) which may be extraordinarily powerful and biologically spurious. An allele unevenly distributed throughout the world becomes "Native American."

To my knowledge, only one of my informants has availed herself of such genetic ancestry tests, perhaps because Abenaki are certain that they know where their aboriginal ancestry lies.[42] They already have answers which are meaningful to them, and/or questions which cannot be answered by DNA tests which are commercially available today. Perhaps these DNA tests speak more to whiteness and blackness as racial formations in the United States, as positing certain genealogical desires and certain expectations of history (paradoxically) peculiar to European settler/immigrant (Nash

[41] For more background on genetic genealogy, see Shriver & Kittles (2008) and Greely (2008).
[42] One informant has had a matrilineal mtDNA test and was shocked by the results. She knew that her matrilineal ancestors were all Abenaki, but her mtDNA indicated European ancestry. Importantly, however, this ancestral line joins with the family discussed by Elizabeth Sadoques (see Chapter Two). These results were exactly what one would expect if "Unredeemed Captive" Eunice Williams were one's matrilineal apical ancestor.

2003, 2003) and African-American experiences in the wake of slavery (Hartman 2007). Perhaps genetic explanations of predispositions to medical conditions or personality traits are more meaningful to Abenaki people than geneticists' claims to explain origins and find distant relatives. Science studies scholar Kim TallBear explains this with particular reference to the Dakota in a recent article examining the Genographic Project:

> ..."how we are all related," how we got to where we are today, and thus "who we really are" are not compelling research outcomes. They do not make sense if peoples already think that they have satisfactory answers to such questions. For example, Genographic is not going to tell me how I am related to my various Dakota tribal kin, the ultimate set of relations in tribal life. Nor can Genographic tell me how we got here today, although it could tell me that I have the founding "Native American" lineage dubbed "haplogroup A." The question of how we as Dakota got to where we are has already been answered, and the answer is not one of genetics. I could reference Dakota creation stories that give us values for living, narrate our common history, cohere us as a people with a common moral framework, and ties us to a sacred landbase. But another important narrative exists that, for many of us, is even more crucial today. We Dakota people got to where we are in 2007 in important ways because of the Dakota Conflict of 1862, that defining moment that so circumscribed present-day Dakota geography, family relations, governance, and identity. That was the moment when our ancestors' dispossession from our ancestral lands – from the life-giving rivers in what is today southern Minnesota – was crystallized. Pushing back violently against white settlement, and the forced marches, prison camps, and mass execution that ensued, marked a bloody re-mapping of Dakota life. "Who we really are" is not a question that most, if any Dakota, will think answered by discovering that they have mtDNA markers that "originated" in Mongolia." (TallBear 2007:416)

However, I have heard numerous references to DNA when informants have spoken about "heritage," often indexing a relationship to their ancestors or replacing blood as the substance of indigeneity. Furthermore, TallBear (2008) has recently raised a cautionary note in her analysis of commercial DNA testing companies which market to individuals and/or indigenous governments seeking to establish aboriginal ancestry for various purposes, including membership in a First Nation. What might be the implications of public acceptance of such genetic testing and claims? For aboriginal

individuals? For First Nations? That this coffeeshop exchange ended with a slip between a language of DNA – "9%" – to a language of blood quantum – "1/16" – spoke to the larger context in which aboriginality, particularly in the Northeast, is increasingly imagined, [43] as did the association with casinos (see Cramer 2006), challenging a new (and very unevenly distributed) economic power. At a time when liberal human rights discourses are being mobilized in opposition to native land claims in Canada and the United States (Mackey 2005; see also Goldstein 2008 and Blancke 2009), genetic indigeneity threatens to further undermine aboriginal rights in ways not yet clear to activists and observers. And it promises to destabilize concepts of aboriginality even if Abenaki family historians have not as yet shown an interest in genealogical DNA testing.

Attending to these emerging questions will require ethnographic attention to the type of affiliative self-fashioning[44] theorized by Alondra Nelson in her study of genealogical practice in the African diaspora, particularly among African Africans (2008a, 2008b). In addition to grappling with authoritative new facts as one continuously constructs the self, affiliative self-fashioning attends "to the weight of individual desires for relatedness…and how this priority shapes evaluations of the reliability and usability of scientific data. In the process, received-facts are also reconciled with a complex of alternative identificatory resources" (2008b:771). Such a framework enables Nelson to

[43] Hamilton develops the concept of genetic indigeneity "as a marker of a discursive shift from a public, scientific, and legal understanding of indigeneity whose predominant metaphor is blood to one in which the predominant metaphor is genes." (2009:73) Her case material was the controversy surrounding "Kennewick Man," however she identifies "maps and measures of one's 'genetic ancestry'" as a similar area of concern (88).

[44] Nelson's "affiliative self-fashioning" is an extension of "objective self-fashioning" as developed by Joseph Dumit. Dumit writes: "The objective self is an active category of the person that is developed through references to expert knowledge and invoked through facts. The objective self is also an embodied theory of human nature, both scientific and popular. Objective self-fashioning calls attention to the equivocal site of this production of new objective knowledge of the self…Objective self-fashioning is how we take facts about ourselves – about our bodies, minds, capacities, traits, states, limitations, propensities, etc. – that we have read, heard, or otherwise encountered in the world, and *incorporate* them into our lives." (1997:89)

question both "naturalist" and "pragmatist" approaches to the redeployment of race in population genetics as the only possibilities (2008b), and assumptions that the authority of genetic genealogy radically shifts the work of family history. For instance, one of her informants expressed frustration with the type of information provided by her test results ("Didn't just about everybody outside Africa come through the Ethiopia area 50,000 years ago?" [2008b:767]), and another planned to visit regions in Africa identified by her mtDNA test (and home to her deceased brother-in-law), but after she completed more of her genealogical research. For Nelson this "underscores how the interpretive work that commences following the receipt of genetic genealogy results can involve consumers' efforts to 'align' genetic DNA analysis with other evidence of their ancestry as well as with their genealogical aspirations, prior experience, or extant relationships" (2008a:259).

Thinking about affiliative self-fashioning can help us consider emerging questions surrounding new genetic technologies and concepts of race, but it can also help us to consider standard genealogical and historical practice as well, among both lay researchers and professional anthropologists. How do people begin to conceive of themselves as relatives? And why/how does kinship work as a privileged domain of sociality?[45] The work of family historians is vital as we work to address these questions.

Aboriginality and/on the Reserve

I have had a number of discussions over the last few years with several off-reserve Abenaki about whether they would ever like to live on-reserve. Some had never

[45] As Povinelli asks in her "Notes on Gridlock," "Why does the recognition of peoples' worth…always seem to be hanging on the more or less fragile branches of a family tree?" (2002b:215) She notes that kinship charts "do not indicate the love, desire, affect, or intimacy that exists between…persons reproductively related." (216) What they do indicate is sexual reproduction, building on a history of representations of blood and rank along with a research -strategy-turned-kinship-theory privileging descriptive (often read as "real," as Povinelli reminds us) kinship and normalizing that very same diagrammatic device, the family tree/kinship chart.

lived on-reserve and the idea had a certain appeal. As did the tax benefits. But a few of them always rejected the idea in the end. Often their inability to speak French was an issue, as would their inability to leave any property owned on-reserve to their non-status (and thus ineligible to own reserve property) children. Some commented that they were related to lots of people on-reserve, but didn't really have any friends there. There was always a reason not to move to Odanak, although never one that precluded future discussion.

One day one informant offered another reason, quite unsolicited. It had a very different rationale than the answers described above. He had been involved in a dispute with a cousin who lived in the same neighborhood. Tempers flared, voices were raised. It was the type of disagreement that affects a relationship for some time to come and the (otherwise timeless) allegiances of kinship served to heighten the sense of betrayal and perception of rupture. Only a few days had passed and he was still agitated telling the tale. And as we were discussing the story he interjected, both playfully and seriously, "See, this is why I wouldn't want to live at Odanak. Living a few blocks away from one cousin is bad enough – they're all [my] kin up there!"

Much of the scholarly and popular discourse surrounding First Nations people in Canada and the United States is predicated on the idea that aboriginal sociality is constructed and reinforced in large part by reserves, and has been for a long time. This is particularly true of the "reductions" of the St. Lawrence valley and their counterparts in New England and New York, where large tracts of land devoid of Eurocanadian/Euroamerican intrusion no longer existed after increased settlement during the 18th and 19th centuries. Reserves and their associated economic geographies are often

taken for granted as the principle folk units of a natural-science-inspired social taxonomy, even if studies of urban native populations in the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century have insisted on the continuities of native life between the reserve and the city.[46] Reserves are imagined as the institutional basis for "tribal" continuity, allowing the proper "functioning" and reproduction of native "society." That reserves in the Northeast are often portrayed as "dysfunctional" in spite of this is usually attributed to a pathology among natives divorced from the context of centuries of settler colonialism.[47]

Even aboriginal leaders are perplexed by the hegemony of the reserve in the face of social tension. In the context of discussions about the Crespieul land claim (Frenette 2003, see also Fortin and Frenette 1989) launched by the governments of Odanak and Wôlinak, the late Chief Gilles O'Bomsawin on more than one occasion commented to me that he had a hard time imagining the Canadian government's plan to place Abenaki from Odanak and Wôlinak, Algonquins from T.-R., and Atikamekw from unorganized territories in the Haute Mauricie on the same reserve, noting that he couldn't get "his people" to get along amongst themselves at Odanak, so how were four different nations on one small territory supposed to live in harmony! My informant's dispute with his

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[46] For example, Jeanne Guillemin writing about urban Mi'kmaq in 1975: "Today, Micmac bands no longer gather for ritual celebrations. But the traditional principle that kinship orders behavior is at the very core of tribal organization, the goal of that organization being, as ever, to insure the perpetuation of the people…The community remains a community even as its network of affiliations is spread over the physical distance between reservations and cities. It is subject to some stress and open to some change but its flexibility and the fact of tribal affiliation assure its continuity." (67-8) Note Guillemin's systemic or organic approach to community; it is "subject to stress" and flexible. Its perpetuation is its *raison d'être*.

[47] This type of analysis was brought home to me one day when Radio Canada morning show hosts were discussing efforts by Chief James Gabriel to address political turmoil at Kanehsatake, a Mohawk First Nation territory northwest of Montreal. The hosts were pleased by Gabriel's goal of dismantling smuggling operations on the reserve: "Enfin, nous avons un bon indien!" they proclaimed. "Finally, we have a good Indian."

For a different take on problems at Kanehsatake and elsewhere in Mohawk country, see George-Kanentiio (2008). See Landsman (2007) on pathology and diagnoses of "native society," particularly in Iroquois studies.

cousin raises a similar concern, even while it ironically privileges the solidarity of family ties and the reserve as a locus of concentrated kinship.

Much of the historiography of the Abenaki is a tale of reduction, not simply a history of losing territory, but one of refugees taking shelter at Odanak and becoming a reserve community. This is certainly the narrative presented by Maurault in his *Histoire des Abenakis depuis 1605 jusqu'à nos jours* (1969[1866]), and that of Charland's *Histoire des Abénakis d'Odanak (1765-1937* (1964). Gordon Day's classic 1981 study, *The Identity of the Saint Francis Indians*, took as its task to understand the language and culture which resulted from this history of reduction, and Calloway's *The Western Abenakis of Vermont, 1600-1800* (1990) told a tale of gradual dispossession and abandonment, although punctuated by (increasingly difficult) periodic returns to homelands in Vermont, the geographic focus of his study. This partial vision of Abenaki history is inadequate. The experience of Abenaki people on-reserve, throughout their homeland, and in cities such as Albany and Waterbury has certainly been structured by the reductive logics and policies of settler colonialism, but continues to exceed them.

Settler Colonialism

Settler colonialism is the *obvious*[48]context of Abenaki life, obvious at least to most Abenaki people and generations of their ancestors. At a minimum, settler colonialism refers to the ongoing projects of colonialism at the heart of the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, nation-states where the colonists never left and

[48] As part of a larger ethnographic project in northwestern Madagascar, Andrew Walsh sought to "convey a sense of ecological underprivilege that is both sufficiently legible and sufficient complex to do justice to the predicaments of the people with whom we work" by "communicating a few obvious points about the current situation" faced by his informants (2005:655). Those "obvious points…[were]…quite simply those things that my informants and , hopefully, my audiences do not need an expert relativist mediator…to explain to them" (656). As Walsh successfully demonstrated, the obvious can be extraordinarily productive when taken seriously.

political authority rests in the hands of the settler majority. For First Nations people this has meant loss of territory, historical erasure, generations of impoverishment and political impotence, and much more. Consider the following description by an anthropologist working among Maliseet and Mi'kmaq people in the Maritimes in the mid-20th century:

> If a single characteristic were to describe such reserve groups, it would be the status of being wards and of seeking to legitimate dependency; on the other hand, a second standard pattern is the recurrent attempt to find ways and means or organizing projects and industries on the reserve. A third, and that which as a solution brings about the least discussion because it appears so well agreed upon, is the need to have one's children educated. Underlying most organization and most talk of the reserve and the people, there appears to be an unorganized unrest and a chronic sense of helplessness which is not unrelated to their belief that the Government plans to "do away with Indians." (McFeat 1962:37)

This "unorganized unrest" and "chronic sense of helplessness" are in no small part characteristic of the settler colonial experience for First Nations people, and in the Canadian context, the *Indian Act* has made them acutely aware that the government does plan to "do away with Indians." There is a fundamental imbalance in settler-aboriginal relations, an imbalance which belies even respectful dialogue and negotiation (see Nadasdy 2009).

This has been obvious to Abenaki people and their indigenous neighbors for some time whether it was manifest in political relationships or day-to-day life. For instance, when Norwegian traveler Johan Schrøder met Joseph-Louis Watso in 1863, he quickly learned the indignities suffered by the latter on a regular basis:

> The truly comfortable days that I passed with this tribe I owe mainly to Joseph Watso, an Indian of great physical strength who was also exceptionally intelligent and a gentleman to boot. On one of our walks we came to an establishment owned by a Frenchman, and I ordered two glasses of cognac. The servant poured one glass only as he rudely remarked that the "savage" could not be served any liquor. Joseph grew angry immediately, but he quickly gained control of himself and smiled: "No, give me a glass of water." I was still too young in America to realize the privileges of skin, and it was annoying to witness the haughty manner

> in which a pompous but insignificant clerk dared to address a man who had been tried in hardship and danger. Out of respect for the offended Indian I also refused refreshments. (1989:76)

This was likely shortly after Joseph-Louis and his first wife went their separate ways, and Watso would relocate to the southeastern Adironacks within a couple of years where he would marry his second wife (and cousin), Alice Johnson, and spend the rest of his days.

Schrøder provided an even more poignant instance of aboriginal people recognizing the obvious when he encountered a group of Maliseet at Cacouna later that year.

> The old chief [Louis St. Aubin aka Louis Thomas] was bad tempered and refused to reveal his name because he believed that I had evil intentions. A policeman had recently tricked him into giving his name and then fined him for catching salmon out of season. "When the white man's law allows us to fish they keep all salmon and trout away from our rivers by blocking them with their nets. Thus the Indian is prevented from catching fish for his dinner. When they take away their nets and the fish again can enter our rivers, the white man says that it is illegal for us to catch them. In this manner we are exposed to starvation and we therefore have to move around and set up our tents wherever money can be made from the insignificant skills of our women. In earlier times we owned much land, but now the Maliseet tribe is poor and becomes weaker every year. (1989:102)

Like Watso, Chief St. Aubin and many of his family members left the St. Lawrence Valley for good shortly after their visit with Schrøder. By the late 1860s they were living in the north woods of Maine along the shores of Moosehead Lake. The headwaters of the St. John, Penobscot, and Kennebec rivers, like the Adirondacks, still afforded partial respite from the powers of the settler state. Most of their direct descendants today, however, are able to claim aboriginal rights in either Canada or the U.S.

While settler colonialism is the obvious context of Abenaki life, it is a social fact rarely acknowledged by the settlers themselves, who largely believe colonialism to have

ended long ago. It is, nevertheless, *culturally* productive for both colonizer and colonized. As anthropologist Jessica Cattelino has recently stated:

> Settler colonialism creates as set of structures, practices, ideological formations, and dilemmas that are open to social scientific analysis. These, I suggest, include but by no means are limited to the dilemmas that indigenous peoples' everyday practices of citizenship pose to settler states, distinctive epistemologies and disciplinary formations, settler quandaries of how to claim national histories and territories when these are laced with traces of invasion, and pressure on the crafting of shared futures. (2010:286)

Generations of settler colonial experience inform the lives of all residents of North America, but the implications of this are particularly clear to First Nations people such as the Abenaki. This is especially true as they grapple with history in the diverse ways described and analyzed in the following pages.

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In a recent essay, anthropologist Richard Handler has written that Western scholars need to recognize that "'history' is *our* project, not *theirs*" (2008:107-108).

> A respectful attitude toward *their* traditions often means granting them a kind of back-door entrance into our project. Yes, we sanctimoniously claim, their traditions really do have truth-value; their ways of knowing can supplement, are perhaps even epistemologically as useful as, ours. This is all well and good when *they* have an interest in making Western-style history, perhaps for use in land claims cases, or because, as citizens of the modern world, they, too, wish to be educated in its various disciplines, for any or all the reasons that other citizens desire education and educational credentials. (2008:108)

He noted that "archaeologists and anthropologists, as well as many other kinds of workers from nonprofit institutions, often approach 'other' peoples not primarily out of respect for their genuinely different knowledge, but only because, to accomplish their work, they have to" (2008:108). His point is well taken. Collaboration cannot be imposed, and aboriginal forms of knowledge must not be seen as mere data to be reframed by scholarly (or bureaucratic) frameworks (see Field 2008).

However, as ethnographers we need to approach the question of what an Abenaki history might look like as an ethnographic question (see Lederman 1986). We must be open to a variety of aboriginal approaches to the past, including those which take forms that we ourselves take for granted. After all, Abenaki forms of history-making, disciplines such as history and the social sciences, and the bureaucratic practices of law have been developing in relation to each other for well over two centuries.

Chapter Two: Prefiguring Abenaki Family Historians

In this chapter I present several elements of the formation of an Abenaki historical consciousness quite unlike that which existed prior to the 19th century. My historical presentation is episodic, however each instance analyzed is indicative of crucial transformations in Abenaki understandings of history, language, beliefs and practices and in Abenaki strategies for living within growing settler states[1] and developing industrial economies. As will become evident, these transformations have necessarily been formed intersubjectively, in the context of various status-ridden relationships with customers, clients, patrons and scholars, and they have been reproduced unevenly, and with hesitations, among contemporary Abenaki family historians.

The narrative that I present below is not meant to function as an origin story, and I must emphasize that in every account and analysis of Abenaki people we are joining a story *in media res*. The ancestors of the Abenaki people have always had an idea of the past and of their particular beliefs and practices as being distinct from those of others, and technologies of literacy introduced by Europeans, while certainly representing an extraordinary change in the lives of aboriginal people, should not be taken simply as the replacement of orality by literacy.[2] In this chapter I present histories of Abenaki guides, Indian Encampments, lecturers and informants as a way to outline a series of developments that inflect the work of family and avocational historians today, as well as the work of the scholars who work with such people today.

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[1] Relevant epochal change is marked by the end of the War of 1812, after which neither Canada nor the United States would require the military assistance of aboriginal allies for defense.

[2] Note that scholars investigating the orality-literacy divide – an endeavor grounded in the work of scholars such as Walter Ong (1982) and Jack Goody (1986, 1987, 2000) – have recently problematized the neatness of that very framework. See Fabian (1993) and Wogan (1994, 2004); for examples in the aboriginal Northeast, see Walker (1984), Bragdon (2000), and Smith & Nash (2003).

This is not to say that the expansion of literacy has not had tremendous consequences for the formation of Abenaki historical consciousness. Formal education did not necessarily produce Abenaki historians, but it is telling that Stephen Laurent, who authored an important article on Abenaki history in Vermont (1955-1956) and translated and published Aubery's 18th c. dictionary as an English-French-Abenaki text (Laurent 1995), came from a long line of literate Abenaki. Henry Masta, author of *Abenaki Indian Legends, Grammar and Place Names* (1932), served as schoolmaster at Odanak, a position once held by his uncle, Dartmouth-trained Peter Paul Osunkherhine (1799-1870s), who was also a Congregationalist pastor. While the Laurent family tradition of literacy is clearly associated with the Catholic Church, for many 19th century Abenaki it was Moor's Charity School and Dartmouth College, in Hanover, NH, which were responsible for the development of literacy within the Abenaki community, often indirectly through the instruction of individuals such as Rev. Osunkherhine and Simon Annance (1799-1880), who returned from Hanover to teach at Odanak (Masta 1929; Calloway 2010).

Captain Francis Annance (ca. 1760-1826) was educated at Dartmouth, and his abilities to read and write in (at least) three languages were instrumental to the Abenaki community's struggles around the turn of the 19th century. More importantly for this chapter, his sons Noel (ca. 1791-1869) and Louis (ca. 1795-1875) were also educated at Hanover (Calloway 2010). Noel Francis Annance, aka Francis Noel Annance, worked in the western fur trade as part of the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company (Maclachlan 1993) before returning to the east and serving as chief of the Abenaki

community at Durham.[3] His younger brother Louis lived at Odanak and Durham before taking up full-time residence in northern New Hampshire and then relocating to the shores of Moosehead Lake, where he was known throughout the region "as a somewhat remarkable character" (Sprague 1892[1885]:418).

> He was a man of unmarked natural ability and superior intelligence, and was noted for his kind and generous disposition, his genial and pleasant manners, unimpeachable integrity and strict morality.
>
> While possessing all of these traits of a noble and refined manhood, he, at the same time, always retained the natural instincts and peculiarities of his race; for he loved the lone hunting-grounds of his fathers, and devoted many autumns and winters to the adventurous hunt and exciting chase.
>
> He was a true child of nature, endowed with faculties that enabled him to fully appreciate her mysteries, wonders and grandeur.
>
> His stern countenance and venerable and commanding form became familiar to all who visited the lake regions for many summers; for he was a frequent habitué of the haunts of the sportsmen and tourists. (Sprague 1892[1885]:418-419)

If individuals such as Noel and Louis Annance were far from representative of 19th century Abenaki people, their stories are instructive. Noel's career in the fur trade was stymied not by his intellectual abilities, education or ambition, but by his position as a "half-breed," a position which owed as much to his time in Hanover as to his "white" grandmother[4] (Maclachlan 1993). Conversely (?), Louis Annance was "celebrated" for his education and intelligence and for his primitive *Indian* rapport with nature.

Given my project to understand the work of Abenaki history, I have been particularly intrigued by Louis Sprague's account of Louis Annance, and believe it to be emblematic of the tensions which have surrounded Abenaki people in their *expected* and

[3] Noel Annance was an "Indian Chief, resident in the Township of Durham," according to his burial record (RCSD).

[4] Noel Annnace's paternal grandmother was Marie-Appoline Gill (ca. 1721-1791), who as raised at Odanak and likely spoke Abenaki language. Her parents, both adoptees, had no Abenaki ancestors. See Chapter 6.

unexpected role as historical analysts.[5] The former role depended on that crucial mix of intelligence, life experience, and the "natural instincts and peculiarities" of the *Indian*. Annance "loved the hunting-grounds of his fathers, and devoted many autumns and winters to the adventurous hunt and exciting chase." One of Lucius Hubbard's informants had a similar drive, thought to be an integral, authentic attribute of Indianness.

> It is said that John Pennowit, often quoted in these pages as an authority on Indian place-names, when he was eighty-six years old, and bowed with age and disease, made his preparations to go hunting in the autumn. The writer once heard a Moosehead Indian wistfully and repeatedly exclaim, while detailed by head winds for several days at Chamberlain Farm, "I wish the wind would go down: I want to get into camp, and shoot a caribou or moose." This man had lost nearly all his fingers, but, notwithstanding his apparent helplessness, went hunting regularly every autumn. (Hubbard 1884:84)

Perhaps it is not a surprise that the "Moosehead Indian" in question was one of Annance's fellow Abenaki, Abraham Capino, who in an 1894 newspaper story was reported to have delivered eight bearskins to Bangor after three months trapping in the woods and wetlands around Lobster Pond. The feat was particularly impressive as Capino had "no toes or fingers with the exception of a stub of a thumb on his right hand, having frozen them off" (*Daily Kennebec Journal*, July 9, 1894).

As mentioned above, a good Indian guide needed to combine such *natural* devotion with experience and intelligence. However, Louis Annance possessed such attributes along with an education and a profound propensity to reflection. Consider the following:

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[5] Historian Philip Deloria (2004) has recently drawn attention to the role of expectations and anomalies in Native American histories. Drawing attention to "broad cultural expectations [that] are both the products and the tools of domination and…an inheritance that haunts each and every one of us" (4), Deloria argued for attention to the unexpected rather than the anomalous. "To assert that a person or an event is anomalous cannot help but serve to create and to reinforce other expectations" (5). He would rather urge us "to make a hard turn from anomaly to frequency and unexpectedness" (6), and in this chapter and elsewhere I strive to follow his example.

When I first read Deloria's book, all I could think was that "Abenaki people have <u>always</u> been unexpected!"

> I enjoyed, for an hour, a communion with this venerable man, and heard his life history from his own lips, and listened with deep interest to his views upon various topics connected with the American Indians.
>
> He stated to me that his brother Noel, at one time, collected records of all the various dialects of the numerous tribes east of the Rocky mountains. Louis devoted much time to the study of these languages, which led him to the belief that they originally sprung from one source. His theory derived therefrom was, that there once lived upon this continent a different and a more advanced race of people than those whom Columbus discovered, and that the arts once flourished among his distant ancestors.
>
> His idea was that they became corrupt and demoralized, and lost their power in much the same manner as have other nations in other ages, and, with a serious expression upon his countenance, he referred to this as "a warning to the white men's governments on every shore."
>
> And it seemed to me that the spirit of this aged man was weighted with the errors, oppression and sorrows of his race, and that the glimpses which education had enabled him to obtain of the possibilities of a grander and a higher life, had increased this soul burden, as his mind became more potent to realize and appreciate the true condition of his people. (Sprague 1892[1885]:422-423)

The *unexpected* report that Noel Annance had made notes on the various languages he encountered as he crossed the continent and that Louis Annance had systematically studied them, building a theory of Americanist philology, served in Sprague's account only to characterize Annance as a doubly-tragic figure. Like the speculative histories proposed by moundbuilder-theorists of the same time period, Annance's aboriginal Americans were a fallen people, and Annance was not only "weighted with the errors, oppression and sorrows of his race,"[6] but his education had "increased his soul burden." Abenaki historical analysis becomes appropriated for a tragic tale of abjection and nobility, where colonial fantasies of communing with the primitive and attributing dignity

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[6] For another Abenaki explanation of decline, see the story "Of the Girl who married Mount Katahdin, and how all the Indians brought about their own Ruin" published in Leland's *Algonquin Legends*, and note Leland's commentary: "This remarkable legend was related to me by Mrs. Marie Sakis, a Penobscot, a very clever story-teller. It gives the Fall of Man from a purely Indian standpoint. Nothing is so contemptible in Indian eyes as a want of dignity and idle, loquacious teasing; therefore it is made in the myth the sin which destroyed their race. The tendency of the lower class of Americans, especially in New England, to raise and emphasize the voice, to speak continually in italics and small and large capitals, with a wide display, and the constant disposition to chaff and tease, have contributed more than any other cause to destroy confidence and respect for them among the Indians." (Leland 1992[1884]:257)

to the inevitable death and disappearance of the aboriginal become a pervasive trope which continues to influence the work of Abenaki historians today. At the same time, individuals such as Louis Annance created possibilities for aboriginal people to begin to experiment with historical, philological and ethnological discourses, possibilities which we may usefully think of as *hesitations*, opportunities to grapple with what was seen to be an unavoidable historical outcome: the end of the Abenaki and their aboriginal neighbors.[7]

Indian Guides

Abenaki have been employed as guides since the dawn of the colonial era. Seeber, writing specifically about "Maine Indian guides" (1988), presented a chronological list of guides that began with Secoudon, one of Champlain's guides in 1605. While originally from the St. John Valley, he was quickly followed by generations of guides from what we might think of today as territory associated more directly with the ancestors of the Abenaki people, guides who worked with explorers, military expeditions, and eventually sportsmen and other tourists in the forests and along the rivers of the Northeast. Guiding was often combined with other economic strategies, with some Abenaki taking a few such engagements, others making their livelihood largely in that industry.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Abenaki such as Elijah Benedict (ca. 1797-ca. 1857), Mitchell Sabattis (1821-1906) and his sons, Elijah Camp (ca. 1836-1904), John Mitchell (1891-1945) and Andrew Joseph (1892-1979) worked in the Adirondacks of New York and other Abenaki, such as Louis Annance, Simon Capino (ca. 1851-?), and

[7] In his famous essay, "Identity in Mashpee," James Clifford wrote that "It is important to distinguish hesitation from resistance, for hesitation need not oppose *or* acquiesce in the dominant course. It can be an alert waiting, thinking, anticipating of historical possibilities. Along with the history of resistances we need a history of hesitations" (1988:343).

Silas Osunkherhine (1849-1882), worked alongside Penobscot and Maliseet guides such as Joe Polis (1809-1884), Thomas Nicholas (1833-1884), and Henry Perley (1885-1972) in the Moosehead Lake region. North of the St. Lawrence River, in the hunting territories Abenaki appropriated from their Algonquin neighbors, yet other Abenaki worked as guides well into the 20th century, and the importance of this is marked by the Musée des Abénakis' virtual exhibit-under-development, "Follow the Guide! Abenaki Hunting and Fishing Guides in Private Clubs from 1885 to 1960."

The gendered and territorialized economics of guiding are crucial to consider in an engagement with Abenaki pasts, but in this chapter I wish to draw attention to guiding as a key activity in the construction of Abenaki historical consciousness. This is not to say that all Abenaki guides had the same experiences or that they ushered in a new age of Abenaki historians, but that the ways in which guides were imagined by sportsmen and others, and the questions put to them by their clients, would have far-reaching consequences for the ways in which Abenaki people have come to understand their history, experience the temporalities of aboriginal experience, and conceive of *history* as a field of inquiry. This was particularly the case in the forests of Maine and the Adirondacks.

The Ideal Guide

Guiding was difficult work that required considerable knowledge, skills, strength and stamina:

> A guide was expected to load and unload the canoe, cook meals, pitch tents, cut firewood, build a fire, and cut evergreen boughs for beds. At camp, they were also expected to tell stories and entertain their employers, teaching the meaning of place names and other Indian lore. A guide had to inspect and re-pitch the birchbark canoe at every stop. When the water was low, he built "shoes" for the protection of the bottom of the canoe. A guide was expected to paddle along

> vigorously. Lucius Hubbard calculated the paddling speed of his guides at an average of 3.5 miles per hour. A good guide was up before sunrise and had the canoe repaired and loaded early in the morning (Seeber 1988:175).

Simon Capino, "erect, tall and lithe, with a face like a cliff," was described by Arpad Gerster as having "the reputation of being an expert canoeman and a good guide."

> His agility and dexterity were noteworthy, and considering his slight build, his endurance was astonishing. It required time to melt the icy crust of his Indian reserve; but when this was dissipated he became quite talkative. Moreover, he possessed a sly humor… Under his impassive surface lay hidden a certain suave, dignified courtesy unknown to the lumber-jack. There was no bluster, no foul talk, no swearing; but instead, a quiet self-possession, which may be regarded as the remnant of the essential pride of the warrior. (1917:187-188)

Moosehead Lake guide Thomas Nicholas, a Maliseet whose family had been associated with the Viger community, was described by Thomas Sedgewick Steele as "a stalwart man," who was "considered the best hunter in the vicinity, while his reputation in the manufacture of birch canoes was known throughout the State." (1882:20)

> He was dressed in a grey shirt, a cardigan jacket, and a black felt hat, which made him look like a savage who had fallen into the clutches of some prowling missionary, and issued from the "conversional brush," not the better of soul, but the richer of a complex and indifferent suit of clothes. (1882:20)

Similarly, Silas Osunkherhine was "short of stature, with broad shoulders, thick neck, and solid frame…a marvel of strength and as agile as a cat." (Hubbard 1884:33) Lucius Hubbard complemented his neatness and cleanliness, "in which many a high-born white man might have deemed it an honor to be his peer" (1884:33), recalling Gerster's assessment of Simon Capino's cooking as "cleanly and proper," if greasy (1917:189). Osunkherhine "had acquired the reputation of being the quickest and most daring log-driver on the Penobscot, and his services were always in demand and brought the highest wages." (Hubbard 1884:33)

All three of these guides were characterized by a combination of expertise, physical prowess, and *Indian traits*. Capino's and Osunkherhine's clients also noted the good relationships they felt they had established with their guides. Capino had "a sly humor" that became evident once he got to know Gerster, and noting the latter's interest in woodcraft, taught him how to properly use an axe, paddle and pole (1917). Osunkherhine entered "into the spirit of exploration which prompted the writer's forest tours, he often devised ways to overcome obstacles and pushed forward where others would have faltered or turned back" (Hubbard 1884:33). This perception of camaraderie was crucial to the successful expedition.

Hubbard found Osunkherhine to be an exceptional companion and guide, and noted with interest his personal history as the son of Rev. Peter Paul Osunkherhine ("educated at Hanover New Hampshire") and a veteran of the Civil War who had enlisted at the age of 14 in a Michigan regiment and been forced to decline a promotion to the ranks of the officers as he could neither read nor write. "His only weakness" was alcohol, "a few swallows of which were enough to set his brain on fire and make him quarrelsome and vindictive, characteristics which at other times seemed to form no part of his nature" (Hubbard 1884:33).

Such character assessments are to be found in descriptions of Adirondack Abenaki guide Mitchell Sabattis as well. Benson Lossing proclaimed Sabattis "by far the best man in all that region to lead the traveler to the Hudson waters, and the Adirondack Mountains" (2000[1866]:13). The Rev. Joel Headley wrote that he was " a man of deeds and not of words – kind, gentle, delicate in his feelings, honest and true as steel" (1864:253). Years later, historians Aber and King concluded: "Throughout his life, he

was an expert guide. Short and slight of stature, he was gentle, unassuming, and reticent, but with exceptional strength and endurance. As a woodsman, he was unexcelled" (1965:25).

Like Silas Osunkherhine, Mitchell Sabattis' weakness was alcohol. Lucius Chittenden of Burlington, VT, wrote:

> Sabattis was a St. Francis Indian, a skilful hunter, and became afterward one of the finest characters I ever knew. At that time he got howling drunk at every opportunity. It is a pleasure to remember that he always attributed his reformation to his connection with me, and that for the last thirty years of his life he was a kind husband, an excellent father to worthy children, and a most reputable citizen. He died only a few years ago, a class-leader in the Methodist Church, universally respected. (Chittenden 1893:141)

Chittenden attributed to Sabattis' sobriety to his own intervention – that when the Sabattis family was about to lose their home in Newcomb, NY, Chittenden bought the mortgage on the condition that Sabattis never drink again. Sabattis, absolutely honest, accepted Chittenden's offer and never touched a drop alcohol from that day forward, repaying his debt to Chittenden and even surprising him one winter evening with a large load of game.[8]

Indian Knowledge

Mitchell Sabattis was also sought out as someone "well versed in the Indian language" (Aber & King 1965). In this capacity, his clients included Columbia University linguist J. Dyneley Prince (1900), and the associations of guiding and place-names (and associated stories) accounts for the relative wealth of such information

[8] "There were the saddles or hind quarters of twenty-five fat deer in their skins, two carcasses of black bear dressed and returned to their skins, the skin of a magnificent catamount, with the skull and claws attached, which he had heard me say I would like to have, a half-dozen skins of the beautiful fur of the pine marten or the American sable, more than one hundred pounds of brook trout, ten dozen of ruffed grouse all dressed and braided into bunches of a half-dozen, and some smaller game, with some specimen skins of the mink and fox. There was more game than my family could have consumed in a year." (Chittenden 1893:154-155)

recorded about the Adirondacks and the woods of northern Maine as opposed to Abenaki lands in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Henry David Thoreau's three trips to the north woods of Maine were instrumental in attracting attention to aboriginal guides and place-names, although his interest was undoubtedly also representative of more widely-held interests. *The Maine Woods* included an extensive list of such names, as well as commentary throughout the text about these places and the process of eliciting the data from his companions. For instance, writing about his 1853 trip, he described the following conversation between Joe Attien and Swasin Tahamont, the former a speaker of the Penobscot variety of Abenaki, the latter a speaker of the variety associated with Odanak, the Champlain Valley and the Adirondacks:

> I asked the Indian name of Moosehead Lake. Joe answered *Sebamook*; Tahmunt pronounced it *Sebemook*. When I asked what it meant, they answered, Moosehead Lake. At length, getting my meaning, they alternately repeated the word over to themselves as a philologist might…now and then comparing notes…and finally Tahmunt said…"like as here is a place, and there is a place"…"and you take water from there and fill this, and it stays here; that is *Sabamook*." I understood him to mean a reservoir of water which did not run away, the river coming in on one side and passing out again near the same place, leaving a permanent bay. (190)

Place-names and their translations were not self-evident to guides or clients. Attien and Tahamont "alternately repeated the word over to themselves as a philologist might…now and then comparing notes" in order to arrive at a satisfactory explanation.[9]

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[9] Another telling instance of the challenges of Abenaki philology was presented in George McAleer's 1906 study of the place-name *Missisquoi*. McAleer translated and reproduced two articles written by Judge Desiré Girouard which included notes from correspondence with Father Joseph de Gonzague and Joseph Laurent on the subject. De Gonzague, while "not consider[ing] himself as being acquainted" with the language despite his long service as Odanak's missionary and his Abenaki father, consulted "our old Abenakis," and they all agreed upon the gloss "Boulders Point" – "a place where there are boulders" – stating that this had been "known among them for a long time" (85). Laurent, however, informed Girouard that he favored the translation "where flint is to be found," but ultimately could not be sure which explanation was the best, concluding that "'Massipskouik,' meaning where flint is to be found, is very

Lucius Hubbard arrived at a different gloss, derived from informants and considered in light of Rasles' Norridgewock dictionary: "The name by which Moosehead Lake is known to the Penobscot Indians is *Xsébem'*, while to that remnant of the Abnakis that have lived at St. Francis it is *Sébam'ook*, either of which is freely translated by 'extending water,' the second form having the locative ending." He followed this with the following note: "A St. Francis Indian once told the writer that *Xsébem'* would naturally and properly be the exclamation of one of his tribe when, going through the forest, he should suddenly see light ahead through the trees, and the sheen from an open body of water" (1884:19). He also presented legends, one obtained indirectly from Louis Annance and one obtained directly from John Pennowit, which explained the English-language name.

Hubbard was a devotee of such data, stating that one of the reasons why he wrote about his time in Maine was "to make known a number of Indian place-names, and several legendary traditions, which he has gathered from Indian sources during his vacation rambles through Maine. The growing interest manifested of late in this subject leads him to think that the publication of these names and their significations, although it the latter no pretension is made to philological precision and fulness [sic], may be received with favor, and may lead to more thorough researches in the same direction by others" (viii-ix).

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much like 'Massapskouik'…meaning where boulders or big stones…exist" (87). In correspondence with McAleer, Laurent later argued that "by the change that the language has undergone…it is very difficult to find out the meanings of old words, especially when corrupted by the many misspellings of the whites" (96). Compare this with the story of "Pial and Az8" in Masta (1932:20-21): when the two could not agree on the etymology of Kennebec River, John declared, "My friend, you are not pleased with my explanation nor am I with yours, but let us say that we both are right" (21).

Eliciting place-names and waxing poetic about one's native companions – recall Sprague's comments on Louis Annance as well as Thoreau's account of his three sojourns in Maine – inspired others, such as Arpad Gerster, to go north. Gerster wrote that he chose Simon Capino as his guide "with the idea of combining a taste of American forest life with an intimate view of the aboriginal in his own element" (1917:187).

> As Simon's reserve diminished, he became more and more interesting. I took care not to let him suspect, however, that the principal game followed by his companion through the Maine woods, was not moose or caribou, but his own aboriginal self. (1917:187-189)

As *Indian* guides being stalked by sportsmen-scholars in pursuit of large game and aboriginal selves, Abenaki learned the value of difference as an object of curiosity and as a part of an economic strategy that drew on lifetimes of experience in ancestral lands. However, the difference could not be *too* great, as Povinelli has argued in a different context (2002a). The *Indian* guide required a working knowledge of English, a set of interpersonal and intercultural skills, and an understanding of language-as-object, an object related to the past and modes of being seen to be in eclipse.

This conflation of difference and time marked another field of commercial enterprise for 19th c. Abenaki: the Indian Encampment. If this milieu was linked to "material culture" and *Indian* presentation rather than folkloric knowledge, philological analysis and Wabanaki woodcraft, it was nonetheless a staging ground for a past that linked economic strategy to a history imagined as decline, replaced by the progress of American and Canadian societies.

Indian Encampments

> EARLIEST OF THE INDIAN encampments was that in the Pine Grove in North Broadway, just opposite the colonial home of Chancellor Reuben Hyde Walworth home. There the slim, barefooted Indian boys, petitioned the visitors to "set up a

> cent." For a few coins they would demonstrate their skill with the bow and arrow. The Gorve [sic] enclosed a ten pin alley and swings, hung from the tallest pines, were in constant motion, attended by Indian boys and girls who also sold bows, canes and baskets there. Often Mrs. Walworth, the first wife of the Chancellor, would look up from her cooking in the stone fireplace, to see an Indian watching her.
>
> Once Clarence Walworth, later to become a Redemptorist Missionary and still later a founder of the Paulist congregation of converts, gave an Indian who stopped by to warm his hands at the great fireplace, a sweater. With a glance of gratitude from his steely eyes, and grunts of "Umph Umph," the Indian put the sweater on.
>
> In the next summer the Indian came noiselessly back to the kitchen door. In his hand was a bow and arrow, beautifully designed, which he gave to the boy Clarence with a smile that bespoke gratitude (Britten 1964).

Indian Encampments, like the one described above at Saratoga Springs, were commercial spaces where many Abenaki families encountered "the Indian" as a larger-than-life figure, as raced and gendered, and as potentially lucrative in the face of diminishing access to resources which had sustained them in previous generations. They were also non-commercial (and otherly-commercial) spaces where other exchange relationships were forged, bringing Abenaki into local spheres of exchange at the same time as they were being interpolated into national understandings of Indianness.

Saratoga Springs, the largest and most elaborate of the Indian Encampments, was built upon earlier histories of aboriginal commerce in the region, and the encampments of families at Sharon Springs, NY, by 1845.[10] In the summer of 1850, there were two Abenaki families – that of Francis and Lucy (Wasamimet) Brazill alias Lagrave and that of Anthony and Eliza Marshall, each of whom was comprised of a non-native man, his Abenaki wife, and their children – and two Oneida [footnote this] families doing "nett

[10] According to McHale (1999:4), the first boarding house at Sharon Springs opened in 1825, and throughout much of the 19th century the village was a "destination for the elite of the United States," and even President Cleveland visited the springs. "Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the spa fell out of favor with New York's upper crust," largely due to competition from Saratoga Springs. Around this time, local businesses "began to actively pursue the patronage of wealthy German Jews" who were not welcome in Saratoga.

and beadwork" and making baskets in Sharon Springs (1850 Census), and according to the 1855 New York State Census, the Abenaki families arrived in Sharon Springs in 1845 and 1846 respectively, and stayed on as full-time residents. The Brazills were joined for a time by Lucy's brother Peter J. Emmett and his family, and for a shorter time by other members of her family. (1855 NYS Census; 1860 U.S. Census; 1865 NYS Census)

In an 1854 book describing the mineral waters which would bring so many visitors to Sharon Springs, Dr. Sebastian Fonda presented the "romantic road" which led to the village, the nearby mountains, and the Pavilion and other hotels which "constitute the main portion of the village." (10) Then he noted another attraction the town offered when he visited in 1853:

> These woods afford extensive, varied, and pleasant walks. A few Indian families, who here take up their summer residences, impart to the scene a forest wildness of other days. They employ their time in making baskets, fans, and similar articles, which are sold to the visitors. The Indian boys display their expertness in shooting, with bow and arrow, at pennies that soon find their way to their pockets. (11)

A visit to the Indian encampment in 1855 was described the following year in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* thus:

> In the woods on the top of the hill, above the springs, was a small encampment of St. Francis Indians, who have occupied the spot for several consecutive seasons, make and sell baskets, fans, and other splint-work, and give pleasure to visitors by their novelty and the picturesqueness of their little village. The chief among them was a very intelligent man, of pure Indian blood, whose wife was a white woman, the daughter of a respectable Methodist clergyman. She was represented as an exemplary wife and mother, and seems to have acquired all the gravity and stoicism of the people among whom her lot is cast. Day after day she toils there at basket-making, and appeared happy. Among them, too, was a real beauty of sixteen, whose features Portfolio caught between the leaves of his sketch-book. He thinks she would have charmed even the venerable Hi-a-wat-ha; and he has since apostrophized her in sixty lines of trochaic metre. (16-17)

Around the same time that these descriptions of Sharon Springs were being written, similar descriptions of Saratoga Springs began to appear in newspapers and other

publications. For instance, the *Utica Morning Herald* noted on 11 August 1855 that "Among the attractions at Saratoga is an Indian encampment in the woods about a quarter of a mile from the village [at the Pine Grove]. Some twelve tents have been pitched there by tribes of Canada and Maine Indians. They are making baskets, arrows, bead bags, &c. which are readily sold to the hotel visitors."

The second location for the Saratoga Springs Indian Encampment was on South Street (now known as Lincoln Avenue), "as it extended across Broadway."

> Many tribes came and went at the camp which was a picturesque and interesting site visited by hundreds who were intrigued by the feats of the Indians, and liked to buy their handmade wares, especially moccasins and bows and arrows. Many chiefs of the northern tribes, warriors, squaws, Indian maidens and Indian boys could be noted among the group, all dressed in colorful regalia. Indian boys exhibited their skill by shooting at a cent fastened to the end of a stick stuck in the ground some 20 feet away. (Britten 1964)

The Indian Encampment's final location was the site of today's Congress Park is the center of Saratoga Springs. "It was covered with tents and log houses, where the Indians camped from late spring until late autumn or until snow came." (Britten 1964).

Documentary evidence relating to the earliest years of Saratoga Springs' Indian Encampment is scarce, but as with the case of the early history of Sharon Springs it indicates a mix of Abenaki and Oneida families, with the Abenaki families maintaining a larger presence through time. For instance, Hope Allen noted that as a young girl, Oneida Lydia Doxtater (ca. 1865-1917) "went with her parents to Saratoga to sell Indian wares, and became friends with Canadian Indians, some of whom were Abenaki; from them she obtained variants of the Canadian Indians stories of Creation," (see also Wonderly 2003:8) and Lydia was likely related to the Honoria Dacotharer discussed in an 1857 article published in the *Auburn Daily American* [Auburn, NY]:

> AN OLD SQUAW. – At Saratoga Springs is an Indian encampment of some thirty huts. They are principally Hurons. There are also four or five huts of the tribe of Oneidas. Among the Oneidas is an old Squaw Princess names Honoria Dacotharer, whose age is 109 years. She was employed as a messenger and a spy and look-out, to ride from one[?] camp to that of the enemy, and learn their designs during those days of trial and danger, and rendered valuable assistance to our brave fathers of '76. She was born at Oneida Castle in 1748. Her husband fell at the battle of Saratoga, in 1773, and her three sons at Landy's [?] Lane and Chippewa, in 1814.
> -*Albany Knickerbocker.*
>
> We saw this "old Squaw" four years ago. She looked then as old as the last century, but retained much life and vigor. She is a venerable specimen of the "Native Americans."

The "Hurons" were most likely Abenaki, the same as the "Canada and Maine Indians" of 1855, given their history at Saratoga, and a lack of Huron history there, although it should be noted that the Huron have a long history as merchants of baskets and other wares marked *aboriginal* (see Phillips 1998). Important for the purposes of this chapter is that such contact between Abenaki and other First Nations people in New York[11] would be critical to the development of a particular "Indian" representational regime.[12]

Further contributing to this representational regime would be the peculiar set of commercial projects developed as part of the Saratoga Springs Indian Encampment as it relocated and grew during the second half of the 19th c.[13] By the late 1860s, the Saratoga

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[11] In addition to Oneidas, there were other First Nations represented at Saratoga Springs over the years. An important example is that of John Polis and his extended family, Penobscots, listed in the 1865 New York State Census in Saratoga Springs. Nancy (Francis) Chandler and her daughter Elizabeth, also Penobscots, were living elsewhere in Saratoga Springs at the same time. The reference to "Maine Indians" in the *Utica Morning Herald* story quoted above may also indicate the presence of Penobscots, although Abenaki families living in and near the southeastern Adirondacks were often identified as Canadian Indians whose ancestors lived in Maine.

[12] Additional mid-19th century contact is evident southwestern New York, where Mary Moulton, daughter of Catherine Metallic, married Thomas Layton Kindness, aka Layton Kanistanaux, a returned member of the Brothertown movement. Both worked as "Indian Doctors," and raised the children produced by Mary's first marriage to Joseph-Louis Watso. Watso's nephew, Ambroise Paul, also worked as an "Indian Doctor" in southwestern New York, and there is considerable evidence for contact between both of these families and their Abenaki relatives in eastern New York.

[13] It is difficult to trace the development of a certain representational regime given the paucity of documents available, but a brief discussion of the available data is still crucial to our understanding of Abenaki historical consciousness.

Springs Indian Encampment had grown much larger than the earlier encampment at Sharon Springs, the encampment that had by this time developed at Lake George, or the later encampment at nearby Lake Luzerne. While there were certain features of the Indian Encampment that persisted, at Saratoga there were a number of other attractions. In 1868[14], the *Utica Observer* reported:

> SARATOGO [sic]. – At Saratoga, they have an Indian encampment, and this serves to amuse the visitors very much. The newest amusement is a game called Aunt Sally and the wooden pins. Those who have been to the Derby races in England will understand this game. It is an importation. A wooden figure representing a very black negro woman, with a profusion of wolly [sic] hair, a jaunty straw hat, very red lips, and a short pipe stuck in her mouth. She swings or bows on a pivot by means of a string under her smock, which a man at ten yards distance pulls. The game it to knock the pipe out of Aunt Sally's mouth, by throwing the wooden pins at it from a fixed distance, while the man with the string keeps her in a bowing motion. The candidates for this honor pay a fee, of course, for the trial, and receive a prise [sic] if they succeed. The fun of the thing is that no one hits the pipe, and everybody laughs and thinks he can.

Clearly this Indian Encampment bears little resemblance to its predecessors in the 1850s. And already in 1868 Abenaki were being evaluated as lacking a certain authenticity:

> Every one is probably familiar with the fact that there is an Indian encampment here. Just let me say that it won't do to read Cooper before visiting the favored spot. A person might feel obliged to do so, who would burden himself with a copy of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress in order to take notes on the way, when going to visit some "dear friend," or would read a history of the United States before visiting the Saratoga battle-ground at Stillwater. There is none of the traditional Indian about the fossils who make bows and arrows or weave blankets during the Summer. They dress as every one does, squaws with hoops, waterfalls, and *panniers*, for aught I know, and instead of the "noble red man," "child of the forest," &c., you see a nineteen-twentieths white man in a nice log hut, who can stare as hard as you can, and cheat you if he gets a chance. They are pretty expert with the bow and arrow, however, and are "death on cents," to use a poetical license of speech. They do not fling tomahawks recklessly, paint abominably, wear blankets solely, squint with an "eagle eye" continually, clamor for "firewater" vociferously, and detest the white man cordially, but they do smoke frequently, chew occasionally, whittle cleverly, loaf unceasingly, talk gibberish unintelligibly, and keep a sharp eye to their own profits skillfully. Now, if I have maligned the Indian or injured the aboriginal feelings of the "natives of the soil," I am sorry,

[14] I have been unable to learn a more precise date of publication of this article.

> but why not import some of the Southern "mean white" element and call it Indian? Perhaps they have – who knows? (*New York Times*, August 17, 1868. Page 5.)

That this *New York Times* correspondent was disappointed by the Indianness of Saratoga Springs' Abenaki might be in part due to the individuals he met. For instance, the 1870 census enumerated the occupants of the Indian Encampment on August 1: of the seven households containing Abenaki people, all but one contained non-native heads-of-household. Eusebe Reeves was a French Canadian man whose wife, Sarah Glandon, was the daughter of Angelique Pakigan. Reeves was identified as a "bow + arrow maker," and was listed with his wife ("basket maker"), his daughter Sarah (sells baskets"), his son Eugene ("attends target"), his children Mary and Henry ("shoots pennies") and youngest daughter Victoria. Additionally, members of the Msadokous and Tahamont families were listed in the household and the Reeves' daughter Melissa was also enumerated in the Indian Encampment with her non-native husband Abram Doterec ("basket maker") and daughter Mary.

The other households were associated with Peter and Theresa – "Talasa" – (Saziboet) Joseph. Their daughters Susan Stone and Sarah Couse lived in neighboring households with their families; their non-native husbands were enumerated as basket makers. Their ex-son-in-law, Abram Burlett, was also listed as a "basket maker," living nearby with his second wife and their two children. Burlett's children with the late Mary Louise Joseph were living nearby with the family of a retired farmer who, like their father, was a non-native man originally from Vermont.

Clearly, there were several non-native men living at the Indian Encampment[15], and many individuals whose non-native parentage may have left phenotypic traces. Importantly, however, visitors to the Encampment could not always tell the "whites" from the "Indians":

> For the past three years, until this summer, one of the attractions of Saratoga to the young men was "the beautiful Indian maiden" who presided at one of the booths of the Indian encampment. Her name was Sarah Reeves, and she was a half-breed daughter of George [Eusebe] Reeves, a recognized chief of the remnant of the Indian tribes which spend their summers at Saratoga and winter in Canada. (*Evening Courier & Republic* [Buffalo, NY], August 16, 1875. Page 1.)[16]

However, there was more to the disappointment voiced by the *New York Times* correspondent. It was not simply a matter of phenotype. These Abenaki did not dress as he expected them to, nor did they fit his stereotypes of the savage warrior or the "noble red man," stereotypes that would continue to inform publicity for the encampment for years to come:

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[15] Louis Gassett would later continue this pattern. Gassett was married first to Harriet Watso, then to Mary Jane Tahamont. He is listed as a resident of the Indian Encampment in business directories for 1888 and 1889, as well as the 1890 U.S. Census Veteran's Schedule. He witnessed the marriage of John Degonzague and Angeline Saint-Denis at Saratoga Springs in September 1893, and his daughter Nellie Ruth was baptized in April 1900 at Bethesda Episcopal Church in Saratoga Springs (RBE). Later that year his family was enumerated by the U.S. Census at Saratoga Springs. Even after his second wife left him, Gassett continued to live with some of his former in-laws in western New York (1910 U.S. Census), and then at Lake George (1920 U.S. Census).

[16] The passage continued: "She was a great favorite with belles and beaux, knit beadwork elegantly, and shot with the air gun wonderfully well; but by and by her heart was also hit by the subtle archery of love. The name of the fortunate gentleman is S. G. Butler of San Francisco, Cal., where he is a broker. They became engaged. He sent Sarah to school. A short time ago they were married, and a few days ago they came to Saratoga. After spending a week there the happy pair – Mr. and Mrs. B. – left Wednesday evening for their home in California, where, as we have said, Mr. Butler is a rich and respected citizen."

Sarah Reeves marriage to Charles Butler (aka Charles Gaucher; 10 June 1875 at Saint-Dominique, Québec) was short-lived. While she and brother Eugene were living with Butler, a liquor dealer, in San Francisco in June 1880 (U.S. Census), by 1890 she was the proprietor of the Saratoga Cottage at Lakewood Village, NY on Lake Chautauqua. There she went by the name "Sarah Strunk." She died the wife of Godfrey Harris, 24 February 1914 and was buried two days later at Odanak. (RSFdS) Harris attended her burial, although they had earlier separated after he learned that she was Abenaki: "While Mr. Harris was visiting at Chautauqua several years ago he met and fell in love with the pretty widow. He believed her to be a Jewess, it is said, and married her in that faith. Shortly afterward he saw a beautiful Indian maiden who bore a striking resemblance to his wife. He learned that they were sisters and that he had married an Indian squaw" (*Syracuse Daily Journal*, April 17, 1903).

> **The Picturesque Indian Village.**
>
> A credible parade was given yesterday morning by the Indians, horses, wagons, etc., comprising the Picturesque Indian Village. The entertainment given in the afternoon and evening was pronounced first-class by all who attended. The fancy rifle shooting by "Texas Charley" was enthusiastically applauded, while the Indian medicine ceremony and other descriptive acts of Indian life were found of great interest. The specialty and variety programme is "simply immense." The entire performance is free from vulgarity, the audience, in fact, being composed of many well-known citizens and guests. The children, especially, were delighted and expressed their approval again and again. Two performances will be given daily during the week, under the spacious tents between Lake avenue and Circular street. (*Saratoga Journal* 31 July 1883.)

Instead, he complained that they "smoke frequently, chew occasionally, whittle cleverly, loaf unceasingly, talk gibberish unintelligibly, and keep a sharp eye to their own profits skillfully." They corresponded more exactly to his idea of the poor, white southerner rather than his notion of what an Indian should be.

One wonders what the writer would have made of correspondence between Abenaki associated with the encampment earlier in that decade. For instance, on September 10, 1860, a debt was recorded at Odanak between Lazare Tahamont[17] and John Watso. Tahamont had received $4.50 from John Watso's son at Saratoga the previous week. This debt was recorded on paper, along with other economic transactions between the two. They kept "a sharp eye" on their finances and were quite familiar with doing so on paper.[18]

Such a "sharp eye" had become necessary in a Quebec which employed a French legal system where notaries served to record and certify such transactions, and in a Northeast traversed by the border between two settler states, requiring Lazare Tahamont's older brother Swasin, a "speculator in moose-hides," to request a "*wighiggin*,

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[17] I am following the usage of "Lazare" on the document in question. "Lazare" is a common gloss for "Elijah," and the individual in question lived from ca. April 1824 to 22 November 1861. He was the first husband of Margaret Msadakous and the father of the Elijah Tahamont discussed below.

[18] This document is in the possession of Susan Marshall.

or bill" of Henry David Thoreau's companion on his 1853 Chesuncook expedition, "since he [Tahamont] was a foreigner," according to an 1852 Maine law which forbade the killing of moose or deer within the state by any "foreign citizens and Indians belonging in the British provinces" (Thoreau 1988[1864]:186).

Lazare Tahamont's widow demonstrated both a studied appreciation of commerce and the complexities of cross-border life, as well as the solidarities of kinship which framed life at the Indian Encampment in an 1863 letter to her father, Thomas Msadakous[19],

> Saratoga Springs, NY Aug 16th 1863
>
> Dear father I take this uportunety to right this few line to learn you that I am Well at present and hope this few line Will fine you injoying the same blessing I should send you som money before this time but We Did not make enoght only to live but now it is more incoraging We sell more then We did but I must send you the some of $6 Doller in this letter for this time in United State treasure Note I hope it will reach you safe [?] and I do not know how much Discount it will be on this money, but let it be what ever it will for I cannot git any silver or Canada money I wich you would tell my sisters if they are willing that I should buy that flanell they told me to buy for them so if they have not change there mind about that yet they must let me know in your next letter if they are Wiling yetthat I shuld by them things you must right as quick as you receive this I send my love to you and the family my girl send her love to her mother and family no more from your effecionate Dother
>
> Margerit
> Tahamont[20]

Margaret was remitting funds to her father at Odanak, apologizing for not having sent any money earlier. She noted that she was unable to convert her U.S. currency into silver or Canadian dollars, and expressed concern and resignation about the exchange rate. She was purchasing flannel for her sisters[21] and conveying her love to her family and that of

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[19] Thomas Msadokous (ca. 1803-1902) lived at Odanak and trapped a hunting territory in the Haute-Mauricie north of the St. Lawrence, likely along the Pierriche and Joli Rivers. (Hallowell & Day 1932)
[20] This letter is in the possession of Susan Marshall.
[21] Ursula (Msadokous) Wawanolett and Mary (Msadokous) Obomsawin.

her "girl" – an unidentified Abenaki[22] who was likely tasked with helping to produce and sell baskets or looking after then-toddler Elijah Tahamont – to her family as well.

The Indian Encampments at Sharon Springs, Lake George and Lake Luzerne, like later, smaller-scale basket selling locales such as Intervale and Bethlehem, NH (see Hume 1991, Pelletier 1982, Nash 2002, Phillips 1998:25, 52-54) and the Thousand Islands region of New York, relied on a studied representational regime which meant, as Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has argued, that Abenaki "needed to acknowledge, even flaunt difference." (2001:347) Ulrich was pointing to a newspaper article regarding the Alumkasset family in 1835, but this acknowledgment of difference became more complicated as the St. Lawrence Valley souvenir trade developed (Phillips 1998) and, even more importantly, as groups of Abenaki families took up seasonal or year-round residence at Indian Encampments. That early arrangements at Sharon Springs and Saratoga Springs included Oneidas and other aboriginal people facilitated a certain concept of *Indianness*, a concept also very much grounded in the commercial encounter. Exogamous marriage and non-native involvement in the commerce of the Indian Encampment appear to have challenged the expectations of some visitors, as did shrewd business activity and clothing not marked as *Indian*.

Abenaki people were aware of the impossible demands of settler publics at work at the Indian Encampments and elsewhere. If their real lives failed as exemplars of *Indianness*, one response was to continue to cultivate a certain genteel respectability all the while confining the *Indian* to a history to be discussed and performed for educational and theatrical purposes. In a turn to history was to be found redemption.

[22] Not all such "girls" were Abenaki – some were local French Canadian girls from Pierreville. I am guessing that this one was Abenaki because of the request to pass her greetings along to her family.

Lecturers

Elijah Tahamont aka "Dark Cloud"

Emblematic of this response was Elijah Tahamont, known professionally as "Dark Cloud," and his family. Elijah was born to Lazare and Margaret (Msadokous) Tahamont 20 September 1861, probably at Odanak. Two months after his birth, the family was traveling along Lake Champlain when his father died suddenly in Essex, NY.

> Benson Landing, Vermont Nov. 27, 1861
>
> Dear father,
> I take my pen in hand to learn [?] you about my news wich are very sad When I learn you that I am left alone in this world a widoe with my little boy only left tome as for my Dear husban Eliger is no more he Departed from this World last Friday Nov. 22th he take sick last tuesday and Dide on Friday last to Essex [?] but he left me one conciliation that is he dide in hope and pease withe the Lord his Savior I forgot to tell you that he dide to Essex N.Y. Where there was no Relation to com to hus in the time of my affiction but thank to god that ther was a good friend round me to simpetise with me but I was so lomson and distress I came here to Benson Landing Vermont [last word was written above?] So I arrive here this morning and fine myself with my diseas husban's uncle that is Peter Joseph's family[23] and expect to leeve with them for this winter. Dear father I wich you would see about the house eftar that you mite letted out to som body ontill next fall for I don't think to have any youse for it. before that time but for my stove I wich you would kiped safe for me not let nobody used no more for the present time. I send our best respect and love to you and all right as quick as you receive this and dereck [?] your letter. to Benson Landing, Vermont
>
> I am your iffectionate Dother
> Margaret Tahamont[24]

Margaret and her infant son spent the winter with the Josephs, preparing to sell baskets at Saratoga Springs the following summer.

> Benson Landing, VT febu
> 12th 1862

[23] Peter Joseph aka Pierre-Marie Mag8a's wife was Therese Saziboet. Therese's sister, Marie-Agathe, was the mother of Lazare Tahamont. Relationships between the Josephs and the Tahamonts were close during the 19th century, and Swasen Tahamont's daughter Victoria was enumerated at the Indian Encampment in the household of Joseph family relatives in 1875 (1875 New York State Census).

[24] This letter is in the possession of Susan Marshall.

Dear father,

I now take this upurtinuty to right to you this few line to learn you that I am well for the present and hope this few line fine you injoying the same blessing I would be glad if you could spare my young brother. Edwin for next summer if you can let him go I would be gladd for he can help me to takare my little boy so if you think you can let him come to Saratoga Spring next somer you mite send him with som of the Indian of St. Francis When they come as for myself I am to work making lots of basskit to sell next sumer [?] and as for my little boy he as ben very sick but nowhis well again and smarte and I learn youthat I am well contended here of [?] one thing We have daly prayer wich his a comfort tome no more for the present I send my best respect to my sisters and brothers and to you rigt as quick you receive this ___[?]

I am you dother
Truly

Malgarit
Thamont[25]

Margaret and young Elijah shifted their residence seasonally. Elijah was baptized 19 April 1863 at Odanak's Congregational Church,[26] but were back at Saratoga Springs the following August. On September 20, 1870, Margaret remarried at Odanak's Anglican Church. Her new husband, Samuel Benedict, had family at Odanak and in the Adirondacks, where he had worked in the lumber industry (1860 U.S. Census). Census records indicate that the couple established dual residence at Lake George and Odanak throughout the remainder of Eljah's youth, and when Elijah married, his bride was Margaret Camp, daughter of John (his step-father's cousin) and Susan (Watso) Camp. Margaret Camp had always called Lake George her home, although her death record indicates that she was born at Saratoga Springs in 1854. She had visited Odanak, where she was baptized in May 1868, and also knew part of Vermont.

[25] This letter is in the possession of Susan Marshall.
[26] Rev. Peter Paul Osunkherhine performed the baptism. Sponsors were Elijah's patrilateral uncle, John Tahamont, and matrilateral aunt, Mary (Msadokous) Obomsawin.

Elijah and Margaret married at some point between 1881 and 1887, the year their daughter Beulah was born in New York. During the 1880s, Elijah was away from Odanak (and outside of Canada) for "8-9 years," and under the terms of the *Indian Act*, petitioned for readmission into the "membership of the Abenakis Council" on 10 December 1888 (RG 10 Vol. 2441 File 91,719). His petition was granted and approved by the Superintendant of Indian Affairs in January 1889, and about three months later Elijah Tahamont sponsored the baptism of Ira Walter Annance at Odanak's Anglican Church (ROA).[27]

Despite readmission, Elijah, Margaret and Beulah did not stay long at Odanak. They were not recorded there on the 1891 census, and daughter Bessie was born in New York in 1894. During the 1890s the family began to frequent New York City, and at some point shortly after the turn of the century – they were still enumerated at Lake George in 1900 – the family became full-time residents of the metropolis.

It was at this point that the Tahamont family became noted in the press. For instance, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* published a story on April 18, 1902, entitled "Mohawk Chief Its Guest: Indian at Chiropean Meeting Tells of the Religion of His Race."

> As interesting as it was novel was the programme presented at the regular social meeting of Chiropean yesterday afternoon at the Knapp Mansion. The industrial work of the red man (or, more accurately speaking, his squaw) furnished the food for reflection and discussion. Bright colored Navajo blankets made the walls gay, and beadwork, basketry and Indian curios were hung about or piled on small tables. The central sun of this display was a Mohawk chief in the full regalia of his tribe. Falling Star [Anne J. (Paul Denis) Fuller], an Indian princess, was expected, but was unable to attend owing to illness. The committee on philanthropy, Mrs. Harlow E. Brown, chairman, had charge of the afternoon.

[27] The other sponsor was Helen (Stanislas) Msadokous. Ira Walter Annance was later known as Walter Benedict; Edwin Benedict claimed paternity of Walter and his brother Chauncey after he married Lucinda Annance five years later.

> In an able and comprehensive paper Mrs. Brown presented the topic, "The Wards of the Nation and Their Industrial Work."
>
> Not the least interesting of the speakers, and certainly the most picturesque, was Chief Dark Cloud, who expressed some pique at the work of squaws receiving most of the attention. By way of contrast apparently he confined his remarks to Indian religion. In very fair English, not devoid of eloquence, he related the legend of how the Great Spirit first brought corn and tobacco to America. He also told of the three great powers – fire, water and rock – and of religious ceremonies. The Indian is never downcast, he said, because he finds peace with the Great Spirit. The white man thinks we have no religion, but we have the sweetest, most beautiful religion, because we believe in nature – we look at the water, the trees, the mountains: we go among the rocks to talk with the Great Spirit.
>
> "If you want to teach the Indian," declared Dark Cloud by way of peroration, "you must live with him, live a perfect life and with nature." (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 18, 1902. Page 12.)

There is much to be considered in this portion of the article. First, "Dark Cloud" was never identified by given and family name, nor was the absent "Falling Star," also an Abenaki with roots in the Champlain Valley, the Adirondacks and Quebec (see Chapter 5). That Tahamont had been deemed a chief, and "Falling Star" an "Indian princess," was noteworthy and spoke to an imagination of Indian nobility so crucial to the romantic nostalgia informing the audience's antiquarian interests, progressive social ideals, and unquestioned settler worldview. ("The committee on philanthropy, Mrs. Harlow E. Brown, chairman, had charge of the afternoon. In an able and comprehensive paper Mrs. Brown presented the topic, 'The Wards of the Nation and Their Industrial Work.'")

Importantly, "Dark Cloud" was presented as a Mohawk speaking generically of "Indian religion" and character. His slippery identification was evident again in an article published May 31, 1902 in the *New York Times*, where "Aiga Tahament, medicine man of the Seneca tribe," performed a funeral for Evans Bradby, apparently an aboriginal man originally from Virginia ("last of the line in direct descent from the mighty King of the

Seneca Indians, Powhatan"). The eulogy spoken by Dark Cloud was delivered in a "voice trembl[ing] with emotion as he told of the Indians' conception of the 'Great Spirit.'

> "I am not boasting," he said, "but it is true that there is no profane word in any Indian language. We marvel at His works, and wonder that the pale face dares to speak lightly of the Ruler of the lightning, the flood, the sun, moon and stars, and that in anger he dares to use the name of the One who in His anger can destroy all."

While other press accounts did identify Elijah Tahamont and his family as Abenaki, they typically stood for the generic Indian nevertheless. An article in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* proclaimed that "Mr. Tahamont is well educated and is a thorough student of Indian life and comments." (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 6, 1902; see also *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, February 3, 1901, page 16.) *Indian* authenticity was also cited in an article detailing the types of performances the Tahamonts[28] gave working as an ensemble at the Orphan Asylum Fair:

> These aborigines will give snake dances, will show how the young braves court the young squaws, go through a wedding ceremony, the wedding dance,, and there will be a dramatic scene in the saving of the life of Captain John Smith by Pocahontas. There will be a "long talk" and a "short talk" by Dark Cloud, and then all will smoke the pipe of peace. These performances will be given in the Assembly Room each afternoon and evening, at 3:30 and 5, and 7, 8 and 9. (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. New York. Thursday, November 13, 1902. Page 12. 62(315).

Coverage the following day commented that "Dark Cloud, the chief of the quintet, combines native manners with modern intelligence and prefaces every ceremony portrayed by the band with an adequate explanation in English." (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, November 14, 1902. Page 12.) Entertainment and education were clearly the goal here,

[28] The group was composed of composed of Dark Cloud (Elijah Tahamont), Long Feather (a Kahnawake Mohawk man), Soaring Dove (Margaret Tahamont), Juanita (given & family name not yet known) and Little Bright Eyes (Bessie Tahamont).

and if it were not strictly Abenaki history being presented, the generic Indian figure was still meant to bring a sense of history and dignity to aboriginal North Americans.

This sense of history and dignity was evoked in the work which members of the Tahamont family performed as artists' models. A 1902 article described Elijah Tahamont thus:

> One of the most picturesque figures in the art studios of New York and Brooklyn, just now, is that of Dark Cloud, or Mr. Tahamont, the famous Indian model, who is considered the best all-around study or model of his race. He is much sought for by leading Indian illustrators and sculptors, for they find in Dark Cloud the best representative of the noble type of the Red Man. The main characteristics of Dark Cloud, which are prized by the artists, are his pure full blood face, commanding figure and strong and characteristic features. (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 6, 1902.)

Tahamont's "face and figure were familiar to thousands who see the illustrations in the prominent weekly papers," and the artists for whom he posed included W. E. W. Deming, DeConts Smith and Frederick Remington (*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, Sunday, February 3, 1901, page 16.). He produced his own apparel for some of the artists, providing "striking opportunities for producing realistic effects," according to the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (April 6, 1902).

Margaret (Camp) Tahamont's attributes as an artist's model were characterized similarly:

> The fast passing away of the aboriginal Indian people, together with their color and picturesqueness, is genuine regret to the Indian painters and artists, consequently a typical and full blooded representative of this race is much in demand for posing purposes. Possessing as she does superior mental gifts, an unusually characteristic Indian face, and varied beautiful Indian costumes, Mrs. Tahamont is looked upon as an ideal subject for illustrating. One of the most noted paintings in which she appears is the large wall decoration in the lobby of the Hotel Netherland, New York, by the artist Tuttle. The picture represents Peter Minuet buying the Island of Manhattan from the Indians for the sum of twenty-four dollars in wampum belts. The head of the Indian chief's wife, the most

> prominent Indian woman in the foreground, is that of Mrs. Tahamont. (*Utica Sunday Journal*, May 12, 1901.)

The author also asserted that "In her early days Mrs. Tahamont was considered the most beautiful of her tribe."

Beulah Tahamont also worked as a model.

> In Brooklyn she recently posed in the studio of Miss Isabel More Kimball, the well known sculptor at the Pratt Institute, for her last work, the life size Indian statue entitled "Weenonah." Beulah is straight as an arrow, with long, flowing black hair, and has unusually clear cut features. In bearing and appearance she is a type of the ideal Indian princess, and when dressed in her picturesque beaded garments presents a charming composition for pictorial work. She is a fine type of her race, both in beauty and refinement. When not in the studios she devotes her time to her books, and is remarkably fluent in English conversation. (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 6, 1902.)

Beauty and refinement. Phenotypically "Indian" and bookish.[29] Beulah had attended school at a mission associated with Sabvrevois College in Montreal and New York City public schools (*Utica Sunday Journal*, March 3, 1901), but could still be the "ideal Indian princess." This combination of traits played easily to the romantic and the redemptive,[30] and it is perhaps not surprising that Beulah's first husband was Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca[31] and aspiring archaeologist and ethnologist. They were introduced by Harriet Maxwell Converse, an important ally and patron of New York City's First Nations people whose friends and associates included some of the artists who employed the Tahamonts

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[29] These traits were shared by her younger sister Bessie "Bright Eyes" as well. Bessie died in September 1909 at the young age of 15. A notice in the *New York Times* read that "When a child she was taught the dances of her tribe and roamed the country and a year ago they encamped at North Beach, where Bright Eyes formed the acquaintance of Irene Van Cleef of Flushing avenue, Steinway. It was then the Indian girl decided to leave her tribe and go to school and, with the consent of her parents, she went to live with the Van Cleef family. Principal Melville says she was studious and persevering. She will be buried in the burial ground of her tribe at Lake George." (September 18, 1909; page 9)

[30] The case of "Molly Spotted Elk" (McBride 1995) and Lucy Nicolar (McBride 2001), both Penobscots, are quite similar in these and other respects. See also Nicks & Phillips (2007) on Kahnawake Mohawk Esther Deer.

[31] As belonging among the Senecas is traditionally a matter of membership in matrilineal clans, Parker, whose father was Seneca but whose mother was non-native, was formally adopted by the Senecas as a young adult. Parker's racial identification was not entirely consistent throughout his lifetime. (see Porter 2001; Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2009)

as models as well as various members of the city's amateur and professional anthropological establishment.[32]

Elijah Tahamont not only lectured and performed, but he also socialized with scholars and artists with special interests in aboriginal North America. He served as an informant on at least two occasions, providing Mark Harrington[33] with four Abenaki terms used for comparative purposes in his article on the Shinnecock language (1903), and De Cost Smith with either a gloss for or an etymology of "tump":

> *Tump*. One word of unquestionably Algonkian derivation seems to have been overlooked – the compound work "*tump*-line," a "pack-strap," or "portage strap." It is given in the "Century Dictionary" as probably derived from the French *tempe*, "temple," on account of the strap being worn across the forehead and temples when in use. The Abenaki word *mádûmbi'*, which might, I think, with equal accuracy be written *má-tû-pi'* (as the *d* partakes in a marked degree of the sound of *t*, and the *b* equally of the sound of *p*) is, I believe, its true source of derivation, and it has the same meaning, that is, a "pack strap" or "burden strap." My authority is an Abenaki Indian, Elijah Tahamont. (1903:128)

An "authority," but not an author. Beulah Tahamont and Margaret (Camp) Tahamont would fulfill a similar role as they told versions of a tale of the supernatural. Beulah's was published in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* by Harrington (1901), and her mother's more complete version was published by Mrs. E.W. Deming, wife of the painter mentioned above, in the same journal the following year (1902). Abenaki people were not yet *writing* history and culture,[34] even though they were clearly presenting it to myriad others *as* such, as objectified, systematized knowledge, knowledge which could redeem the Indian as object of science and dignity only when aboriginal people embraced the "civilization" of the city and cosmopolitan sociality, the arts and literature, and

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[32] The evening Converse died "she was invited to take dinner with Chief Tahamont of the Abenakis, his family and friends at the chief's residence on West 26th street" (Parker in Converse 1908:29).
[33] Later Parker's brother-in-law and uncle to Bertha and Melville Parker.
[34] On the complicated entanglements of literate informants/collaborators and early professional anthropologists, see Berman (1996).

dramatic renderings of a past which evoked the complicated and contradictory history of representations of *Indianness*.[35]

I have seen no indications that the Tahamont family felt badly that their "authority" was informing others' publications, but there was an important transformation occurring at this moment, albeit one whose implications have only slowly been realized. Beulah's husband, Arthur Parker, was embracing salvage anthropology[36] and a progressive vision of "civilizing the Indian," all the while building a career for himself as author, scholar and educator. (Porter 2001, Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2009). Arthur and Beulah's daughter Bertha would follow the example of both sides of her family, conducting ethnographic fieldwork in California and archaeological research in Nevada with her uncle Mark R. Harrington, publishing several articles, and working at the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. Her later life is often associated with her second husband, Oscar "Iron Eyes" Cody, the Italian-American actor best known as the "crying Indian" in a well-known television commercial produced by the Keep American Beautiful campaign (Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2009:169-173).

Rev. Henry H. Emmett

Not much older than Elijah Tahamont, the Rev. Henry H. Emmett was another Abenaki whose story evokes similar themes of the romantic and the redemptive, of Abenaki being interpellated as subjects of history rather than merely objects. The earliest

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[35] It should be noted that while in New York, Elijah Tahamont began to act on stage: a 1904 *New York Maine and Express* story reprinted in the *Los Angeles Times* reported that he was "playing a native part in 'The Great Train Robbery' in Philadelphia," and he would go on to appear on film, moving to California at some point around 1910. Daughter Beulah also appeared in films in California after her divorce from Parker.

[36] With an evolutionary, rather than Boasian, point of view. Colwell-Chanthaphonh (2009) linked this to Parker's association with Harvard's Frederick Putnam as well as his claims on the legacies of his great-uncle Eli Parker and the anthropologist with whom he worked, Lewis Henry Morgan.

record, apart from U.S. and New York State census records[37], that I have found regarding this man is from a column of local, Redwood, NY, news published in the *Watertown Daily Times*, Tuesday, June 24, 1879: "Rev. Henry Emmet, half-breed, of Fishers Landing, struck the warpath against intemperance on Thursday evening last, and made a glorious assault on the enemy." Two days later the *Watertown Re-Union* included a similar, if less colorful, note: "Mr. Emmett, the Indian revivalist, residing near Thousand Island Park, delivered a spirited gospel lecture to a large audience in Redwood on Sunday evening."

The following winter, according to an article in the *Oswego Daily Times* (Friday evening, February 20, 1880), "a great revival [was] in progress at [Sandy Creek, NY's] Baptist Church, conducted by the young Indian preacher, Henry Emmett…the church [one Sunday] was literally 'packed,' every possible place for benches and chairs being filled, and the pulpit crowded so full as to leave barely standing room for the minister." More than one hundred stood on the porch, and others were turned away for want of space. Some revivalists came from a distance, and the church was "crowded every evening for over a week, with a large attendance at the afternoon meetings." Rev. Emmett was said to be "a rapid speaker, and so thoroughly in earnest that his words seem accompanied by a spiritual fire that burn[ed] in the hearts of his hearers."

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[37] Henry H. Emmet was born circa 1852 in Schoharie County, New York, almost certainly in the town of Sharon. I first found Emmett in the 1855 New York State census, living with his family and other Abenaki, in Sharon, NY. His parents had been in town 4 years, having been in Otsego County before that, where their older children were born. They were listed on the 1860 Federal at Sharon, NY. (Carlisle P.O.), and in 1865 the New York State census again listed them in the northern part of Sharon. By 1870 (when they were again listed in a Federal census), the Emmetts had moved to Warren, Herkimer County, NY. (Cullen P.O.) In June 1880, Rev. H. H. Emmett is living with his wife, Augusta, and three children in Redwood Village, Jefferson County according to Federal census records. I have not consulted the 1892 census in reference to this family, but in June 1900, they were listed on Federal census rolls in Greenville, Mercer County, PA. In 1910, Rev. Emmett's widow was living with their son Sheldon's family in Skaneateles, Onondaga County, NY. These documents were consulted at the New York State Library in Albany, as well as on-line via ancestry.com.

Later that week (Thursday, February 26, 1880), references to Rev. Emmett began to appear in the *Pulaski Democrat*. A donation for his benefit was to be held, and it was noted that a baptismal font had been installed at the Sandy Creek Baptist Church. "Rev. Emmett, although laboring incessantly, seems apparently as fresh and joyous as ever." On March 11, 1880, the same paper reported that he was "about to commence a series of meetings in Pulaski." It was predicted that he would "draw crowded houses wherever" he went. A report from April 15 concluded that "Rev. Emmett is an earnest and successful worker for his Master, and the more intimately he is known the warmer friends he has."

The *Pulaski Democrat*, unlike other papers in western New York, did not call attention to Rev. Emmett as an "Indian" or "half-breed" (until a June 12, 1895 story discussed below). When the *Oswego Daily Times* described the meetings in Pulaski during the spring of 1880 (March 16), the story turned on Emmett as an Indian, much like the first account I reproduced above: "Mr. Henry Emmett a half-breed Indian Evangelist is conducting meetings at the Baptist Church every afternoon and evening. He came here from Sandy Creek, where he has been Christianizing the white people with good success. We hope he will be as successful in this place." If the first account relied on archetypes of the Indian warrior, this later report relied on irony. An Indian (a "half-breed," no less), had been "Christianizing the white people with good success." Redemption was in the "white man's" religion, a point underscored by a zealous Indian preacher saving the souls of his non-native neighbors.

Rev. Emmett was ordained as the pastor of the Sandy Creek Baptist Church (having served as pastor-elect) in January, 1881 (*Pulaski Democrat* January 20, 1881.) In

addition to village residents and church dignitaries, the ceremony was apparently attended by Rev. Emmett's parents (of Alexandria Bay) and father-in-law, also a member of the clergy. (*Pulaski Democrat* January 13, 1881.) He continued to fill the church with parishioners, speaking on topics such as the "Immortality of the soul." He was described as "an eloquent preacher" who spoke perhaps a little too rapidly. (*Jefferson County Journal* May 24, 1882) He left Sandy Creek in the second half of 1882 (*Pulaski Democrat* January 25, 1883), after a illness, which may or may not have been related to his departure. (*Pulaski Democrat* July 27, 1882)

In January 1883, Rev. Emmett was "preaching nightly to immense audiences in Webster, N.Y., where a revival [was] in progress." (*Pulaski Democrat* January 25, 1883) In November 1884, he was "the Indian preacher" of Holley, NY, assisting the pastor of the Carlton Baptist church revival in Orleans. (*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* November 28, 1884). On July 25, 1889, the *Syracuse Weekly Express*, however, told a very different tale of Henry H. Emmett.

Notably, even when the newspaper accounts discussed above identified Rev. Emmett as an Indian or half-breed, the reference was *racial*. There was no placement of Rev. Emmett within an aboriginal community, and no mention of the word Abenaki. Yet, we know that Emmett's father, Peter J. Emmett, was Abenaki[38] and that Emmett's

[38] Peter J. Emmett was baptized 9 September 1809 at Odanak; according to that record, he had been born circa June 1809. (RSFdL) Later census records place his birth in New York State (1870 U.S. Census), although according to the 1865 New York State Census of Sharon, NY, he was a naturalized American citizen. He was baptized as Jerome, and was the son of Pierre Wasamimet and his wife Marie-Josephte Annance. He was identified as Jerome 8ezanmimette at his marriage to Marie-Cecile Portneuf (RSFdL 12 February 1828), and their son Jean would employ that surname throughout his life. In 1832, however, Jerome was identified with the surname "Pagamka" (RSFdL 13 November 1832) – a term meaning "fisher," a member of the weasel family, and a name often employed by members of one branch of the Neptune family associated with Wôlinak and Sartigan. On the 1831 census of Durham, Quebec, however, he was enumerated as "Peter Jeroume," and it is this formulation which he employed in New York beginning in the 1850s. It is not uncommon that Abenaki employed their father's names in such a manner during the

childhood was spent among other Abenaki families around the resorts of Sharon Springs, NY.

"An Indian Wedding" (*Syracuse Weekly Express*, July 25, 1889. Page 5)

repositioned Henry H. Emmett within a larger aboriginal community, although never using the name "Abenaki."

> Considerable comment has been occasioned at the Park this season by the managerial edict which prohibits a band of Indians from selling their wares to cottagers. It has been the custom of a certain tribe of half-breeds to locate within easy distance of the grounds, pitch their wigwams for the season and pick up a few nickels from the weaving of splint baskets, pin cushions and general souvenirs of barbarism. But this season will prove a hard one for the poor Indian. He has been excommunicated from civilization and driven from the pale of the tabernacle. Many of the islanders have considered this interdiction too severe, and may succeed before the season closed in establishing him in the full employment of his reservation. The history of the Wells Island Indian is peculiar. They represent the union of original America with France. The founder of the tribe, an old thoroughbred Indian by the name of Emmet, was famous in early local history. Late in his career he fell from Indian grace by marrying into the French, from which union has sprung the French Canadian Indian of the Thousand Islands.[39] Henry Emmet, the present chief, is a direct descendant and now holds the inherited scepter.

Chief Henry H. Emmett of the Thousand Islands! This presentation of Abenaki history bears little resemblance to Abenaki experience, but draws on similar tropes employed in accounts of Elijah Tahamont. However, it does offer additional insight into Rev. Emmett's life and the ways in which it was often narrated.

> Henry used to drink a great deal of poor whiskey in his youthful days, but several years ago conceived that it would be both righteous and remunerative to indulge

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early 19th century, and the fact that this formulation was listed on a census record from a predominately Anglophone part of Quebec likely indicates code switching involved with family names.

[39] Census records and newspaper accounts indicate the presence of both Abenaki and Mohawk basketmakers and merchants in the Thousand Islands during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For instance, the *Watertown Herald* reported on November 17, 1888, that "Enos Masta [Ignace Masta], an Indian, announced that he will tan furs by the Indian method." On September 7, 1898, the *Northern Tribune* of Gouverneur, NY, reported an assault on Benjamin Capino, an Abenaki basketmaker who spent his summers in Clayton, in which he suffered a broken collar bone. The family of Samuel and Mary Jane (Obomsawin) Paquette became year-round residents of nearby Ogdensburg, and members of that family are the subject of numerous newspaper articles.

> in preaching. It is said that at his first meeting, held at Alexandria Bay, the tent was filled to overflowing and the proceeds of his contributions were enough to set him up respectably in life. Since that time he has held camp meeting every year. As he is now among the islands it is to be presumed that the French-Indian clergyman will hold revival meetings.
>
> This year there are five families, consisting mostly of innumerable children and yellow dogs, to which has recently been added the sixth.
>
> The reformed preacher's first marriage fee was received last night, and "Indian town" holds marital celebration. One of the band, who goes by the euphonious name of John Mesadoquois[40], became enamored of a dusky skinned French maiden, and was made a happy husband. The ceremony was performed by the ministerial Emmet[41], after which the bridal party started out on foot for Jolly Oakes…

An "eloquent preacher" and an Indian chief, Henry Emmett had found salvation, turning away from alcohol and now ministering to his own people in the Thousand Islands, a people suffering from new restrictions on trade.

After 1884, newspapers in western New York rarely mention Rev. Emmett. According to obituaries reproduced on the Ne-Do-Ba website,[42] he then preached elsewhere in New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania, returning to Sandy Creek, NY, shortly before his death in 1905. He did, however, return from time to time, and some of these visits were recorded in the local press. A "former pastor, Rev. Henry Emmett, the Indian" lectured at the Sandy Creek Baptist Church in May 1895 (*Oswego Daily Times*, May 2, 1895. Page 6.), and held revival services there in March 1901 (*Oswego Daily Times*, March 25, 1901. Page 5). In June 1895, after speaking at Sandy Creek, he gave a series

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[40] John Mesadoquois, aka Jean-Baptiste Msadoquis, was the son of Thomas Msadoquis II and Cecile Degonzague. His bride was Rosianne Descoteaux from the parish of Saint-Thomas-de-Pierreville, a parish neighboring (and created from land expropriated from) Odanak. She was one of four sisters who married Abenaki men; her sister Apolline had already married Thomas' uncle, Adolphus Msadokous.

[41] According to the *St. Lawrence Republican* (31 July 1889), "A WEDDING in high life is reported from Fine View house, Alexandria Bay. The groom, John Mesadoguois, is a young Indian who runs a basket manufactory establishment back of the Fine View house, and the bride is a blushing young damsel who was employed at an adjoining camp. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Roman Catholic priest at Alexandria Bay." I have not been yet able to ascertain whether a priest or Emmett (or both) performed the marriage.

[42] http://www.nedoba.org/bio_wasamimet02.html#sidebar-container, last accessed 6 May 2010. Where these obituaries were first published is unknown.

of sermons at Pulaski. "It will be remembered by many that Mr. Emmett, several years ago, when he was the boy orator, gave a series of sermons in Pulaski, which were listened to by packed houses. Very many will be pleased of this opportunity to again listen to this humorist and orator" (*Pulaski Democrat*, June 12, 1895.).

Given this tale of personal redemption and oratory zeal, of a "half-breed" preacher descended from Indian royalty, I was not surprised to read this characterization in an obituary posted on Ne-Do-Ba's website (see note 42):

> The son inherited the talents of both parents and was a brilliant man in many respects, though naturally by the reason of the two conflicting currents of race-blood in his veins, he was at times erratic. He loved the forrest, the sports of rod and gun and was fond of all sorts of athletics. He was a great reader and had a most remarkable memory and could quote with apparent ease whole sections of articles or books he had read.

Nor was I surprised to read among the reproduced obituaries that Henry Emmett was known for his speaking beyond the pulpit, as well. One obituary stated that in Greenville, PA, "he gave up the ministry and began lecturing, his principal lecture being the North American Indian." Another noted that "He was a prominent pastor and a lecturer on the American Indian." According to a third, "In the pulpit [Emmett] was a magnetic and eloquent preacher and always attracted large audiences and as a lecturer was popular all over the country. He lectured on many topics but his 'North American Indian' was, perhaps, his masterpiece of them all." The echoes of Elijah Tahamont's lecturing in New York City are suggestive, as are the parallels with Arthur C. Parker, another "half-breed" with a non-native mother whose early childhood among his fellow Seneca was followed by years where visits with other native people were infrequent. While Parker left seminary to focus on archaeology and ethnology (Porter 2001, Colwell-Chanthaphonh

2009), Emmett concentrated on "the North American Indian" later in life, after a successful career as a Baptist preacher.

"Indian history," and perhaps Abenaki history, were brought into focus as a systematic discourse, complete with its ethnological dimension, for Abenaki such as Henry Emmett and Elijah Tahamont at the Indian Encampments. While Abenaki already had a history of selling baskets and other wares, the value of difference took on new importance and new meaning at places like Sharon Springs, Saratoga Springs, Lake George and Lake Luzerne. That Abenaki often failed to live up to the contradictory expectations of settler society helps Emmett's and Tahamont's experiments with historical and ethnological authority, which was, of necessity, grounded in a moral authority. That these experiments were undertaken in an era of expanding industrial education for aboriginal people[43] underscores the importance of a progressivism that today strikes us as tragically ironic. They were also undertaken as anthropology was professionalized in the United States and Canada, and it is to the relationship between Abenaki people – working as informants – and scholars that I now turn.

Informants

During the summer of 1955, University of Vermont education professor John Huden and his wife took to the road pursuing Abenaki-related research and stayed one weekend at Odanak with Oliver and Alice (Masta) Wawanolett, or "Oliver the Strategist" and "Princess Alice" as Huden referred to them in his 1957 letter published in *Vermont*

[43] At least six Abenaki attended the Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, PA, around the turn of the 20th century: Robert Tahamont (son of James and Estelle (Mischeaux) Tahamont), his cousin Estelle Tahamont (daughter of Johnson and Annie (Mischeaux) Tahamont, their cousins Dora and Flora Masta (daughters of Ignace and Lucinda (Tahamont) Masta), Blanche Newell (daughter of Belmont Newell and Victoria Tahamont), and Walter Paul (son of John H. and Susan (Camp) Paul). Walter Paul's sister attended the Thomas Indian School on the Cattaraugus Reservation. Many other Abenaki attended residential schools in Canada in the following decades.

History.[44] Writing of his stay in the village, he described some of the Abenaki he met, including Lazare Panadis, who exhibited a huge painting of a turtle which much impressed Huden; Ambroise Obomsawin, "probably the best-versed-in-Abnaki on the Reserve" (187); Elie Robert Obomsawin[45], "among the last of the St. Francis Indians who could (and would) 'really talk Abnaki,' legend as well as language" (192); his neighbor Louis Hannis, who also "expressed great interest in the old Abnaki and other Indian words" on the maps Huden was investigating (188); and even "some aging Indians from Albany, New York," who complained that while "forty-five or fifty years ago, practically everybody on the Reserve spoke good Indian, and almost everyone got out of bed early to pound ash branches for making basketsplints," such was no longer the case (189). Remarkably, almost everyone – even the "aging Indians from Albany" – encouraged Huden to consult the papers held by the seminary at Nicolet.[46] Huden reconstructed Elie Robert Obomsawin's advice:

> You had better go to see the reverend fathers at Nicolet College, twenty miles or so up the St. Lawrence," Elie advised. "The Père Aubery Old Abnaki dictionary is there, and probably lists some of the words you are seeking. But don't feel too badly if you fail to find all your words. The Old Abnaki language gradually changed to New Abnaki after the French came, and after the beat-up New England and Hudson River tribes trickled into St. Francis two or three hundred years ago. (188)

In consulting with these Abenaki as he worked to understand a set of old maps, Huden engaged in collaboration of a different type than the relationships explored in previous sections of this chapter. Importantly, however, these older community members,

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[44] Wawanolett may be glossed as strategist, "a person clever in council as well as warfare." (Huden 1957:187) As for "Princess Alice," the reference is to her father, Henry Masta, who held the position of chief for several years in the late 19th century.

[45] Elie Robert Obomsawin (1883-1955) was the son of Simeon Robert Obomsawin and Priscille Laurent.

[46] This was already part of his plan, and he had obtained a note of introduction from Stephen Laurent when the Hudens visited him in Intervale, NH, on their roundabout way north. Laurent was a former classmate of the monsignor when he studied at Nicolet, and the Hudens "were welcomed most warmly" (189).

not only speakers of the language but individuals who had once sold baskets or worked as guides and readily shared old stories with fellow Abenaki and visiting scholars alike, were well aware of *archival sources*, and insisted on their usefulness to Huden's project, which they understood as *historical*, and thus posing questions which they themselves could not answer, even when those historical questions were also linguistic. In the following sections, I consider informants involved with more classically ethnological and linguistic projects to further query the ways in which Abenaki have approached their own knowledge, textual and scholarly sources, and the roles of informant and avocational historian.

Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa

> Several people at Odanak told me I should by all means see Mrs. Nagazoa, and I knew about Dr. Frank Speck's work with a Maude Benedict at Lake George, but it was only recently I realized you were both people. In October I was visiting Oliver and Alice Masta Nolet, and her sister, Mrs. Dennis, gave me your address. (Gordon Day to Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa, 6 January 1959; Day Papers Box 523, Folder 3)

Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa may be responsible for the largest collection of Abenaki "material culture" conserved by museums today[47] and provided several scholars with historical, ethnological and linguistic data, and old stories she had learned growing up in the late 19th century at Lake George, NY and at Odanak. Additionally, photographs, books and papers which she preserved, including a collection of documents assembled by her maternal grandfather, Thomas Msadokous (1803-1902), have been invaluable in my own developing understanding of Abenaki pasts. Unlike her brother, Elijah Tahamont[48],

[47] Some items were purchased, others donated. They are now held by the Adirondack Museum (Blue Mountain Lake, NY), the New York State Museum (Albany, NY), and the Canadian Museum of Civilization (Ottawa).

[48] As noted above, Elijah Tahamont was raised by his stepfather, Samuel Benedict, and his mother, Margaret Msadokous.

Mrs. Nagazoa developed a particular imagining of Abenaki history grounded in her work producing and selling items to tourists at Lake George, collecting family papers and artifacts, and taking an interest in the history of her family in the Adirondacks and at Odanak. She took her role as ethnological and historical informant very seriously, and demonstrated considerable pride in her work and her family's legacy.

Gordon Day first requested an interview with Maude in January 1959, and received a reply later that month.[49] She indicated that she would be happy to meet and noted that she had tried to obtain a copy of Frank Speck's book, an interest she revisited when she wrote again that October: "In your letter of Aug. 3 you said that you had found some of the tales I had told Frank Speck. Will you please tell me the name of the book so I could get one or see one if there is any in the library in Albany." Day replied with bibliographic information for "The Functions of Wampum among the Eastern Algonkian" (Speck 1919a) and "Penobscot Shamanism" (Speck 1919b), noting that her account of an old marriage procedure appeared on page 55 of the former (in Abenaki language) and her telling of the Odepsek story (see Chapter 4) appeared on pages 283-285 of the latter.[50] He was sure that the State Library in Albany would have these publications.

The following January he wrote again sharing a reference to another publication, this time regarding her grandfather, Elijah Benedict, who had guided Ebenezer Emmons' Natural History Survey through the Adirondacks. He also included an article which he had written for the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine* (1959), asking for her opinion. It was the pictures which inspired her comments. She replied: "I would never know Ambroise

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[49] Correspondence with Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa, Day Papers Box 523, Folder 3.

[50] Abenaki kinship vocabulary elicited from Maude Benedict in 1908 appeared in Speck (1918). Day was aware of this by 1961 when he published "A Bibliography of the Saint Francis Dialect" in the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (1961a), but perhaps did not know in 1959.

Obomsawin. I took that picture of William Watso. Ambroise seems quite old in that picture. William Watso is an uncle of John. The old village the same." She requested an additional copy to send to her daughter and grandchildren in Syracuse who were very interested "in all of our Indian." Day sent additional reprints several weeks later, along with a note that "Some of it is still guess work, but Dartmouth wanted to know something about its early connection with St. Francis." He hoped that she might spot some mistakes.

In the meantime, Day discovered an article in the *Journal of American Folklore* which published a witchcraft tale told by Beulah Tahamont's mother (Deming 1902).

> I remember you telling me that Beulah was the former Mrs. Arthur Parker, and I wonder whether you can give me her mother's name, that is both her given name and maiden name?

He also noted that he had received "a nice letter from your friend," philosophy professor and Adirondack historian Warder Cadbury, whose letters to Nagazoa bore striking similarities to Day's[51] and whose correspondence with Day was very revealing of her understanding of the work of scholars and the role of the informant. When Day first wrote to Cadbury[52] January 28, 1960, inquiring about a list of Adirondack place names originally obtained from Sabael Benedict, he remarked that he had visited Mrs. Nagazoa the previous winter.

> …I learned from her that you are preparing a story of Sabele Benedict and his times. In fact, so ethically scrupulous was she that I could not even extract mythology or a linguistic sample from her, for fear that she might be infringing on your first right to her information. Or perhaps she was afraid of the tape recorder. But I'm going to try again to get her speech on tape as she is one of the best remaining speakers of the dialect.

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[51] Consider a postcard he sent to her in December 1956: "Thank you for your earlier letter – I'm working along on the Sabael story, and will keep you posted. Question – did you say that Sabattis was an Abenaki name? And could not be some other Indian tribe?" (correspondence in the possession of Susan Marshall).
[52] Correspondence with Warder Cadbury, Day Papers, Box 515, Folder 18.

Cadbury was "surprised and flattered by her reticence to talk with [Day], on the grounds that [he] had priority."

> But none I have, or wish – and if it would help you in getting data or recordings of her spoken language, I would be glad to send her a note via you saying it was quite OK with me. I knew she could speak the language, but I know nothing about it, and my interests are more historical than linguistic.

The matter was revisited in correspondence 28 years later, when Cadbury asked Day whether he had in his files any "biographical or historical or genealogical notes related to Sabael (or Sabael Benedict), gathered from Mrs. Nagazoa," adding that "even the slightest snippet of information" would be useful. Day revisited his fieldnotes but found nothing of interest to Cadbury's research.

> I got nothing at all from her about Sabael Benedict, because she knew you were working on the subject and was being very ethical about keeping her information for you. She said only that Sabael was her great grandfather through her father Samuel and grandfather Lijah. She also said that she has attended a Centennial Celebration at Indian Lake the year before, and referred to Sabael as "grandpa Seepial."

Maude imagined her work as informant as an exchange practice, no doubt a conceptualization with roots in her many years selling baskets and other crafts at Lake George, as well as her commercial transactions with Speck, Hallowell and Parker. Such activities were bound by an ethics, regardless of whether they involved monetary exchange.

Day did send Nagazoa (and her daughter, Mary Jane) a small honorarium after his visit, and Cadbury purchased a model canoe and a picture of Sabael from her. However, it was clear from her correspondence – including a Christmas card which she and her family sent to Day – that Maude derived a certain satisfaction from these relationships. She enjoyed both her status as an authority on the Abenaki past and the opportunity to

engage with students of that past. For instance, she twice donated items to the Adirondack Museum – a wooden mortar as the museum opened in 1957, and ten items related to the basket trade in 1960. A letter accompanying this collection provides invaluable context, identifying the splint baskets as the product of her family's work at Lake George and dating one basket to 1870, made by her father at the time of his marriage. She presented the material pedagogically, including an unfinished basket which demonstrated how baskets were started, and a note with a roll of splint that read: "This is ash what we usto made baskets with."

The letter also situated her patrilineal kin within Adirondack history, identifying herself as Sabael's great-granddaughter, and stating that her grandfather, "Elijah Benedict of Indian Lake," was highlighted in Ebenezer Emmons' 1840 report. This circulation of references, prevalent among my informants today, was indicative of her understanding of the past as *history*, as well as the pride, prestige and pleasure she associated with being both source and object of knowledge. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, by the late 1950s, she also missed the regular, intensive social contact with her fellow Abenaki that she had characterized most of her life, a lack that was no doubt assuaged only partially by her work with Day, Cadbury and the Adirondack Museum.

Henry Watso

The name "Henry Watso" always seems to elicit warm recollections (or memories of warm recollections) from my informants. The first time I had heard of him was during a conversation with the late chief, Gilles O'Bomsawin, who told me that when he was a child, he and his mother were once stranded in Buffalo, NY with no way of getting back to Odanak. His mother remembered that Henry Watso lived in the city, and when they

contacted him, he came to their rescue and saw that they got home safely. After a childhood spent traveling back-and-forth between his family home at Odanak, New York and New England, he spent most of his adult years south of the border, working in Vermont, Massachusetts, and New York, particularly Buffalo, before retiring to New Hampshire and, finally, back to the reserve, all the while maintaining affective ties to Odanak and his fellow Abenaki. Working in Gordon Day's papers at the National Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, I learned that attachment extended to their shared history.[53]

On June 22, 1960, Gordon Day wrote to Henry Watso, then living in Buffalo, NY, telling him of a celebration being held at Odanak that coming summer, as well as describing his research and expressing his desire to "perhaps arrange to do a little work" with him. Day noted that he had already worked with Henry's brothers Louis (of Claremont, NH) and John (of Albany, NY), and was hoping "to collect as large a specimen of the Abenaki language from as many people as possible as well as personal recollections of old time events, way of life etc." Day would be at Odanak several times during the summer and hoped to meet Henry when he was on-reserve visiting relatives.

Several days later, Watso replied to Day, and after establishing that he would not visit Odanak until late that summer, he provided some advice and encouragement. He hoped that his brothers had been of assistance, quoting *Hamlet* as he noted that Day undoubtedly knew that both[54] had "gone to that 'undiscovered country from whose bourne [sic] no traveler returns,'" and lamented that "the customs of the Abenakis have long ago disappeared and the language is now fast going too." "Too bad you did not start

[53] Correspondence with John & William Henry Watso, Day Papers Box 526, Folder 26.
[54]Henry actually had several brothers, but by 1960 was the only one still alive. He also outlived all of his sisters.

this research ten years ago when some of the old timers were still around[55]…I think you will have done a great thing by preserving on tape the spoken word of the Abenaki." He suggested that Day "might find some information at the State House in Montpelier, Vt. regarding the Abenakis," and that "the person who could help [him] the most at the Village would be Philip Nolet," who, Watso believed, studied for the priesthood at one point.

As for Henry Watso himself, he wrote: "I have been away from the village for so long I probably would not be of much help to you." In fact, Day did later record him, with his niece, Beatrice (Nolett) Allard, speaking Abenaki, but even then he seemed ill-at-ease.[56] Watso's discomfort was mirrored by Dora (Masta) Tahamont after Day wrote to her and her husband, Fred, in January 1962.[57] He had learned that the couple spoke the language from fellow Abenaki George Hoff and Joe Brown, and after Ed Msadoques of Keene, NH, provided him with their address, he asked them if they might be willing to spend a few hours with him on his next trip to New York (they lived in Glens Falls). He wrote: "I am particularly anxious to obtain old stories, but I am quite content with lists of words."

When Mrs. Tahamont replied to Day, she suggested that he contact her cousin, Mrs. Alice (Masta) Nolet, in Florida. "She lived in Odanak most of her live [sic]. We left there when very young. Do not know much of the language now." Certainly neither of the Tahamonts had passed much of their lives at Odanak, and Mrs. Tahamont had

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[55] Several people have expressed the same opinion to me, 40-50 years later!
[56] Watso told Day that he had spent about 40 years in the U.S., and had forgotten much of the language. By "the U.S." he meant cities such as Buffalo, NY, without large Abenaki populations. Nonetheless, he and his niece were still able to speak in Abenaki for a few minutes, their topic being the former's desire to retire to Odanak.
[57] Correspondence with Fred and Dora Tahamont, Day Papers Box 526, Folder 2.

attended Carlisle Indian School while a child, but, with the possible exception of their time in the Berkshires, they did maintain close contact with other Abenaki throughout their lives.[58] However, they clearly no longer considered themselves speakers, at least not in any sort of authoritative way. Being away from the reserve was not a new development in the lives of Abenaki people, but it was now experienced as a rupture, an internalized questioning of authenticity associated with diminished fluency in aboriginal tongues. It was not that the Tahamonts and Henry Watso no longer spoke Abenaki language. Rather, they no longer knew it as their first language.[59] They felt unsure of their linguistic performance and uncomfortable with the prospect of having their speech scrutinized *as Abenaki*.[60] They all, however, sought to be helpful, suggesting the names

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[58] Fred Tahamont's childhood was spent in New York City and Lake George, and while he had two Abenaki parents and an Abenaki stepfather (his father Joseph Tahamont, died when Fred was very young, possibly still a toddler, and his mother then married Joseph Burlett), it is quite likely that his mother, Celina Dauphiné, spoke only French and English. In 1899, however, he married Anna Emmet, the widow of Napoleon Robert Obomsawin, at Odanak's Anglican Church, and apparently lived there until after he became a widower in 1907. In the spring of 1910, he was enumerated on the U.S. census in Asbury Park, NJ, working for his aunt, Caroline (Tahamont) Masta, alongside her daughters, Alice and Adelaide, and her husband's niece, Dora. It was around this time that Fred and Dora married.

Like her husband, Dora was born in New York to two Abenaki parents, both of whom, Ignace Masta and Lucinda Tahamont, undoubtedly spoke Abenaki as their first language and taught their children the same. As a young girl she attended the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, where students were not allowed to speak their native languages, and does not appear to have lived at Odanak prior to 1901. Soon after the Tahamonts were married, the couple lived near relatives in Claremont, NH, for several years before moving to Housatonic, MA, and then to Glens Falls, NY, just south of Lake George, where Fred Tahamont's siblings lived.

[59] This phrase was suggested by an interview with one of Paul Rickard's sisters in his film "Okimah" (Rickard 1998). Rickard's sister was describing her experience returning to Moose Factory after attending residential school and finding that Cree was no longer her first language, that she needed to "relearn" or "remember" her original language and associated skills she had acquired as a young girl.

[60] This phenomenon has also been noted in other aboriginal communities, and is being specifically addressed by the Language Keepers Project in their work with speakers (and former speakers) of Passamaquoddy. See http://www.languagekeepers.org (last accessed September 13, 2010). As Hill has recently pointed out, enumeration in the service of supporting language preservation and revitalization work can easily find itself in conflict with "our on-the-ground knowledge of the problematic nature of our analytic units ["speakers"], to say nothing of our understanding of the dangers of enumeration as a gesture of power" (2002:128). The Language Keepers Project seeks to respond to such concerns in its work. That said, I am sympathetic to those with whom I have spoken who have pointed to immersion programs as the *sine qua non* of language revitalization. On the complicated terrain of language revitalization, see Hill (2002) and Whiteley (2003). For an important perspective on histories of such work in Mi'kmaq country, see Cyr (1999).

of people who might be of more assistance, and Watso did meet with Day later that summer at Odanak.

When Henry Watso wrote to Day almost two years later, after having "shuffled off the Buffalo" and relocated to Troy, NH, his thoughtfulness, enthusiasm, and good humor in the face of disorienting change was evident. Instead of providing Day with data in his role as a supportive-if-reluctant informant, he now turned to Day for knowledge. Following in the footsteps of such figures as Elijah Tahamont and Rev. Henry Emmett, he would soon be speaking publically about Abenaki life.

> I have been approached by a Fraternal and also a Boys' Organization to give short talks on the Abenaki Indian and the New England Indians in general – his customs, religion, his survival struggles and his modern mode of life. Where did the Abenaki come from, were they of Algonquian stock and why did they finally break away from the other New England Indians?
>
> As you know I'am one of them but my ignorance about them amazes me and I thought, maybe, you having delved into their history might help me with some sort of information I can use in prepareing [sic] something interesting both for the boys and the grown-ups also.

Rather than simply relying on his own experience as an Abenaki man, Watso sought to prepare a presentation, interesting for a mixed-age audience, that would contextualize contemporary Abenaki experience within an historical and ethnological framework. His questions drew from an understanding of an ancestral past in and around New England and relations with other First Nations as well as an acknowledgment that he did not have a firm grasp on the *details* of that past and those relations. Henry Watso envisioned *Abenaki history* as a body of knowledge and field of inquiry which required research and expertise rather than ancestry and biography, and turned to Day for assistance.[61]

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[61] Day's reply the following month succinctly addressed Watso's three basic questions. He confessed: "I hardly know where to start with material for your talks. There is so much which is not written and published. I have dug out a good bit of it from colonial and the French records." I have expressed similar opinions to my informants on numerous occasions.

This *historical* dilemma – "As you know I'am one of them but my ignorance about them amazes me…" – marked a considerable break from the historical approach of earlier generations of Abenaki historians, although there are important commonalities as well. Importantly, this dilemma remains salient at the dawn of the 21st century, contributing to concerns over authority and authenticity, and spurring a desire for research and learning; heightening the pervasive fear of inevitable loss, encouraging new efforts to engage with history.

Maurice Paul Denis

Henry Watso was not the only Abenaki writing to Gordon Day with questions. Maurice Paul Denis initiated a rich correspondence with Day in October 1964 when he asked whether he might be able to help him learn his great-grandfather's "Abenaki name."[62] His lifelong friend and distant relative, Théophile Panadis, had "always spoken respectfully" of Day and thought that he might know.

Day's reply was delayed by his move to Ottawa, and in the meantime Paul Denis had further considered the issue:

> I have been reading the book, "Les Abenakis D'Odanak" And there I came across something which may have a clue of some sort. Page 84, I read that Athanase, son of Jean Baptist Onision, Abenaki from Missisquois village was baptized by father Audran and excepted by father Denis Baron[63], perhaps it means some thing. This happened August 9th 1759 Taken from the records of Fort St. John 1757-1760.

January 22, 1965, Day wrote his response, acknowledging that his answer was "not as helpful as you might like."

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[62] Correspondence with Maurice Paul Denis, Day Papers Box 516, Folder 7.

[63] Athanase was baptized August 9, 1759 by Father Elzéar Maugé, récollet; the baptism performed by Audran, a Jesuit, with the consent of the Recollet priest Denis Baron, occurred on July 17, 1758 (Charland 1964:84).

> I doubt that the fact that there was a Recollet named Denis Baron at Fort St-Jean had anything to do with your family name. I suspect that Denis was the baptismal name of a remote paternal ancestor and that in the course of time the Indian name was replaced. You know how it goes: his son could have been christened Sozap and called familiarly Denizis and his son becoming perhaps Azô Denis or Azô Sozapsis Denis. It is possible that the series will come to light in the register of St-François between 1760 and 1815. I'll watch for it.[64]

Years later, in 1978, Day replied to a request from Paul Denis about books on the Abenaki language, adding: "I still keep in mind the question you asked Theo Panadis long ago about the original Indian name of the Dennis family, but so far I have no answer. The earliest complete census of the village, 1827 I think, lists them already as Dennis. If I ever find the answer I'll surely send it to you."

While Maurice Paul Denis was far from the first Abenaki to turn to history books to answer specific questions or address general interests, Day must have been struck by his initiative and creativity. Not only was Paul Denis bringing thoughtful questions to a trusted expert, like Henry Watso had, but he was reading, looking for connections, forming working hypotheses. He was not only an informant but an avocational historian, and when Day wrote in June 1985 to set up a visit, he was looking forward to taking "some time to chew the fat about mutual Abenaki interests."

Authors

Relationships between Abenaki informants and the scholars with whom they worked reflected complicated regimes of authority and affect, as personal relationships and commitments to historical knowledge were framed within hierarchies of expertise

[64] Day never found an Abenaki-language name associated with the Maurice Paul Denis' apical ancestor, nor have I. I suspect, however, that the basic analysis offered in this letter was accurate. His great-grandfather was Louis Paul Denis, whose father was known as Paul Denis. Paul Denis' father was likely baptized Denis; there are numerous examples of parental baptismal names being employed by later generations as surnames. It appears that this family employed the surname Paul Denis rather than Denis to differentiate itself from another Denis family originating with Swasen Denis, a Passamaquoddy man who had married an Abenaki woman, although descendants living in the U.S. have alternately employed "Paul," "Denis," "Dennis," and "Paul Denis."

which were part of the very concept of history as a domain of understanding. Even when Abenaki have (incompletely) transitioned from informant to author, as in the case of Henry Lorne Masta, roles and relationships have been marked by hesitation, on the part of both the author and their professional colleagues.

Henry Lorne Masta

On April 26, 1931, Prof. Eric Kelly of Dartmouth wrote to Frank Speck at the University of Pennsylvania regarding a manuscript then in his possession: "a grammar and story book, together with lists of derivatives of the Abenaki language" authored by "the one time chief and school teacher of the Indians at St. Francis," Henry Lorne Masta.[65] Masta had approached Kelly asking for his help in publishing the book, and Kelly was "trying to find out the cost, the place it has in the field of scholarship, and the actual use it might find." He had originally contacted the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE), but they had replied that Kelly should contact Speck who was "probably more familiar with the Abnaki language than any of our anthropologists." Kelly's letter to Speck included a handwritten note stating that Masta was over 70, "cultured and well educated," and had genealogical ties to Abenaki – particularly Peter Paul Osunkherhine – who had attended Dartmouth. What Kelly did not mention in his letter to Speck was that Masta had published a brief article on the relationship between the Abenaki – including his family – and Dartmouth in a 1929 issue of the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*.

Kelly wrote to Masta around the same time, forwarding the reply he had received from the BAE. Masta was very encouraged when he replied on April 28.

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[65] A. I. Hallowell Papers, American Philosophical Society, Ms. Collection 26, Series I. Correspondence, Box 9, Speck, Frank Goldsmith.

> …I know Mr. Speck personally. His assistant Mr. A.I. Hallowell happens to be with me just now. He will return to Philadelphia in a day or two. He is quite sure that Mr. Speck will approve the work but he suggests that a copy of the book be sent to him (Mr. Speck). I do believe that Mr. Speck + Mr. Hallowell will do their best for us. I am optimistic in your success because I know your [sic] are sincere in your attempt. Accept my hearty thanks until you get something more substantial.

Indeed Speck did express interest in the project, and at Hallowell's suggestion (via Masta), Kelly sent the manuscript to Philadelphia. Kelly, a specialist in Slavic Studies, had a book of his own in the proof stage, and he was pleased to turn over the project to someone else. He wrote: "I took it up only in trying to help Mr. Masta for whom I would do anything I could."[66]

Henry Lorne Masta was born March 11, 1853 to Ignace and Thérèse (Nagazoa) Masta, and baptized the following day in the Catholic Church.[67] It may have been the only time he set foot in that church. His father, a member of his brother Peter Paul Osunkherhine's Congregationalist Church[68], was absent, and Masta would later be known for his Anglican[69] (locally imagined as "Protestant" as opposed to "Catholic") partisanship and long-running political rivalry with devout Catholic Joseph Laurent.[70]

At the age of twelve, after attending Simon Annance's school at Odanak, Masta was sent to Sabrevois, Quebec, to attend a francophone Anglican school (Masta 1929). Years later, he wrote: "The fact that I did not understand much, either in French or

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[66] Earlier in the same letter, Kelly outlined his initial plan for dealing with the Masta manuscript: "My original idea was to take out the stories, edit them or rewrite them, and add a few more; these I would submit to my own publishers under the name of Masta and myself as translator; my own name would carry them and assure a sale in the juvenile field. Then with what could be made from the stories I could use to cover the cost of printing."

[67] His godparents were Henri Vassal and Felicité Gill.

[68] Osunkherhine was the son of François-Joseph Osunkherhine alias Congololet, and Catherine Vassal; Ignace Masta was the son of Catherine Vassal and her second husband, French soldier Toussaint Masta.

[69] See Little (2004) on the replacement of American-based denominations such as Congregationalism with institutions such as the Anglican Church during the 19th century, and its ramifications for the consolidation of an English-Canadian identity in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. The implications of this shift in terms of Abenaki religiosity and territoriality merit further consideration.

[70] See Charland (1964, chapters 14 & 15) for one well-known, if too narrowly drawn, account.

English, was a great drawback to my success" (Masta 1929:302), and yet Masta studied there five years – his education including two years of Latin and one year of Greek (Hallowell 1932) – before, having decided against a career in the clergy, beginning his career as a teacher, first at Sabrevois and Berthierville, and then at Odanak. He taught for 10 years and was reappointed to the post in January 1909 (Masta 1929), after having served as chief for many years. "Cultured and well educated," Henry Masta had held positions of authority among his people, represented them in dealing with the Canadian government, and had also engaged in the basket trade, concentrating his efforts in southeastern New York and Asbury Park, NJ.

It was perhaps not surprising that Masta was asked by Frank Speck to accompany him to Wôlinak in 1914 (Speck 1928), and that he would maintain an on-and-off correspondence with A. Irving Hallowell, Speck's student, during the 1920s and 30s, responding to enquiries ranging from kinship terminology to translation requests to historical information.[71] Often Masta had a quick answer, but some questions required turning to his own informants[72] and reporting back to Hallowell. Masta also turned to Hallowell with questions, including advice on how he might acquire a copy of Clark Wissler's *The American Indian* (1922).

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[71] A. I. Hallowell Papers, American Philosophical Society, Ms. Collection 26, Series I. Correspondence, Box 6, Masta, Henry Lorne.

[72] In March 1932, Masta informed Hallowell that regarding the name "Skwahando," he had consulted Nicolas Panadis (Théo Panadis' father, born in the fall of 1850), Louis Napoleon Obomsawin (born in January 1852, raised by maternal grandparents), and John B. Nagazoa (born in July 1851; he and wife were sources of many of Hallowell's stories), as well as Chief Elie Robert Obomsawin (born in April 1883, but not closely related to any of Masta's other informants).

At some point during the midst of this correspondence, Masta was writing what was to become *Abenaki Indian Legends, Grammar and Place Names* (1932). Portions of his preface sounded startlingly Boasian[73] as he laid out the rationale for his book:

> It is wonderful how the untutored Abenaki Indians, men, women and children of St-Francis Reserve, Odanak, P.Q. can use grammatical expressions. They unconsciously speak in such a manner that strong adjectives agree with strong nouns, weak adjectives with weak nouns. Not knowing the meaning of declension, they nevertheless use the adjectives, nouns and personal pronouns in the required case. They never made the mistake of having a weak noun as the object of a strong verb. They never miss putting the object of either strong or weak verb in the accusative case, nor putting the noun in the dative case after a preposition. They never use the plural instead of the dual number of vice versa.
>
> I do not claim that our language is perfect, but we believe that it is as grammatical in its expression as any other and we also believe that all the other Algonkian dialects are about the same as ours. (13)

Masta's statement was an expression of linguistic relativism and Abenaki pride, made all the more obvious by his concluding remark that "if we offer our grammar, it is chiefly to show our White brothers what kind of language is ours" (14). This is a key difference to the rationale expressed by Joseph Laurent almost five decades earlier when he published his *New Familiar Abenakis and English Dialogues* (1884). Laurent's "primary aim...[was] to aid the young generation of the Abenakis tribe in learning English" (5), although he "also intended to preserve the *uncultivated* Abenakis language from the gradual alterations which are continually occurring from want, of course, of some proper work showing the grammatical principles upon which it is dependent" (5).[74]

Masta's emphasis on grammar overshadows the legends and place-names throughout the book, and his experience as a school teacher was likely the genesis of his

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[73] Compare Masta with a statement by Edward Sapir: "The fundamental groundwork of language – the development of a clear-cut phonetic system, the specific association of speech elements with concepts, and the delicate provision for the formal expression of all manner of relations – all this meets us rigidly perfected and systematized in every language known to us" (1921:22).

[74] Laurent's book also included pronunciation and grammatical presentations and an etymological section dealing with place-names. His dialogues were organized around topics such as health, age, weather, arriving at a hotel, travelling on a steamboat or by canoe, etc. (2006(1884]).

pedagogical approach. *Abenaki Indian Legends, Grammar and Place Names* is broken into three sections corresponding to the three parts of the title, but even the opening section were punctuated by grammar lessons. Masta presented fourteen stories in Abenaki and then English, several of which included the declension of a key noun from the text. For example, in "Two Young Men, Nikes and Nojmigan8t (*Weak Knee*) Discussing" (19-20), the characters considered the Abenaki gloss for Rivière aux vaches, or Cow River, which was not *Kaoz'itekw* as might be expected, but *Kawassen'itekw*, meaning "tumbling of trees river" – a reference to "a whirlwind [which] once caused havoc along that stream breaking and uprooting trees" (20). Masta completed the story with this note:

> *The compound noun Kawassen'itekw is declined: -*
> Nom: - Kawassen'itekw
> Gen: - Kawassen'itekw'i
> Dat: - Kawassen'itekwok
> Acc: - Kawassen'itekw
> Abl: - Kawassen'itekwok (20)

Masta was teaching his reader about the Abenaki language even as he presented a series of old stories and morality tales set at Odanak and throughout Abenaki country (see Chapter 5).

In his foreword to the volume, Hallowell seized upon Masta's studied interest in his language as well as his status as a native speaker:

> In both form and content it reflects the life long interest of Mr. Masta in his native tongue, a linguistic consciousness manifestly unusual in one whose forebears of even two centuries ago were still living the untutored life of other American aborigines of that period. The book thus embodies the virtues of a keen and active linguistic heritage. It can hardly be judged by the rigid canons of academic criticism, since the author does not pretend that he has presented a complete philological treatise, in the narrow sense. In my opinion, the intrinsic interest of the book lies in the virtues of its defects. The mind of the author is deeply

> immersed in the idiom which he sets forth, a relation impossible to the outsider, no matter how well trained in comparative linguistics. (Hallowell 1932b:9)

Abenaki Indian Legends, Grammar and Place Names, therefore, was to be appreciated as a native text rather than a scholarly treatise, representative of Masta's unusual "linguistic consciousness," which we might read as a lifetime's immersion in his natal linguistic community as well as an ample education in the classics enabling him to present a studied overview of the language as well as items of folklore.

Hallowell's papers do not reveal Masta's thoughts when he read Hallowell's foreword. It had been Hallowell, rather than Speck, who had helped Masta finalize his manuscript, and he had donated $15 to assist with printing costs. Reading through Masta's letters to Hallowell (the latter's side of the correspondence is not contained in his papers), the former's gratitude was plain. Writing on February 24, 1932, Masta thanked Hallowell for his help, and added that he would "strictly follow" his suggestions. On March 9, 1932, Masta wrote that he had finished revising the grammar and "Indian names" section of his book, as well as the story, "Nagako and Mozis," which he was sending to Hallowell for his corrections, and later that month Masta thanked Hallowell for "suggestions, changes and orders" which he intended to follow "with great satisfaction."

All of this is particularly remarkable given Hallowell's foreword:

> This little book lay dormant in the author's mind long before it was written. Other duties and interests kept thrusting the actual writing of it aside, so that pen was not set to paper until the winter of 1929. This was in the 77th year of the author's life. Once started, it was carried to completion without advice or assistance from anyone except for a few suggestions made by Prof. E.P. Kelly of Dartmouth and the undersigned[,] when it was practically finished. (Hallowell 1932b:9)

The nature of Hallowell's "suggestions," however minor, are not known to me. I suspect that they would be quite revealing, however, of both the character of Masta's text and the relationship of authority and authorship at work in its production.

Regarding the character of Masta's text, I would highlight the dialogic presentation at work in nearly all of his "Abenaki Indian Legends and Stories." Clearly pedagogy drove the text, and left in question the manner in which Masta retold old tales to his new audience[75], although "Lol8 and Sakso" (32-34) offered a retelling of the well-known "Odepsek" story (see Chapter 6) that was clearly rewritten to address the question posed by Lol8: "Uncle Sakso, can you tell me what is a wizard?" (32).

As for questions of authority and authorship, Masta graciously, uncomfortably, deferred to Hallowell in his correspondence, unsure of himself as author and seemingly as authority, an ironic sentiment given the numerous times when he answered the anthropologist's questions. The hierarchical nature of their relationship continued to be evident after the publication of the book: in Masta's last (archived) letter to Hallowell, written in May 1933 when Masta was 80 years old, he displayed striking concern about the state of their relationship.

> Your favor of the 30th ult. was duly received with much pleasure. Not hearing from you for what seemed to me an unusual long time I began to look over the past, to see what I have done that could have displeased you. This letter of yours disavows apparently any such thing or if there had been one, it is blotted out. Thank goodness.

[75] I am also struck by the lack of identifiable individuals in Masta's stories, with the exceptions of Wawanôgit and Môladakw – two 18th/19th century family names, but here used as dialogic props – and Laurent (Lolô) Tahamont, his wife's grandfather, who was said to be the source of the story told in the "Wijokamit and Ma8wat" dialogue (47-49). The temperance lecture/theological lesson character of this story about the devil and alcohol could have been told by Tahamont, a Congregationalist, but more context would be invaluable to understanding the history of this tale. Clearly, however, it presented the type of image that Masta espoused – Protestant and sober.

Later in that same letter, Masta employed a rhetoric of social intimacy and expressed his desire to continue their relationship: "I am sure that every one of your relatives at Odanak would be pleased to take you in…I hope that we will meet again next winter if not sooner."

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The economically and politically strategic positions which Abenaki people have occupied as they have struggled to make a living and be treated with dignity have structured transformations of historical understanding. Guides, Abenaki families at Indian Encampments, lecturers, informants, avocational authors like Masta… in relationships with clients, customers, scholars, etc., as well as with each other, they have all taken part a complicated creative process that continues to this day. It is not simply a process by which Abenaki become the authors of history and related forms of knowledge, however; they will always be, necessarily, the objects of history and the social sciences, too. Even if they are the historians and the social scientists. The point, rather, is to chart the still-unexpected developments (and hesitations) by which Abenaki produce knowledge in a variety of relationships with their non-native interlocutors, such as anthropologists like me. It is to bring ethnographic attention to bear on historical understandings-in-formation and a demand for dignity as people-of-their-time, and not merely remnants of an age eclipsed by settler society.

As noted in the previous chapter, "Native American Studies" is overdetermined by crises of *identity*, but the salient terms of struggle for Abenaki people have more often included, at least prior to the late 20th century, *dignity*. From Louis Annance to Henry Masta and beyond, all of the Abenaki people discussed above have conceived of history

in a social field characterized by an increasing professionalization of academic disciplines. While we must not dismiss the particularities of professional knowledge practices, scholars must also acknowledge that (as a discipline) "We tend on the one hand to be involuntarily (speaking charitably) patronizing toward nonacademic Native historians and on the other to be blind to the similarities of our often quite distinct enterprises" (Buckley 2006:213). In the following section I further draw attention to these dynamics in the case of a remarkable Abenaki historian, Elizabeth Sadoques.

Oral History as Complement

In an important article published in 1972, Gordon Day coined a phrase associated with an important historicist methodology which has become characteristic of studies of the colonial and precolonial North America. Day worked out his approach by considering Rogers' Rangers' October 4, 1759 assault on Odanak, a sneak-attack celebrated by the English as having inflicted tremendous losses on their aboriginal enemies (more than 200 Abenaki killed), but noted quite differently in the reports of the French (30 dead, including 20 women and children). He reconciled the conflicting reports by considering Abenaki accounts told to him by Elvine (Obomsawin) Royce and Théophile Panadis and others told to Harrington in the mid-19th century, concluding that as most Abenaki in residence that night were warned of the imminent assault by one of Rogers' "Stockbridge" rangers, they were able to hide when Rogers attacked. Having set the village on fire and fled south, Rogers never counted the dead and assumed that most of the village's occupants had died.

Day was struck by "the frequency with which the traditional statements solved puzzles created by the partial coverage of the documents and the frequency with which

the data of history and the data of tradition taken together form a congruous and more believable whole," and referred to the "phenomenon" as "oral tradition as complement" (1972). He particularly noted the linguistic data conserved in Panadis' account[76] and the level of detail contained in Royce's telling, a story which she had learned from her great-aunt Mary (Msadokous) Obomsawin.[77]

> You have probably seen, as I have, the value of oral traditions discounted because of the supposition that they must be retold every generation, say every 30 years, with the consequent increased chance for errors of transmission. Abenaki traditions, however – and I suspect eastern Algonquian traditions in general – seemed to have been passed on by an aged person carefully and deliberately training young children until some of them knew the old stories verbatim, as an American child of my generation might know *The Night Before Christmas*.

Another example of the "oral tradition as complement" approach has been found in recent scholarship surrounding Eunice Williams and the 1704 French-Mohawk-Abenaki-Huron assault on Deerfield. In 1922, Elizabeth Sadoques (1898-1985), a young Abenaki woman and professional nurse, presented a paper at the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association's (PVMA) annual meeting in Deerfield.[78] An edited version later appeared in the association's proceedings (1929), and more recently the original version

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[76] Panadis' account, which he learned from his grandmother who knew Abenaki who had first-hand knowledge of the attack, included speech attributed to the "Stockbridge Indian" who apparently warned the Abenaki of the impending attack. Based on an analysis of the linguistic data and historical context, Day reasoned that this individual was a Schaghticoke who, left behind when most of his fellows fled north in 1754, joined with the nearby Stockbridge Mohican.

[77] While Day was quick to note that Royce's telling brought a story from 1759 to the mid-20th century "in only two steps" (Day 1972), there was most likely one more step involved in its transmission. Mary (Msadokous) Obomsawin's grandmothers were not alive in 1759. Her maternal grandmother's mother, a woman named Agnes, was born around that time, as was her paternal grandmother's mother, Suzanne Annance. Of note, her paternal grandmother, Jeanne-Ursule (Ignace) Msadokous, was raised from the age of 10 by her maternal aunt, Dorothée Annance, who was a young woman at the time of the attack.

[78] Bruchac (2006) provided some background information regarding Sadoques' PVMA presentation. Sadoques and Elizabeth Fuller, a descendant of the Williams family of Deerfield, met through a mutual employer. Fuller informed her mother of Sadoques' Deerfield connections, describing her as "a charmer," and "very refined," and the mother facilitated the invititation to speak.

has been published in *Captive Histories: English, French, and Native Narratives of the 1704 Deerfield Raid* edited by Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney (Sadoques 2006).[79]

Contrary to the established historical account of Eunice Williams as the "unredeemed captive" who chose to live her life as a Mohawk woman at Kahnawake (see Demos 1994; Alfred 2006[1995]; Haefeli & Sweeney 2003), Sadoques related that her maternal grandfather's[80] grandmother[81] was Eunice Williams' granddaughter.[82] The tradition was remarkably specific:

> Many years ago, when there existed a great number of wars between the French and English, a number of captives were brought to Canada from the land of the "Bostonias," the name given the English settlers. Counted among them were two small children, a brother and sister, who were brought to the camp-fires of the Abenaki. The boy [thought to be Stephen Williams, Eunice's brother] was given up but the little girl was adopted into the tribe and grew up as an Indian child later marrying an Indian brave. (258)

[79] The brief analysis below is drawn from the latter. In introducing the original version of the paper, Haefeli and Sweeney drew attention to various editorial decisions made when the PVMA published the piece in 1929, including the substitution of "White-men" for "strange men," and the highlighting of the Eunice Williams story accomplished by excising much of the historical context presented by Sadoques (in Sadoques 2006). If Sadoques was imagining an Abenaki landscape in the "Pioneer Valley," the PVMA was centering their historical perspective on Deerfield as frontier community. Eunice Williams, of course, was pivotal for both accounts. For a very different collective memory of Deerfield, see Alfred (2006[1995]), but note that even among the Mohawk, Eunice Williams has become an increasingly important historical figure.

[80] John (Jean-Baptiste) Watso (ca. 1817-1868).

[81] Sadoques' telling of the story indicated that the woman in question was John Watso's paternal grandmother, Marie-Eulalie (ca. 1756-1843), "si connue parmi les sauvages," who was a daughter of Josephte Gill and her Abenaki husband (Maurault 1969[1866]:364). Bruchac argued, however, that the grandmother in question was Mary Eunice Ajean, his mother. Given Sadoques' clear identification of the woman as Eunice, named for Eunice Williams, this is a reasonable conclusion, although I would hesitate to completely discount Marie-Eulalie given one newspaper's report on the Watsos 1837 visit to Deerfield that stated: "One of the party, a woman of 86 years, the mother of the rest, is grand daughter [sic] to Eunice" (quoted in Bruchac 2006:264).

[82] As Bruchac noted (2006:271-272), Edwin Benedict (1842-1901) acknowledged this Watso family story in his 1890 letter to C. Alice Baker.

This child was identified in Watso family tradition as Eunice Williams, which made for a particularly noteworthy visit to Deerfield undertaken by the Watso family and others in 1837 where they were met with great interest and greeted as potential kin.[83]

Anthropologist Marge Bruchac (2006) has engaged with this work with a classic "oral tradition as complement" approach, beginning to query the classic Eunice Williams story in light of Sadoques' account and investigating 19th century archival records and museum collections in Deerfield and surrounding towns. Her research has yielded valuable information about Abenaki sojourns in the region in 1837 and 1838.[84] What I would like to draw attention to here, however, is that Elizabeth Sadoques herself engaged in an exercise of "oral tradition as complement" in 1922.

Primarily, of course, her data derived from family lore, which she claimed to have retold *exactly* as her mother told it, and as it was told to her mother. Such a precise retelling of the Eunice Williams tradition and the 1837 trip to Deerfield may well be an example of the intergenerational historical dynamic identified by Day as he considered the tales told by Royce and Panadis. That the story of Eunice Williams was maintained

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[83] It appears that they did not receive as warm a welcome in 1838 (Bruchac 2006). In their notes to Sadoques' paper, Haefeli and Sweeney pointed out that 1837 and 1838 correspond to the "Patriote" Rebellion in Lower Canada (Quebec), and this may have been one reason why the Watso family was visiting New England (in Sadoques 2006). However, my research indicates that the Watso family and other Abenaki should be thought of as part-time residents of ancestral lands in northern New England and New York throughout the 19th century. The Watso's 1837 and 1838 journey as far south as the Deerfield region may have been partly inspired, however, by tensions all along the U.S.-Canadian border (see Little 2008).

[84] However, there are multiple errors in the details of Bruchac's historical presentation. For instance, she identified Simon and Joseph-Louis Watso as twins (2006:265), when baptismal records indicate that Simon was born ca. September 1822 (RSFdL) and Joseph-Louis in June 1824 (RSFD); she identified Louis Watso's sister, Marie-Helene Otôdoson, as "his unmarried sister, sixty-year-old Marie Helaine Watso" (265) when she was in fact a widow of Joseph-Louis Saziboet and would have been more likely to have used the Otôdoson rather than Watso surname; and she misattributed a marriage between Louis Degonzague and Marie-Louise Olinass to Louis Watso (274). Louis de Gonzague Otôdoson aka Watso should not be confused with the various Louis de Gonzagues for whom variations on Degonzague have become a surname. Additionally, Louis Watso's residence in Quebec was at Durham, not Odanak (see 265), and Edwin Benedict never served as "minister in the Anglican Church at Odanak" (272), having left the clergy in Minnesota after an affair with a married woman in his congregation prior to his return to the Northeast.

generation-to-generation by only one branch of the Watso family throughout the 20th century may be indicative of circumstances particular to the experience of Israel and Mary (Watso) Msadokous' family.[85]

Sadoques' paper included more than the story of Eunice Williams and the Watsos' 1837 stay in Deerfield. She provided context and established her authority, beginning her presentation with a note about stories, stories which progressed from tales of "hunting, traveling and warfare" to tales of "strange men" arriving from across the ocean, to tales colonial days. She told her audience that she had heard some of these same stories as a child, and subtly claimed the surrounding region as the land of her ancestors.

> At the present time the old Indian names throughout New England and a part of Canada are quite readily translated through the Abenaki language – my native tongue. Your neighbor "Wachusetts," small mountain, and your Connecticut, "Quanitagook," long river, as also your Pocumtuck, "river with many turns," are words very familiar to me. (257)

Then she situated the conflict within which the "memorable sack of Deerfield in 1704" (258) occurred: conflict between France[86] and England, English expansion, and the devastation of King Philip's War.

Sadoques further presented an analysis of her family's story, well aware of the taken-for-granted status of the canonical tale. Having been told that her uncle, William

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[85] Notably, Israel and Mary left Odanak in 1878 or 1879 to establish a home in Norwich, CT, along with Mary's sister Eunice Watso and non-native brother-in-law David Stegman (spelled a variety of ways). After a brief return to Odanak, Israel and Mary took up full-time residence in Keene, NH, where Elizabeth was born and raised. David and Eunice also relocated to New Hampshire, living in Bethlehem and Littleton.

[86] Sadoques' opposition to French Catholicism was evident in her paper. "The English came here for freedom in religion and that was their one desire while the French who at that time were under control of the Jesuit priests came to convert the Indians to their religion and incidentally to so control their savage minds to *their* wills" (257).

Watso[87], had been named in honor of the Williams family and that her aunt, Eunice Watso[88], represented another generation named in honor of Eunice Williams, Sadoques noted that her aunt Eunice also had a daughter of the same name.[89] She also engaged with published accounts, arguing that while "history tell us that Eunice was taken by Maqua or Mohawk," it was well known that other family members were taken captive by Abenaki (2006:259-260). Why were some family members taken by Abenaki and others Mohawk, from the same house? She then questioned an apparent lack of baptism or marriage record at Kahnawake[90] and explained how Eunice could easily have traveled from Odanak to Kahnawake to meet with an English negotiator. The Abenaki version of events was being employed to shed new light on written sources.

One final analytic perspective was pivotal to her argument: language. Sadoques pointed to the captive Nehemiah Howe's account – again, a published source – of having met Eunice Williams' husband – "Amrusus" – at Crown Point. She wrote that "the name Amrusus is strictly Algonqui[a]n in construction and accent and translated in the Abenaki language is the name Ambrose called 'Ambroasis'" (260). In 1962, her sister Agnes offered a different analysis of "Amrusus." Writing to Gordon Day, she proposed the Abenaki gloss "Ălmusus," meaning "one who walks away."[91] She continued, "As I have observed in the language and in the names given to individuals, that their name

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[87] While Elizabeth's paper identified William as the child born shortly after the family's trip to Deerfield, this was James (Jacques-Joseph) Watso, who was born in December 1838 and baptized the following March (RSFD). William was born in April 1841 (RCO). He died September 19, 1889 in Bethlehem, NH.
[88] Eunice Watso was born in October 1851 (RCO) and died April 6, 1926, in Littleton, NH.
[89] Another Eunice, "Mary Unis," was born to Joseph-Louis and Mary (Moulton) Watso August 6, 1848 (RCO). This was most likely the Abenaki woman later known as "Lee O Netto" or "Leeonetto" in Chautauqua County, NY, where her mother, Mary Moulton, lived following her separation from Joseph-Louis Watso. Mary Moulton then married Thomas Layton Kindness, aka Layton Kanistanaux, one of at least three members of the Brothertown movement who left Wisconsin to return to New York. On the Brothertown, see Jarvis (2010) and Silverman (2010).
[90] Scholars have since argued that she was baptized as Marguerite. See Alfred (2006[1995]).
[91] Day Papers, Box 555, Folder 17.

would be a personal characteristic." Both women had cultivated the linguistic virtuosity sought decades earlier by Thoreau and others traveling the Maine woods or the Adirondacks, as well as an understanding of and interest in *history* that draws on centuries of Abenaki experience, including those presented in this chapter. They also displayed an investment in that history that speaks to concerns with *dignity* related to those discussed above.

Finally, that Elizabeth Sadoques' paper prefigured the approach laid out by Day fifty years later speaks to histories of history and related scholarly endeavors which implicate 19th century sportsmen and tourists and their guides, 20th century professional anthropologists and their informants, and Abenaki avocational historians whose developing understandings of historical practice are closely linked to those of their interlocutors, be they members of an historical society in 1922, an ethnologist working at Dartmouth in 1962, or countless other amateur and professional scholars. As anthropologist Emily Martin has argued in the context of science (1997), history must not be thought of as a "citadel," cut off from other actors on the landscape. Without discounting the particularities of historical and social scientific disciplines, we must recognize that local historians and other lay publics as well as the Abenaki people who are the focus of this dissertation are an essential part of the development of the history of history. This same dynamic empowers and structures the critical and creative projects of past Abenaki guides, basket sellers, lecturers, informants and authors, as well as the contemporary projects to which I now turn.

Chapter Three: Abenaki Historical Practices

The historical practices of the Abenaki people with whom I have worked in the early 21st century are much more diverse than those described in the previous chapter, but like their predecessors, contemporary Abenaki lay historians today engage in various projects in a context of settler colonialism, economic change, and professional knowledge practices. They strive to make sense of family and aboriginality for themselves and others, in contexts quotidian and out-of-the-ordinary, personal and political, sentimental and bureaucratic. Like their cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents of the 19th and 20th centuries, they link – sometimes subtly, sometimes explicitly – Abenaki history to dignity. Like their forebears, they also grapple with questions of authority, acknowledging and lamenting what they do not (but often feel they should) know, even as some engage in creative, rigorous, context-rich, and expansive research projects. They often express an acute sense of change – usually experienced as loss, often tinged with regret – and a profound concern with future losses. It is within this context that they conceive of historical significance and instantiate broader and deeper networks of kin.

In this chapter I explore the known/unknown and the preserved/at-risk of Abenaki history-making at the turn of the 21st c. Following the example of anthropologists such as Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995) and Penelope Papailias (2005), I turn to my informants' historical practices, interrogating some of the ways in which knowledge is brought into being. I do so less to arrive at a theory of Abenaki history than to shed light on the ways in which primarily off-reserve Abenaki, status and non-status, understand both the Abenaki past and the potential roles of history in limiting and/or expanding Abenaki sociality and responding to the challenges of settler colonial regimes whose continued

power seems unassailable.[1] "Neither history nor memory," Carole McGranahan has recently reminded us, "is ever only about the past and present, but they are also very much about the future" (2010:19).[2]

Events and Relationships

Historian Joseph Amato has recently described "the trinity of family history: genealogy; history, especially local and micro-regional history; and storytelling" (2008:242); genealogy serves as the "official scorecard of family history: You can't tell the players without a program!" (2008:11). Establishing such a "scorecard" or "program" is the most basic work of the family historian: charting family relationships across time and space, gathering birth, baptismal, marriage, death and burial records, and often linking these with census, court, military, immigration and other official documents, as well as biographical details contained in local histories, newspapers and family lore. According to literary scholar Julia Watson, genealogy "establishes the family's collective biography as a rooted network that has legitimately and verifiably inhabited the past" (1996:297).

"Legitimately and verifiably" are important terms here. Watson has juxtaposed this documentary impulse to the memorial practices of autobiography:

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[1] Of particular concern to Papailias's study of local history in Greece was the question of "how people learn the habits of history and come to frame their experience and that of those close to them in particular and often quite limiting ways" (2005:xiv). While the silences and gaps produced by various forms of historical practice, professional and lay, demand ethnographic attention, in this study I also want to consider the ways in which such practices may also be expansive and inclusive.

[2] Or, as Stanley Diamond wrote: "Even the past in many of its aspects is never wholly past, except for the actors who have created it in the first place. Our behavior in the present, our making of immediate history, conditions our reading of more remote history; and, of course, this statement has its obverse. Our present acts affect our interpretations of the past not only by changing the total context in which past events now exist…In a sense then, the past is always waiting to be recognized and completed by us. To grasp the meaning of any happening anywhere, anytime, requires a reconstructive act of the imagination, simultaneously true to our stated purposes and faithful to the spirit of the object with which we are actively engaged, that is, which is in accord with the 'facts.' In the end, we live in the history we choose to make, and that is salvation, or punishment, enough" (2007[1964]:37).

> Genealogy makes truth claims about the knowability of family history and its power to authorize the individual while actively resisting the incursions of autobiographical storytelling. Tracing one's genealogy requires verifying biographical detail as documentable fact and suppressing "subjective" autobiographical detail (1996:299).[3]

Although this sketch of her idealized genealogist would be complicated by some of my less document-driven informants, Watson identified a belief in the primacy of documentation held by many Abenaki researchers. This, however, is only a starting point for a consideration of their historical practice.

The Abenaki family historians I have come to know have undertaken a variety of genealogical projects, ranging from the assembly of names and dates based on correspondence and interviews with relatives or catalogues of relationships based on a consultation of published marriage repertoires and on-line genealogy forums to extensive datasets compiled from research in microfilmed and original church registers and vital records, census records and other sources. Typically, this information is entered into computer database programs specially purchased for this task: many of my informants, whether they actively conduct genealogical research or merely keep a record of the family around them, own such software, usually a version of Family Tree Maker. Such software is invariably accompanied by digital and paper archives (which also exist in homes where no such software is to be found), and may be used by informants in conjunction with these other materials, or serve as an end unto itself.

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[3] Importantly, Watson read Alex Haley's *Roots* as a particularly important intervention into the work of family history. "He reforms the detached objectivity of the genealogist into an instrument for reinventing the family as a transformative experience for the reader-searcher" (1996:316). Importantly in the Abenaki context, *Roots* - "the genealogical quest subsumed in a mythic history impossible to verify through documents" (1996:317) – has come to play a key role in the transformation of family history in North America which is partly responsible for the proliferation of claims to Abenaki and other ancestors among members of Abenaki families and many others without aboriginal ancestors throughout the Northeast.

This latter possibility is evident in a question posed to me and others on several occasions by one of my informants: how many "people" do I have in my database? Such a question is an example of the cultural productivity of genealogical work, eliciting discussion and, in this case, performing authority through a quantification of "results." It also indexes a set of assumptions about data as framed by software that require consideration.[4]

To further introduce this discussion, let me turn to the dataset which I have assembled with my database software, The Master Genealogist. The first data entered into my database relate to a late 17th/early 18th century Abenaki: Chief Jean Toxuse. The program enables me to search for this individual by name (including alternatives which I have included in the dataset) or ID number (#1), and allows me to record and review the documentation associated with each bit of data, displayed on the "Person" tab of a "Details" screen.[5] These databases are organized around events and relationships, bringing both temporality and territoriality to Abenaki family and avocational history, and structuring regimes of affect and belonging among Abenaki family historians, even those without a research project.

For instance, looking at Chief Toxuse's data, there are seven events/relationships listed:

1) His birth is listed as "before 1690," based on an assumption that he was at least 19 years old when he fathered a son, Pierre-Marie. That he was already identified as a chief

[4] While the family tree has come to be a potent taken-for-granted model of (and for) kinship (per Povinelli [2002b], with a nod to Geertz [1973:93-94]), this transition from the tree to the database opens up possibilities for new understandings of relatedness as well as new understandings of genealogical data and its *management*. Among these are technocratic conceptions of authority based on, perhaps, quantification.

[5] The other tabs are "Family," which focuses on a couple, their parents and their children, and "Tree," which displays a family tree stemming from the selected individual.

at the time suggests that he was quite a bit older. Estimated ages or age ranges can help when attempting to match pieces of data within the set to the same reconstructed individual. This event is associated with no specific source.

2) His marriage to a woman named Rosalie (#3) is undated but sourced. The entry for their son's baptism in PRDH[6] Vol. 8 indicates that they were married at the time.[7]

3) The birth of the couple's son, Pierre-Marie (#2), circa February 1709 at Noratchouan (Norridgewock, on the Kennebec River). The son was baptized at Nôtre-Dame-de-Québec the following August 23, which explains how it is that we know of the event and relationships today. I have noted the presence of Pierre Lefevre, interpreter, at the baptism based on information provided in PRDH.

4) Chief Toxuse's death, February 11, 1720. Here the source is also recorded as PRDH Vol. 8, but indicates his burial record.

5) Chief Toxuse was buried at the Hôtel-Dieu in Quebec City the following day. The entry in PRDH noted that he was an Abenaki chief to whom Monsieur de Vaudreuil had given the cordon rouge and the King's Medal.

6) Chief Toxuse's name was recorded in his son's baptismal record as Jean Toxus.

7) Chief Toxuse's name was recorded in his burial record as Jean Taxous.

As anthropologist Raymond Fogelson has noted, "Events…have traditionally been considered as the primary elements in the study of history. As minimal units in

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[6] The Programme de recherche en démographie historique (PRDH) at the Université de Montréal had undertaken an extensive research project to reconstruct Quebec's population from the early days of New France into the 20th century, drawing from old church registers and other sources. While the project's database was established "to provide demographic data, this remarkable tool has been used for a wide variety of research projects involving scholars from many disciplines," including many family history researchers (http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca/en/leprdh.htm, last accessed 18 September 2011). Data are available on-line; the early registers of some parishes have also been published as bound volumes.

[7] Note that I have no consulted the original record. While this is usually my research practice for later records, I generally rely on PRDH for records predating the late 18th century.

historical discourse, events must be described, analyzed, ordered, and interpreted" (1989:134). However, imagining something as an event requires an understanding of distinctiveness, a taken-for-granted sense of relevance, and a variable time scale which allows the question of whether the Battle of Saratoga, for instance, was an *event* at all. Was the American Revolution the event, of which the Battle of Saratoga was only one part? And were either of these *events* from everyone's perspective? Fogelson has asked "whether the American Revolution was a real event for American Indians or an unmarked interval in a continuing series of struggles that had begun long before 1776 and would continue after the British surrender at Yorktown" (1989:142), drawing attention to position and significance in one's understanding of action and time.[8]

If the "minimal units of historical discourse" are far from self-evident (from the standpoint of the cultural analyst, at least), the basic events of genealogy, however, are firmly grounded in Euro-American models of kinship and personhood, and histories of state and ecclesiastical regimes of bureaucratic demography. State records of birth, marriage and death (and sometimes burial) and church records of baptism, marriage and burial form the most basic data of genealogy, reflecting and construing the "facts of life" as imagined in the "West," and endowing these events with particular significance – personal and social. Database software builds on this understanding, preselecting these events as critical to the construction of genealogical personhood.

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[8] The role of significance in the determination of an event is further underscored by scholarly works which analyze only certain types of events. For instance, in *Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India*, Veena Das focused on what she referred to as "critical events" after which "new modes of action came into being which redefined traditional categories such as codes of purity and honour, the meaning of martyrdom, and the construction of a heroic life" (1995:6). The vast majority of events construed as such by my informants are far more quotidian than, say, the Bhopal disaster of 1984, although, as we will see, there are important exceptions.

Even within the scope of the civil and ecclesiastical basics, database software allows its users to enter contextual data. In building my own dataset, I employed a fairly inclusive approach, noting almost everything I could given the data contained in the records I was consulting. However, in the case of Chief Toxuse (and many others), I did not take the time to enter the identity of the priests involved in these events, trusting that I would be able to consult my notes should their identity ever be of interest. The family historian is presented with a limited set of choices, but choices nonetheless.

As I developed my own database and was able to view or discuss those of several of my informants, it became apparent that assumptions about both relevance and the organization of data structured the types and amount of information being recorded in this format. For instance, I have rarely seen my informants record other events into their datasets, even if information often tracked by genealogists, such as residence, was close at hand in their personal archives. Furthermore, some of my informants made note of multiple spellings of names in documents they had consulted, but most had standardized the name within their databases without including records of variant spellings as separate events. Such information was relevant, but not envisioned as part of their digital dataset. Many had also not cited their sources as they entered their data, even though most genealogical software not only allows for this, but may also include the capability to note the reliability of the source as well.

The participation of individuals as witnesses to an event associated with others was often deemed irrelevant by my informants. For someone tracking relationships through time and across space as part of a project querying Abenaki sociality, it may be worth noting that at the October 3, 1799 marriage of Capitaine Pierre Tax8s and Marie-

Louise Portneuf at Odanak, the following individuals were present: Antoine Portneuf, Joseph Tax8s, and an Abenaki man known as François (RSFdL). For others, it may be that the event itself, and the relationship between the spouses, was all that would have required attention in the dataset. This speaks to understandings of databases as means or ends, as well as the result of specific sets of questions.

Consider, for example, another question posed to me on multiple occasions by the informant mentioned above: would I give the Council or the Musée des Abénakis a copy of my dataset? The question was clearly framed in terms of exchange and intellectual property[9], but it reveals an understanding of such work as an end, a product. Recall the quantification of data elicited in the first question and its potential to evoke authority: the database becomes an artifact and a source, and the authority that it enables could be derived from my academic achievements and easily appropriated by those with the necessary access.[10] Such a process would transform the status of my dataset as means within an ethnographic and historical project, blackboxing the questions, assumptions, and methods which inform the assemblage of certain data and the representation of certain events and relationships.

The questions, assumptions, and methods underlying the choices made by historical practitioners may have many effects, enabling or disabling understandings through time and across space, and modeling kinship and sociality. Decisions about whom to include, whether taking notes during research or entering data at a computer, matter. How one frames genealogical inquiry or Abenaki history structures and is

[9] Informants such as the one in question are sometimes disappointed that almost all of the information that I have organized with my database software was derived from public sources.
[10] The reading of expertise and authority employed here is similar to that of Ricard discussed in Chapter 4, although the project associated with this reading is quite different.

structured by understandings of territoriality and belonging, but the research apparatus – databases, for instance – and the particular projects undertaken by lay historians also play a critical role in crafting these understandings. Even those software-employing informants whose datasets represent only direct ancestors tend to have a more extensive sense of their distant kin and are less likely to privilege one or two surnames in their reckoning of social proximity or their narration of Abenaki history.

"Missing" Relatives

As my informants construct their databases, they also produce loose ends ("missing" documents and descendants whose fates or identities have not been surmised), some reflecting the way that family memories are produced, some reflecting the way history is inscribed in documents and archived and researched. While my informants and I can trace some of their aboriginal ancestors to the turn of the 19th c. and others to the 17th c., for many genealogists the work includes tracking descendants as well, yielding a significant number of potential descendents whose existence has been suggested by research. Periodically, my informants and I come into contact with such "lost" descendents, often providing a mutually-enlightening exchange: they have questions about their ancestors and relatives and we have questions about their branch of a particular family (tree) and their knowledge of Abenaki history. Sometimes, the loose end traces to the early 20th c., sometimes it is older. The following two cases are representative of "still missing" Abenaki families.

Catherine (Portneuf) Watso and her daughters

What became of Catherine (Portneuf) Watso and her daughters Martha and Caroline? Catherine was the youngest daughter of Simon Portneuf and Marie Annance,

born circa November 1826 and baptized in February 1827 at Odanak (RSFdL). At some point before 1847 she married Simon Watso, and their first child, Simon, was born in January of that year, dying two months later (RCO). In March 1849 they had their second child, Martha. According to U.S. Census records, she was born in New York (1880 U.S. Census); this is supported by the six months between her birth and her baptism at Odanak's Congregational Church (RCO).[11] The couple's third child, Caroline, was born circa 1852 (1870 Census). I have yet to locate any birth or baptismal record for Caroline.

Simon Watso died between 1852 and June 1858, when Catherine, a widow, sold land she had inherited to a French Canadian (E. Boucher #3256; Ricard 2006 Nos. 7179, 8400). I have found no death or burial record, but it is likely that he died south of the U.S.-Canadian border as an 1856 document lists Simon and Catherine as having been absent in the U.S. for many years (E. Boucher #2800, Ricard 2006 Nos. 7194, 7195, 8399). I have not learned much about the fate of this family, but in June 1870 Catherine, Martha, and Caroline were living in Palmyra, NY, where they made a living as basketmakers (1870 Census). In 1880, Catherine and Martha were living in Lenox, NY, again working as basketmakers. As New York vital records for the late 19th c. are quite incomplete, these women's subsequent deaths or marriages will likely continue to escape the notice of family researchers and scholars, and locating other potential sources of information will take considerable time and/or luck.

Joseph and Susan (Toxuse) Capino and their children

[11] This baptismal record identifies Simon Watso as a root doctor, which also supports residence away from Odanak.

Joseph Capino was born in either 1814 or 1819[12] to Joseph-Thomas Capino and his wife, Marie-Anne Otôdoson. In July 1853 he and Susan Toksos were married at Durham in the presence of fellow Abenaki Noel Annance and John Lawless[13] (RCSD). Susan may have been the Ursule baptized at Odanak February 22, 1824, a day after her birth to Pierre-Nicholas and Anne-Sophie (Gill) Toxus (RSFdL). Their oldest son, Jonas, was born circa June 1854, in Quebec or Vermont (1870, 1880, 1900 U.S. Census). A second son, Caleb, was born in Lunenburg, VT, in November 1858 (VTVR) and a daughter, Lovina, was born circa 1865 in Maine or New Hampshire (1870, 1880 U.S. Census). In June 1870, the family of five was living in Gorham, NH, with Joseph's mother (1870 U.S. Census).[14]

Questions about the family's fate begin with the 1880 census, when Joseph, his wife and three children were enumerated in Milan, NH. Joseph's wife was listed as "Mary," begging the question as to whether Susan had died, or perhaps her name was misrepresented on the census. Regardless, I have not been able to find any more recent record of the couple. And I have found little more for each child. Jonas was listed as John Capineau on the 1900 Census, living in Grafton, MA, where he was working as a weaver at a cotton factory (1900 U.S. Census); he died in Sutton, MA, in February 1905 (MAVR). Caleb was living in Lunenberg, VT, when he married Flossey Gasper, an Abenaki woman, in Gorham, NH, October 18, 1885 (NHVR). In February 1892, Lovina was living with Ambroise Paul Denis' family in Lakewood Village, NY (1892 NYS

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[12] Two sons – Cyr Joseph born in 1814 and Joseph Marie born in 1819 – were born to Joseph-Thomas Capino and Marie-Anne Otôdoson and later baptized at Odanak (RSFdL). I have not yet been able to ascertain which brother survived to adulthood.

[13] John H. Lawless was the son of John Lawless (ca. 1806-1880), a non-native man, and Anastasie Saziboet (1796-1872), an Abenaki woman.

[14] Marie-Anne Otôdoson is listed on the census as Mary A. Mattallock (1870 U.S. Census), her second husband being a member of the Metallic family. See Chapter 4 for more on the Capinos and Metallics.

Census). What became of Lovina and Caleb? Could their grandchildren and great-grandchildren be out there today?

The fate of these families is of great interest to some of the family historians with whom I have worked, and of some curiosity to others. There are potential kin out there waiting to be discovered, and loose ends for the genealogical researcher. (Similarly, these are loose ends for the scholar of Abenaki history with questions about life away from Odanak.)

Significant Gaps

Family historians (and anthropologists), however, confront other gaps in their knowledge. A theory of gaps is crucial to consider, given the taken-for-granted structure of events in lay historical practice. The gaps confronted by my interlocutors include both the chronological and the contextual. What else was occurring between births, deaths and marriages, and beyond the snapshots afforded by census records? What were the lives of my informants' ancestors like? What were they, themselves, like? These gaps are accepted by some Abenaki family historians, and are troubling to others, silences created in each of Trouillot's "four crucial moments" of "historical production": "the moment of fact creation (the making of sources); the moment of fact assembly (the making of archives); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of history in the final instance)" (1995:26).[15]

[15] Importantly, Trouillot cautions his readers that "These moments are conceptual tools, second-level abstractions of processes that feed on each other. As such, they are not meant to provide a realistic description of the making of any individual narrative. Rather, they help us understand why not all silences are equal and why they cannot be addressed – or redressed – in the same manner. To put it differently, any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences, the result of a unique process, and the operation required to deconstruct these silences will vary accordingly" (1995:26-27).

The process of "fact creation" – the construction of the church records consulted by the compilers of the PRDH – has yielded a particular (and quite limited) set of "facts" about Chief Toxuse. I might wish to know the cause of Chief Toxuse's death or the reasons why he had received a medal from the French king. Such information, however, was not recorded in the registers, unknown or irrelevant to the priest-scribe. While we are indebted to the circumstances which allow us to know anything at all about an Abenaki man living in the late 17th and early 18th centuries – not the case for most of his contemporaries, and even in the late 19th century we are left with documentary silences regarding families such as those of Simon & Catherine (Portneuf) Watso and Joseph & Susan (Toxuse) Capino – my informants and I are constantly frustrated by sources which do not anticipate our questions and archives which do not (easily) yield desired data.

The formation of archives is crucial to determining the possibilities of historical research. In the case of Chief Toxuse, the indexing and abstracting work of the PRDH has provided access to church records prior to the 19th century which would otherwise require many hours of work in archives and churches reading through microfilmed and paper registers, which is how I and my informants have located more recent church records (although many Quebec registers covering the 19th and early 20th centuries are now consultable – and searchable[16] – on ancestry.com). The notary records which informed my account of the Simon Watso family were consulted by Elaine (Paquette) Ricard in archives where these collections were assembled as such, sometimes with finding aids, other times without. Information relating to this family and to the Joseph Capino family was the result of archival research in Pittsfield, MA, Concord, NH, and Albany, NY, as well as on-line research which is how I was able to find Jonas Capino's

[16] There are numerous transcription errors which hamper such on-line searches.

death record and the 1870 and 1880 census records enumerating Catherine (Portneuf) Watso and her daughters.

Attention to sources and archives is necessary for a critical understanding of Abenaki historiography and the work of contemporary lay historians, as is attention to the creation of narratives, or "fact retrieval," as well. Recall the accounts of Mitchell Sabattis, Louis Annance, and other 19th and early 20th century Abenaki in the last chapter, who in many ways are emblematic of a narrative of Abenaki life which would continue throughout the 20th and early 21st century: The threat of aboriginal occupancy having been removed, Abenaki could be celebrated as "Canadian Indians" who have returned to old territories or settled in (what were thought to be) new ones.

What was celebrated, however, was an extension of the logic of *lasting*, which historian Jean O'Brien has identified as "a rhetorical strategy that asserts as a fact the claim that Indians can never be modern" (2010:107), removing aboriginal people *as* aboriginal people from the landscape. In O'Brien's study of 19th century local history in southern New England, she argued that narratives "of progress and historical time for non-Indians, mixture and degeneracy for Indians" (2010:107), particularly reports of the last "full-blooded" Indian in a given locality, "purifi[ed] the landscape of Indians" (143), even if the "last's" descendants were known to live nearby (130-134). Claims to what we might think of today as aboriginal title were removed by racial logics of purity and degeneracy.[17] The imaginative reduction which recast Abenaki such as Sabattis and Annance as "Canadian Indians" accomplished (and continues to accomplish) a similar feat.

[17] O'Brien (2010) also identified "firsting" and "replacing" as important historiographical strategies which naturalized a post-aboriginal New England.

The geography of lasting is crucial to understand, as are the ways in which such narratives may be embedded in regional discourses of "wildness" and the tourist industries associated with such discourses. Dona Brown noted the use of "Indian legends" such as the tale of "'Chocorua's curse,' which describes an Indian chief driven to the brink of a cliff by white pursuers and finally forced to jump to his death" (1995:66-67), in creating "romantic associations" for the White Mountains as early as 1830. Later "guidebook writers frequently lamented the dearth of Indian associations in the region" (1995:67); they turned instead to tales of pioneering settlers.

In the Adirondacks, figures such as Sabael Benedict and Mitchell Sabattis were part of the experience of the wilderness for many white visitors. In his history of the region, Paul Schneider discussed the imaginative entanglement of hunting, an imagined aboriginal past, and wilderness which prevailed in the region for much of the 19th century:

> Both the preference for Native-sounding place-names like Tahawus and the habit of writers of the time to adopt faux Indian pseudonyms like "Piseco," "Wachusett," and "Nessmuck," suggests that a large component of the romantic idea of wilderness was nostalgia for an imagined aboriginal past. Never mind that the country was currently waist deep in the bloody business of Native removal in the West; there hadn't been any serious threat from the Iroquois for at least three-quarters of a century, and Americans wanted to play in the Great Longhouse. They wanted to be Indians, and Indians killed and ate game pretty much all the time, didn't they? It was the way of the wilderness, and the romantics wanted to be a part of it all. (1997:177-178)

Such romantic associations have lingered in the region, somewhat transformed: local interest in Dan Emmett's canoe building (see Roy & Benedict 2009; Bond 1955), an *Adirondack Life* profile of Andrew Joseph and his basketry (Bufo 1973), a local newspaper column highlighting Tupper Lake resident Walter Lagrave's desire to teach archery to community members. The columnist noted that "His ancestors numbers [sic]

some very famous Abenaki warriors who made this weapon something to be feared in the forest as well as in battle" (McLaughlin 1954).[18]

Similar narratives surrounded Joseph Laurent's longtime seasonal occupation at Intervale, NH. Established in 1884 with five cabins, "By 1900, the camp consisted of a shop, a kitchen cabin, five residential cabins, a cabin for the storage of trade items, and several wigwams" (Hume 1993:105). Unlike hunters and adventurers visiting the Adirondacks and the north woods of Maine, tourists in the late 19th century White Mountains, "the era of the grand hotel," "wanted all the comfort of home, plus fresh air, beautiful scenery, and entertainment" (1993:106), and they frequently visited establishments like Laurent's.

> Beginning in 1902, Chief Laurent was recognized in Conway as a legitimate successor of seventeenth-century Penacook leaders when he "was invited to be the guest of honor at the unveiling of a memorial plaque commemorating Wanalancet, a former leader and almost legendary hero" in colonial history. This symbolic relationship was reinforced six decades later; when the memorial to Chief Laurent was dedicated at the Intervale camp in 1959, Frederic Burtt, as President of the New Hampshire Archeological Society, placed earth from the Tyngsboro, Massachusetts, memorial to Wanalancet in front of the memorial to Chief Laurent. A year later this symbolism was echoed in the messages from Wesley Powell, Governor of New Hampshire, at the dedication of the totem pole at Intervale and to the people of Odanak on the occasion of the tricentennial celebration of the immigrant village. (Hume 1993:112; references deleted)

"Chief Laurent"[19] was celebrated in a way that linked the logic of lasting to that of the "Canadian Indian." Having written aboriginal people out of their homeland, politicians and local historians could safely and selectively write them back in by appealing once

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[18] The author continued with a remark that "In a short demonstration Tuesday evening with a hunting bow with a 65-pound pull, he convinced us all that it is a he-man sport" (McLaughlin 1954). Celebrations of wildness have generally required male Abenaki heroes, particularly in the forest. In the Indian encampments and cities, where non-native women were likely to be present, Abenaki women also featured more prominently.

[19] Laurent was one of Odanak's chiefs from 1880-1892, serving four elected terms. (Hume 1993:105)

again to romantic associations. Gaps are produced in the "moment of fact retrieval" and in the "moment of retrospective significance."

All of Trouillot's "four crucial moments" are in evidence when we consider the portions of Vermont and northern New Hampshire which were particularly "wild" during the 19th and early 20th centuries – along the upper Connecticut River and its tributaries. Here there were not nearly as many tourists or clients searching for guides. This contributed to a smaller Abenaki population and a poorer historiographical tradition, yielding a figure such as 'Aunt Sarah' of Lunenburg, VT, as a local figure – still "lasted" – rather than celebrated by tourists and other travelers as a relic of a preserved wilderness. Other members of the Toxuse family, and Morice and Capino relatives on the other side of river almost escape notice in the creation of regional historical sources.

The Importance of Stories

What sources and narratives might we find in a region oriented toward water rather than wilderness? There are a handful of vital records, church register entries, and lines on various censuses documenting Abenaki people in the Thousand Islands region of New York during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The records are incomplete, indexing, among other things, an aboriginal population with complex residential strategies and a state vital statistics apparatus that was still in formation. They are instructive, however, allowing us to learn, for example, that Frank Benedict[20], born the previous January, was baptized in June 1885 at St. Mary's Church in Clayton. "John Mesdoquis" was his godfather[21], and Mary Nolet was his godmother[22]. John's parents[23]

[20] Frank's parents were Louis and Susan (Lagrave) Panadis. He was baptized Francis Penadit. His father's family were known by the name Panadis north of the border, but took the name Benedict in New York, like other Panadis-Benedicts had before them.
[21] Jean-Baptiste Msadoques (ca. 1866-1905).

served as godparents for William Henry Paquette[24], baptized the following June in the same parish (RSMC). Jessie Watso[25], a young woman in her 20s, died in Watertown in 1897, and Louis Tahamont's family was living at Wilna, NY, in June 1900, where they were engaged in the basket trade. These data are crucial to the Abenaki family historian as well as an anthropologist considering Abenaki sociality through space and time, but they are limited. What other sources of information have we accessed?

Local newspapers, scanned and indexed by the Northern New York Historical Newspaper Project (http://news.nnyln.net/) and Fulton History website (http://www.fultonhistory.com/), provide additional insight into the history of Abenaki families in Saint Lawrence and Jefferson counties in peculiar ways: primarily as reports on "Indians" as part of the local tourist trade, local social news, reporting on local crime, and accounts of misfortune. The first category has been the source of useful, although often vague information. On October 5, 1888, the *Watertown Herald* reported that "A new industry has been introduced into our village [Clayton], on quite an extensive sale [sic]. It is basket making and about a dozen or more families of Indians are employed," and the following July 17, the *St. Lawrence Republican* stated that "TWENTY-FIVE Indian families are engaged in basket making between Clayton and Alexandria Bay. They clear $20,000 during the season." The Indians in these articles were most likely Abenaki, although Mohawks and others cannot be discounted. There were a few more specific references in the local press, including a report from Clayton that "Enos Masta, an Indian, announced that he will tan furs by the Indian method," (*Watertown Herald*,

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[22] I have not yet identified this woman, undoubtedly a Wawanolett or the spouse of someone with that name.
[23] Thomas and Cecile (Degonzague) Msadokous.
[24] Son of Samuel and Marie-Jeanne (Obomsawin) Paquette.
[25] Daughter of Samuel and Catherine (Paquette) Watso.

November 17, 1888)[26] and a paragraph detailing the complaints of "Joseph Portneuf, an Indian basket manufacturer with headquarters below Fine View," regarding the smuggling and resale of baskets originally bought at Odanak during the winter at bargain prices, thus reducing his profits (*St. Lawrence Republican*, July 22, 1891).

The social pages yield scattered but valuable references to Abenaki families who became (more-or-less) full-time residents of the area. For instance:

> Miss Adelle Watso, who has been the guest of Mrs. Katherine V. Saunders and Mrs. Lena Miller for the past two weeks, returned to her home at Thousand Island Park Saturday. (*Cape Vincent Eagle*, March 2, 1911)
>
> Frank Benedict of Thousand Island Park was in Clayton Saturday. (*Watertown Herald*, April 20, 1912)

Crime reporting, however, has been the source of considerable information as a few Abenaki were either arrested for illegal activity or found themselves the victims of same. As the details were of interest to newspaper readers of the day, we often learn something about the context of the crime in question and the parties involved.

A set of stories regarding Benjamin Capino (1861-1908), an Abenaki man whose early life was spent in the Eastern Townships of Quebec and the White Mountains of New Hampshire,[27] provides an important example. Neither I nor my informants have learned very much about this man after his family moved to Odanak in 1881 and he married Felicité Pakikan.[28] On December 12, 1898, however, the *Ogdensburg Journal* reported that he had been arrested the previous Saturday for stealing $18 and an overcoat

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[26] "Enos Masta" was either Ignace Masta (1821-1902) or his son of the same name (1863-1910). I suspect it was the latter given his history in New York. However, Ignace Sr. also spent time south of the border, even accompanying a mixed Abenaki, Huron and Maliseet group led by his brother and sister-in-law selling baskets in the Catskills (and probably other parts of the region) two years before his death (1900 Census).

[27] Benjamin Capino's father was Théophile Capino, Joseph's brother. His mother was Marie Obomsawin.

[28] I have been unable to learn of the circumstance of his wife's death; when Capino died in 1908 he was a widower (RSFdS), and I suspect she died in the U.S. Nor have I been able to learn the fate of their son, Benjamin, born in August 1883 and baptized three weeks later at Odanak (RSFdS).

from his employer, Samuel Paquette. Paquette was an Indian basket maker, and Capino worked for him. Capino was drunk and had purchased a ticket for Montreal. I have not yet learned the outcome of Capino's arrest, but his time in the Thousand Islands region had not been easy that year. In September, the *Northern Tribune* reported that "a gang of toughs" went to his home in Clayton. "They threw stones and sticks at the house, and when the red man came out to remonstrate with them they seized him, pulled him into the street, broke his collar bone, put his shoulder out of joint, cut his nose and face, and generally misused him. In the words of [Justice of the Peace] F. D. Rogers, 'If he [had] been a white man he would have been killed.'" The article noted that Capino was a resident of Clayton "during the summer, supporting himself by making baskets," and he may have been living in Ogdensburg later that year as he healed from the assault.

Crime reporting has also proven invaluable to the development of an understanding of Samuel Paquette's family in New York. In November 1898, charges were dropped against Samuel Paquette for removing trees from State Hospital property. Paquette had hired another aboriginal person to "obtain wood for the baskets and…did not know where the wood, in question, was cut." As the perpetrator of the crime had disappeared, authorities intended to later charge Paquette and his wife with receiving stolen property (*St. Lawrence Republican*, November 9, 1898).

After Paquette's death, local newspapers provided details of the misadventures of some of his sons, including Samuel Jr.'s arrest for public intoxication. Paquette's drinking had been financed by another native man named Jim Thomas, who earlier that day had been hired by Samuel's mother to make baskets. The article's headline – "JAIL

FOR PAIR OF BAD INJUNS" – spoke to the prejudice the Paquette family encountered in Ogdensburg (*St. Lawrence Republican*, February 16, 1910).

Abenaki also appeared in stories of shocking tragedy. For instance, in June 1909, "Gordon Emmett[29], a carpenter residing at Fine View, committed suicide by jumping into the St. Lawrence river near Round Island shortly before noon Friday…Emmett was about 50 years of age, and was well known in the Thousand Island region" (*Watertown Re-Union*, June 30, 1909).

That he was so well known but had largely escaped notice in the local press tells us much about the formation of what comes to be known as the historical record throughout the region, for Abenaki and non-native people, and bring us back to Fogelson's question about events and significance. As Stanley Diamond has written,

> all human events are fundamentally historical. But…these events are not of equal importance; perhaps most things that men do turn out, in the end, to be publicly inconsequential, although they may be critical to the persons concerned. This is another way of saying that human affairs are often trivial, or apparently chaotic; that is, the patterns are there but they are so intricate and private that it demands a divine eye to sort them out; they crisscross through our daily lives; they happen as history but they have no historical gender. No socially critical turn of events hinges upon them… (2007[1964]:29)

Diamond's essay was part of a larger piece on historicity, and he struggled to find a vocabulary that conveyed the contingent and captured the significant without overdetermining it. Without the question of history as a grand theoretical (and ideological) issue, a more ethnographic approach is available. Significance becomes amenable to study in the history-making process, at each moment of historical production.

Following Trouillot, I argue that historical and genealogical practice grounded in events and relationships, and the projects within which they become salient, necessarily

[29] Gordon Emmett was the son of Jerome Wasamimet aka Peter Emmett. He moved to the Thousand Islands region in the 1870s.

produce silences and exclusions. Choices are made; data are artifacts of particular methods and practices, of archival searches, document reading, recording strategies, and project management, as well as concepts of significance grounded in personal interest or notions of kinship. Some silences go unacknowledged; others are experienced as gaps in one's knowledge. Resignation or renewed research may be the outcomes of confronting such a gap, but family historians, despite their documentary emphasis, are acutely aware of the limits of the written. Their understandings reflect that expressed by folklorist Martha Norkunas in her study of Lowell, MA:

> I learned from census records that Nana's father came from Ireland via England in 1878 and her mother in 1879, while Grandpa's relatives came in 1849. There were a few other details I learned from written sources like church records, death certificates, and city directories. These documentary sources ultimately told me little about my family's past. Everything we know about who we are and what we had done had to come from the stories. (Norkunas 2002:68)

In the following sections, I survey the non-documentary, first turning to fiction and then to more intimate memories of family members and stories.

Significant Fiction

In her preface to *Aunt Sarah*, a fictionalized biography of her great…aunt Sarah Toxuse, Trudy Parker wrote "For most of us, American History began with the incursion of the European settlers upon these shores and yet, through family legends, many of us knew that the American Indian was here first and that the elusive Western Abenaki (St. Francis Indians) had a history of their own, long before that. It didn't have to be documented for an Indian never forgets" (1994:x). This was a bold dismissal of the archives, and Parker's task was to present her family history, the story of Aunt Sarah, "to bring it alive for you, just as I was told they lived it" (x). "Actual written documentation on this tribe of Indians is scarce, except that which was written in the memory, burned

therein by the glowing embers of their nightly campfires" (x-xi). The scarcity of documents made it "necessary to work fiction with facts, to bring my characters alive" (xi).

In addition to the scarcity of documentation, Parker did note a brief mention of Aunt Sarah in a 1976 town history of Lunenburg, VT, and briefly discussed a contradiction between a document and oral history. Aunt Sarah's death certificate (filed in Lunenberg, VT, where Parker has served as Town Clerk) states that she was born in St. Francis, P.Q, Canada, in 1828. According to the document, Aunt Sarah died in February 1931 at the age of 102 years and three months, "but from the time I can remember hearing about her, the way I heard it was that Our Aunt Sarah had lived to see 108 winters" (x). Parker could not account for the discrepancy, and her book was written with 108 years as the correct age. [30]

Documentation about this family is scarce by comparison with other Abenaki families, and this scarcity is a challenge for research, whether by anthropologists or family historians. Parker's turn toward oral history, the context of which she did not discuss in the book, is a powerful rhetorical strategy for dealing with documentary lack,

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[30] If the oral history cited by Parker indicates that Aunt Sarah was born at Odanak in 1823, and her death record indicates that she was born at Odanak in 1828, census records provide even more complications. Consider the following:

Document	Date & Place of Birth
1870 U.S. Census	circa 1840, NJ
1880 U.S. Census	circa 1839, PA
1900 U.S. Census	Dec. 1838, PA
1910 U.S. Census	circa 1840, PA
1920 U.S. Census	circa 1835, VT/NJ
1930 U.S. Census	circa 1835, PA

Based on these census records, similar records of her siblings, and an item published on October 3, 1835, in *Hazard's Register of Pennsylvania* ("...two families of Indians from the banks of Lake Champlain have taken up residence in the city [Philadelphia, PA], dwelling in two birch bark tents, they propose to carry on the basket-making business." [cited by Fred M. Wiseman, http://www.abenakination.org/history.html, last consulted 18 September 2011]), I have concluded that a date of birth in the late 1830s, near Philadelphia, is most likely.

and one which is presented as more authentic: aboriginality understood as orality. "Written in memory," not on paper; writing as metaphor, to draw attention to techniques and scenes of memorialization – the "nightly campfires." However, to memorialize this for her audience, Parker was obliged to "work fiction with facts."

This work of "fiction with facts" sounds like historical fiction, but Parker's claims are quite different. Consider Ron Feulner's explanation of fact and fiction in his novel, *Adirondack Justice* (2005), whose main characters' Abenaki childhoods in the southern Adirondacks were inspired by those of his wife, Alice (Bull) Feulner, and her family.

> This book is of fiction – but my imagination was built around seeds of real events. These stories belong to the people whose culture existed in the southern Adirondacks before and during World War Two, before the interstate highways opened the region to urban America – and changed it forever. Of course, I modified and embellished the stories to make them fit my characters and plot, then I invented other stories to bind them together to form a completed work of fiction. (iii)

Adirondack Justice drew from an engagement with local and regional history, including (but certainly not limited to) its Abenaki component, in order to create fiction that conjures a not-so-distant past. *Aunt Sarah* employed the inverse strategy.

Both authors, however, mobilized fiction in the service of history. Feulner was able to speak about the early- to mid-20th century lives of people in the southern Adirondacks without implicating any actual person. For instance, a discussion between two characters about the importance of a local baseball league and the impact of the war in Fiddler's Rock (2005:103) is literary invention, but it could easily be read as a work of local history. Parker's task was to tell a story about an historical figure, drawing on an unspecified mix of oral history and creative fiction to "bring [her] characters alive" (1994:xi). Parker even sought to transcend historicity, writing that "This story comes from legends told about my family band and my main characters all lived and died, but

legends live forever" (xi). Notably, Sarah Toxuse lived much of her life in the upper Connecticut Valley, where Abenaki families have not been widely and well known in local history. In the southeastern Adirondacks, Abenaki families appear regularly and matter-of-factly in the historical record.

By turning to fiction, these authors call our attention to narrative's potential to engage with gaps by the production of plot, context, and new silences. Stories may even become a research strategy. One family historian recently wrote to me that she "sometimes move[s] fast into story lines, which can be hard to let go when new facts emerge." She constructs narratives which account for what she has learned, and these narratives inform her ongoing research. More than that, they also meet "a strong desire to know these people who are us, yet whom we have not met nor do we know (or even know of)."

Obituaries

The newspaper obituary is an important form of memorialization which organizes and partially narrativizes biographical and genealogical data in a formulaic presentation, typically appearing in a local newspaper but increasingly published and circulated on-line. Take the obituary of John Fish, an Abenaki lay historian whom I had the pleasure of meeting during the summer of 2002. He died December 20 that same year at his home in Indian Lake, NY, and his obituary was published in the *Post-Star*, a newspaper based in Glens Falls, the following day. With the byline "Indian Lake," the report provided his name, his age, his address, and then the time, location, and detail of his death. This was followed by the detail of his birth and parentage: "Born on Dec. 6, 1914, in Indian Lake, he was the son of the late Herbert and Mattie (Mitchell) Fish." Most of the remainder of

the obituary provided a biographical sketch, told in highlights including his education, his rank in the military and his service in Europe during World War II, and his employment history. He was predeceased by three siblings, and survived by his wife of 60 years as well as nieces and nephews. Finally, the arrangements for services were presented, as well as a call for "contributions in his memory" to the Indian Lake Volunteer Ambulance Corp. This is not unlike countless other obituaries which have been published in newspapers across the country for decades.

Obituaries do, however, provide opportunities for creativity, for exceeding the genre's minimum requirements of death-birth-parents-education-service-career-deceased-survivors-arrangements.[31] After noting his retirement from the New York State Department of Corrections, Fish's obituary stated that "John truly enjoyed history and for 15 years had volunteered to be in charge of the Indian Lake Museum." Indeed, this is the capacity in which I made his acquaintance, and in which he had first made the acquaintance of his third-cousin-once-removed David Benedict, who introduced us.

His love for history was also presented earlier in the obituary. The fourth sentence, between his education and his military service, read "John was the great-great-grandson of the Native American, Sabael." Clearly John Fish was, as the expression goes, proud of his Abenaki heritage.[32] The same sentiment was evident in the *Burlington Free Press* obituary of Ellsworth C. Royce, of Lyndonville, VT, and Bushnell, FL, who died

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[31] Newspapers may or may not charge a fee to publish an obituary, limiting many people's ability or desire to write a lengthy narrative.

[32] When I met him, he seemed quite pleased to talk about Indian Lake history as Abenaki history, and about his own family history. He opened the Indian Lake Museum for me and David (and Bill Zullo, the Indian Lake Town Historian), and pointed out a number of items of interest, particularly items associated with his cousin, Emma (Camp) Mead. He also proudly showed us a Plains-style headdress which he had been given years before. It was clear that he derived pleasure from acknowledging his Abenaki ancestors and relatives and discussing a native history which was also his family history.

on January 19, 2003. In addition to noting his family, his work history, his hobbies, and his military career, the following sentences were included:

> Ellsworth spent many years of his youth on Thompson[’s] Point [Charlotte, VT] with his grandfather, Simon Obumsawin, and learned much of his hunting and fishing while there. He helped Simon make a birchbark canoe and could hunt well with a bow.

Andrew Joseph’s[33] obituary, published in the *Saratogian* on January 17, 1979, included a photograph of Mr. Joseph in a Plains-style headdress, and included the following:

> He was predeceased by a well-known cousin, Mitchell Sabbattis; famous Adirondack guide. Joseph was born Oct. 18, 1892, in an Abenaki Indian encampment of the Algonquin nation at Congress Park, Saratoga Springs. He spent his early years in Saratoga Springs.
>
> He was a well known Adirondack guide and craftsman of the early 1900s and spent most of his life in Long Lake.

Each of these three obituaries told Abenaki histories, drawing on biography to bridge the gaps of the bureaucratically-inflected events and relationships anticipated by genealogy software. Even more intimate historical narratives, however, may be performed directly in the context of death rituals themselves.

Eulogies

I was fortunate to meet Andrew Joseph’s son Philip (“Phil”) Joseph (along with Phil’s wife, Wilma, and a nephew) in July 2009 when he attended “Abenaki Day” at the Adirondack Museum. I was particularly excited when Phil introduced himself before one of the talks I gave that day, as I would be discussing objects in the museum’s collections

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[33] Andrew Joseph’s father, Louis Joseph, was the son of Sarah (Joseph) Couse, and grandson of Peter and Theresa (Saziboet) Joseph. His mother was Anna Minor, daughter of Ellen (Paul Denis) Minor, and granddaughter of Noel and Ellen (Lawless) Paul Denis. Anna likely had no memories of her mother, who died months after her birth, and census records (1875, 1880) indicate that she was raised (largely or entirely) by her maternal grandmother and step-grandfather, Louis St.-Denis. Family correspondence indicates that she also knew her father, Andrew Minor, and was certainly in touch with her sister, Sadie, although the circumstances of Sadie’s childhood remain something of a mystery to me.

which were obtained from members of his family. He was happy to answer a few quick questions before my presentations and expressed his approval after my talk.

Andrew Joseph was well-known in the Adirondacks and immortalized in a 1973 *Adirondack Life* article detailing his skill and experience as a basket maker (Bufo 1973). As stated in excerpts from his obituary quoted above, Joseph was born at the Indian Encampment at Saratoga Springs, but spent most of his adult life at Long Lake, NY, his family having relocated there at the suggestion of Mitchell Sabattis (Bufo 1973:21), a relative of his mother's family.[34] The *Adirondack Life* story provided a biographical sketch of Joseph, and a step-by-step account of the basket making process. Having laid out the basics of basketry, the author concluded:

> And that is all there is to it. Don't expect to match the production schedule of Andrew Joseph – he is a master at his craft and a rather unique, aggressive individual to boot, who can call on 73 years of practice and a constitution rivaled only by superman [sic] to produce several dozen baskets a week. (Bufo 1973:24)

Indeed, Andrew Joseph's own apprenticeship began early in life, as he described:

> On Monday my father and I would go into the woods and cut down a good straight ash…We would strip the bark and pound the log for the splints, usually going around the log three or four times. On Tuesday we would split the splints and smooth 'em down, and on Wednesday we would start weaving the baskets. We would weave right through Thursday, often racing each other to see who could finish a basket first, and on Friday we would put on the rims. Saturday, we bound the rims to the baskets and put on the finishing touches, and on Sunday we tied 'em together and carried 'em 4 miles into Long Lake. There wasn't any bridge then, and we had to ferry across the lake. We sold everything we made, usually between 18 and 24 baskets, to Sullivan's store for $9 a dozen. And those were big baskets, 18 inches high. (Bufo 1973:21, edited to include only Joseph's speech.)

The hard work involved in the Joseph family's endeavors marked his entire life. Supporting a family of six children, he hunted, did construction, masonry, and various

[34] Mitchell Sabattis and Andrew Joseph's maternal step-great-grandfather, Louis St.-Denis, were patrilateral first cousins and likely knew each other as youths and adults.

odd jobs, sold vegetables, and worked as a guide. At 80 years old, Anthony Bufo referred to Joseph's constitution as "rivaled only by [Superman]," and recounted that

> Nine years ago Andrew moved to a small cabin framed by birch and pines on the shore of Loon Lake. He planned to retire, but a sedentary life did not fit his character. "The house was not insulated, so I dug out a cellar by hand and spread the dirt around for a lawn. The kids thought I should take it easy and get some relaxation because I was 71, so I started waterskiing. Was too easy, so I went back to making baskets." (Bufo 1973:22)

This remarkable individual inspired one of the more remarkable documents which I have encountered in my research with family historians: a eulogy composed by Phil Joseph for his father's funeral, January 19, 1979.

> Well folks, on behalf of the Joseph family, the first thing that I would like to do is to thank you for coming today, and sharing with us a very special day in our lives. The last time I talked to Long Lakers as a group, I earned the right to do it. It is my recollection that it was June of nineteen hundred and fifty-one when I presented the valedictory. It seems just a trifle unfortunate to me; but I've always been sort of a tough judge of circumstances; because it was drilled into me by that fellow who lies there; that a great many more heard that valedictory, than will hear this eulogy; and I think the eulogy has a lot more meaning in it, to our family, and to our friends in Long Lake, than anything I could have ever put together back in nin[e]teen hundred and fifty-one regarding our foreign policy.

Considering eulogy as an historical genre, I have been struck by the ways in which it exceeds obituary and the nuts-and-bolts of genealogy. More than just the hobbies or personality of the deceased are catalogued, as is clear from Phil's acknowledgment of those in attendance when the eulogy was read and his comparison between the size of the audience before him and the size of another audience at his other turn at public speaking in Long Lake, his valedictory address. This speech, however, had "a lot more meaning in it."

Phil continued by sharing things he had learned from his father, illustrating each point with an example, often with humor.

> […] The first philosophy he drilled into me; again and again, was that, "Actions speak louder than words". You seldom heard him say to my mother "I love you", but he was always rearranging her kitchen or whatever else he could do for her from a carpentry stand-point.
>
> Then he always advocated that we be persistent and we be prepared. I think he exemplified that when he did still hunting. He is a still hunting expert and a few people, here today, can attest to that. […] I guarantee you there's at least three men; one of them lying down, one sitting by his mother, and one standing up here, who has his long johns on.

The eulogy was intimate, personal, a point underscored by how quickly Phil wrote it. More time to reflect was not necessary.

> […] I wrote this eulogy in five minutes, maybe ten, I don't think any more than that. You are not able to see it, but the title goes "In Memory of A. Joseph, Our Abenaki Chief" and it has a tear drop on the 'J'. It's strange that only one hit, because there was a lot of them coming. He was a Success […] He was Strong. He was Determined. He was Humble. He was a Worker. He was Poor…by some peoples [sic] standards. He was a Good Father. He was a Great Hunter, and a Great Fisherman. He was more often Right. He was a Good Teacher. He was Sometimes Wrong. He was a Strict Disciplinarian…too strict. He was Loved. He was Misunderstood…I think, he was misunderstood. He learned to Love God…almost too late. My mother learned much earlier. He was a very difficult student for her to instruct.
>
> He was Thoughtful. He Sacrificed. He was a Good Provider. He Gave what he could. He had many true Friends. He asked for God's Blessings. He was a Saratogian Newspaper delivery boy. That's why you see those Saratogians out there. If you haven't seen them; I was your Saratogian delivery boy today. The first and last day for Saratogian delivery's [sic] by this guy. But I think it carries a very significant article and you're all welcome to it. We'll leave them here when we go.

The eulogy was written to be spoken; a copy was kept in Phil Joseph's papers which he later shared with me. The obituary in the *Saratogian*, however, was distributed to the audience, with additional significance generated as a keepsake from the funeral and given Phil's comment on the association between his father and the newspaper.

> […] The last four words that I got from my Father, were "God Bless You All…" He didn't stop with just 'you' even though he was talking to me. But he knew that I would have the <u>courage</u> that he taught me to have, no matter what it cost me, to get up and say those four words. It was the toughest part. Thanks for sharing with us today. It made it a lot easier.

Old Homes

In the preceding sections, I have laid out some fundamental issues in the work of Abenaki family historians, considering the nuts-and-bolts of genealogy, including the silences and exclusions which may be created at numerous points in the process of historical production – some recognized by (me and) my informants, others not. Expansions and inclusions may also result from such historical practice. Finally, I have begun to sketch the use of narrative and social creativity among my informants, designed to address gaps in one's knowledge or express sentiment hard to convey in much of the documentary record available to researchers. Such work blurs the scholarly boundaries of fact and fiction, as well as the boundaries of historical research and everyday life. In considering questions of significance, the overlap of formal and informal contexts is of particular importance.

For instance, during a recent conversation Denise Watso was particularly excited to tell me about a photograph that her uncle Raymond had just given to her. The image was of her grandfather, Fred "Sosai" Watso, her great-uncle John B. Watso, their first cousin, Edwin Nagazoa, and Edward DeGonzague, a much more distant relative who married Mathilde Benedict, a sister of John B.'s wife (Eva Benedict) and 2nd cousin of Sosai's wife (Elsie Dauphinais). The photograph had been sitting in her uncle's home, like many such items only coming to the attention of a family historian when someone goes rummaging through old albums or boxes, perhaps to follow up on someone's questions, but just as likely the result of their own reminiscing or housecleaning.

I have often heard family historians musing about the photographs, documents and objects being kept in the homes of older Abenaki[35], at least as often as I have heard them speak reverently of elders' memories. Experiences, stories, keepsakes and heirlooms become re-envisioned as the substance of Abenaki history and tradition, to be reworked by Abenaki historical practice and shared within extended families, with fellow Abenaki, or even with anthropologists, historians, or the general museum-going public. The urgency of the task echoes Henry Watso's statement that he was "one of them," yet was amazed by his "ignorance of them" (see Chapter 2). The assumption here is that knowledge of a distinctively Abenaki "culture" and history could no longer be acquired in the course of one's quotidian experience; houses and their contents, as well as memories, skills and language, were newly-significant, and required transformation into new types of objects which might be shared or preserved.

Such projects were imagined as urgent, as projects of historical preservation and cultural survival, whether grounded in the bodies and knowledge of elders or the objects in their homes. A struggle against time was perceived, a struggle against the inevitability of loss. Consider, for instance, the concern which Phil Joseph expressed to me in the summer of 2009:

> I almost died in December. That's why I'm kind of interested in sharing some of this information with someone who's going to catalogue it. You can see I'm not good at cataloguing, but I collected it. And you can catalogue it. And so can Melissa [Otis, a researcher from the University of Toronto]. She's working on a thesis, too. And then she said she'd give me a copy of what she does.

I was struck by the conflation of mortality and historical practice, an understanding that the papers, objects and photographs which he had collected would not hold the same meaning for others, and that his memories and experiences needed to be shared and

[35] Sometimes the homes themselves are accorded particular status. See Chapter 5.

recorded to be preserved. Cataloguing meant the survival of some of his knowledge and experience, as well as his research and collecting; it was an organizational and contextual activity that would socialize knowledge, transforming it from the personal to the collective, whether Abenaki or Adirondack.

I was also struck by the way in which collecting begets more collecting! Phil Joseph's home archive continues to grow as he anticipates receipt of my future work and that of Melissa Otis. That which is significant requires preservation, preservation often elicits sharing (research), and that in turn produces new significance and additional objects to preserve. However, research and archiving may raise questions of continuity. Many of the lay/family historians with whom I have worked have expressed a concern with the fate of their papers and collections after their deaths. A notable, lighthearted example of this occurred in August 2005 when David Benedict and I visited Dorothy and Wayne McDermott at their home in central New York. Dorothy and I were looking through binders full of images, notes, kinship charts and documents she had assembled when Wayne and David walked into the room:

WM: What are you going to do with all this stuff?

DM: I don't know [resigned] what I'm going to do with it all. Take it with me.

WM: Yeah, but this is only one of, what, 200 books.

DM: Oh God, I've got millions of

DB: [interrupting] Can you take it with you?

DM: I don't know [laughter].

WM: Pack it in an urn [everyone laughed]!

Abenaki family and lay historians cannot "take it with" them, and often worry that younger generations will not be interested in the fruits of their labor, as either knowledge or archival material. The past always implicates other temporal frames, and the questions of significance attached to history-making contribute to the ways in which Abenaki experience is made meaningful.

Looking for Names

The evening of April 18, 2002, I received e-mail from David Benedict. He had just heard from a correspondent that eBay had just auctioned off a family Bible once belonging to a branch of the Watso – written "Watsaw" – family who had lived in New York. David made some inquiries and learned that the Bible had not yet been sold. He wrote late the next day: "Hey, may have thrown some money down the toilet this morning but I went ahead and bought that bible I was telling you about." He knew that it was from the southeastern Adirondacks, and assumed that it had once belonged to his relatives. The seller had reported that it was "full of names and dates," and that it included an assortment of papers, too.

When the Bible arrived, it was "not the great shakes" that David had expected genealogically, but it was "definitely our folks." It had belonged to a member of the Watsaw family – a granddaughter of Joseph-Louis Watso (aka Louis Watsaw) and his second wife, Alice Johnson.[36] Later that evening he typed up the "names and dates" and the various obituaries, etc., that came with the Bible, and shared them with me and two other family researchers who were more closely related to the Watsaws. Nothing he had

[36] Alice Johnson was the daughter of John Johnson, a non-native man, and Alice Mitchell, an Abenaki woman. Alice Mitchell was born circa July 1821 to John Mitchell aka Michel Ajean and Catherine Benedict, and baptized (with the name Therese Michel) the following January 26 at Akwesasne (RSJFR).

acquired directly addressed his research questions, but he was sure that it would be of particular interest to others.

David had rescued an artifact from an uncertain fate, attaching significance right away to a family name, a name which indexed Abenaki ancestry and a set of relations. This framed his methodology: first skimming for other names-cum-relationships and then transcribing the documents. It also framed the next step: sharing the data with fellow family historians. Copies of photographs and copies and/or transcriptions of documents circulate widely among Abenaki family historians and other contacts, accounting for a portion of the accumulation of personal archives – paper and electronic – and eliciting kinship through the sociality of a particular form of exchange. For most of my informants, family research was a sociable enterprise.

Dorothy McDermott began her research knowing quite a bit about the family of her grandmother, Dorothy (Watso) Garland. She had met some cousins and remembered her great-great-aunt Anna (Johnson) Chandler[37] visiting and taking her grandmother to Lake George to visit with family, and heard stories about those relatives.

> And then, when I got talking to Bebe [her aunt Anna's daughter], then we'd compare things and she'd give me information and I'd give her, so it got to that point that I really got into it. But I just mainly started putting pictures I had together and like that. Then I bought that Family Tree program and started, started doing that. I just wanted to organize everything I had. It seems like if someone isn't interested in this stuff, it's the first thing that gets tossed out, you know. So that's mainly how I started. I just wanted to organize what I had and it just seemed to grow from there. And then I heard about Sabael and I wrote to this Warder Cadbury and asked him information, and he put me in contact with David. And it just seemed to go from there. But I'm glad I did. I found out a lot of interesting things.

[37] While Anna was Dorothy (Watso) Garland's aunt, she was less than ten years older than her niece. Dorothy's mother, Margaret (Johnson) Watso, was over fifteen years older than Anna, her youngest sister.

Dorothy and Bebe's relationship deepened as their mutual interest in family history led to an exchange relationship. Not only did this lead to the formation of Dorothy's personal archive, but it led to further expansion of her research activities and exchange networks. Her library grew as she purchased books about the Adirondacks, she followed leads and developed new questions, and when she reached out to historian Warder Cadbury, he put her in touch with David Benedict. The transcriptions he sent her from the Watsaw Bible were only one episode in a long history of exchange, and in 2011 they still periodically send each other notes from old newspapers or other such materials implicating their mutual Abenaki kin.

I have been privy to many such exchanges over the years, and have heard stories of many others. Such relationships tended to be multidirectional, and now that e-mail can be sent to several recipients at once this dynamic appears to be increasing. Even off-line, however, documents and genealogical data circulated along with visits and correspondence. The late Esther Wawanolett, an Abenaki elder and former registrar known for her genealogical interests, wrote to her cousin Ed Lush, catching him up on her health, mutual relatives and other acquaintances, and offering to send him a picture of her great-grandparents taken in the U.S., probably at Bethlehem, NH, where they lived for many years. (She had received the photograph from another Abenaki family historian who came across it while she was doing her own research.) Esther mentioned David Benedict, from whom she had received a Christmas card. "He still makes researches for his family," she wrote, and it was clear that his ongoing research had inspired her to think about the various branches of the Benedict family who did not have family members living at Odanak.

One of those branches was that of Solomon Benedict, Jr., who relocated to Ontario in the late 19th century.[38] He and his brothers purchased a farm rich with black ash trees, planning to cut all of the ash, pound it into splint, and take the splint back to Odanak for basket makers were in need of the material. They had intended to default on their mortgage once they had the ash, but Solomon Jr. fell in love with one of the local women, Annie, they had hired to cook and clean for them.

Solomon and Annie's youngest child, Adele Benedict, was an early correspondent of David's as he was beginning his own genealogical research, and Elaine (Paquette) Ricard and I were fortunate to meet her in February 2003 when she was 95 years old.[39] Our mutual acquaintance with David was a touchstone during our visit, and in discussions leading up to it. During a phone call with Elaine, Adele referred to David as "a going concern" and expressed some disappointment that he would not be able to accompany us on our trip; during our visit she expressed relief that David was no longer working in the San Francisco Bay area of California as she was quite concerned about the possibility of earthquakes there.

David's correspondence with Adele began after he wrote to a man who had compiled a book about Benedict families in America, and he sent David photocopies of a few pages from Aber and King's history of Hamilton County, NY, and Adele's genealogy and address. Similarly, Dorothy McDermott's investigations of cemetery plots led her to write to her distant cousin Harold Watsaw in the fall of 1996.

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[38] One of his sons, Alexander Benedict, married Florence Lagrave, an Abenaki woman, and lived at Odanak and in Waterbury, CT. The rest of the family has remained in Ontario.

[39] After a phone conversation with Adele in January, 2003, Elaine wrote to me: "Called Adele Benedict today.... Was on the phone for 2 hours... The Lady is sharp....smarter than I and probably better looking too...[…] She's a vegetarian.... retired RN at 69....[…]does her weekly groceries and visits to the Mall... loves to read.... 'likes to keep on top of things' she said...I really think we are going to enjoy this..."

> I have been researching the Watsaw (Watso) family and while in the North Creek Cemetery, I came across the Watsaw plot. I noticed it was very well cared for with flowers and a flag which led me to look in the phone book in hopes of finding some relatives and it is there where I located your address.

Dorothy identified how she was related to the Watsaw family and included a "family group sheet" indicating what she had learned so far and requesting additional information about their shared ancestors. She also offered to share what she had learned about the family.

As relationships between these Abenaki family historians have grown over the years, their amiable sociability has grown. They tend to be separated by space – they may have never met in person – but exchanges of genealogical data, family and personal stories, old photos, documents, etc., along with humor, disagreement, and caring, produce not only historical insight but Abenaki sociality as well. The Watsaw Bible inspired interest among David's correspondents both for the information that it contained and for its importance as an heirloom, as an object that was once part of a relative's home. More recently, nieces and nephews of the Bible's previous owner have been very excited to learn of its existence for all the same reasons, and David plans to gift them with the artifact at some point in the future.

"Family Stuff"

Susan Marshall's family home in Rensselaer, NY, across the river from Albany, was the off-reserve archetypical old Abenaki house, even if it had only been accumulating material traces of her ancestors' lives since her grandparents first moved there in the mid-20th century. The process of collection, however, dated back to the mid-1800s, when her grandmother's grandfather, Thomas Msadokous, started to assemble a set of documents that were eventually stored in a painted toleware box. As discussed in

the previous chapter, Susan's grandmother, Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa, saved old baskets, photographs, books and other objects, including that box of receipts and letters, and even after many of the objects had been sold or donated to scholars and museums, many remained. Susan's mother, and then Susan, continued to hold onto these possessions.

The house was always full of *family stuff*, which is importantly how Susan imagined the material. Like the house itself, old photographs, baskets, and even documents written in French or Abenaki, were technologies of kinship, implicated in the maintenance of affective ties to, or mediated by, deceased kin. It was that familial intimacy that she brought to my visits, often accompanied by Susan's 3rd cousin, David Benedict. As I was recording an interview with Susan in February 2003, she commented on the process of such memory work and a recent afternoon the three of us had spent looking at family photographs and talking about Benedict family history:

> …Now you're getting my brain working, see that. Cause I know there's a lot of information in this brain of mine that's just been pushed to the back and it helps. It was so good to talk about the family last time when you guys were here. Oh my God, I was in heaven.

Sharing memories of her grandmother and other relatives was fun, and she was pleased by the opportunity to learn more about them as I deciphered old receipts or as she and David worked to identify individuals in a few unmarked photos.

For years almost every visit included a look at something she found while going through a box or cleaning out a drawer, either in preparation for an eventual move or in anticipation of a visit. During the February 2003 interview, Susan showed me some baskets made by Eva (Rainville) Hannis, her grandmother's sister's daughter.

CR: [These are] the tiniest baskets I've ever seen. And they were – Eve Hannis?

SM: Eve Hannis made these.

CR: [to tape recorded] We saw a picture when David and I were here last time we saw a picture of Eve. And Eve used to come and, she was a cousin of [pause]?

SM: She was a cousin of Grandma's.

CR: And she used to come visit fairly often?

SM: She was in CT, she lived in CT.

CR: In Waterbury?

SM: I think in Waterbury. I think so. I found her, I found an old letter from her, I don't know what I did with it. Cause she used to stay here with us, too. Grandma used to live here, Eve used to live here. We always had somebody living here. That's why this house is so haunted. All these spirits come back and bug me.

Kinship has a temporal dimension whether considered as an object of family history or as the subject position of an Abenaki woman. If the former might see the contents of these old dwellings, and perhaps the dwellings themselves, as resources to be documented, shared and preserved, Susan's house was clearly an affective nexus produced by her own experience and visits with relatives and friends, stories she had been told and the items assembled over the course of lifetimes. The temporal character of affect was brought home by Susan's ghosts. Susan often spoke of the spirits who lived in that house or who would visit from time to time, sometimes referencing the fact that her parents' ashes were kept in the back bedroom. Her home contained not only worldly artifacts but supernatural traces of her ancestors as well, personhood extending beyond death as a function of place and relationship.

Susan's family home and its contents not only sustained old relationships, it was also generative of new relationships, too, as she visited with me and David and shared photographs with relatives. When she later traveled to Odanak in 2008 (see Chapter 5),

she brought a small photo album, and later sent an old postcard of the Anglican Church to a relative with whom we visited. She also plans to give Eve Hannis' tiny basket to one of Eva's step-grandsons at some point in the future. I have to confess to a short moment of panic when I heard this, the preservationist ethos of the museum and of disciplinary history wanting to keep the collection "intact" colliding with an ethos of kinship in which such exchange practices enact affective relations, indexing shared family history.

Susan's new home, an apartment just a few miles away, is much smaller, and she had to give away or leave behind some of her possessions when she moved in September 2006. She made certain, however, that all of her family stuff was brought to her new abode. Helping Susan move, I found myself carrying the urns containing her parents' ashes. I wondered whether the spirits would continue to "come back and bug" her, and what it meant that I, the anthropologist asking about family history and artifacts rather than an Abenaki experiencing kinship mediated by objects and a dwelling, was the person who ended up with the urns in his arms. Susan's old photographs, papers and baskets continue to elicit affective sociality, and the spirits eventually found her new home across town.

Significant Gifts

While conducting research in Abenaki country, I have been fortunate to examine the collections of a variety of museums. Such experiences have been vital to my research, and I have worked to facilitate connections between two institutions – the New York State Museum and the Adirondack Museum – and my informants, particularly those whose ancestors fabricated and/or owned objects in their collections. As an ethnographer of history, I have also been fascinated by the assemblage of these sets of Abenaki

artifacts and images, by the act and understanding of donation itself, and by the ways in which it might inform contemporary understandings of Abenaki people and their history within and beyond their homelands. For instance, the Adirondack Museum's files contain a note that one Abenaki donor, Andrew Joseph, was planning to gift the museum with an ash log which had been pounded for splint, and that he had said that he would like his picture taken in front of an exhibit display with a set of basket making tools he had already donated. This gift was a very personal one, a display of pride and a love of the Adirondack region, a sentiment echoed by Phil Joseph when he discussed with me donating additional materials to the museum in the future: a sense of significance both familial and historical, in terms of both Abenaki and regional pasts.

Such personal sentiment and historical conviction was transformed into an appreciation for the gift and a presentation of the institution as gathering and preserving "historical material" when Adirondack Museum Registrar Ronda Barton wrote to acknowledge Andrew Joseph's donation on August 26, 1974.

> Thank you for your recent gift to the museum. We appreciate very much both your donation and your wish to help us preserve the historical material of the Adirondacks.
>
> In order to complete our records would you be good enough to sign the enclosed two copies of our gift record and return them to us in the self-addressed envelope. We in turn will send you a signed receipt.
>
> In order to have a more historical record of your gift, it would help us if you would note any significant historical information which you may have, such as origin, use, dates or personal associations concerning the gift.
>
> Again, thank you for your kindness and interest. It is the cooperation and thoughtfulness of people like yourself which will make it possible for this institution to become the truly representative museum of the Adirondacks.[40]

In between paragraphs thanking Joseph and establishing his role in furthering the museum's mission, Barton addressed two other considerations. The first was paperwork:

[40] Accession records, Adirondack Museum.

all items in the museum's collections must be accounted for. A "gift record" form had been created to record the transaction, to begin a chain of custody for all objects. A receipt will be remitted so that the donor may have a similar official (signed) record.

The second consideration was historical: "if you could note any significant historical information which you may have, such as origin, use, dates or personal association concerning the gift." Note the open-ended "any" preceding "significant historical information," tempered with a set of examples of significant information. Where and when was it made? How and when was it used? For what purposes? By whom? Here significance was a question of context that could then establish other forms of significance – an object's antiquity, its associations with Adirondack people, how it might be anomalous, emblematic or representative of a theme in the history of the region.

Importantly, these two considerations enhance the historical authority of the museum by partaking of bureaucratic and expert rhetorics. The objects will be appreciated and well taken care of, as evidenced by attention to both bureaucratic and historical detail. Such considerations were not formally presented in the museum's early years, however, but become increasingly apparent as the institution became increasingly professionalized. Compare similar letters from Director Robert Bruce Inverarity to Mrs. Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa (August 7, 1957) and Mrs. Joseph Sabattis[41] (August 1, 1958), thanking them for their donations:

> Dear Mrs. Nagazoa:
>
> We are most pleased to have the implement for pounding corn which you so thoughtfully brought to the museum.
>
> May I express to you the appreciation of the Adirondack Historical Association and the Adirondack Museum for your gift of this tool.

[41] I believe that Mrs. Sabattis' husband, Joseph, was the son of Charles Sabattis, and grandson of Mitchell Sabattis.

> Gifts just such as yours will make this museum the valuable research center and repository of Adirondackiana toward which we are working.
>
> Dear Mrs. Sabattis:
>
> May I express to you the appreciation of the Adirondack Historical Association and the Adirondack Museum for your gift of the gaff hook, the fish net, the two packbaskets, the three paddles, the guideboat seat and back rest, the two pair of snowshoes and the ten photographs of Brandreth, Calkins Creek and other scenes. We are very glad to add this material to our collections.
>
> All contributions to this institution, which is chartered by the Board of Regents of the State of New York, are tax deductible. We are unable to place valuations on gifts.
>
> It is the cooperation, kindness and thoughtfulness of people like yourself which will make it possible for this museum to become the truly representative museum of the Adirondacks. Again, thank you very much for your gift.

In these letters, accounting was addressed within the text itself, rather than being deferred to a separate form. The question of "significant historical information" was addressed only within the terms of the gift: generous donations which allow the Adirondack Museum to establish collections representative of the region's history. In fact, Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa provided considerable context in making her donation and the transaction itself may have been facilitated by Adirondack historian Warder Cadbury (see Chapter 2). The items obtained from Mrs. Sabattis, on the other hand, lack any sort of contextual information. While her husband was from an Abenaki family involved in the guiding business, we cannot even be sure that the artifacts of that trade donated by Mrs. Sabattis were formerly the property her in-laws (although that is a likely explanation), with the exception of a pack basket which Andrew Joseph identified in 1974 as one which his father had made for [Mitchell?] Sabattis. The only other item in the museum's collections directly associated with that famous Adirondack Abenaki family consists of a pair of snowshoes obtained in 2001, which were strung by Mitchell Sabattis.

Mrs. Sabattis probably understood the role of the new Adirondack Museum from the local publicity it had generated, but one can say little else about her understanding of

the significance of her donation. Likely her affinal ties to Mitchell Sabattis, a figure of considerable historical interest and pride in her hometown of Long Lake, were also a factor. Mrs. Nagazoa would have been aware of the new institution through her collaboration with Warder Cadbury, and perhaps her correspondence with a relative in Indian Lake, Mrs. Elsie Conklin, the widow of her cousin Gabriel Camp, and as discussed in the last chapter, had a long history collaborating with scholars and contributing to museum collections[42], as well as engaging with tourists.

All of this might help to explain Andrew Joseph's gift and how he perceived it. He was an Adirondacker and a Long Laker, and the Adirondack Museum was quickly establishing itself as the premier institution where regional residents could tell themselves (and others) stories about themselves.[43] His family was associated with Mitchell Sabattis, and he himself had worked as both Adirondack guide and Abenaki basket maker, an occupation he returned to in his final years. This occupation and its biographical and historical context was of interest to people, as evidenced by the recent *Adirondack Life* article.

Furthermore, Andrew Joseph's friend, Maurice Paul Denis[44], was an Abenaki known throughout the Adirondacks for his continuing role in Old Forge's tourism industry, producing splint baskets, carved totem poles, and other objects. "Chief Dennis" was a regional celebrity, and watching him (and/or members of his family) work was part of the allure. By the 1970s, pride could be attached to aboriginal craft production, and a

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[42] Frank Speck had acquired a child's pin-and-sticks game from her as well as two pairs of moccasins, all of which are now in the collections of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Arthur Parker, then married to her niece, Beulah Tahamont, later acquired basket making tools and other items for the New York State Museum.

[43] The allusion, of course, is to Geertz (1973:448).

[44] They were also third cousins. Maurice Paul Denis' great-grandfather, Louis Paul Denis, and Andrew Joseph's great-grandfather, Noel Paul Denis, were brothers. Whether the two were aware of this relationship, or how it may or may not have mattered to them, I have been unable to ascertain.

general sense of a more recent Native American[45] past, particularly in the backwoods of the Adirondacks, could be celebrated, particularly when it was also a story of a close family, hard work, and progress.

Recall the characterization of Andrew Joseph in *Adirondack Life* discussed above, and consider a 1996 article in the *Hamilton County News* profiling Phil Joseph's brother John, then 65. Dubbed "the poster boy for the American Dream," he was a "rags-to-riches story" whose hard work and determination led to his financial success in the blasting business and the means to indulge his passion for flying by establishing his own personal airport and a small fleet of aircraft. He began work at the age of nine as a golf caddy in the summer and assisting his father in the winter; he was employed at a sawmill as a teenager. His wife complained that he still worked too much:

> "He promised he'd retire," said Joseph's wife, Doris, who bristles at her husband's compulsion to work so hard. "Well, I guess he's semiretired. He only works six days a week now." (Traster 1996:14)

John Joseph credited his father "with teaching him how to survive in the wilderness and in life."

> "He was grooming me for my own business since I was seven years old," Joseph said. "He would say, 'John, we've got to make a floor.' And he would take out the squares and ask me how we should cut them. And he'd wait. Real patiently. Sometimes 20 minutes, or 40, whatever it took. And only after I'd come up with something, he'd say, 'Well, wouldn't it work better if we do it this way?" And I'd say, 'By gosh, that does work.'"
>
> Joseph stopped a minute to collect his composure. "I fill up just thinking about it," he said. (Traster 1996:14)

Phil Joseph also speaks with obvious pride about his family, how close they have been, and how successful. "Dad and the three sons managed to hunt together," he told me, pointing out a 16-year age difference between his oldest brother, Andy, and himself,

[45] I use the term "Native American" given the general perception of Abenaki people as Canadian Indians, rather than the aboriginal inhabitants of the Adirondacks.

and lamenting that he never developed the same level of skill as his brothers. Andy was a diesel mechanic, saw mill operator and flight instructor who spent his adult years in North Creek. Jane had a career as an aeronautical engineer after working as a math teacher in Long Lake; she was the valedictorian of her class after having skipped a year. Kay was also a valedictorian, a "disciplined student [who] worked like hell." He is close with his sister Edith, a fellow snowbird who spends her winters in the same Florida town that Phil calls his home-away-from-home, and has lovingly described his brother John as a "tough guy," full of charm, and a "hard, hard worker." Phil, the youngest, was the valedictorian of his class, went on to college, and had a family and a successful career. John may be the "poster child for the American dream," but the whole family seems to have benefited from familial solidarity and hard work.

None of the children, however, went on to make their living as basket makers or guides in the Adirondack woods, even though the oldest did learn how. Here it is useful to consider one of Phil Joseph's recollections of his father: the only times he remembers hearing his father speaking Abenaki was with Maurice Paul Denis[46]. Indeed, Phil's experience of the Abenaki language was one of exclusion; the two older men would speak Abenaki and when he would try to interrupt, he was dismissed in a language he did not understand. He did, however, commit the phrase to memory, and years later learned that it was indeed a curt and rather rude comment that seems at odds with the understanding of Andrew Joseph's relationship with his children described earlier. That the two characterizations seem at odds demonstrates the pleasure Andrew Joseph took in a particularly Abenaki conviviality, the powerful experience of change-as-rupture, and the way in which all of this can be imagined as generational.

[46] He did not speak Abenaki with either his cousin Joe Towner or members of the Sabattis family.

Andrew Joseph did not teach his children to speak Abenaki. While this decision was likely taken in part because Mrs. Joseph spoke no Abenaki, one common explanation among Abenaki people for language loss, he likely also felt that it was not suited to the lives his children would lead; that their success would come from hard work and an English-language education (as it did), something that he had not obtained having left school after only a few years. I have heard this explanation from an Abenaki speaker whose children never learned the language, and Perley, referring to it as "language suicide," found similar dynamics among the Tobique Maliseet (Perley 2002).[47]

Such complex associations with emblems of his Abenaki youth – language and basket making – undoubtedly informed Andrew Joseph's gifts to the Adirondack Museum, as did the emphasis he placed on hard work and education. This contributed to a particular understanding of the significance of overlapping Abenaki, regional, and local histories which has much in common with understandings developed by many Abenaki in the early 21st century.

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Denise Watso has not conducted historical or genealogical research in the archives, but the home office she shares with her partner, Jennifer Hanson, contains an

[47] Other explanations typically offered by my informants include enforced French-only policy of Odanak's Catholic school, the English-only policies and traumatic dislocations of Anglican residential schools, contemporary educational and language policies in Quebec, and labor histories and legal regimes which have led to increasing numbers of young Abenaki growing up off-reserve and/or working and socializing in primarily Anglophone or Francophone settings. Different informants privilege different explanations, in part reflecting the experience of their particular family. I would add other factors as well, including minimal contact with other Abenaki-speaking communities (Wôlinak, Penobscot), the different varieties spoken by these people and a lack of resources, and, more importantly, political will. The latter reflects a complicated language politics in Abenaki country where speakers may be both revered and resented; where histories of work as teachers and informants has led to a complicated politics of linguistic competence; where French and English accents may result in conflicts over pronunciation or other aspects of language use; where native speakers and those who have made a study of the language may speak quite differently; and where self-identified Abenaki have obtained resources to hire certain individuals to teach strangers who now may be seen by the larger public as language authorities.

her own archive – filing cabinets and binders full of old photographs, newspaper clippings, articles about Abenaki history, correspondence, notes, video recordings, and the minutes of Abenaki community meetings she has organized in and around Albany over the years. Some of this is understood to be useful to her own work on behalf of her people today, but she also asserts that a record of Abenaki people today must be maintained for future generations.

Denise has a small Abenaki-related library next to her desk, as well as objects such as baskets, carvings, toy canoes, and small drums, often made by relatives. There are more in her workshop where she also keeps her carving tools; when time allows she works on honing her skills and deepening her knowledge of Abenaki craft traditions, often with one of her children nearby, working on their own project. Denise has started to learn Abenaki basketry from her aunt Barbara Watso, hoping that she and her children will eventually learn the skills that enabled her family to survive during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For Denise, skills such as basket making are always understood in terms of a proud Abenaki future for her children and the struggles faced by her elders and her ancestors.

Such an understanding of significance is particularly evident when she laments the fact that she never learned to speak Abenaki. She explains language loss within the broader Abenaki community largely as the result of educational institutions – particularly the Canadian residential schools which several non-Catholic Abenaki children were forced to attend, as well as day school formerly located at Odanak which was run by nuns who would not allow the Abenaki language to be spoken on the premises – but acknowledges larger social pressures from "the dominant society." When encouraged to

learn French so that she can more easily communicate when she regularly visits Odanak, she replies indignantly that if she were going to learn another language, it would be Abenaki. She has told me on numerous occasions that she wishes she could learn the language and teach it to her children.

Over the last few years, Denise has become aware of museum and archival collections which include objects, images, recordings, and narratives resulting from histories of research among Abenaki people, including some of her great-aunts, -uncles, and distant cousins such as Andrew Joseph.[48] She understands this as both family history and Abenaki national history and has spoken of her desire to see copies of such material obtained and made available for consultation by Abenaki people at Odanak, Albany, and elsewhere.[49]

For Denise, Abenaki stories are also of particular relevance to local and regional histories. Speaking in public, Denise often refers to Albany-area Abenaki as "hidden treasures," noting that relatively few non-Abenaki are aware of the size of the Albany community. She also often notes the importance of Abenaki families in the history of the Adirondack region, something she has come to learn only in recent years: I have heard Denise explain how very surprised she was when she drove through the hamlet of Sabael, NY – named for her ancestor Sabael Benedict – on an Adirondack camping trip with her family. Such knowledge of the past is perceived to address historical ruptures and provide a tremendous source of understanding and pride today and in the future.

[48] Andrew Joseph was a third cousin of both of Denise's paternal grandparents.
[49] See Brown & Peers (2007) for a study of just such a process.

Chapter Four: Delineating a Homeland

On July 28, 1955, Stephen Laurent, an Abenaki who had lived in both Quebec and New Hampshire, gave an address that was later published by the Vermont Historical Society (VHS) (Laurent 1955-1956). Laurent was presented by the VHS journal editor as the "hereditary chief of the Abenakis," son of a published author, an educated man, and "a scholar in his own right (1955)." The talk was a remarkable collection of Laurent's thoughts on Abenaki language, religion, and medicine, derived from the author's experience as an Abenaki man born at the dawn of the 20th c. and as a well-read student of Abenaki history. Throughout the address, Laurent referenced Abenaki tradition, the historical record, and his and his father's personal relationships with scholars such as John Huden and Frank Speck. One of these references to Speck demonstrated both a rich sense of humor and a recognition of the challenges of Abenaki history.

> Once an anthropologist from the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Speck, said to my father, "Well, Chief Laurent, I have studied your language and culture from an ethnic standpoint, and my conclusion is that you belong to that group of Abenaki Indians known as the Kanibessinoaks." A few years later he came back to visit my father and said, "I'll have to take that back, about your being Kanibessinoak. Further research leads me to believe that you belong rather to the Penawobsket sub-tribe." My father just smiled and said: "Well, Dr. Speck, I hope that I'll live long enough to find out before I die just what kind of Indian I am!" (1955:287)

One might interpret this joke as a dismissal of the questions Speck was pondering, and thus as an attempt to subtly slight anthropological authority.[1] In Laurent's case,

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[1] Laurent provided several accounts of Abenaki humor at the expense of others, including his father's tall tales – "The white man will swallow everything, arrow, bow and quiver, just so long as it's an Indian that tells it!" the elder Laurent was reported to have said (1956:6) – as well as Abenaki children who enjoyed a bit of mistranslation at the expense of nuns teaching at an Odanak school (1955:293-294).

In what may or may not be an analogous situation from Penobscot country, Eunice Baumann-Nelson has recently conveyed her distress that Frank Speck's early 20th century Penobscot work, primarily with older men, had resulted in some "embellished" stories being reproduced in print (see Speck 1997[1940], also 1935).

"I remembered how these men would laugh amongst themselves after the visits, because they had 'pulled his leg.' Much later, in reading *Penobscot Man*, I realized what that expression meant, for they had

however, this is only a partial explanation as the conversation was recounted in the midst of an explanation of "how the Abenaki relate to other groups ethnically" (1955:286). Laurent was attempting to give some geographic context to his presentation of Abenaki history and culture, placing his people in the Northeast and noting that as a unit, Abenaki was once "further subdivided into smaller groups, like the Sokoki, the Penobscots, the Coossucks, the Missisquoi, and others, according to the names of the regions, rivers, or lakes near which they lived" (1955:287). The exchange between Speck and the elder Laurent was mischievously humorous, but it was also illustrative of "the difficulty that specialists today have in making strict tribal distinctions" (1955:287), given that the names by which the region's aboriginal people have so often been known were based in geography rather than something more akin to race.[2]

Laurent did not simply dismiss the issue of historical divisions among the ancestors of the Abenaki people, and he was even more committed to claiming Vermont as an Abenaki homeland, rather than territory associated with the Iroquois, who he argued only possessed the land for a short time around the time of Champlain's 1609 voyage. The Abenaki "resumed possession of the land" after the Iroquois defeat at the

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embellished the tales with numerous pornographic twists. I was horrified to recognize that these misrepresentations, appearing in an otherwise reputable book, would forever appear as valid to its readers" (Baumann-Nelson 1998:80).

Baumann-Nelson's memories and concerns raise a number of questions. Might the embellishment of stories they told to Speck (all of the more risqué tales?) not provide insight into the sense of humor shared by old Penobscot men of the early 20th century? Or their understanding of authority and cross-cultural encounter? What inspired the particular "embellishments" they performed? Notably, Baumann-Nelson reported that Frank Siebert did not display surprise when she shared this with him, and she "surmised that he had encountered the same phenomenon in his interviews with the older men from whom he was collecting data" (1998:80).

It also raises questions about Penobscot notions of propriety through time, and the ways in which they might be gendered. And finally, note Baumann-Nelson's concern with authenticity, an authenticity which was in many ways the standard to which Speck aspired (although he was also widely known for his tricksterish sense of humor). How did Speck's informants understand authenticity? How might Penobscot understand authenticity today? And how might these understandings overlap? (An appropriate question given Baumann-Nelson's statuses as a Penobscot and as a Ph.D. who has taught at the university level.)

[2] The choice of contrast – geography and race – was Laurent's.

hands of Champlain (1955:287). Speck's desire to place Abenaki on the map was shared by Laurent, and constituted, perhaps, a bit of his frustration with the difficulties of the historical task.

Laurent was certainly not the only Abenaki confronted with vexing challenges involving ethnonyms and glottonyms, territoriality, and Abenaki history. For instance, late in the summer of 2003, I attended a memorial ceremony in honor of those killed during a 1724 English assault on the colonial-era Abenaki settlement of Norridgewock, located by the confluence of the Kennebec and Sandy rivers in what is now the western portion of the State of Maine. I had been invited to attend by Odanak First Nation Chief Gilles O'Bomsawin, who for the second year was leading a small delegation of Abenaki and supporters. The event itself was hosted by Barry Dana, at the time the chief (governor) of the Penobscot Nation and the ceremony was conducted by a Penobscot elder.[3]

Several months before this memorial, Chief O'Bomsawin was telling me about his previous trip to Norridgewock. One of things by which he was particularly struck was the plaque commemorating the work of Father Sebastien Rasles, S.J., the French missionary slain in the 1724 assault.

FATHER RASLE'S SCHOOL AND MISSION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

ON THIS SITE, PRIOR TO 1705,
STOOD THE FIRST NATIVE AMERICAN
SCHOOL IN THE REGION NOW KNOWN
AS THE STATE OF MAINE.
THIS SCHOOL WAS ESTABLISHED BY
FATHER SEBASTIAN RASLE, A MISSIONARY,

[3] This was my understanding at the time, and that of Chief O'Bomsawin. It later came to my attention that Gedakina, Inc., an organization directed by self-identified Abenaki Rick Pouliot, "co-founded this annual memorial," working with regional Wabanaki communities (http://www.gedakina.org/alliance/norridgewock.html).

PRIEST, AND TEACHER IN THE KENNEBEC
RIVER AREA FOR THIRTY YEARS.
FATHER RASLE'S ACTIVITIES INCLUDED THE
PREPARATION OF AN ABENAKI DICTIONARY.[4]

He was puzzled by the fact that this had been an historic *Abenaki* settlement, as attested by the monument among other things, yet the memorial ceremony was being hosted by the *Penobscot*. He readily acknowledged the potential for common histories, having recently expressed regret that a representative of the Penobscot government had been unable to accompany him on a trip to France to honor Jean-Vincent d'Abbadie de Saint-Castin (1652-1707), a French baron and Abenaki chief who lived for many years at Pentagouet on the lower Penobscot River (see Salagnac 1969). Nevertheless, the ethnonyms obscured historical dynamics and left Chief O'Bomsawin with questions.

Similarly, I spent May 28, 2002, on a roadtrip with David Benedict through a swath of the Adirondacks, first stopping to visit with local historians in the town of Indian Lake, named for his ancestors.

> First on the scene during the American Revolution was the Abaneki [sic] Indian from Canada, Sabael Benedict, who settled on the shore of Indian Lake. He was the first permanent resident of Hamilton County. Here Sabael raised one son and three daughters[5]… (Aber 1984:24)

The local historians – Bill Zullo and John Fish, the latter a distant Abenaki cousin of David's (see Roy & Benedict 2009b) – seemed quite happy to talk with us about local Abenaki history including tales of Emma Camp Mead, an early 20th century local

[4] The marker was erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution in December 2000.
[5] Sabael raised two, not three, daughters. Catherine and Margaret were baptized on July 17, 1800, at Saint-Jean-François-Regis (RSJFR); the former was the ancestor of the Mitchell family, the latter was the ancestor of the Camp family. The third purported daughter, Marie or Maria, was the result of a misreading of the 1870 U.S. Census of Indian Lake which listed Marie Camp, 69, in the household of Elijah Camp. This woman was Elijah's step-mother, Maria Diamond, who had married his (non-native) father John Camp while the family was living in Middleburgh, Schoharie County, NY from the late 1840s into the 1860s.

businesswoman who was the daughter of Sabael's grandson, Elijah Camp, and an Oneida woman, Elizabeth Kennedy.

We journeyed on, driving to Lake Durant, a small body of water along the road between Indian Lake and Blue Mountain Lake. David wanted to show me the gravesite of his grandfather's grandfather, noted Abenaki guide Elijah Benedict, which is marked by an unusual large standing stone. According to the late Adirondack historian Warder Cadbury, the stone was erected by local log drivers in 1902, on the spot of "an old Indian grave" thought to be that of Benedict, "apparently a general tradition at that time."

Past Blue Mountain Lake we drove to Long Lake, a community associated with well-known 19th century Abenaki guide Mitchell Sabattis. Stopping for a late lunch, I purchased a copy of John Todd's *Long Lake* [1983 (1845)], quickly noting the passage on page 28 referring to local traditions of an old Abenaki village (destroyed by the Mohawk) and burial ground nearby. Having eaten, we made for our final destination: the iron mine at Tahawus, said to have been discovered by Elijah Benedict not far from the place where mountain streams meet to form the Hudson River.

At the end of the day, as David was dropping me off at the parking lot in Queensbury where I had left my car, he wryly observed, as he would many times subsequently, that the eastern Adirondack region is *typically represented as Mohawk territory*.

Questions from the eastern and western boundaries of Abenaki country have combined in the person of Sabael Benedict, 18th-19th century apical ancestor of the Benedict family, who has often been described in Adirondack historical texts as a Penobscot. What might this mean? David Benedict and I have had several conversations

about this, and when we were beginning to collaborate with Warder Cadbury on a portion of his Sabael biography in 2002, David wrote to me that "One thing I know that concerns Warder the most is Sabael's tribal origin. Does he stick with 'Penobscot' or re-write history[?]"

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History had deemed Sabael a Penobscot despite his Abenaki family and his residence in "Mohawk territory," even as Norridgewock had been *written* an Abenaki place despite Penobscot claims to its legacy. Such are the dilemmas of time, space and belonging from each side of an Abenaki *homeland* that is partially constituted by historical practice. How scholars and others reckon groups and territories through time are crucial considerations when First Nations are acknowledged as groups whose aboriginal rights are tied to territorial precedence. Despite common histories at locations such as Norridgewock, confusion remains about how best to describe and identify with the legacies of communities which no longer exist as such. Despite long Abenaki histories in the Adirondacks, they are typically mapped as Mohawk and Oneida lands. Despite his status as progenitor of a large Abenaki family, Sabael Benedict is commemorated in regional historiography as a Penobscot.

Stephen Laurent, his father, and Frank Speck would have appreciated these perplexing scenarios, and this chapter presents my own attempts to grapple with Abenaki histories and territorialities – such as the above examples – as well as the various relationships which have been central to such work. As an ethnographer concerned with the production of knowledge, as well as a professional student of Abenaki history engaged in collaborative research with Abenaki family or lay historians, I have found

questions of expertise to be central to any endeavor to understand the past, and to this set of questions in particular.

The Expert and the Lay

On May 21, 2007, Elaine (Paquette) Ricard sent an e-mail to me, two other scholars, and two of her fellow Abenaki historians, asking us to write "formal reviews" of *The St-Francis Abenaki Paper Trail, 1790-1900* (Ricard 2006), "in order to enhance the sale of the book." I wrote back three days later, asking is she was "looking for a paragraph or something closer to a page or two," and she promptly replied that she thought that a short paragraph would be more than enough.

I spent the next couple of hours trying to figure out how to capture Elaine's book in a short paragraph, highlighting not just the parts of Elaine's project that fascinated me, but the "selling points." Why should Abenaki people, scholars, college libraries, etc. buy the *Abenaki Paper Trail*? At the end of the afternoon I sent her the following:

> Elaine Ricard's "Abenaki Paper Trail" is an important research tool, representing thousands of hours of painstaking research locating, reading, understanding, and cataloguing notary records (in French and English) which provide critical insights into the lives of Abenaki people, particularly those associated with 19th century Odanak and the short-lived community at Durham further up the St. Francis River. This is not a history of Abenaki people or a genealogy of Abenaki families; it is an index which allows scholars and Abenaki family historians to identify documents pertinent to their own research projects. Ricard's work will help Historically-known Abenaki to learn more about the lives of their ancestors, and historians and anthropologists to learn more about topics ranging from law and social organization to literacy and faith.

She quickly replied, "If comments like those [don't] sell the book, nothing will..." but later that evening asked if I could mention something about the Abenaki-language documents. The next morning, I made the change:

> Elaine Ricard's "Abenaki Paper Trail" is an important research tool, representing thousands of hours of painstaking research locating, reading, understanding, and

> cataloguing notary records (primarily in French and English, but some documents are in Abenaki) which provide critical insights into the lives of Abenaki people, particularly those associated with 19th century Odanak and the short-lived community at Durham further up the St. Francis River. This is not a history of Abenaki people or a genealogy of Abenaki families; it is an index which allows scholars and Abenaki family historians to identify documents pertinent to their own research projects. Ricard's work will help Historically-known Abenaki to learn more about the lives of their ancestors, and historians and anthropologists to learn more about topics ranging from law and social organization to language and faith.

"How is this?" I wrote; she replied, "Perfecto," and thanked me again. I re-read the paragraph a few more times, and then set it aside.

Two months later, Elaine wrote to me again regarding a potential change to the review. She had been thinking of a comment I had made while during a conversation we had with Daniel Nolett at Odanak the previous year. She remembered me saying something "to the effect that Dr. Day's work was the 20th century version and [her project] was the 21st," adding that "any reference to him may help." When I wrote to her that the comparison that I had made was to Masta[6], and asked if that would work well, she replied that she thought that "'Day' would be a logical reference since most universities are familiar with his works and hold his publications in their libraries."

Reading What "We" Write

Some of our informants clearly read what we write; this is not a revelation in the early 21st c. (see Brettell 1993), but a disciplinary context that merits renewed attention (particularly in aboriginal North America[7]). We need to be conscious of informants' reading practices, the reading practices of others within and outside of a given "field," and the stories that might circulate about our presentations and texts. Dona Davis has

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[6] On Masta's *Abenaki Indian Legends, Grammar and Place Names* (1932), see Chapter 2.

[7] Note that Henry Masta was reading Wissler on aboriginal North America in the early 20th century, and decades later Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa was trying to obtain copies of Speck's Abenaki-related work. See Chapter 1.

reported on rumors circulating around her ethnography when she later returned to the village in Newfoundland where she had conducted research, rumors which apparently were the result of some residents confusing her work and that of an account of nearby village by another author (Davis 1993). The identities of the anonymous informants associated with certain case studies or quotations were also an issue in the field, although Davis noted that many conclusions about these identities were incorrect.[8] Such concerns with personal information, small communities and public knowledge about research activities and contacts led Marilyn Bentz to conclude that "it is not ethical to use life histories, or to report specific incidents from individual lives, if such information has the potential to prove embarrassing if the identities of these people were revealed" (1997:121).

Davis, however, learned more subtle lessons about local ethics as informants read her work. For instance, local women objected to her "use of direct quotes as an invasion of their privacy," regardless of how accurate she was or how successful she had disguised her informants' identities (1993:31). Another telling example was provided by a story of a woman who took an axe to a hose in frustration when the village water supply was diverted to a herring boat, interrupting her domestic work.

> To me, she was a feminist heroine. When I read this account to popular women's studies audiences, they sometimes get up and cheer as I deliver the final line. However, when this woman herself read my account of her actions, she was very distressed that I said she had said a bad word, "asses" (1993:31).

Beyond ethnographic encounters with ethics and propriety, anthropologists engaged with readings of their own (and others') scholarly work have been drawn to

[8] See van der Geest (2003) for an example of informants who wished to see their names appear in ethnographic accounts, even in the context of locally objectionable social practices. See also Hodgson (2011) for an important discussion of naming in anthropology and history.

consider issues of ethnographic and native knowledge, regimes of expertise, and the politics of historical and social scientific scholarship. Critiques of Richard Handler's ethnography *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec* (1988) by Québecois scholars largely articulated the very nationalist ideology that he had described and analyzed in his study (see Handler 1993). Gail Landsman's important analysis of her research with Sara Ciborski on a dispute between self-consciously traditionalist Iroquois and non-native Iroquoianist scholars regarding the creation of a curriculum resource guide for New York public schools (see Landsman & Ciborski 1992) presented a more nuanced and complex social field where her informants on both sides of the dispute rejected an analytic shift "from the content of history to the politics of representation" (Landsman 1997:170) and reviewers treated her use of scholars as informants – even though she relied on public statements – as a violation of ethical research practice. Landsman has challenged us to consider the complicated and, for some, disconcerting overlaps between the academy and the field and the politics of scholarship in such a world.

"They" Are Sometimes "Us"

The overlaps between anthropology (and disciplines such as history) and aboriginal North America extend, of course, to First Nations anthropologists from the Northeast who work on- and off-reserve with their own people. Their experiences, unsurprisingly, trouble too-easy formulations of the "native anthropologist" and working "at home,"[9] leading to fieldwork challenges such as those discussed by Bernard Perley, an anthropologist who returned "home" to the Tobique (Maliseet) First Nation to conduct

[9] There is now a vast literature on this topic, but I have Narayan (1993) and Greenhouse (1985) in mind here. See also Panourgiá (1995), Passaro (1997), Weston (1997) and Muir (2004) for particularly useful analyses.

research, having spent most of his life away. Working in the Native Language classroom at the reserve elementary school, Perley found himself entangled in numerous antagonisms paradoxically resulting from value placed upon, yet utter marginalization of, Maliseet language instruction in Tobique and throughout the region (2006). The anthropologist's response was to embrace all of the ironies of the field – including his own challenges with speaking a first language which had been replaced by a second (see Perley 2009) – to chart the work of power in efforts to revitalize knowledge and use of the Maliseet language.

Other aboriginal anthropologists from the Northeast have taken up their position within two overlapping social fields to ground and articulate an engagement with First Nations politics and the discipline of anthropology. Penobscot anthropologist Darren Ranco has argued that he must use his position as an anthropologist to write against "anthropological research paradigms and notions of culture[10] [which] have impacted Indian communities in the areas of, for example, tribal sovereignty, federal recognition, resource rights, and environmental justice" (2006:76).[11]

In a recent article, Audra Simpson, a Mohawk anthropologist from Kahnawake, has responded to "anthropological portraits of timelessness, procedure and function that dominate representations" of the Iroquois (2007:68), representations which she described as "documentary…[seeking] to authenticate cultural forms rather than analyze them" (71). Such a tradition in Iroquois Studies originates with the work of Lewis Henry Morgan in the 19th century, and continued to set the agenda throughout the 20th century (in no small

[10] Ranco's argument suffers from a peculiar and partial reading of disciplinary history, but he describes personal experience as an undergraduate thesis writer at Dartmouth College to support his contention that anthropology overprivileges the exotic and objective (2006).
[11] For an example, see Ranco's polemical reading of the work of Shepard Krech (Ranco 2007).

part due to the influence of the late William Fenton). Simpson has "always found such portraits…to be strange in light of the deeply resistant, self-governing and relentlessly critical people" who are her fellow Mohawk and her informants (2007:68). Like Ranco, Simpson turns her ethnographic attention to topics of particular importance to aboriginal peoples, in her case the "membership" disputes gripping Kahnawake as efforts to refuse Canada's power to determine who would and would not be considered "Indian" and "Mohawk" led to considerable tension within the community. Such efforts have included the identification (and removal) of non-members living on-reserve, activities with 19th century precursors as Mohawk people have grappled with earlier forms of the colonial state project.

Theorizing and Doing "Theory"

One Saturday morning during the fall of 2010, I received a telephone call from Denise Watso, an acquaintance and Facebook friend of Audra Simpson, regarding a comment the latter had posted on her personal page. Audra had expressed her excitement about a project entitled "Theorizing Native Studies." What, Denise asked, did that mean?

Even before I had exchanged a couple of e-mails with Simpson on this topic – she is currently co-editing an interdisciplinary book which addresses "the state of theory" in Native Studies – I had a general sense of what she meant. As scholars, we "theorize" all of the time, and not simply when we engage with bodies of literature explicitly considered "theory." In her essay, "Paths Toward a Mohawk Nation: Narratives of Citizenship and Nationhood in Kahnawake," Simpson engaged with the work of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, two widely-read scholars of nationalism, as well as her own ethnographic research at Kahnawake. She intervened in theoretical – generalizing

and comparative – conversations inspired by Gellner and Anderson to ask whether statehood *must* be the ends associated with nationalism. "Perhaps the desire may be for an abstraction – a principle, such as sovereignty, for moral victory, or simply for *respect*" (2000:121, emphasis in the original). She spoke to *theory* and to the particulars of the Mohawk Nation and the Canadian settler state.

That framework of dealing with scholarly literature as well as ethnographic data, of asking questions of all sizes – Simpson posed a big one when she asked, "What is the 'stuff', then, of indigenous nationhood?" (2000:117) – is the taken-for-granted "stuff" of academic anthropology. As E. Summerson Carr has recently argued, "expertise requires the mastery of verbal performance, including – perhaps most importantly – the ability to use language to index and therefore instantiate already existing inner states of knowledge" (2010:19). The indexical meanings of "theory" are at least as important as its various denotational meanings. This is part of the process by which disciplinary knowledge is created and communicated (and contested), and by which the expert and the lay achieve social salience. After all, scholars are not the only humans who *theorize*, even if we are the only humans who concern ourselves with *theory*.

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In her recent review article on expertise, Carr asked "What are the semiotic processes by which expertise is realized, and what cultural and linguistic resources are deployed in this inherently improvisational, interactional, and institutional work?" (2010:27). Considerations akin to those framed by Carr were informing Elaine's request for reviews in 2007, as well as Laurent's address in 1955.

Doing ethnography in a setting where lay historians and others not only read what I write, but, like some of the aboriginal anthropologists mentioned above, have various stakes in my work, including political commitments, personal relationships, and their own projects as Abenaki family or lay historians. Elaine and others have self-consciously engaged with expertise and regimes of knowledge production. While Elaine had no financial stake in the dissemination of *The St-Francis Abenaki Paper Trail*, she had invested countless hours and a substantial amount of money in its production. Furthermore, she recognized its utility to present and future Abenaki family historians and to scholars. She realized that in order to convince institutions – particularly university libraries – to purchase the volumes, she would need to mobilize expertise "in order to enhance" sales.

There is, of course, an irony here. Elaine, after all, in locating, reading, and indexing hundreds of notary records, had gained a unique and learned perspective vis-à-vis Abenaki history. She had not produced a scholarly article or monograph, but she had engaged with a set of documents that have not been systematically considered by professional scholars of Abenaki history, including those whom she had asked for reviews. Such dilemmas of expertise recall Paul Nadasdy's argument to reject the question of whether something is or is not science is not a productive question, given that "It has proven to be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to contextualize scientific knowledge in such a way as to distinguish it from non-science in a consistent and convincing manner. It seems that knowledge is just too fluid and heterogeneous to be neatly divided into different systems" (2003:137).

Nadasdy echoed Laura Nader's call for a "naked science – an open science stripped of its ideologized vestments" (1996:12), a recognition that "Science decontextualized becomes privileged, dressed up, understood by its ideology rather than its practice, [and] lacking in reflexivity" (1996:3). As Nadasdy and others have demonstrated, such an acknowledgment is merely a starting point; a critical approach to knowledge requires an engagement with specific knowledge practices and the institutions that may be associated with them.

In North American and elsewhere, we inhabit overlapping social fields where *lay* and *expert* are crucially important, if often inadequate, native categories. I had employed these categories when I compared Elaine's work to Masta's: neither had a college degree, however both demonstrated a sophisticated approach to challenging historical sources, and both have made invaluable contributions to Abenaki historiography. Elaine, however, was looking for a different comparison. Day's publications are among the holdings of most university libraries throughout the region, demonstrating his expertise in the field of Abenaki studies. Where I thought to highlight continuity in Abenaki lay history, Elaine hoped to index expert/scholarly authority that she herself could not claim directly. (Of course, this is what Masta did in turning to scholars for assistance in publishing *Abenaki Indian Legends, Grammar and Place Names* [1932], and Elaine's request for reviews immediately brought to mind Hallowell's forward to that book.)

As anthropologists, we seek to reckon with both our own knowledge practices and those of our informants as cultural phenomena amenable to (and compelling) systematic description and analysis. In Abenaki country and beyond, anthropologists are not the only ones theorizing such history-making and engaging with its institutional contexts.

Institutional positioning, however, is crucial to the production of knowledge not only in the establishment of expertise; the situated character of knowledge practices has other implications as well.

Locating Abenaki Country

In all of its incarnations, *Abenaki* has come to serve as a shortcut for a set of complex histories of aboriginal life in the Northeast, for a set of overlapping identifications grounded in the profound changes wrought by North American settler colonialism.[12] Ethnogenesis has long been integral to aboriginal historiography in the Northeast, where various demographic upheavals resulted in what are too often considered to be commensurate units of sociality. Like caste and nation, ethnicity, "tribal" or otherwise, naturalizes claims of scale and collapses historic difference: Mohawk: Abenaki: Mi'kmaq:: Kahnawake: Odanak: Listiguj.[13] (Note that the formula could just as easily read: Mohawk: Abenaki: Mi'kmaq:: Akwesasne: Wôlinak: Eskasoni.) That these units are, in some instances, thought of as equivalent, and are projected as such backward in time, is more a matter of bureaucratic rationality than it is of ethnographic reality. As anthropologist Karen Blu has written, "it is all too easy to imagine Native American conceptions of place as timeless givens, constructions made by homogeneous peoples, each with a culture and social order all its own, in splendid isolation from others." Importantly, she added: "Federal and state legal systems, of course, encourage these formulations" (Blu 1996:198).

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[12] This is, of course, not to argue that aboriginal life in the Northeast was devoid of change before the arrival of Europeans or the advent of settler colonialism. See, for instance, the discussion of late woodland sociopolitical change below.

[13] The first three terms are labels for aboriginal peoples, the second three terms usually refer to specific First Nations or reserves, which are not quite the same thing. A First Nation may have claims to aboriginal title or other rights far beyond the boundaries of a reserve.

Abenaki in such a formulation is an identity linked to two or three reserves and an historic territory, to a language and to an imagination of culture that assembles representative traits and assigns them emblematic significance.[14] It is a formulation which is maladroit when accounting for ancestors from the New England coast or the middle Connecticut River (Pioneer) Valley, peoples whom archaeologists classify as Saint Lawrence Iroquoians, as well as historical peoples known as Abenaki since the early 17th century, nor is it ample when we engage with the more recent histories of the Odanak, Wôlinak, and Penobscot First Nations. Ethnogenesis as historical process and as historical explanation constructs meaningful solidarities, but is necessarily reductive. Production and reduction are the stuff of culture, but as I have been arguing in this dissertation, we must bear in mind the ways in which knowledge practices have structured the possibilities of meaning-making when reckoning histories of Abenaki territoriality and belonging.

Aboriginal Representations of Space

Aboriginal people, like people everywhere, have always had concepts of space which included claims to preeminence and techniques of representation; concepts which, of course, have changed over the millennia. In the Northeast, autochthonous understandings of geography differed from those of the Europeans they encountered as traders, missionaries, soldiers and others began to arrive in the region over four hundred years ago, as is evident by systems of place-naming which described or evoked a physical or ecological characteristic of the location in question, or political, historical, or mythical

[14] I follow Jean Briggs (1997) in contrasting traits and emblems, the latter not a "mere behavior," but symbolizing "a psychologically or socially or politically meaningful contrast between two worlds, two contexts," and mobilized to achieve collective ends, including the "positive assertion of…identity." (1997:234, 231) It is important to note, however, that traits, like emblems, are the product of processes of objectification. See also Handler (1988), particularly chapter 3.

knowledge (Prins 1994).[15] Places were not always fixed with a name, but conversational context and shared knowledge provided certainty in communication. The role of context becomes particularly obvious when considering the term *Wawôbadenik*, "white mountains," a term that may refer to either Mt. Marcy and its neighbors in the Adirondacks or the White Mountains of New Hampshire (Prince 1900:126).

In fact, as Julie Cruikshank has pointed out in her research among Tagish-, Tlingit-, and Southern Tutchone-speaking peoples of the Yukon, place-names recontextualized as names on a list or places on a map may be very different types of lexemes than place-names uttered in other contexts. Cruikshank and Yukon elder Angela Sidney identified some 230 Tagish-, Tlingit-, and English-language place-names in the life narrative the latter was recounting, despite decreased mobility "as people were consolidated into villages following the wartime construction of the Alaska Highway" (1998:17). Cruikshank wrote that "Repeatedly, women talked about time with reference to places named in Athapaskan languages and sometimes not seen for years yet still providing anchors for memory. Frequently, too, naming the places reminded women of songs that reenact and commemorate events" (17). So tied to such narrative performance were these place-names, that when Cruikshank asked another informant "to pronounce a list of place-names…compiled from her stories," the woman retold the stories rather than simply pronounce the names" (1998:20).

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[15] The most influential ethnographic consideration of place-names remains Keith Basso's *Wisdom Sits in Places* (1996), a study not only of Western Apache geographical understandings, but also of the role of those understandings – condensed as place-names – in all aspects of social life. While Basso was working in a context where many more of his informants spoke their aboriginal language, a combination of fieldwork and archival research in collaboration with native speakers in the Northeast may still lead to insight into the use of place-names by previous generations of First Nations people, as well as perceptions of space today. For another approach to the ethnography of space, see Adrian Tanner's important study of Mistassini Cree hunters (2005[1979]).

Given the context-specific understandings of place-names and the sociality to which they have long been bound, Cruikshank warns of the implications of mapping projects.

> As background to land claims negotiations, many communities set out to document the extent to which territories near their communities had been used in the past and continue to be used by particular families. Named places can thus be transformed from sites of significance to authorized boundary markers demarcating neighboring groups. Imperceptibly, named places that were formerly an assertion of multilingualism and mobility, of exchange and travel, can come to divide and separate people who were formerly connected. (1998:20)

Nevertheless, "Most aboriginal communities in Canada – even some of the urban ones" have conducted what anthropologist Terry Tobias has dubbed "land use and occupancy mapping" (2000:xi). "Possession and control of cultural data translates into considerable political power, at both the negotiating table and in court" (xi); "Any group with aspirations to meaningful self-government and recognition of rights will engage in this kind of research" (xii).[16]

Tobias has identified this sort of mapping as "the geography of oral tradition" (2000:xi), an approach which resonates with the work of the Passamaquoddy Place-Names Project described by Sanger, Pawling, and Soctomah (2006), an initiative which has identified hundreds of Passamaquoddy-language place-names in the region of Passamaquoddy Bay between Maine and New Brunswick. Like the resource managers and claims litigants with whom Tobias has worked, the Passamaquoddy and their non-native collaborators created a map which supports assertions of aboriginal presence beyond two reservations as well as ongoing language preservation projects. In Abenaki country, geographer Philippe Charland (2006) has conducted similar research on

[16] The classic account of such research is Brody (1981); see references in Brosius, Tsing, and Zerner (1998) regarding mapping – "countermapping" – in "community-based natural resource management."

Abenaki-language place-names in Quebec, without the same level of involvement of an aboriginal government interested in producing digitized maps like the Passamaquoddy's.

Listing and mapping place-names represents a radical break in native knowledge practices, and in the types of claims being disputed in the Yukon and elsewhere such a break may involve disruption of old patterns of association and movement across the landscape. In the Passamaquoddy case, where older histories of reduction and language loss pertain, one could imagine the potential for the inverse – a re-envisioning and reclaiming of Passamaquoddy country beyond the reservation, and perhaps eventually a recontextualization of place-naming within everyday speech acts. If maps have the power to disrupt, perhaps they also have the power to renew.

In the Wabanaki case, it must be noted that maps and a type of cartographic imagination are nothing new. Harald Prins has noted that "Although there are no indications that the Wabanakis kept permanent cartographic collections, there is evidence that they made maps for temporary needs" (1994:111). *Wikhegan*, maps etched on bark, were noted by Jesuit missionary Sebastian Rasles in 1723, and Prins' article includes illustrations of three 19th century examples, one Maliseet (Gabriel Acquin, ca. 1840), one Passamaquoddy (Chief Selmo Soctomah, ca. 1800), and one Penobscot (Nicholas Francis, ca. 1885).[17]

Historian Jon Parmenter noted an even more extensive mapping prowess in his recent history of Iroquoia: an Onondaga delegation visiting Albany in 1697 drew a map

[17] Garrick Mallery noted in his *Picture-Writing of the American Indians* a different spatial reporting technique – an ingenious mode of giving intelligence" – then current among the Abenaki according to Henry Masta. "When they are in the woods, to say 'I am going to the east,' a stick is stuck in the ground pointing in that direction. 'I am not gone far,' another stick is stuck across the former, close to the ground. 'Gone far' is the reverse. The number of days' journey of proposed absence is shown by the same number of sticks across the first" (1972[1884] 1:334; notes on illustration removed).

including "elements of five major drainage systems in Northeastern North America (the lower Great Lakes basin, and the St. Lawrence, Susquehanna, Connecticut, and Hudson rivers) in an area spanning approximately 150,000 square miles," as well as portages and various native and non-native settlements (2010:ix). Not only did these individuals have an impressive knowledge of regional geography reflecting long histories of trade and other activities, but they also demonstrated a facility with representing such knowledge cartographically.

From Territory to Property

Such a facility among aboriginal peoples of the Northeast no doubt contributed to the development of Frank Speck's classic model of Algonquian[18] sociality and territoriality. In "The Family Hunting Band as the Basis of Algonkian Social Organization" (1915), Speck proposed "the family group as a fundamental social unit among the hunting tribes of the northern woodlands" and offered an analysis of the "definite claims" to territories which they possessed (1915:289).

> There is, indeed, considerable significance in the fact that these tracts were remotely inherited in the families and that they were well known by definite bounds not only among the owners but among the neighboring groups…It would seem…that such features characterize actual ownership of territory. (1915:289)

[18] Speck later paid attention to similar patterns of territoriality among the Mohawks of Kahnesetake (1923) and the Huron-Wendat (1927), both of which were rare examples, he argued, of diffusion of a trait from Algonquian people to Iroquoian peoples. For another example, see Speck's note that Huron birch bark canoes still in use during the time of his research were largely of Maliseet design. "Those who follow canoe making are either wholly or in part of Malisit blood; the art is said to have been brought from the Malisit of Cacouna" (1911:222).

Speck found the boundaries of hunting territories "so well established and definite" that he was able to map "the exact tract of country claimed by each family group," each one hundreds of square miles (1915:290).[19]

Among the Penobscot, Speck identified twenty-two such family groups and territories, although Frank Siebert later identified twenty-four (Speck 1997[1940]:203). Groups and territories were totemically associated with animals, in many but not all cases game particularly associated with the land in question (206). Importantly, Speck reported that "The family hunting district was designated by the term *nzi·ʹbum*, meaning 'my river' (206)[20], which Speck took to be evidence for "The determination of the country, in the native mind, from the point of view of its waterways" (206).[21] Much has been made of the importance of a riverine orientation throughout the Northeast, a point to which I return below.

As Janet Chute has pointed out, "few concepts have proved so thought-provoking and, unfortunately, have created more acrimonious debate" (1999:482), as the family hunting territory; of central importance in that debate was the antiquity of the institution. Responding to an article by Speck and Eisley (1939) in which they considered the implications of Naskapi subsistence practice and their lack of hunting territories, Hallowell optimistically wrote that by investigating important ecological considerations, "the level of inquiry is shifted from the plan of description and chronological reconstruction to that of process and structural dynamics of human adjustment" (1949:36).

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[19] "The districts among the Algonkian seem to average between two and four hundred square miles to each family in the main habitat, while on the tribal frontiers they may average from two to four times as large" (Speck 1915:290).

[20] Siebert later reported *wəgadoʹnkəgan*, or "(his) hunting territory" (Speck 1997[1940]:207).

[21] Following Craik & Casgrain (1986), however, we might think of this designation in terms of activity on the landscape rather than a formal system of territories. Attention to the knowledge and coordination required for subsistence activities, the seasonality of prey, river levels, etc. suggest the need for greater attention to the temporalities of territoriality.

However, while studies did become much more ecologically engaged, the issue of "chronological reconstruction" dominated studies of the topic for some time to come. The debate to which Chute referred has been largely characterized as that between Speck and his followers and anthropologist Eleanor Burke Leacock, whose 1954 publication, *The Montagnais "Hunting Territory" and the Fur Trade*, presented her argument for the institution's development as a "response to the introduction of sale and exchange into the Indian economy which accompanied the fur trade" (1954:2; see also 1955). In eastern Wabanaki country (the Maritime peninsula), archaeologist Bruce Bourque has argued that family hunting territories could only have developed in the late 18th century "after a degree of territorial stability was again achieved" after the dramatic demographic upheavals of the 17th and early- to mid-18th centuries (1989:274-275).

Eventually the very terms of the debate were questioned. Harvey Feit noted that "despite the fact that earlier anthropologists on both sides of the debate assumed that Algonquian family hunting territories are an existing, or developing, form of private property, more recent fieldwork has shown that – even after more than three hundred years of fur trading and seventy-five or more years of government administration and cash incomes – the territorial practices and concepts of northern Algonquians are not adequately described as such" (1991:110).[22] As Nadasdy has recently argued, Speck,

[22] Feit also argued that the anti-colonial activities of several of his key early informants as well as Speck's own advocacy for First Nations communities influenced the way in which Speck framed territorial rights as a system of *property* (2001; see also 2009). Undoubtedly, political considerations, theoretical interests and fieldwork encounters have played a role in the development of later conceptualizations of Algonquian territoriality. If Speck saw private property as attesting to the validity of his informants' claims and the sophistication of their culture, Leacock saw the decline of communalism at the hands of capitalist and colonialist exploitation. (Feit [2009] also noted the documents available to Leacock at the time of her research, adding that newly available archival material has yielded a much more complicated understanding of regional trade and territoriality.) Perhaps contemporary anthropologist Colin Scott's rejoinder to Leacock, based on his research among Wemindji Cree goose hunters, should come as no surprise: that their

Leacock, and their supporters have "applied their own contemporary Euro-American concepts of property to the ethnographic data" (2002:249), rather than following a tradition of theorizing property that originated with Sir Henry Maine. "Coherent and rational systems for deciding who has what rights to different plots of land" (Nadasdy 2002:250) *may* constitute forms of property, but this need not be flattened into either the "private" or "communal" properties of Western legal theory.[23]

From Property to Territory

The approach taken by Speck and others, however, with its emphasis on property-as-such rather than rights to/in/vis-à-vis land, and its cartographic methodology, has not only led to misunderstandings about aboriginal territoriality in the Northeast, but has resulted in considerable confusion about "tribal boundaries" throughout the region. Notably, a set of maps produced for the Smithsonian's *Handbook of North American Indians* (Trigger 1978) has represented and reinforced a series of ethnological boundaries and objects which have proven very problematic despite the following cautionary note accompanying the volume's regional map:

> This map is a diagrammatic guide to the coverage of this volume rather than an authoritative depiction of tribal ranges. Sharp boundaries have been drawn and no territory is unassigned. Tribal units are sometimes arbitrarily defined, subdivisions are not mapped, no joint or disputed occupations are shown, and different kinds of land use are not distinguished. Since the map depicts the situation at the earliest periods for which evidence is available, the ranges mapped for different tribes often refer to quite different periods, and there may have been many intervening movements, extinctions, and changes in range. Boundaries in

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goose hunting territory system is in no way "a symptom of the decline of communal production" but it is rather "where cooperation between households is most important that the complex is strongest" (1986:170).

[23] Nadasdy has argued against a universalized concept of property, which he finds analytically suspect and politically dangerous. Rather than theorizing "what property *is* and who does or does not possess institutions that qualify" (2002:251), he is more concerned "with trying to understand why and how people use and struggle over different conceptions of 'property' in the first place" (251). Furthermore he noted that once we "claim that some specific set of non-European social relations in fact constitutes a set of 'property relations'…we authorize politicians, judges, and other agents of the state to act on them as they would other more familiar forms of property" (251). See also Scott (1988).

> the western half of the area are especially tentative for these early dates. The tribal boundaries to the north and west also do not correspond precisely with the ecological boundaries used to define the Northeast for the purposes of this volume. Not shown are groups that came into separate political existence later than the map period for their areas. For more specific information see the maps and text in the accompanying chapters. (Trigger 1978:viii, reference removed)

This map is a hodgepodge of various peoples and times, produced in a way that elides temporality and carefully arranges a variety of quite different knowledge artifacts in one seamless whole. The editor's note of caution is not followed throughout the text, however, and the volume's authoritative status[24] has no doubt contributed to the further consolidation of its geographic representations and temporal confusions.

One set of choices of particular interest here is the division of a portion of the region into the territories of the Abenaki (Western and Eastern), the Maliseet-Passamaquoddy, and the Micmac. These glottonyms-cum-ethnonyms are arranged with series of river drainages in mind, a model typically associated with Speck (1915, 1997[1940]) and Snow (1968)[25], in which each major river corresponds to a tribal division. In the work of these scholars and others, such a model has been extended back in time beyond the arrival of Europeans.

In an important article, "Ethnicity on the Maritime Peninsula, 1600-1759," Bourque disagreed with this view (1989). He argued that "the modern Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, and Maliseet tribes are better understood as products of ethnic realignments, shifts in residence, territorial loss, and the Indian policies of New England and New France" (274), than the survivals of groups in areas with less pressure from

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[24] Whiteley has recently written of the series: "This magnum opus is steadily emerging as the synoptic *sine qua non* of Native American ethnography. Organized both areally and thematically, the sheer comprehensiveness of its approach on individual peoples, societies, and histories, marks a new plateau in the history of native ethnography" (2004:460).

[25] Bourque (1989) provided a more complete historiographical discussion of this.

colonists. While the Speck-Snow reading of regional group identities theorized an in-situ transition from the Abenaki (or Canibas, an alternate ethnonym), Etchemin, and Souriquois of the 17th century to the Penobscot, Maliseet and Passamaquoddy, and Mi'kmaq of today, Bourque demonstrated a series of population movements by which Abenaki-speakers from the Kennebec valley and other drainages further (south)west came to dominate the previously Etchemin-speaking village at Penobscot, yielding an Abenaki-speaking Penobscot people (1989). Prins further developed this line of argument in his analysis of Meductic[26] and other 18th century communities along the Saint John River, where Abenaki-speaking minorities were eventually subsumed by Maliseet-speaking majorities (1992).

Prins and McBride (2007) have more recently revisited earlier generations' place-name research in light of these new historical understandings and dialectical observations recorded by a French missionary in the 1670s, identifying two distinct ethnonyms-cum-glottonyms: Western and Eastern Etchemin. The latter they associate with Maliseet-Passamaquoddy speakers; the former they argue inhabited the Penobscot region. Thus, Etchemin-language place-names in the Penobscot region represent survivals of a language which preceded the dominance of Abenaki language in the watershed, rather than a "borrowing from Passamaquoddy" as Siebert argued for place-names such as Bangor – Kenduskeag or *káteskik*, "at the place or land of the eel weirs" (Siebert 1943:506). Prins & McBride's analysis has been particularly important as it insisted on temporality in historical linguistics: Etchemin-language place-names in the Penobscot valley and along Penobscot Bay were not, Passamaquoddy. The Passamaquoddy-

[26] Meductic "persisted as a small Maliseet community until the mid-nineteenth century," when, after encroachments by white settlers, the Province of New Brunswick established a new reserve upriver, near Woodstock (Prins 1992:67).

language-as-such did not yet exist.[27] They assert that by "Ignoring differences between Western and Eastern Etchemins, collapsing regional dialects into one language and simply reducing both into 'Maliseet' or 'Passamaquoddy,' we risk misidentifying early indigenous Penobscot Indians as Maliseets or Passamaquoddies" (2007:253)[28], an error perhaps made all the more easy by extensive intermarriage among these three peoples (and to a lesser extent, their Abenaki and Mi'kmaq neighbors).[29]

From Territory to Ethnonym

Reckoning with changing ethnonyms and glottonyms, extreme demographic transformations, and fragmentary data of inconsistent quality and often insufficiently understood context has not only been a central preoccupation of researchers working on the eastern side of Abenaki country, but has also been characteristic of work further to the west. In the mid-20th century, forester-turned-linguist Gordon Day initiated an extensive research project to better understand the historical ethnology and language of the people associated with Odanak, whose language Siebert named "Western Abenaki" to differentiate it from the "Eastern Abenaki" spoken into the 20th century by the Penobscot (Smith & Nash 2003:7). Day later transformed this glottonym into an ethnonym (1978), a move which many have emulated (see Haefeli & Sweeney 2003), but more cautious

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[27] Linguistic difference within the Penobscot community persisted into the 20th century. According to Siebert: "Among modern Penobscot speakers, those whose ancestors came from the lower Penobscot River and Bay employ some grammatical forms and vocabulary that approach the Passamaquoddy language, while those whose families came from the villages on the upper Penobscot and Kennebec use the pure Abenaki tongue. For example, the numeral "five" in Penobscot is *pálenəsk*^{w}, although many Penobscots whose ancestors came from the lower river or bay use *nɑn*, which is either a cognate or a borrowing corresponding to Passamaquoddy *nan*" (1943:506-507).

[28] Prins & McBride employed this model to reanalyze the Neptune family, an Etchemin family long-associated with leadership positions among the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy (2007:237-238, 254-257). Neptunes (or Neptons) are also to be found among the Sartigan Abenaki families who live today at Mashteuiatsh, and the family name was also once found at Sartigan, Wôlinak, and in Maliseet country.

[29] When "Asked what percent of individuals who are members of the Penobscot Nation today have genealogical ties to one or more of the other Wabanaki groups, Penobscot genealogist Carole Binette responded, 'One hundred percent.' This, she added, was no doubt true for Passamaquoddies and Maliseets, and for a considerable percentage of Mi'kmaqs" (Prins & McBride 2007:3).

scholars have been hesitant to follow, writing instead of "western Abenaki" (Calloway 1990). Smith & Nash have argued that "Western Abenaki" is only useful after the early 19th century, when large-scale aboriginal demographic shifts subsided; before that time, such terminology confounds efforts to understand aboriginal history and languages (2003). As will become clear from the following two case studies, I am less certain that such terminology is valuable even for thinking through the last two hundred years.

Case Study #1: "The Adventures of Master Rabbit" and Joseph Capino

The first example I offer to rethink the East-West divide is from Leland's *Algonquin Legends*, a collection of Wabanaki folklore based on the words of aboriginal people whom he had met, published accounts, and manuscripts other researchers had shared with him. At the beginning of the text, Leland cited several authorities including (under the category "Persons") "Miss Abby Alger, of Boston, by whom I was greatly aided in collecting the Passamaquoddy stories, and who obtained several for me among the St. Francis or Abenaki Indians." He also cited her under the "Books, Manuscripts, Etc.": "*Manuscript: Six Stories of the St. Francis or Abenaki Indians*. Taken down by Miss Abby Alger."

However, the only overt use of Alger's Abenaki material is on pages 220 and 222 in the midst of the "Adventures of Master Rabbit," a set of Mi'kmaq[30] and Passamaquoddy[31] accounts of *Mahtigwess*, the Rabbit, detailing at first his misadventures mimicking other beings and making a fool of himself, and then his further, more

[30] Leland obtained Mi'kmaq versions of Rabbit's adventures from Silas T. Rand, a missionary who took considerable interest in folklore.

[31] Tomah Josephs, Governor of the Indian Township (Peter Dana's Point, ME) Passamaquoddy territory, recounted this story to Leland September 2, 1882. Leland wrote, in reference to this tale, that Josephs "in his narration not only often interpolated jocose remarks, but was wont to ejaculate 'By Jolly!' especially during the most striking scenes. I think that with him the interjection had become refined and dignified" (213).

successful endeavors after developing his *m'téoulin*, or spiritual power.[32] During Leland's presentation of "how the Rabbit became Wise by being Original, and of the Terrible tricks which he by Magic played Loup-Cervier, the Wicked Wild Cat" (213)[33], he noted that one part of this tale, the "cross-examination of the Doctor," was "taken from an Abenaki version, narrated by a St. Francis Indian to Miss Alger. This Indian is the well-known Josep Cáppino" (220).[34]

Leland offered his readers some (although not adequate) context to understand the various editorial choices he made in constructing hybrid stories, including important background on Rabbit's encounter with the Wild Cat.[35] He noted a Chippewa version of the tale provided by Schoolcraft in which Hiawatha is the protagonist, a Micmac version which abbreviated "the most amusing portion" of Rabbit's adventures, and Josephs' Passamaquoddy rendition which supplied the portion missing from the Micmac telling, "but [consisted] of nothing else" (222). Finally:

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[32] Leland noted: "It will be seen in the end that [the] great Indian virtue of never giving in eventually raised Rabbit to power and prosperity. *Il y a de morale ici*" (210). It is not entirely clear whether the moral lesson was as much the product of these old stories or Leland's re-telling.

[33] After a brief account of Rabbit's acquisition of spiritual power, Leland recounted Wild Cat's efforts to capture and kill his prey, Rabbit. Employing his power as a *m'téoulin*, Rabbit escaped Wild Cat's first attempt, and subsequently presented illusions which left Wild Cat cold, hungry, increasingly frustrated, and later, gravely injured. On one such encounter, "Wild Cat had become a little suspicious, having been so often deceived" and asked a doctor brought to treat his head wound, Rabbit in disguise, about his split nose ("Once I was hammering wampum beads, and the stone on which I beat them broke in halves, and one piece flew up, and, as you see, split my nose.") and the yellow soles of his feet ("Ah, that is because I have been preparing some tobacco, and I had to hold it down with my feet, for, truly, I needed both my hands to work with. So the tobacco stained them yellow.") Wild Cat was once again taken in by this subterfuge (219-220).

[34] I have been unable to locate Alger's *Six Stories of the St. Francis or Abenaki Indians* manuscript.

[35] Of course, it would have been preferable from the point of view of the anthropologist had he recorded each telling of the tale, rather than collapsing multiple retellings into one version. As Parsons wrote almost a century ago, "…the tale may be thought of as a kind of storeroom or language or custom, a linguistic showcase or reliable bed-rock for the study of ceremonialism or of the ways of daily life. From this point of view, variants of the tale may have even less chance of being collected – or even, if collected, of being presented – than from the point of view of the tale as an independent entity. In the one case the tale is too independent of its cultural setting, in the other it becomes a mere serf to other cultural factors" (1920:88-89; see also Radin [1915]). On other facets of Leland's approach to Wabanaki folklore, see Parkhill's important study (1997).

> The Abenaki tale is slightly different in its beginning: "Rabbit was making maple-sugar in the woods, but he was very pious, and rested on the Sabbath. While praying on this day by his hearth, there came a great black fierce man, who glared at him, but Mahtigwess kept saying 'Peace! peace! peace!' for that is the way the Rabbit prays. Then the stranger was angry because he would not cease praying and talk with him, but the Rabbit said, 'Would you have me break the Sabbath?' Then he went and brought the stranger, who was a Wild Cat, refreshments." These refreshments were the same as those given by the Doctor. Here the chase begins. (222)

A typical culture-as-traits approach to considering Joseph Capino's version of the "Master Rabbit" story as evidence that the story, or varieties of it, were known throughout Wabanaki country from the Mi'kmaq in the east to the "St. Francis Indians" or (Western) Abenaki in the west. However, knowing something about Joseph Capino's background, one might ask whether or not his stories would be characteristic of "Western Abenaki" culture.

Was Joseph Capino a "Western Abenaki"?

Joseph Capino was born circa 1814,[36] the son of Joseph-Thomas Capino and Marie-Anne Otôdoson. Both the Capinos[37] and the Otôdosons are Abenaki families historically associated with Durham and Odanak; Day identified the Capinos as Sokoki descendants and suggested southern origins for the Otôdosons as well.[38] Hallowell was

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[36] Joseph Capino's date of birth is difficult to determine as his parents had two similarly-named children in a relatively short period of time, and I have yet to locate a death record for either one. Cyr-Joseph Capino, the most likely candidate, was born circa 15 April 1814 and baptized 30 May 1814 at Odanak. Joseph-Marie Capino was born 15 February 1819 and baptized the next day at Odanak. (RSFdL) According to the 1870 U.S. Census, Joseph was born circa 1814; the 1880 census indicates that his birth was circa 1810.

[37] The Capino family are descendants of Pierre-Jacques Capino (ca. 1758-1830) and his first wife, Marie-Gabrielle. Another Capino lineage or branch is indicated by a burial record from Saint-Cuthbert, January 24 ,1812 – the burial of Marie-Anne Capinau, 76 years of age, the widow of François-Joseph, Abenaki of the St. Francis village. She had died four days earlier at her cabin in the woods. Present at her burial was her son, "Paul Capinau." I have been unable to learn more about this family.

[38] According to Day, "The Abenaki form is *otódosán* 'he passes by'. This name has a superficial resemblance to that of a Wampanoag chief at the time of King Philip's War -- Totoson or Tatoson, sachem of the territory on the south shore of Massachusetts west of Cape Cod. The name has some resemblance also to Natick *ohtohtosu* 'is removed'. (1981:90) Day speculated that "Totoson could have fled to Schaghticoke and the name reached Odanak from there" (1981:90), but this should only be considered as an intriguing possibility, not as a satisfactory explanation. The use of personal, family and other names

told that the Otôdoson family were "supposed to have come from farther south originally than some of the rest,"[39] and according to Day "Odanak tradition places the family at Saint-Hilaire on the Richelieu River before coming to Odanak" (1981:90).

Joseph-Thomas Capino was born in August 1784 and baptized two days later at Pointe Olivier on the Richelieu River, suggesting that the family was traveling to or from Lake Champlain. In 1806, Capino married Susanne Toxuse, with whom he had one son. She died during the summer of 1809, and the son died approximately two weeks after Joseph-Thomas married his second wife, Marie-Anne Otôdoson, daughter of Durham grantee Joachim Otôdoson and his wife Marie-Eulalie.[40]

In November 1822, when Joseph Capino was still a boy, his father died. A little more than three years later, "Molly Ann Swasean, of Ascot," [41] married "Bammy Girnot Matalic"[42] at Ascot's Anglican Church. This man, baptized Pierre, was one of three children baptized by Louis Metallic and his wife Marie-Agnes at Saint-Joseph-de-Beauce during the summer of 1798.[43] His first marriage, to Marie Philippe[44], a member of the Sartigan-identified family today represented by the Philippe family of Mashteuiatsh,

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among the various ancestors of the Abenaki people are not adequately understood to allow for any certainty as we theorize between specific names separated by significant space and time.

[39] Hallowell Papers, M.S. Coll. 26, Series V – Abenaki Indians – Hunting Territories + Family Names.

[40] According to Maurault (1969[1866]), Marie-Eulalie's mother was Josephte Gill; her father was an unknown Abenaki man.

[41] "Swasean" is an Abenaki pronunciation of the name "Joachim," her father's baptismal name.

[42] In later records his name was recorded as "Pamaguimite" (1831 Census of Canada). Day cautiously suggested the following explanation of the name: "*pemágwamít* 'the one who sticks to something, as, for example, to a tree being climbed with spurs'" (1981:92).

[43] The other two were Antoine, the progenitor of the Metallics of Listiguj, and Catherine, the future wife of Eli Moulton of Lennoxville and Sherbrooke, Quebec, and later Stockton, NY.

[44] The couple was married at Saint-Joseph-de-la-Pointe-de-Lévy 27 August 1812 (RSJPL). Present on the groom's side were Francois Louis (uncle), François-Xavier and Nicolas (friends) and Antoine (brother). Present on the bride's side were Thérèse (mother) and Suzanne (sister).

ended with Marie's death near or at Akwesasne on May 23, 1824.[45] On December 4, 1825 he married Otôdoson.

Were Joseph-Thomas Capino, Marie-Anne Otôdoson and Pamaguimet Metallic all the same *kind* of Abenaki? As I discussed above, the Capino family were thought to have originated in the middle-Connecticut Valley, moving to Durham/Odanak via Schaghticoke (and presumably, Lake Champlain). The Otôdosons were thought to have had origins even further south, although the narrative breaks down even with our first documented generation: Joachim Otôdoson married the daughter of a member of the Gill family. While we know nothing of her Abenaki father, her younger life was likely village-based.

According to maps such as the one found in the Smithsonian's *Handbook*, Joseph Capino's step-father was also a "Western Abenaki." While almost nothing is known of his mother, Pamaguimet's father was the Metallick celebrated in northern New Hampshire as a hero of the American Revolution and the "Last of the Cowasucks" (see, for instance, Colby [1975:258-259] and Calloway [1990:241]). That he and his siblings traveled to the Chaudière River to be baptized amongst Abenaki typically associated with Penobscot (read: "Eastern Abenaki"), however, complicates any attempt at categorization.

That these people were able to communicate with each other seems like a reasonable conclusion to make, but what might it mean to consider them all be to "Western Abenaki"?

[45] "Marie Belippe" from the Saint Francis mission was buried the following day at Saint-Jean-François-Regis.

Case Study #2: "Wawenock Myth Texts" and Francis Neptune

Frank Speck's ethnological work in the Northeast has had a profound impact on understandings of the history, beliefs and practices of aboriginal peoples throughout the region, understandings which have included the very existence of these peoples as groups-through-time. Speck's goal was to identify and describe "cultures" and "languages," objects which have a long and complicated history of conflation. He understood culture as complexes of traits – beliefs and practices – which diffused from one group to another over time, and practiced "salvage" research, a compulsion to rescue data thought to be representative of earlier generations from a foretold oblivion as aboriginal society disappeared before the onslaught of settlers.

In 1914, Speck went into the field with a sense of urgency rewarded at Wôlinak, an Abenaki reserve to the east of Odanak, near the mouth of the Becanour River, by demographic crisis and sociolinguistic rupture. The 1911 Census had enumerated eighteen individuals residing at Odanak in seven households. Abenaki Henry Metzalabanlet and Trefflé St. Aubin were living with their French Canadian wives; Henry and his wife had a son. Three French Canadian widows of Abenaki men maintained residence on the reserve; two were raising children (one of whom was a shop girl in Montreal). All of these individuals spoke French, almost all spoke English.

The final two residents in 1911 were the only two who spoke French, English, and "Abenakis": Elizabeth Thomas, an 80-year-old Abenaki basket maker, and François Nepton, a 55-year-old Indian Doctor. The former died in December 1912, but the latter was still living at Wôlinak when Speck arrived.

> Within the last generation the Wawenock dialect has gone completely out of use. Most of the survivors are half-breeds and speak French. The only person I found

> who knows the dialect is François Neptune, supposedly a full blood, in his sixties (1914), the oldest man at Becancour, whose acquaintance I had the good fortune to make in 1914 during a trip of reconnaissance among the Abenaki in company with Mr. Henry Masta of this tribe. [footnote 44 – "It might be added that Mr. Masta has given considerable time to the study of his people, and he is quite satisfied as to the identity of the Abenaki of Becancour with the Wawenock of early Maine history."] Neptune's interest in his dialect, which he knew to be on the verge of extinction, made work with him quite easy, although the state of his health prevented our doing more at the time. (Speck 1928:177)

Based on his work with Neptune, Speck identified the Wôlinak Abenaki as descendants of the Wawenock known on the Maine coast centuries earlier. This identification has been dismissed by linguist Frank Seibert, who noted that Wôlinak, or /wάwinak/, should be glossed as "circular or rounded island," and most likely refers to nearby Montesson Island (1982:100). He further argued that Wôlinak's largest demographic contribution derived from the Sandy River in western Maine.

Such origins would not be surprising given Siebert's classification of Neptune's speech as "the only modern record of any other Eastern Abenaki [dia]lect" other than Penobscot (1982:98).[46] Siebert supported this analysis by reporting that two of his Penobscot informants to whom he read Neptune's texts "considered them to be excellent representatives of the old Eastern Abenaki [lan]guage and narrative style (1982:98).

Regardless of Speck's erroneous identification of Neptune's speech with that of the Wawenocks, Siebert does little to unsettle his understanding of "language" and "culture" as clinally distributed. For instance, when presenting Neptune's "myth texts," Speck wrote that "The following few myths in text will, I think, enable us to form some idea of its intermediate position between Penobscot and St. Francis Abenaki when more

[46] Note, however, that according to MacDougall's analysis of a set of 19th century writing samples, Joe Polis, a Penobscot, used "certain Eastern Abenaki words that were not found in Penobscot" (2001:327). MacDougall argued that they "probably hail back to families who immigrated to Indian Island from Norridg[e]wock and other decimated Abenaki villages in the late eighteenth century" (2001:327), noting that the term was also used by François Neptune.

of the texts already collected in both of these dialects are published." (1928:177) This new material was meant to be in the service of ethnological classification and comparison.

Speck's assumption of clinal distribution and correlation between "language" and "culture" is further evident as he moves further away from questions of dialect:

> …The ethnical position of the Wawenock seems to have been intermediate between the Penobscot, their northern and eastern neighbors, and the composite Abenaki bands along the coast to their west. (1919:54)

Speck's approach was broad and systematic, although it did not always yield the data he sought:

> So far as can be said at present the material culture of the Wawenock was practically identical with that of the Penobscot and St. Francis Abenaki. Not much of this is preserved to the present day. (1928:176)

In the end, his analysis was consistent. He posited three ethnolinguistic units (from west to east): "St. Francis Abenaki," "Wawenock," and "Penobscot." While much more aware of the demographic upheavals of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, Siebert's model was strikingly similar. For him, the Wôlinak Abenaki speech community was "Eastern Abenaki," but spoke a variety which was intermediate between the "Western Abenaki" of Odanak and the variety spoken at Penobscot. In the context of comparative linguistics this may be accurate (although the linguistic sample recorded by Speck is quite limited in scope). However, do the details of François Neptune's life and family history support the conclusions of Speck and Siebert more broadly?

What kind of an Abenaki was François Neptune?

François-Thomas Neptun was born and baptized 28 October 1856 at Becancour, and was listed on each Canadian censuses between 1861 and 1911 as resident of

Wôlinak.[47] In 1891, he and his mother were also listed on the census as residents of Somerset, Megantic County, Quebec. Neptune was married to a Canadian woman at Plessisville, a parish near Wôlinak, in 1892. His wife, however, apparently died before the 1901 census was taken. He died December 24, 1929, at L'Hôpital Saint-Michel-Archange (RHSMA), and was buried two days later.

I have found little additional information to flesh out Neptune's life, but Indian Affairs records consulted on microfilm at Archives Canada in Ottawa contain one publicly available file regarding Neptune: a series of letters detailing his efforts to obtain a pension from the government of Canada in 1920. The correspondence paints of a dire picture of Neptune's circumstances: "…I am very poor, invalid, incapable of work. As you know, food is absolutely necessary, [and] I ask you to work on my behalf without delay." While he requested that his request be made to the Minister of the Interior, it was transmitted to the Secretary of State, mistaken for military matter. Neptune replied that an error had been made, and that he was writing in regards to a pension as an Indian of Canada. There is no further correspondence in the file detailing the eventual success or failure of Neptune's efforts.

There is little in this all-too-brief sketch to provide insight into the question of the language Neptune spoke, the origins and identifications associated with Speck's "Wawenock culture," or the ethnological position of Wôlinak Abenaki. If we imagine all of these matters as, among other things, genealogical claims – for instance, was the language he spoke the language of his parents? – then perhaps his family history might advance our analysis.

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[47] Wôlinak Abenaki were enumerated as part of the parish or municipality of Becancour.

Etienne Canactonque aka Etienne Nepton (ca. 1795-1859)

I have learned little of the early life of François Neptune's father, Etienne Canactonque aka Etienne Nepton aka Etienne Joseph-Marie, or of his family. Systematic research in church registers has thus far yielded only fragments: Etienne and his first wife, Marie-Anne, buried an infant at Lévy in 1829, and a toddler at Becancour in 1831. A "List of Heads of Families at Becancour who have petitioned for Land in Arthabaska" dated November 1831 stated that he had been resident at Wôlinak since the previous autumn.[48]

After his wife died in November 1841, Etienne married Agnes Degonzague, an Abenaki woman whose family has been associated with Odanak from at least the end of the 18th century.[49] One daughter was born to the couple in 1843, but lived only two days; Agnes died the following day. Etienne was listed alone in the 1852 census, but married a third time in 1853 to Marie Marguerite Jeannot, François's mother.

Etienne's parents were Joseph-Marie Neptone and Marie Michel, who is the late 18th and early 19th centuries baptized and buried children in the parish of Saint-François-d'Assise-de-Beauce and Saint-Joseph-de-Beauce along the Chaudiére River where the Sartigan Abenaki were struggling to hold onto their lands in the face of Eurocanadian encroachment, as well as at Saint-Joseph-de-la-Pointe-de-Levy where large numbers of aboriginal people gathered each summer. While one record identifies Joseph-Marie as amalecite[50], other records such as Joseph-Marie and Marie Michel's August 1794 marriage at Saint-François-d'Assise-de-Beauce identify them as abenaquis. Tellingly,

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[48] RG10 Vol. 83:32651-32653 cited in Savoie 2003:103.
[49] The month following Etienne's marriage to Agnes Degonzague, his sister Cecile married Wôlinak Abenaki Joseph-Ignace Inawonet. Census and church records indicate that she resided at Wôlinak until her death in 1882.
[50] The burial record of daughter Suzanne Neptone, 13 August 1818 at Levy.

they were "abenaquis de l'acadie" according to this last record. This is not an uncommon inconsistency; aboriginal families with histories spanning the Penobscot, St. John and Chaudière rivers often turn up in the documentary record as alternately Malecite or Abenaki. This may be indicative of ancestries including members of each collectivities, the insufficiencies of each ethnonym for representing regional aboriginal socialities, diverse choices made by aboriginal individuals, or the understandings of the priests producing the records in question. Unfortunately there is little contextual information regarding the way in which such identifications were elicited and comprehended by clergy.

Marie-Marguerite Jeannot (28 April 1821 – after May 1901[51])

Marie-Marguerite Jeannot was born at Wôlinak in the spring of 1821, and her baptism was recorded in parish records, however her life before marriage in 1853 presents a bit of a mystery as far as the question of language and ethnology are concerned. Her mother died 16 months after her birth, and in 1829 her father married an Abenaki woman about whom very little is known, with the exception of her death in 1839. Perhaps Marie-Marguerite was raised by her father, but it is likely that she was fostered for at least part of her childhood. Many years of her life are unaccounted for as she was 32 years old at the time of her marriage.

Edouard Jeannot (1798-1865)

Joseph Edouard Jeannot was the son of Jean Jeannot and Charlotte, Algonquins from Trois-Rivières (T.-R.). Charlotte died when Edouard was five years old, and his father married another Algonquin woman the following year. The details of his

[51] I have been unable to locate a burial record for this individual.

childhood are unclear, but on 12 August 1821, at the age of 21, he married Marie Tohan at Becancour. He signed his name in the register, as did Pierre Nagazoa.

After the death of his first wife, Marie, he married another Abenaki woman at Becancour, with whom he had one daughter who died two years[52] after her mother[53]. Edouard died in November 1865 north of T.-R. and was buried in Saint-Etienne-des-Gres.

Marie Tohan (1803-1822)

Marie Tohan[54], was the daughter of Jean-Baptiste and Marguerite, baptized in Becancour one day after her birth. Her father was a chief at Wôlinak by 1806, where his name was recorded as Jean Baptiste Pepi8ermet. Speck noted this as the name of Neptune's grandmother (Marie Tohan), writing it as *Pabi·welə mɑ't* and glossing it as "He is thought small." (1928:176)

An aside regarding "Wawenock Proposal Wampum"

This last identification demonstrates the importance of historical context for evaluating ethnological claims. Consider the following passage in which Speck discusses an artifact which he obtained from Neptune:

> On a study trip to Becancour I obtained an interesting specimen of Wawenock proposal wampum, probably the only one of its kind, consisting of several strings which were presented with a proposal of marriage by the grandfather of my informant, François Neptune, to his grandmother whose name was *Pabi·weləmɑ't*, "On le croit petit." Neptune himself was about seventy years of age at the time of my visit to him, so one can judge from this as to the period of use. This wampum comprises one loop of dark beads of a size smaller than usual, about a span in length, and another loop of white beads about ten inches in length. The two together formed a proposal gift of extraordinary worth. (Speck 1919:54)

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[52] Marianne Jeannot died 27 November 1841 and was buried two days later at T.-R. (RICTR)
[53] Magdeleine died 16 February 1839 and was buried two days later at Becancour. (RNNDB)
[54] This surname is also often spelled Towan, particularly in records relating to her brother Jean-Baptiste. Her brother Amable employed the surname "Gill" later in his life. Both surnames attested to the family's descent from Antoine Gill, son of Joseph-Louis Gill and his first wife, Marie-Jeanne Nanameghemet (see Gill 1887:35 for the Abenaki pronunciation of "Antoine" – "Toân"). Antoine's daughter Marguerite married Jean Toxuse at Odanak, but his son Jean-Baptiste became a chief at Wôlinak.

Note that Speck's claim is that this wampum and this proposal exchange are "Wawenock." However, Marie Tohan (Pabi·weləmα′t) received this wampum and its accompanying proposal from Edouard Jeannot, an Algonquin. Perhaps this ceremony was once common among Abenaki at Wôlinak or elsewhere, but the data does not support Speck's definite statement. What this does indicate is the intelligibility of wampum as an object of value, as a gift accompanying a marriage proposal, in an aboriginal milieu where individuals of different languages and histories interacted, and – in the case of the Algonquin of T.-R. and the Abenaki of Wôlinak – intermarried frequently.[55] That alone provides significant insight into the Algonquin-Abenaki world of the early 19th century St. Lawrence Valley, and likely beyond.

François Neptune's Language

Ultimately, François Neptune's biography and genealogy cannot lay bare the origins and historical processes constitutive of his particular idiolect.[56] Nor do we know enough about the local speech community (or communities) to understand how representative the "Wawenock Myth Texts" might be. Research among Delaware-

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[55] Few marriages occurred between Abenaki associated with Odanak and those associated with Wôlinak, or between Abenaki associated with Odanak and Algonquins from T.-R., throughout the 19th century, although there are exceptions:
25 February 1813 Joseph Portneuf (O) & Marie Magdeleine (W)
14 February 1814 Pierre Nagazoa (T.-R.) & Ursule Gill (O)
18 September 1835 Luc Vincent (W) & Marie Obomsawin (O)
15 July 1839 Vincent Canachou (T.-R.) & Marie Alamkassat (O)
18 January 1842 Louis Lazare Otôdoson (O) & Marguerite Shaouiguenet (T.-R.)
15 August 1842 Etienne Nepton (W) & Agnes Degonzague (O)
12 September 1842 Jean Vincent (W) & Marie Tahamont (O)
5 January 1846 Michel Ajean (O) & Clarisse Pekan aka Nepton (W)
As we have already seen, these identifications are not entirely accurate. Jean and Luc Vincent of Wôlinak were first cousins of Marguerite Shaouiguenet of T.-R.; their fathers were brothers. And Clarisse Pekan was fostered at Odanak by Jean-Baptiste and Louise-Catherine (Joseph/Magwa) Tahamont. Perhaps the list above should count her 1855 marriage to Louis Sougraine at Becancour as exogamous, rather than her marriage to Michel Ajean.

[56] Consider Mithun's argument that a phonological distinction between the varieties of Cayuga spoken in Oklahoma and Ontario are likely the result of the former's historical contact with speakers of Huron-Wendat/Wyandot language (1989:250-251).

speakers at Moraviantown, for instance, has revealed not only remarkable varietal complexity within a single speech community, but also remarkable awareness of that same complexity (Goddard 2010).[57] We lack such sociolinguistic insight regarding 19th century Wôlinak and other speech communities such as the Algonquins of T.-R.

Neptune's personal and family history, however, make clear the tremendous social complexity of Abenaki country, particularly as it overlapped with neighboring Algonquin populations. Furthermore, two of Wôlinak's principal families from the mid-19th century until today have Maliseet surnames: Saint-Aubin and Bernard. Both families have Maliseet, Algonquin, and Abenaki ancestors. Such complexity at Wôlinak and among the Capino family challenge modeling exercises of Speck, Day, Siebert and others, and calls into question the utility of terms such as "Western Abenaki."

Theorizing the Abenaki

The history of the Abenaki and their neighbors might lead one to embrace "critiques of bounded culture [which] focus on the neglect of processes and relationships that extend across space" (Bashkow 2004:443). After all, there seems to be no "pure" Abenaki language, culture, territory, etc. However, what if one were to approach the question of boundaries from an ethnographic standpoint? What if one were to abandon theory as such, turning instead to the important theorizing of Abenaki people themselves?

My inspiration is two-fold: recent scholarship revisiting the question of cultural boundaries, and the modeling exercises of Abenaki people themselves, including Speck's informants.

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[57] Perhaps similarly, James Collins has noted that his Tolowa informants are not quick to criticize what he perceived to be errors in the speech of some community members, but merely note that that is now how their family spoke the language. "Tolowa skeptics question the effort to have a *general* linguistic description for the entire speech community. They call on local definitions of language, as the communicative wherewithal of extended kinship groupings" (1998:267).

Bounded Culture from a Neo-Boasian Perspective

In a 2004 article in the *American Anthropologist*, Ira Baskhow offered an engagement with "Boasian anthropologists as seminal thinkers, offering a selective retheorization of their work that has implications for current culture theory" (444). Specifically, he considered "culture areas," noting that in Boasian practice, bounded cultures – modeling exercises to be sure – were neither impenetrable nor timeless. Rather, such geographic representations were designed "precisely to gauge the historical traffic across them" (445), emphasizing the "past, rather than [the] present" (446). Furthermore, "In Boas's conception, cultures appeared to have different boundaries when looked at from different viewpoints, and it was just this theme that became increasingly central to Boas's thinking over his career" (446).

Importantly, he noted that boundaries need not be borders. Instead, we need to approach boundaries "as conceptual structures centered on symbolic contrasts or oppositions" (2004:451). Such work need not only concern the types of culture history and ethnolinguistic research discussed above, but could also help us to understand contemporary meaning-making as well.[58] How do the people with whom we conduct our research theorize meaningful differences?

[58] As Robert Brightman has noted: "Thus an existing element of custom, intrinsically of no semiotic account, might acquire meaning as an identity sign through its contrastive salience with parallel customs of neighbors. Virtually any cultural form can assume such significance: language, dress, marriage rules, and, famously, diet. Thus, to take a relatively contemporary example from the mid-1980s, within the merry precincts of 'Mr. Arthur's' tavern on Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis, Chippewas and Lakotas reciprocally exchanged the jocular epithets 'Dog Eaters!' and 'Fish Eaters!' across the imaginary line that divided the place moiety-like between them" (2006:357). See also Bashkow (2006).

Abenaki Theorizing

The most fascinating part of Speck's analysis of the "Wawenock" was this passage regarding the classificatory imagination of his various Abenaki-speaking informants:

> [The] intermediate complexion [of Neptune's language] has led to an anomalous classification among the Indians themselves. The Penobscot associate Wawenock with the St. Francis dialect, while the latter reciprocate by classing it with Penobscot. (1928:178-179)

While Speck considered this to be confirmation of his own analysis, I understand it to be representative of theorizing by his informants.

There are numerous examples of Abenaki speakers noting differences in their speech and that of their neighbors. For instance, Louis Portneuf told Gordon Day that Penobscots did not speak like the Abenaki, and that he had a hard time communicating with them, while Oliver Obomsawin was able to compare Abenaki and the Maliseet spoken by Phileas Launière. Obomsawin concluded that he thought that the two languages were "close," although he has also identified at least one similar word ("to eat") in Plains Cree.[59]

I have heard several Abenaki speak of Penobscots and Maliseets as relatives, accentuating reported linguistic similarities and cultural traits, as well as more general (if originally linguistically-based) joint identity as Wabanakis, an identification also often extended to the Mi'kmaq people. Similar theorizations may come from Penobscots and Maliseets, too, as I was recently reminded by a Maliseet guest at an Abenaki public meeting in Albany where I had given a brief presentation. He understood the distinctions

[59] Day Papers Box 562 Folder 13.

people made, but wanted to focus on the common identity he shared with his hosts – they were all Abenaki, or Wabanaki.

Of course, Abenaki people conceptualize other differences as well, and I have heard numerous references to "white people," "Europeans," etc. My informants' ancestors have long engaged in such theorization. Take, for example, the following scene described by Schrøder after his 1863 visit to Odanak:

> [During the evening, some young people] wandered around making practical jokes. There were, for instance, three young Indians with *stove-pipes* (top hats) on their heads and lighted cigars in their mouths, but otherwise *in puris naturalibus* [naked], who came sauntering towards us in an exaggeratedly dandified manner. They were pretending to be Yankees and as they passed the fire we were sitting at, one of them exclaimed haughtily, "*All Indians, I guess.*" A young girl picked up a brand from the fire to "Teach the Yankees manners," as she put it, but she was turned away with: "*Get away, you squaw*," which together with the general laughter at the procession embarrassed her so much that she retired. It was all in fun, but these and other episodes nevertheless demonstrated how well these intelligent Indians understood and are sensitive to the attitudes and prejudices of most white people. (1989:76)

Perhaps the most constant boundary-making in Abenaki (and Wabanaki) country, however, has been that distinguishing them and the Mohawks. Schrøder reported that "all Canadian tribes are bound together in friendship. The ancient tradition of renewing treaties and pacts every sixth year is still followed. The Mohawks, however, are an exception and they are regarded as the enemy by the Abnaki" (1989:75). Similarly, Elizabeth Sadoques argued that the influence exercised by the Jesuits over their Abenaki congregation was "exemplified by their tolerance for an age old enemy" (2006:257).

Similarly, the Abenaki story most widely represented in the publications and papers of scholars is undoubtedly the "Odepsek" story, told here in simplified format:

> Once upon a time strange Mohawk came for the purpose of killing the Abenaki. A great dance was going on at the time. One of the Mohawk took pity on the Abenaki and he told an Abenaki woman about it and warned her to run

> away when the Mohawk appeared. Despite this warning the other Abenaki would not believe her when she told them and would not run away. All those who did not were accordingly killed. The Mohawk took all their cradle-boards and laid them in the bed of a little creek so that they could cross over. Then after having killed the Abenaki the Mohawk departed. They lodged that night at "Skull Place" where they camped. Later when the rest of the Abenaki returned from the hunt they were told that many of their people had been killed. They at once prepared to follow the Mohawk. Among them was a certain shaman and he conjured and learned where the Mohawks had camped. The shaman also saw how they all were sleeping and he went across to where they were and cut open all their bark canoes. Thereupon the other Abenaki crossed over and killed all the Mohawk while they were sleeping. Only one Mohawk was spared. They cut off his ears and told him to go forth and tell abroad how all his people had been put to death. (Speck's free translation of Maude Benedict's 1907 account, 1919b:284-285.)

Similar Abenaki-Mohawk contrasts are meaningful in other contexts, too. I have heard several different Abenaki comment on how Mohawks are much more aggressive than Abenaki people, often relating this to Mohawk horticultural histories as opposed to an Abenaki ethos grounded in "nomadic hunting and gathering." This contrast evokes the image of the Mohawk warrior, and is sometimes narrated in terms of Mohawk expansionist warfare during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, or in terms of the "Oka crisis" or Kahnawake's vocal opposition to the *Indian Act*. I have even heard one informant claim that different dance styles witnessed at powwows he had attended supported this basic opposition of characters.[60]

Such distinctions can be playful, and may extend to perceptions of Mohawks as darker and more endogamous than Abenaki. For instance, at Odanak's powwow one summer I was sitting with an off-reserve informant and her non-native traveling companion. As Mohawk dancers from Kahnawake performed for the assembled crowd, the latter quipped to the former that the Mohawks really looked Indian, playfully

[60] I witnessed a similar bit of objectification at a lacrosse match during Odanak's annual summer powwow. Odanak was playing Wendake. Fans of the latter were making much more noise in the stands than fans of the former. I heard one Wendat man sitting behind me say: "Les abénakis – ça se crie pas!"

implying that the Abenaki did not. The joke was meant to provoke a friend, but the contrast of phenotypes and the expectations that "Indians" look a certain way, in an Abenaki and Mohawk context, was not new to me or to many of the Abenaki I know.

East and West, Mohawk and Abenaki

There is much to consider in the examples with which I opened this chapter. Processes of language formation, overlapping histories of residence and affiliation, competing claims to historical precedence, and the precise aboriginal identification of a celebrated historical figure; these are issues thoughtfully contemplated by scholars and natives alike. Ultimately, this chapter argues for an ethnographic approach which can get lost in struggles for historical understanding. Such an approach takes seriously the knowledge practices of those with whom we work, people for whom cultural boundaries are particularly meaningful. We must also remember that boundaries between professional and avocational historians and social scientists are not borders, and are insightfully analyzed by many of our interlocutors.

Chapter Five: Histories of Home

In the first decade of the 19th c., Edward Augustus Kendall encountered Abenaki at "Saint-Français" who knew the region around Norridgewock and were able to recount "a superstitious history of a rock that lies in the river, a little below" the old village site. (1809 3:52) He also met "Zanghe'darankiac, or people from the mouth of" the Androscoggin River[1] (1809 3:142) as well as "Cohássiac" from the upper Connecticut Valley[2] (1809 3:191). Others at Odanak may have recalled origins on Winthrop Pond, near the Kennebec River[3] (1809 3:124), and Kendall discussed the "true name and signification" of "Michiscoui" at the north end of Lake Champlain with "the Indians of Saint-Français" as well (1809 3:276). The "Indians of Saint-Français" had a complex understanding of *home*, clearly not bound by the limits of the Abenaki village that would later become a reserve under Canada's *Indian Act*.

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[1] "I learned, that they call it, or rather its banks, *Amilcungantiquoke*, or *bands of the river abounding in dried meat*; that is, *in venison*." (1809 3:142)

[2] "Some Indians, of this part of the Connecticut, still remain at Saint-Français, where they call themselves *Cohássiac*" (1809 3:191). Day (1978) translated this "the ones from the white pines," referring to the Lower Coos Intervales at Newberry, Vermont.

[3] Having identified Winthrop Pond as the former Lake Cobbeseconte, Kendall wrote: "A very trifling number of the Indians, of this river, are still in existence, and belong to the village of Saint-Français, where they bear the name of Cabbassaguntiac, that is, people of Cabbassaquntiquoke. *Cabbassa* signifies a *sturgeon*. The pronunciation *cabbassa*, more elegant, as I think, than *cobbissé*, is constant among the Indians whom I saw; and I may take this opportunity of remarking, that the form of the Indian words is commonly more elegant in their own mouths, as they are rendered by the English colonists. I exclude, on this occasion, all that is deeply guttural in their speech.

But the Cabbasagunties were not only inhabitants of Cabbassaguntiquoke, but *cabbassas* or sturgeons themselves. They relate, that in days of yore, a certain man, their progenitor, standing on the banks of the river, stripped himself, and having made formal declaration that he was a sturgeon, leapt into it. He never returned out of the water in human shape; but a sturgeon, into which he was supposed to have changed himself, or to be changed, was seeing playing in the stream immediately after his disappearance; and, upon this evidence, in addition to his own declaration, all the nation professed themselves ever after to be sturgeons." (1809 3:124-124) What is not clear from this passage is whether his informants related the story of their identification with the sturgeon to Winthrop Pond, or whether it was Kendall who made this connection between the name of a group and the name of the place. Sturgeon are (or were) found throughout the rivers of Maine, as well as other parts of the Northeast, including the Connecticut River and Lake Champlain.

Kendall's book does not provide ample context for evaluating the significance of his data in terms of the relative importance of various ancestral homelands in the historical imagination of Odanak's "residents" at the turn of the 19th century. He never divulged the names of his informants and did not query the bases of their identifications with specific places.[4] Nor did he ever reveal the extent of his questions and the dates of his visit to Odanak. Kendall's informants were intimately acquainted with some locations south of the U.S.-Canadian border, while some were remembered or provided forms of identification, but the precise processes of reduction and production at work elude his readers. However, discussing Norridgewock, "a *village seated on still water*, or more minutely, on a still water between two places at which the current is rapid" (Kendall 1809 3:52), Kendall revealed a still-productive physical engagement with ancestral homelands: "The Indians of Saint-Français and Becancourt still occasionally pass and repass between the Saint-Lawrence and the Penobscot and Saint-John's" (1809 3:52).

If a narrative of historical rupture has long characterized most imaginings of Abenaki history and geography, it has always been confirmed and contradicted by the lives of Abenaki people. The Abenaki people are said to have abandoned their homeland for the mission of St.-François-de-Sales, currently the reserve community known as Odanak. And yet, for many Abenaki families Odanak was always a part-time residential strategy, often for only one or two generations.

This was enough to ensure that in New England and New York, these aboriginal people became known as "St. Francis Indians" and later "Canadian Indians" as well. Without a reserve south of the border, Abenaki were known within settler states as

[4] For instance, given a case of immediate ancestry linked to two different locations in the homeland – Missisquoi and Norridgewock? – how might one identify? Are their lineal principles at work? Can such identifications be context driven? Might they reflect biographical details as well as family history? Etc.

Canadian Indians, even if they had never set foot within the boundaries of Canada. This is the state of affairs in which Abenaki people have found themselves for centuries, and this is the dilemma of recognition which has plagued them since the founding of the United States. Despite continued residence in and near their homelands south of the border, Canada and the Odanak reserve have profoundly structured Abenaki aboriginality, often imagined as rooted in a reserve rather than the homeland in which many Abenaki have continued to live. Abenaki people are faced with a powerful double bind: in order to be recognized as the aboriginal people of much of northern New England and New York, they must be recognized as Canadian Indians. Any claim to local "American" aboriginality has to be both supported and supplanted by an association with Odanak and with the Canadian nation-state.

This chapter will explore the predicament posed by Abenaki residence off the reserve and south of the border as it structures the possibilities of *home* as meaningful space. For Kendall's informants, home exceeded Odanak. It was also generated in stories and place-names and regular returns to territories to the south. This less-than-settled existence has always challenged the expectations of two colonial states and their bureaucratic apparatuses, as well as those of their non-native citizenries. At times, it has also provided conceptual challenges for Abenaki people, too.[5]

In what follows, I pursue this matter historically and ethnographically, arguing for the suspension of narratives of rupture, reduction and diaspora, and for a more complicated approach to questions of *home* in Abenaki studies. Being *at the village* – the typical gloss for the Abenaki word *Odanak* – has long comprised one set of Abenaki

[5] On cross-border challenges elsewhere in Wabanaki country, see Jerome & Putnam (2006) and Wicken (2005); for an important set of examples from Coast Salish country, see Miller (1996-1997 and 2006).

affective and sociopolitical possibilities. In the following pages, I will identify other historical and contemporary possibilities and grapple with Abenaki imaginations of home at the village and in the homeland.

Taking a Tour of Newport with Skip Bernier

I already knew Richard "Skip" Bernier – a member of the extended Robert Obomsawin family – the first time I visited him at his home. We met in downtown Newport, VT, not far from his primary residence on the eastern shore of Lake Memphramagog. Most recently, we had met in the conference room of the Band Council Office at Odanak, where he and a cousin sat in on a meeting with Chief Gilles O'Bomsawin, two archaeologists based in Vermont, and me. In the various conversations which composed that meeting, Skip had expressed his frustration with the state of Abenaki-related politics in Vermont, particularly the dominance of the "St. Francis/Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation" in the historical and political imagination of contemporary New England (particularly Vermont), and the unwillingness of politicians and policymakers to entertain alternative historical-ethnological models and to treat his extended family and other Abenaki he knew accordingly (as players in the realm of politics and "culture").

On that first Newport visit, we got into Skip's truck and went on a bit of a tour of the area. Skip told me stories about growing up in town and pointed out a long series of homes where relatives lived, noting whether or not they had status under the *Indian Act*. Many of them did. He also told me about, and often pointed out, where various relatives worked, including state and municipal government offices, the local public works department, and a town library. As we drove, he commented on the labor histories of his

extended family[6], the military service of various relatives, and recent educational achievements. He held up two grandsons as examples of advancement in higher education: the oldest was a senior in college, had traveled abroad, and had shown a particular interest in Abenaki affairs.

The point of the tour was highlighted by several comments Skip made: there were a lot of Robert Obomsawins in and around Newport, they had spent their lives in Vermont (but had relatives at Odanak and Waterbury, CT), and had worked hard to establish themselves as respectable members of their residential community while still maintaining interests in and kinship connections to their fellow Abenaki, particularly at Odanak, where Skip and a sister own a house. For Skip, genealogy and biography established his family's claims to political recognition as Abenaki in the state of Vermont, and their histories of hard work and social mobility earned them the respect that he felt they had been denied in his own lifetime and during the lives of his ancestors.

However, he also narrated a deeper history within Vermont. He spoke with me about his interest in Robertson's Lease, about his genealogical work, about local archaeological finds, and about old books he had read about aboriginal history. After an hour or so in the truck, we drove to Orleans, where Skip showed me a local monument dedicated in 1892 commemorating a spot near the confluence of the Barton and Willoughby Rivers known alternately as "Indian Landing" and "Barton Landing" (the first navigable spot on the Barton River where one could move goods downstream to Lake Memphramagog), and told me about a nearby field which was said to have been

[6] Skip retired from a career as an electrical contractor. In reference to Abenaki-related politics in Vermont, he was very defensive about being perceived as a "Johnny-come-lately," and was quick to point out that he had to work. Having retired, he wanted to devote some of his time to work for justice for his people.

filled "with teepees" at some point in past, drawing on his reading of local history and his general knowledge of local geography.[7]

Skip's sense of the Abenaki world, however, was also bound to Odanak. Many members of his family were enrolled at Odanak; their numbers had grown after the passage of Bill C-31, which is when Skip received his own status. Skip valued the friendship he had developed with Chief Gilles O'Bomsawin, who had come to Newport to meet with Abenaki living there. (Skip had recently accompanied the chief on a similar trip to Sudbury, Ontario.) And when Skip and his relatives felt that they needed some sort of name to compete with various groups self-identifying as Abenaki, they chose "Odanak Abenaki of Vermont." They did not, however, elect any sort of leader. "We already have a chief," Skip stated emphatically: "Gilles O'Bomsawin."

Testimony at Montpelier, 2006

This combination of biography, family history, older aboriginal histories and hard-working respectability, as well as allegiances which exceed state borders, have informed Skip's political activism in the years since his retirement. On January 20, 2006, Skip testified before the Vermont House Committee on General, Housing & Military Affairs to voice his opposition to S.117, legislation designed to extend "state recognition" to self-identified Abenaki people who live in the state.[8] He had prepared testimony

[7] "The early settlers of Barton found Indian wigwams, in a decayed condition, quite numerous in the vicinity of the outlet of Barton pond, from which it is to be inferred that it was a favorite camping ground of the savages. It is stated that an old Indian by the name of Foosah claimed he killed twenty-seven moose, beside large numbers of beaver and otter near this pond in the winter of 1783-'84." (Child 1883:186)

[8] S.117 was signed into law later that year, but its recognition of an unspecified Abenaki "minority population" was deemed insufficient for standing under laws such as the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-644). Subsequent legislation has created an application process for recognition administered by a government commission composed of self-identified Abenaki. I have reviewed the commission reports submitted to the legislature in 2011 and concluded that the review of historical claims made by applicant groups has been inadequate. Denise Watso has recently compared the process to a "grant competition," questioning its integrity as an engagement with indigenous rights.

which expressed his concerns that lawmakers were uncritically accepting the historical claims being made by a variety of groups based in Vermont.[9]

Skip began by introducing himself genealogically. His grandfather was Frédéric Robert Obomsawin,[10] an Abenaki from the "Saint Francois de Sales mission" at Odanak. He continued:

> I personally would support a bill recognizing the Abenaki people. Out of respect for my culture I strongly feel that one should have to prove their heritage to be part of this recognition. Oral traditions is simply not proof of Abenaki identity. It seems to me that after 20 years and two BIA hearings one could easily obtain genealogy proving their identity.

Skip's critique of the bill, which required no genealogical evidence of Abenaki ancestry, was framed from the beginning with an identification with the name Robert Obomsawin, an unambiguously Abenaki family. He did not take a stand against recognition per se, but insisted on documentation.

As he continued, his narrative spanned the border between the U.S. (Newport) and Canada (Odanak). A history of wage labor was not a challenge to aboriginality; rather, it was how Abenaki people were able to support themselves.

> My mother and her 11 siblings were also born over 100 years ago at this same Indian Reservation [Odanak] on the St. Lawrence River in Quebec. She was next to the youngest of the children in the family. In those days the education on the reservation was very limited. At a very young age she and her brothers and sisters came to Newport and the surrounding areas to find work. She and her five sisters found work in hotels in and around Newport. Eventually they acquired

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[9] Ironically, when the bill was passed Rep. Francis Brooks pointed to Skip's appearance before his committee to illustrate the importance of the legislation. According to Brooks, when he addressed the committee, "One could feel the pride. Also, one could feel the desire to be recognized as a Vermonter and an Abenaki" (Hallenbeck 2006). Skip's testimony, which was in favor of Abenaki rights but opposed to the recognition of self-identified Abenaki, was not always as clear as it might have been. Brooks' statement, however, betrayed a lack of understanding of Abenaki history and aboriginal rights and a multiculturalist, non-political celebratory approach to *heritage* which was largely shared by his fellow legislators.

[10] Frédéric Robert Obomsawin was the son of Louis Robert Obomsawin and Henriette Toussignant dit Lapointe, a French Canadian woman.

> other employment at the Bray Mill, various sewing factories and restaurants in the area.
>
> Her six brothers also migrated to this area. One of them became a very good auto body man in the automobile industry. Another became a lineman and others worked in the woods and factories. One was killed while working in the woods here in Vermont.

Hard work, professional success and family tragedy were all part of the Abenaki story in Vermont, a story which includes the large Robert Obomsawin extended family and others.

> Out of these 12 individuals many of them had good-size families, most of them still living in Vermont. A great many of them are in Orleans County, some in Vergennes, St. Johnsbury, Lyndonville, Orleans, Hardwick, and Derby, just to name a few of the areas.
>
> Many of these Abenaki descendants of Odanak have very responsible jobs with different municipalities and State of Vermont and other reputable employers. They also work very hard to better themselves and their families. I personally have genealogy on all these individuals including other families that live here in Vermont and Odanak. For example, Wawanolet, or Nolet[11] and Jean Baptist Masta[12] who died November, 1861 Barton, VT. Also there was a Reeves Masta, born and died in Barton along with his brother John Masta who died May 14, 1857 Barton, VT.

Skip estimated "the number of Abenaki descendants from Odanak living in Vermont" at between 350 and 400 people, and broadened the scope of Abenaki genealogical documentation beyond his extended family, mentioning Mastas and Wawanoletts with histories in northeastern Vermont. Here reference to Odanak and unambiguously Abenaki family names[13] combine with references to specific documented events (an official record of a death, for instance) to establish the types of proof he was

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[11] Skip has met some of the children of a Wawanolett woman in northeastern Vermont. It should also be noted that Louis Wawanolett, killed during the War of 1812, was known to trap around Double Pond in Salem (east of Newport, VT) around the turn of the 19th century. His trapping partner was Metallic (Day 1981:100, citing Harrington 1869:22-23).

[12] Dr. Jean-Baptiste Masta (John Masta in the U.S.) was "An Indian of the Abanaquois tribe, born at St. Francis, C. E. [Canada East, today known as Quebec]; read medicine with Dr. Lemuel Richmond, of Derby Line; graduated at Dartmouth Medical College, 1850; admitted June, 1861; died at Barton, VT, October 21, 1861." (Vermont Medical Society 1884:107) Masta was one of four children born to French Canadian militia officer Toussaint Masta and Catherine Vassal, whom he married in 1812. Vassal was born to a French officer, François Vassal de Monviel (see Legault & Lépine 1988) and an Abenaki woman, Marguerite Annance.

[13] Masta is actually a French name, and not all Mastas are Abenaki. Jean-Baptiste Masta, however, was. (See note 9.) Most of my informants use the name "Masta" as though it were an Abenaki name.

arguing must be considered as part of any group's case for recognition as an aboriginal government. In fact, when dealing with state and federal agencies in the 1980s and 1990s to establish his electrical contracting business as a minority-owned firm, Skip was visited by a consultant who came to his office "to gather all the information he could get to prove that I was an Abenaki Indian."

Insisting on historical and genealogical documentation and ethical conduct, Skip argued that this was not a question of personal politics or intergroup rivalries.

> I personally do not have a problem with any of the so-called Band's, Clans or tribes. My personal opinion is that each and every individual applying for recognition should have to prove heritage. Odenak does not recognize the above mentioned for the simple reason that they have failed to submit genealogy proving their heritage. I have brought several resolutions from the Odanak reservation which "were" approved by the Band council and Chief Gillis O'bomsawin.
>
> Ethically it is wrong for scholars and some individuals to present photographs of past generations on fishing trips and family gatherings along with a biography of their oral tradition as proof of their Abenaki heritage. It is my opinion this is not enough evidence to be recognized as an American Indian.

Skip returned to this theme of ethics and evidence again during the question and answer session which followed his prepared testimony, but his specific reference to "scholars…[presenting] photographs" was a clear allusion to two photographs published by Frederick M. Wiseman (2001:126, 127) as examples of "River Rats," anglers and fishing guides from northwestern Vermont whom he has claimed were Abenaki. Wiseman's 2001 book unproblematically referred to families such as the Robert Obomsawins who are enrolled at Odanak as being in "exile" (101, 115, 118, 119), as opposed to those Wiseman has claimed maintained a "traditional 'extended family band' lifestyle" or "somewhat more acculturated" way of life within Abenaki homelands in the U.S. (120). Wiseman's characterization of historically-known Abenaki as exiled to

Canada was met with a refusal from Skip, and, in one way shape or form, from all of my informants, infuriating some of them.

I share many of Skip's historiographical misgivings vis-à-vis Wiseman's *The Voice of the Dawn* (2001) and other work which could be easily read as *exiling* Abenaki history north of the border. However, I have struggled with Skip's easy association between Odanak and his family's history in Vermont, with the ways he conflated documentation and ethics, and with his insistent references to hard work and respectability. Listening to Skip testify in 2006, I was concerned with his use of the phrase "Abenaki descendant of Odanak," which I felt reduced Abenaki history to one locale in Quebec and offered political foes an additional opportunity to paint historically-known Abenaki people as "Canadian Indians." Furthermore, his ethical frame, which implied a populist rejection of *politics* in favor of *justice*, was so tied to ideologies of class mobility that I worried that his stand for aboriginal rights and his argument for the importance of documentation would be lost to his audience, too easily assimilated to a Vermont mythos of labor migration celebrated particularly in relation to immigration from French-speaking Canada.

I still believe that my political analysis was apt, but I was missing the ethnographic lesson. The challenge Skip presented was interpretive, and applicable to understanding Abenaki histories and the realities of off-reserve residence today. Ironically, my own desire to present non-reductive Abenaki histories obscured the insights resulting from engaging our informants on their own terms. While critical ethnographic and historical attention is desperately needed to properly account for the necessary linkage anthropologist Karen Blu identified between "how Native Americans'

relationships to their home places, past and present, get shaped" and the "political ramifications of ideas of home place" for such peoples (Blu 1996:197), as students of culture we must also acknowledge that "few home places are simple" (Blu 1996:220).

Persistence: Capinos and Robert Obomsawins

Having spent considerable time in the archives working out Abenaki histories of residence, trade, etc. throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, conversations with Skip and others have led me to contemplate suggestive patterns of movement and residence between the Eastern Townships, Lake Memphramagog, the Upper Valley of the Connecticut River, and the White Mountains beyond. Such patterns were extended by an affinal tie between the Capino family[14] and the Robert Obomsawins – Frédéric Robert Obomsawin's sister, Skip's great-aunt, Séraphine Robert Obomsawin, married Louis-Joseph Capino in June 1889 (RCCS).[15] The son of Théophile and Marie (Obomsawin) Capino, Louis-Joseph was raised in northern New Hampshire until he moved to Odanak as a teenager (see Chapter 4).

That "move" to Odanak, however, like others before it, did not signal a complete rupture with homelands south of the border. When Louis-Joseph's sister, Hannah, married Louis Paul Denis at the Congregational Church at Eaton, Quebec in February 1885, her residence was recorded as Newport, VT.[16] I have not learned why she was living in Newport, or whether or not her young son, John Capino, or other Abenaki were living there with her. The affective substance of residence remains frustratingly elusive,

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[14] For more on this particular pattern, see Chapter 2. Note that one central figure in these family networks, Pierre-Nicholas Toxuse, met Harrington in Newport on September 19, 1864, where he shared the Abenaki-language name of Jay Peak, one of the region's tallest mountains (Harrington 1869).

[15] The marriage was witnessed by Samuel Watso, Henry Masta, and Caroline (Tahamont) Masta.

[16] "Louie" Paul Denis was recorded as a basket maker from Pierreville. Louis' parents were Joseph and Clarisse (Bibeault) Paul Denis.

but the glimpses afforded by the documentary record indicate a persistent presence south of the border.

Almost thirty later, in June 1924, one of Louis-Joseph and Séraphine's daughters, Anna[17], crossed the border from Canada into the United States at Newport.[18] According to customs records, Anna was 32, a widow, a basket maker. She could read, write and speak English[19]. 5'4", dark complexion, black hair, brown eyes. Her last residence was "Pierreville," and she had last been in the U.S. (New Hampshire) in June 1923. Her closest relative in Canada was her sister, Alice Capino, then a resident of Montreal.[20]

Accompanying her was her younger cousin (and Skip's mother), Malvina Robert, 18, single, a basket maker. Malvina could read, write, and speak French. Her last residence was North Hatley, Quebec,[21] where her brother Israel still was living. According to this record, she had never before been in the U.S. Both women carried $20 and were bound for Newport, where they would stay with Mrs. Fred Leblanc (Eva Robert

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[17] Anna (Capino) Godon and her sister Alice Capino worked with Gaby Pelletier (1982) while he was conducting research on Abenaki basketry during the month of June, 1980. Pelletier described the genesis of this research in similar work among Mi'kmaq and Maliseet basket makers, followed by a trip to the Musée des Abénakis at Odanak in 1979. He was impressed with the quality of Abenaki baskets for sale at the museum, singling out a particular basket made by Anna (Capino) Godon, and was concerned about the craft's survival (1-2).

[18] National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.; *Manifests of Passengers Arriving at St. Albans, VT, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1895-1954*; Record Group: *85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*; Microfilm Serial: *M1464*; Microfilm Roll: *508*; Lines: *9-10*.

[19] Anna also spoke French and Abenaki.

[20] According to Pelletier, from the 1920s to the mid-1940s, the Abenaki basket industry suffered a decline which he attributed in part to the Depression, but also largely to the monopoly created by Phileas Launière, a Maliseet businessman who moved to Pierreville around 1910 with his wife Emerentienne Sioui, a Huron from Wendake. Pelletier was told that Launière's low pricing reduced the ability of Abenaki basket makers to make a living. Attempting to boycott Launière's control of the basket trade, some tried to sell their baskets door-to-door. "Others looked for different types of employments, such as, Alice Capino who after attempting to sell her baskets and those of several others at Cagnawaga [sic], found work in a factory in Montreal." (1982:7-8) Launière's work in the basket trade and his life before moving to Odanak deserve further consideration (including his time selling baskets with Henry Masta and other Abenaki in the Catskills during the summer of 1900), as does his legacy. Today, many of his descendants are enrolled at Odanak, and some of his children, grandchildren and siblings married Abenaki people.

[21] By 1911, Frédéric Robert Obomsawin's family was living in North Hatley, Quebec, at the northern end of Lake Massawippi, where they made baskets. (1911 Census of Canada) I have not yet been able to learn the full extent of their basket business.

Obomsawin), Malvina's sister. Anna planned to spend three months in the U.S.; Malvina planned to stay indefinitely.[22]

I have never intended to argue a facile continuity that would posit the Robert Obomsawin family simply picking up where their border-crossing Capino cousins left off. Records which I have consulted have not offered ample detail to begin to consider questions of motive and meaning. Furthermore, the information they do record can be contradictory – in 1924, Malvina Robert claimed to have never before entered the U.S., but a record exists of her November 1923 border crossing at Newport.[23] And Anna Capino's history in the U.S. exceeded her family's history in the Eastern Townships and northern New England.[24]

If a facile continuity is not the interpretive answer, however, neither is an explanation overdetermined by rupture, that posits various regimes of labor migration as something other than aboriginal. Clearly both rupture and continuity have and continue to characterize Abenaki experience within and beyond their homeland. That such characterizations are not necessarily experienced as problematic is a lesson in resisting reduction that I have learned as I return over and over again to both archival sources and my work with informants like Skip. Reckoning with persistence requires abandoning

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[22] Other siblings were also living in the Newport area at the time. Sisters Fabiola and Rose married Austin and Arthur Lahar in 1921 in Derby, VT. Note that once these women married non-native men, they lost their status under the *Indian Act*.

[23] National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.; *Manifests of Alien Arrivals at Newport, Vermont, ca. 1906-June 1924*; Record Group: *85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*; Microfilm Serial: *A3402*; Microfilm Roll: *7*.

[24] For instance, she was also recorded crossing the border in 1915 on her way to Old Forge, NY (National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.; *Manifests of Passengers Arriving at St. Albans, VT, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1895-1954*; Record Group: *85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*; Microfilm Serial: *M1464*; Microfilm Roll: *286*; Line: *21*), and again in 1917 as she and her cousin Vicky Capino were on their way to Wildwood, NJ (National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.; *Manifests of Passengers Arriving at St. Albans, VT, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1895-1954*; Record Group: *85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*; Microfilm Serial: *M1464*; Microfilm Roll: *331*; Line: *1*.).

ethnocentric assumptions about the meanings of home and taking our informants seriously. And for the anthropologist studying and producing historical knowledge, it requires keeping archival work and fieldwork in constant productive tension. Work with other informants has allowed me to build on these insights, paying particular analytical attention to practices of territoriality and the poetics of home.

"She was born at Odanak."

On September 2, 2004, my friend Mark Gagne and I drove to the home of Susan Marshall, then a non-status Abenaki woman[25] who had lived her entire life in the Albany metropolitan region. (Most of that time she has lived in the same house she called home when I met her in 2003.) From Rensselaer, we journeyed to Deerfield, MA, to visit three exhibitions commemorating the famous 1704 French-Mohawk-Abenaki-Huron raid on what was then a frontier outpost of English colonization: "Remembering 1704" at the Flynt Center of Early American Life at Historic Deerfield, and "Introducing a Native American Perspective" and "Covering Up History: Rethinking Memorials" at the Memorial Hall Museum of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association (PVMA).

As the three of us were exploring the PVMA's exhibits, we came across photos of Israel Sadoques, his wife Mary Watso, and their family.[26] Susan immediately recognized Mr. Sadoques.

"I've got a picture of that guy! And of her, too." She pointed to a picture of Elizabeth (Sadoques) Mason.

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[25] Susan received her status in 2008.

[26] Members of this family, many of whom live within the region, figured prominently in the planning and implementation of 1704 commemorations, particularly the children and grandchildren of Israel and Mary's daughter Elizabeth (Sadoques) Mason. On Elizabeth Sadoques, see Chapter 2.

During the past couple of years, I had spent a few afternoons with Susan looking through her grandparents' old photos. I was sure I knew the photos to which she was referring. And I immediately started making the kinship connections, knowing that these links might be a little removed from Susan's knowledge of her family history. Without realizing it, I assumed the position of pedagogue.

"Yeah, I'm pretty sure you've got a couple photos of Israel Msadokous. He was your grandmother's uncle. Her mother Margaret Msadokous was Israel's sister. And Israel was related to your grandfather, too. His mother [and Margaret's] was a Nagazoa – I think he and your grandfather, no, he and your grandfather's dad, John [Jean-Baptiste] Nagazoa were first cousins."

My friend Mark was nearby. His ears perked up.

"So, you're related to those people?"

"Yeah, I've got pictures of some of them."

"Now, your mother was Abenaki, right?"

"Yeah, my dad was white, but my mom was Abenaki. *She was born at Odanak*." [my emphasis]

Mary Jane (Nagazoa) Marshall *was* born at Odanak. However, this exchange caught me off guard. The implication that Mary Jane, having been born on-reserve in Canada, was *truly* native was unavoidable.

Mary Jane, however, had not spent much of her life at Odanak. Nor had her mother, Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa. Like the case of the Capinos and Robert Obomsawins above, I had imagined her family story, drawn in large part from papers saved by Susan's grandmother, many of which were archived in a 19th century toleware

box by Thomas Msadokous, her grandmother's grandfather, from my historicist vantage point. In a paper presented to an American Studies workshop at Princeton in 2004, I queried this conversation between Susan and Mark, without reaching any conclusions, by highlighting the irony of such an identification given an extended family history of off-reserve residence.

I began in the mid-19th century with Susan's great-grandmother, Margaret Msadokous, arguing that she was emblematic of a certain Abenaki experience. Her early life was apparently more Odanak/Canada-centered; her father hunted and trapped north of the Saint Lawrence River, and her mother's family – Nagazoas – had roots in Abenaki country and among the Algonquins of Trois-Rivières.[27] Her part in the Saratoga Springs and Lake George Indian Encampments were likely the result of affinal ties, preceding a period of more generalized seasonal travel to resorts in the U.S. later in the century.[28]

Lazare Tahamont and Samuel Benedict, Margaret's husbands, however, were emblematic of 19th century "Canadian Indians" who lived south of the border during a considerable portion of the early 19th century but were still thought of by settlers as "Saint Francis Indians" (see Chapter 2). Margaret's three children also spent much more of their lives in the U.S. than in Canada, as did Mary Jane (Nagazoa) Marshall and Ruth (Nagazoa) Schufeldt, two of her six granddaughters.[29]

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[27] Her son-in-law, Edwin Nagazoa, had a similar residential history in his earlier life, visiting Lake George on at least one occasion (1892 New York State Census). Nagazoa's family history had much in common with his wife's, however. In addition to common Nagazoa ancestry, his mother's mother – Mary Jane (Benedict) Paquette – was Samuel Benedict's sister.

[28] However, Margaret's brother Israel and his wife, Mary (Watso) Sadoques, took up residence in Keene, NH, between June 1880 (when they were enumerated on the U.S. Census in Norwich, CT) and October 1881 (when, according to his death record a year later, son William was born in Keene). See Sharrow with Keating (2001) and Nash (2002:27-28) for accounts of the family's journey.

[29] Margaret's other granddaughters were Beulah and Bessie Tahamont (discussed in Chapter 2) and Geneva "Eva" (Rainville) Hannis and Margaret "Molly" (Rainville) Hannis. Eva's and Molly's childhoods were

Demographic Rupture in the Wake of the Basket Trade.

This narrative, however, does not provide much insight into the creation of homes and the meanings of Odanak for Abenaki people today or in the past. We can, however, learn more from living Abenaki and from archival sources. For instance, when Margaret Msadokous' daughter, Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa, returned to the U.S. during the depression,[30] with her husband Edwin Nagazoa, it was to build a life quite different from the one she had known at Lake George. She was a "Canadian Indian" in a whole new way, even carrying documents which attested to her status:

> Department of Indian Affairs — Office of
> Canada — Indian Agent
>
> To whom this may concern.
>
> This is to certify that Edwin Nagazoa and his wife Maud B. and their daughters E. Ruth and Mary Jane Nagazoa are Indians belonging to the Abenakis tribe of Pierreville; and as such are entitled to all privileges accorded by law to American Indians.
>
> Given in my office this
> 7th day of April 1934
>
> Benj. Maurault, Agent

The Nagazoas were now seemingly representative of what Day characterized as a demographic rupture around the time of World War I. Writing from an Odanak-centered perspective, he characterized a pre-war population which had "retained its essential character and a fairly steady number in spite of a slow emigration to the United States" (1981:62) but subsequently began to undergo profound change.

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spent at Lake George, Odanak, and Keene, NH. During her adult years, Eva lived at Odanak and in Waterbury, CT; Molly spent her adult life at Odanak.

[30] Maude Benedict and her two nieces were enumerated by the New York State Census at Lake George in June 1915, the summer before her marriage to Edwin Nagazoa (RAO). It is not clear how often she was in the U.S. between that date and April 1930 when she was enumerated in Albany (1930 U.S. Census).

> The price of sweet grass for baskets went up, and the American market practically disappeared. Many families left the Reserve to take a variety of war jobs, and most of them did not return to Odanak. The village never recovered its former size, and intermarriage with Whites increased steadily. Some guides were offered jobs in the United States by sportsmen whom they guided[31], and small Abenaki communities developed , notably in Albany, New York, and Waterbury, Connecticut. Contact was maintained between these families and those in Odanak, and many returned in later life to live in Odanak. (1981:62)

Although Albany has been an important nexus of Abenaki sociality in the 20th and 21st centuries, it was clearly different from life at Odanak or more rural places south of the border. Families networked to varying degrees in the Albany region, and as Day noted many maintained their connections on the reserve. Even families who did not resume residence on-reserve nor had parents or siblings living there were part of this. For instance, Susan Marshall tells of Abenaki friends visiting her mother and her grandmother, and remembers hearing stories of her grandparents hosting visitors from Odanak.

> I remember Mom telling me that they used to, that they never knew when Indians were going to be passing through, that they would stop and of course Grandma and Grandpa would open up their house and everybody would come and stay and they would just have one big party.

The density of the Nagazoas' social contacts with other Abenaki families lessened with time, however, in ways which resonate with the experience of some other Albany Abenaki I have come to know. Three events point to the types of explanations often provided by my informants:

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[31] While some Abenaki worked as guides south of the border, most Abenaki who worked as guides for sportsmen operated in the St. Maurice watershed on the north side of the St. Lawrence River, where Abenaki established hunting territories in the 19th century. See Nash (2002).

1) In 1930, the Nagazoa family lived next door to Fred and Elsie (Dauphinais) Watso (1930 U.S. Census).[32]

Many of my informants point to decreasing geographic proximity as leading to a decreasing level of social interaction among Abenaki families. Shortly after the 1930 census, Fred and Elsie Watso relocated to Odanak (although some of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren live in the Albany region today) and the Nagazoas moved across the city, eventually buying a home across the Hudson in Rensselaer.

Residential shifts are usually presented alongside attention to a heterogeneous workforce and exogamous marriage, both generative of new social ties beyond the Abenaki community. This generation of Abenaki in Albany were becoming parts of non-native social worlds at the same that it was incorporating newcomers into Abenaki networks of family and friends. This in itself was not a new process, but the scale was unprecedented and accelerated in the second half of the century. Often such an explanation is also grounded in a similar appeal to the importance of labor, recalling Skip's testimony discussed above. Abenaki needed to work to support their families, and such hard work became a source of pride for many, even if now some consider it to have been a source of assimilation.

2) At Edwin's funeral in 1951, pallbearers included Robert Paquette, John Watso and Levi LaGrave. Marguerite (Launière) LaGrave and Mrs. George Dennie [Adelaide (Masta) Dennie] were also in attendance.

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[32] I have thus far identified the following Abenaki families listed on the 1930 U.S. Census for Albany, NY. Ward 7: Edwin & Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa and children; Fred & Elsie (Dauphinais) Watso and children. Ward 9: Alfred Msadokous. Ward 12: John & Eva (Benedict) Watso and children; Edward & Mathilda (Benedict) Degonzague and children. Ward 15: Philip & Rose Degonzague and children. Ward 18: Alice Degonzague. Also in 1930: Mitchell & Frances Nolett's family was enumerated in Colonie; Elie & Marie (Nagazoa) Nolett's family was enumerated in Troy.

3) At Maude's funeral in 1961, pallbearers included Levi LaGraves. His wife Marguerite and sister Alice also attended.

A diminishing density of contact is indexed by records of these two funerals, reflective of both the centrifugal forces of labor and residence as well as the social rupture of death. While Maude's correspondence with Gordon Day and notes found in her papers make it clear that she was in contact with other Abenaki even in her later years, such interaction was less frequent in the ten years following Edwin's death.

No doubt there are multiple factors involved in this, but I suspect that Maude was much more of an outsider at Odanak and within immediately Odanak-centered social networks in Albany than Edwin was. This is not to say that Maude did not have friends and relatives at Odanak and in Albany, but her relationships were not of the same nature as her husband's. Not only had much more of Edwin's youth been spent on-reserve, but he had more immediate family residing there throughout his lifetime, including siblings, matrilateral and patrilateral first cousins, and his parents, who lived well into the 20th century. Maude's only period of "full-time" residence at Odanak was immediately after her marriage to Edwin; Lake George had been her home for much of her life. After the death of Molly (Rainville) Hannis in 1936, Maude's remaining niece, Eva (Rainville) Hannis, was her most immediate connection to the reserve, and Eva resided in Waterbury, CT, for much of her adult life.[33]

It was occasionally clear, however, that she missed more intensive social interaction with her fellow Abenaki. When Day asked her in a February 1960 letter if she

[33] There are no doubt personality issues at play, too. I have spoken with a couple of elders who remember both Edwin and Maude, but particularly light up when reference is made to the former. They were very fond of him, his parents, and his sister Mary Lucy. I have also heard on more than one occasion that Edwin was "a very good looking man!"

had heard about the plans for a celebration at Odanak that coming July, she replied, "No I had not heard of the celebration - would like to go again and see all [the] Indians."[34] This sentiment is crucial for understanding some of the power that the reserve has held and continues to hold for many Abenaki people beyond biography, immediate family connections, politics, etc. It has been a space of presumed homogeneity, of refuge and solidarity for Abenaki people. It has offered a social density not easily available south of the border since the end of the Indian encampments, and a claim to a place that is *reserved* for Abenaki people.

"Exiled from the tribe"

When a *New York Times* correspondent visited Norman and Sara Angeline (Otôdoson) Johnson, Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa's longtime neighbors and distant relatives, at Lake George in 1912, Angeline told a complicated story of home that deepens our understanding of the dilemmas facing off-reserve Abenaki people today and years ago. The correspondent recorded her story of arrival at Lake George with her parents[35] to make their living there and at Saratoga. According to Mrs. Johnson (as retold by the correspondent):

> After six years of success and happiness the elder Tutteson learned that he and his family had been exiled from the tribe of Abnakis, for according to their Indian custom any member of the tribe who is absent from his home more than five years shall be disowned and his property shall be forfeited and divided among the remaining families…The banishment from the tribe was at first keenly felt by the Tutteson family, nevertheless they determined never to apply for reinstatement as regular members of the Abnakis, and decided to pass the remainder of their days at Lake George. (*New York Times*, September 8, 1912. Page X10.)

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[34] Gordon M. Day Papers, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Québec. Box 523 Folder 3 Correspondence - Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa

[35] Louis-Lazare Otôdoson – "Gansha Tutteson" in the article – and Marguerite Shaouigonet. Marguerite was an Algonquin from Trois-Rivières, but related to the Nagazoa family.

Unbeknownst to the *Times* correspondent, it was not "their Indian custom" that individuals and families be "banished from the tribe" due to extended absences, but a provision of the *Indian Act*. According to colonial law, not Abenaki custom, the Otôdoson family lost their rights to own property on-reserve, to share in reserve resources, and to participate in political decision-making. Angeline had engaged lawyers to restore her family's property and standing within the Abenaki community, and that of her husband, as well. The article indicated that Norman Johnson was "exiled from the tribe" subsequent to their marriage, but his particular situation likely owed more to his white father,[36] as well as to a much longer history of off-reserve living as he was born and raised in the state of New York .

At least some of the Johnsons' ancestors had been frequenting the southeastern Adirondacks since the late 17th c., in capacities ranging from hunting expeditions and war parties to seasonal visitors and full-time residents. Undoubtedly Angeline's ancestors included residents of Schaghticoke, and Norman's ancestor Sabael Benedict was known to some of the earliest white settlers in the region. Places like Lake George had been *home* for a good long time. But they had not been *home* in its entirety. Despite their personal histories and family origins south of the border, the Johnsons were thought of, inasmuch as they are thought of as aboriginal people at all,[37] as *Canadian Indians*. Residence south of the border, however, had cost Angeline's family their status under the *Indian Act*. Thus for the *Times* correspondent, the Johnsons were Indians in exile rather

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[36] Norman Johnson's father, John Johnson, was non-native. His mother, Alice Mitchell, baptized Therese Michel (RSJFR), was Abenaki, the daughter of Michel Ajean aka John Mitchell and Catherine Benedict.

[37] According to the *Times* correspondent, "Of the hundred or more thousand visitors who each year make Lake George their vacation ground or a stopping place on a tour of the Adirondacks there are but few who knew of the existence of a family of full-blooded Indians located at the village of Lake George, at the very head of the lake. But should you ask one out of every ten of these sojourners at Lake George who Norman Johnson is, the answer would invariably be, 'He is the man who sells sweet-grass baskets and birch-bark canoes.' That they would know."

than Abenaki living in or near ancestral lands. And the Otôdosons and Johnsons lost one part of their home by making a living in another part of it.

"I'm looking for cousins."

Such experiences help us to understand the practices of meaning making I have encountered among off-reserve Abenaki people who do not embrace Odanak as *home* and yet still reckon it as an important part of who they are as Abenaki people; similar historical and genealogical frames of reference often structure their experience and understanding of the village. David Benedict's second trip to Odanak in the mid-1990s was telling in this regard. David was devoting significant time to better understanding his patrilateral family history and his Abenaki relations, and after a walk through a local cemetery, David was passing in front of the Catholic Church before heading over the Musée des Abénakis. This was when he first met Joe Benedict.

I have heard both men tell the tale of their first meeting, and while the details did not precisely match up, the basics of the story are the same. Both of them have clearly enjoyed telling the story to me and to others with whom we have been visiting. The following is based on one set of David's recollections:

> It had been a long, hot summer day. David had been obliged to make a half-dozen stops on the drive from his mother's house in the Adirondacks to Odanak, and at each stop he couldn't find anyone who felt comfortable speaking with him in English. He was quite aggravated by the middle of the afternoon when he was walking in front of Odanak's Catholic Church.
>
> "Here's this old guy riding a Schwinn bicycle with a basket in front and he starts speaking to me in French." Once again David was confronted with a language he didn't speak, and his reply – in English – was a bit abrupt. "Hey old man, what building is that there?"
>
> The "old man" got off the bike and asked who David was and what he wanted - in fluent English without a hint of a francophone accent. David was thrown: "My name is Benedict and I'm looking for cousins." The "old man"- Joe Benedict - held out his hand and said "you just met one."

> According to David, despite their kinship ties, Joe "wasn't very happy" with him, but suddenly a car drove into the parking lot. It was Joe's brother Roger and the three of them were soon getting to know one another. In addition to discussing genealogical and historical connections,[38] David remembers vividly the union connections that came up in conversation. Joe was a union iron worker and Roger a union carpenter, both working in the northeastern U.S.; David was a union ironworker and glazer who worked out west for many years. They sat on the steps for about an hour and "shot the bull" before they each left, David heading over to the museum at this point.

Kinship ties, historical interest, common labor histories and good storytelling combined to frame David's relationship to Odanak, and the following year when David attended Odanak's annual powwow with his brother Philip, David had already told them about meeting Joe. They wanted to stop by Joe's as they were walking around Odanak, but, as David recalled, there were about 20 people having a party there so they continued walking – they didn't want to impose. Joe spotted David, however, and called him over. Joe introduced them to two of his children – Michael and Joann – and then Joann started introducing them to everyone else – all with the last name "Benedict." "They were all Benedicts!" David told me, and noted that a few of them "came from Albany."

David remembered being welcomed by Joe, Michael and Joann, and meeting many members of his extended family. He still recalls how nervous Joe was preparing to read something in Abenaki language – the language Joe first spoke – to the assembled crowd, and was quite taken with Joe's sense of humor:

> I remember Philip and I sitting on the grass watching kids dance. Joann came over to join us, then Joe. As we watched the dancing, Joe and Joann pointed out people we were related to. And then Joe pointed to a guy in bear-themed regalia who was dancing bent over with his arms near the ground. "That guy's looking for change."

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[38] Apparently there was some confusion over the re-use of certain given names within different branches of the Benedict family. David's great-grandfather, Edwin Benedict, had a nephew with the same name, who was Joe's grandfather. Both branches of the family had (have) members named Chauncey, too.

This mix of pride and humor was compelling to David, and on a trip we made to Odanak in 2002, David was anxious to stop by Joe's in order to catch up and to introduce me to this man about whom I had heard so much.

No one was home when we first stopped by Joe's house that morning, so we drove over to Chez Yvonne[39], a new basket shop owned by Nicole Bibeau, where David planned on buying several baskets to distribute as Christmas gifts later that year. Nicole was teaching basketry to a group of community members as part of a project organized and financed by Odanak's government, and we enjoyed our visit immensely. As we left, however, David noted that none of the students were Benedicts, and he realized that he did not know of any Benedicts currently working as basket makers. When we returned to Joe's house and found him home, we told him about our visit to Chez Yvonne and David asked if Joe knew of any Benedicts currently making baskets. "Benedicts don't make baskets," Joe replied with a grin. "They just chase women!"[40]

Collecting acorns

Not all instances of "return" to Odanak are mediated by new acquaintances and long-lost relatives; historical consciousness can structure feelings of belonging in other ways. Such Abenaki often drive or walk around the reserve, and visit the Musée des Abénakis or Saint-François-de-Sales, the Catholic mission facing the river, to view Théophile Panadis' beautiful carvings. They walk down to the river or look for a lot or home once owned by one of their ancestors.

One informant, who had done most of these things, found herself contemplating old oak trees on one visit. Had any of these trees been standing when her grandfather

[39] The shop was named in honor of Yvonne (Msadoquis) Robert Obomsawin, Nicole's grandmother.
[40] When Joe was a young child, his family subsisted largely on earnings from the basket trade and the production of toy birch bark canoes.

was baptized there? How many of these trees had ancestors growing in the village while earlier generations of her family came and went? She scooped up a handful of acorns and brought them home to plant – a tangible and living enactment of historical continuity and belonging and a tribute to the generations of her family (two in some ancestral lines, many more in others) that called Odanak home.

David Benedict, on the other hand, has established a very different type of arboreal relationship to Odanak. On his first visit to the reserve his Jeep slid on some ice, hitting a small tree planted beside the Musée parking lot. His Jeep was undamaged, however the tree still bears a small scar caused by the collision. Should David find himself in that parking lot on a trip to Odanak, he always takes a look at that tree, recalling that small accident and other parts of that introduction to Odanak, including a long, warm visit he and his girlfriend enjoyed with Nicole O'Bomsawin and Rodrigo Brinkhaus at the Musée. I even heard him refer to "my tree" one afternoon as we were walking back to his truck after a funeral at the Catholic church.

A "Return" to Odanak?

Knowing all of this, I was still caught off guard by Susan's easy association of Odanak and her mother's Abenaki identity. In previous conversations with Susan, alone and with other informants, she had certainly set Odanak off as a place of particular significance to her as an Abenaki woman, and to her family's history as Abenaki people. She had done the same for Lake George. However, she had never before articulated a link between Odanak (or Lake George for that matter) and her mother's standing as an authentic Abenaki woman.

What was even more remarkable, however, was how Susan began to refer to Odanak as "home" years later, after she had received her status and twice visited the reserve. I suspect that there are multiple explanations for her growing affective association with Odanak, including many that I describe above. Undoubtedly her status and band membership are important here – for instance, she can now own the property which her mother and aunt, exogamous, and therefore non-status, Abenaki woman, were forced to sell when her grandmother died. Furthermore, as will be discussed in the next chapter, Susan can now vote in Abenaki elections. The band office is now the seat of her government and she has the right to attend general meetings and cast her ballot for chief and councilor. She now has rights that she can exercise as part of the Odanak First Nation.

Her two trips to Odanak are worth considering, too, as important components of Susan's more figurative "homecoming." I accompanied Susan on each trip: the first in August 2008, the second during the annual powwow in July 2009. In 2008, we visited with a number of Susan's relatives – a variety of second, third and fourth cousins, some of whom she had already met in Albany – at their homes, the Council office, and over lunch at the Calumet restaurant. We made a driving tour of the village and went to the Musée. And we stopped to take pictures, including snapshots of the Anglican Church. Each of these sets of activities was significant.

Perhaps least important was the trip to the museum, although Susan took in the exhibits with interest. She was most animated, however, in the gift shop, where she was able to find items – beaded earrings and barrettes, for instance – that she enjoyed wearing but has difficulty finding in Albany. The work of Abenaki craftspeople available at the

museum appealed to and reflected her aesthetics, providing a powerful point of identification.

There were some items exhibited in the museum, however, which also elicited strong reactions. Baskets and beadwork recalled family items in her possession and evoked stories she had been told of her grandparents' work as basket makers. Photographs on display were also important technologies of identification, and echoed one of Susan's own homecoming strategies: she brought a small photo album with her so that she could elicit memories of her mother, aunt and grandparents should she meet any older community members, and in fact she did meet people who recognized these individuals as kin. She also had a photograph of a house where her mother and grandparents once lived, and after some discussion the house was identified as "the Capino house," and she was able to compare it with the photo before we left. The pictures she took of the Anglican Church served a similar purpose, a comparison to an old photo postcard of the church which had been saved in her grandmother's papers. Written on the back of the card, in Maude's handwriting, was "The Indian Church at Odanak P.Q. The Episcopal or Church of England."

Perhaps the most important aspect of Susan's Odanak visit was the warm welcome she received from distant relatives. One cousin recalled her mother's last visit to Odanak, her grandparents, and even her great-grandparents, and encouraged her to visit again. Other cousins joined us for lunch at the Calumet, where conversational topics ranged from Abenaki politics to what it was like to grow up at Odanak. At the Council Office, Daniel Nolett and Jacques "Jacko" Thériault Watso took time out to visit with us,

and Jacko gave Susan a CD of First Nations music which Susan has spent many hours listening to in the months since that trip.

Our 2009 trip to Odanak was quite a different experience, continuing the homecoming process. She recognized streets and buildings and began to know her way around. In the crowds of the powwow Susan ran into people she knew, either from Abenaki community events in Albany or from her previous trip to Odanak. She was sharing stories with her fellow Abenaki, joking with many of them like they had always known each other. Susan had long considered Odanak to be part of her mother's and grandparents' home; it was not becoming part of her home, too.

I could not help but think of her grandmother, Maude (Benedict) Nagazoa, writing to Gordon Day about the powwow in 1960: "[I] would like to go [to Odanak] again and see all [the] Indians." The "Indians" were kin and longtime friends, many of whom, like Maude, spoke Abenaki language and shared similar experiences of racism, colonial policy and bureaucrats, travel and work in the basket trade, and so much more. Furthermore, in the late 19th and early 20th century, Abenaki at Odanak were very aware of their continuing histories in and near old homelands in the U.S. They enjoyed common frames of reference that changed substantially as the 20th century progressed.

Readmittance

As a child, Maude's family did not always have rights at Odanak. During the late 19th century, several families who had been living in or adjacent to old homelands in the U.S., including Angeline (Otôdoson) Johnson's family (see discussion above), Elijah Tahamont's family (see Chapter Two), and Samuel and Margaret (Msadokous)

Benedict's family, lost their status and rights once the *Indian Act* of 1875 was introduced. Like many Abenaki, they had lived "in a foreign country" for more than five years.

In the years following the implementation of this law, and its 1880 amendments, a number of Abenaki petitioned their government for readmittance as "band members,"[41] and approval at the local level was forwarded to Ottawa for the permission of the Canadian government.[42] Consider the following three cases:

October 15, 1885, the Odanak Abenaki[43] passed a resolution readmitting Peter M. Joseph.[44] They wrote to Ottawa asking that he "be recognized as a brother and be readmitted into membership of this Band which he had forfeited through residence in the United States without leave." He was 91, ill, with no support except that of his aged sister[45], who was also poor, and the Abenaki wished that he be supported by the Band "as other members thereof in similar condition." Their agent, Henri Vassal, relayed the letter to Ottawa on October 17, adding that he supported the decision. On November 2, 1885 Ottawa replied to Vassal that they approved (RG10 Vol. 2319, File 63,536).[46]

February 2, 1889, the Odanak Abenaki[47] passed a resolution readmitting Samuel Benedict, who, with his wife and two daughters had lived in the United States for more

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[41] The earliest may have been in 1883 when Frank Otôdoson was readmitted (RG10 Vol. 2213, File 42,810). At least one Abenaki, Ignace Masta (Jr.), refused to appear before the Council to explain his absence from the village (Vassal to Superintendent of Indian Affairs, 28 August 1882, in RG10 Vol. 2110, File 20,219).

[42] Since only cases forwarded to Ottawa may be found today at Archives Canada, it is impossible to determine how many request for readmission were rejected by Abenaki at Odanak.

[43] The following sign the 15 October 1885 letter: Chief H.L. Masta, Chief Thomas Msadoques, Chief Jos. Laurent, Thomas Wawanolett, Lazar Wawanolett, Samuel Watzo, Henry Watso, Theophilus Capino, Thomas Nolet, Louis Wawanolett, Louis Denys and Philip Nagajoa (RG 10 Vol. 2319, File 63,536).

[44] Joseph had lived in the Champlain Valley of Vermont and at Saratoga Springs in his "absence."

[45] Mary Joseph aka Marie-Josephte Magwa (1810-1897) was the widow of Joseph Saziboet and in 1885 was married to Louis Dauphiné (1817-1898).

[46] Joseph returned to Saratoga Springs, where his surviving daughters lived, and passed away December 9, 1886.

[47] The following voted in favor of Benedict's readmittance: Chief Joseph Laurent, Chief Laz. Wawanolett, Chief H. L. Masta, Samuel Watzo, E. Benedict, Samuel X Msadoquis, John X Msadoquis, Cesar X

than five consecutive years,[48] thus losing their "droits de communauté dans cette Réserve," or communal rights in the reserve. There was a concern expressed, however, that his status as a naturalized citizen of the United States might preclude government approval of his readmittance, and two band members opposed him, most likely on these grounds. Ottawa confirmed, however, that his naturalization did not preclude his readmittance, confirming Odanak's decision (RG10 Vol. 2446, File 93,320).

May 26, 1892, the Odanak Abenaki passed a resolution readmitting Israel Msadaquis as a member of the band. "Resolu: Que Israel Msadaques, fils de Thomas Msadaquis qui a demeurré aux États-Unis durant plusieurs années, et par consequant a été consideré comme ne faisant plus partie de la bande, soit maintenant admis au nombre des members de la tribu…" [Resolved: That Israel Msadoques, son of Thomas Msadoquis, who has lived in the United States for several years, and as a consequence was no longer considered as a member of the band, be now admitted as a member of the tribe…][49] Ottawa replied to P. E. Robillard, Indian Agent, in July, requesting more information before approving his readmittance. They wanted to know: 1) "When did the Indian leave the Band?", 2) "What documentary evidence is there that he ever belonged to the Band?", and 3) "Where has the interval been spent?".[50] There is no further correspondence in this file (RG10 Vol. 2619, File 128,481).

Hanness, Edwin X Benedict, J. B. Nagazoa, Napoleon Obomsawin, Siméon X Obumsawin, Jos. X Claude, Theophilus Capino, Elie Wawanolett, William Wawanolet, Dulphus X Msadoquis, Nicolas Panadis, Cesar Ls.. X Hanness, Ambroise X Claude, Frs. Jos. X Pakikan, P. Ls. X Obumsawin, Jacques Jos. X Obumsawin, Thomas Sadoques, Moise de Gonzague, Simon Obomsawin. W. Watso and John Tahamont voted against the measure (RG10, Vol. 2446, File 93, 320).

[48] The family's principle residence during this time was in Caldwell, NY, at the south end of Lake George.

[49] Present at the Council meeting: Chief H.L. Masta, Chief Joseph Laurent, Chief Lazare Wawanolett, Chief Solomon Benedict, and the members of the band (RG 10 Vol. 2619, File 128,481).

[50] Israel Msadokous, his wife Mary Watso, and their children, had been living first in Norwich, CT, and then by the fall of 1881 in Keene, NH, where Israel died November 28, 1917 (NH Vital Records). Mary died in Keene December 24, 1934 (NHVR).

Whether or not Israel Msadoques regained his status under the law or not, his case, like those of his peers, was indicative of a reductive dynamic constraining Abenaki and non-native conceptions of home and naturalizing the reserve as the authentic location of Indians-as-such. Belonging and legal aboriginal personhood were linked to residence; "band member" became an administrative category by the *Indian Act*. Being Abenaki was reduced to being a "member of the band," and having "rights in the reserve," rights which must be recognized by the male (voting) band members, and then by the settler state.

The stakes involved in such categorization become clear in more controversial cases of readmittance. In November 1888, Chief Joseph Laurent requested a 2-3 year period of probation for Abenaki who wish to be "réhabilités dans leurs anciens droits"[51] (RG10 Vol. 2438, File 91,185). He noted that periodically families request the reinstatement of their rights, having lost them after more than five years residing in a foreign country (the U.S.). While he generally supported this, he was concerned the character of such families was not always well known by band members – he was particularly concerned about alcohol – and cited the case of François Msadoquis,[52] who was readmitted two years earlier by the Council, although their decision had been temporarily suspended by Ottawa. Msadoquis drank, disturbed the peace, and his unmarried daughter had given birth to a child. Laurent did not want the family to be kept from their rights indefinitely, but felt that they should still be under probation.

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[51] One might translate this as "rehabilitated in their former rights," although the English translation contained in the file utilized the language of "readmission," "tribe," and "membership" rather than "rights."

[52] Frank Msadokous (1849-1901) was the son of John Msadokous and Isabelle Provost, and husband of Helen Stanislas. Frank, Helen and their children spent much of the 1870s and early 1880s in New York and Pennsylvania, visiting Odanak in March 1872 (RAO) and May 1881 (1881 Census of Canada). Correspondence related to his readmittance is also located in RG10 Vol. 2365, File 73,829.

Furthermore, he knew of another family who were to request readmission after an absence of about 25 years, and was concerned that the husband, though a good man, liked to drink. The wife was "trouble."[53]

The man and woman in question were Laurent's uncle, William Obomsawin,[54] and Marie-Anne Morisseau,[55] who had long lived in Grand Isle, VT, in Lake Champlain.[56] In 1883, William and Marie-Anne visited Odanak, and in 1884 visited again, declaring their intention to once again live in the village. Late in 1888 the couple returned and took up residence in Pierreville, not having any land at Odanak. Not long after Laurent wrote to Ottawa asking for a 2-3 year period of probation for readmitted Abenaki, William Obomsawin reapplied for band membership.

Henri Vassal, Agent of the "St. Francis Agency" of the Department of Indian Affairs, wrote to his superiors on December 15, 1888, informing them that Obomsawin had recently arrived in the village after a 28-year absence from the country, and had asked to be readmitted "as a member of the band." Vassal reported that the Abenaki had consented to his request, provided that he submitted to the probationary period required

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[53] In the same letter, Laurent expressed his concern about the availability of alcohol, with two drinking establishments just off-reserve in Pierreville.

[54] William (or Guillaume) Obomsawin (1833-1905) was the son of Simon Obomsawin, a chief at Odanak for many years, and Monique Wawanolett. Joseph Laurent's mother, Catherine Obomsawin, was William's half-sister by Simon's first marriage to Marie-Anne Pinewans.

[55] Marie-Anne was the daughter of Joseph Tanaghette, from Oka; his father was Algonquin, his mother was Iroquois (marriage record, 25 September 1827, RLO). Marie-Anne's mother was Agnes Portneuf (1800-1829), daughter of Joseph-Thomas Portneuf and Marie-Agathe Beaubassin. What became of Marie-Anne and her sister Sophie after their mother's death (she was buried four days after her death according to the registers of Notre-Dame-de-Montréal) is not clear to me, nor is it entirely clear that both girls had the same father. Unlike, Marie-Anne, Sophie consistently used the surname Morisseau, sometimes written as Morice or Morisse, rather than versions of Tanaghette (or their grandmother's name, "Agathe"), and the record of her marriage to Theophile Panadis in 1846 lists her father as a tailor, rather than an Algonquin hunter (RSFdL).

[56] In the summer of 1870, William and Mary (as she was known south of the border) were living there in the household of Margaret Tromp, an elderly white woman; William was working as a day laborer (1870 U.S. Census). In the summer of 1880 the couple is listed in Grand Isle as their own household: William was working at the manufacture of baskets and Mary was keeping house (1880 U.S. Census).

by the Department. On January 11, 1889, the Department communicated their approval to Vassal, and eighteen months later, the new Agent, Pierre Robillard, wrote that the Abenaki Council recently passed a resolution recognizing that Obomsawin had completed his year of probation. They also resolved that Robillard inform the Department, and that the Department officially decree Obomsawin readmitted; the Department promptly replied in the affirmative (RG10 Vol. 2440, File 91,718). All seemed to have been resolved.

However, in June 1893, William Obomsawin wrote to Ottawa requesting their intervention regarding a piece of land he claimed at Odanak, and over five years of correspondence on this matter are contained in the relevant file at Archives Canada. The gist of the story is that in 1862, just before leaving the country for an extended period of time, William Obomsawin mortgaged land to Leonard Duguay, a non-native. The land in question had been inherited by William Obomsawin from the estate of his father; it formed the northern third of Simon Obomsawin's property. (The other two thirds were bequeathed to William's sisters Catherine and Christine, and Christine had subsequently sold her portion to her nephew, Joseph Laurent.)

In 1865, at the behest of his mother, Laurent purchased Duguay's interest in the property, and in 1884 William made arrangements with his nephew to pay off the mortgage and take possession of the land. Obomsawin, however, did not express a desire to reacquire the lot until 1893, two years after Laurent had given the land to his son-in-law, Eli Wawanolett, who had then built a house upon it. (Laurent blamed Obomsawin's wife for having scuttled the 1884 arrangements, and for having spurred Obomsawin's activities in 1893.) Ultimately, the Department of Indian Affairs determined that

Obomsawin had lost his rights to the property when he mortgaged it to a white man (rather than a fellow Abenaki), and that he furthermore had lost his rights to any property at Odanak during his absence.

Numerous issues were raised by this dispute, and it is tempting to see it within the context of a long-running series of disputes between Joseph Laurent and Henry Masta (Maurault, Charland), which was certainly an important aspect of the story. These two individuals represented a division between Catholics and Protestants that had long structured – in part – Abenaki social life. It was telling that one of the points raised by Masta and his supporters in support of Obomsawin was that Laurent had been the Indian Agent when he acquired the property in question, without receiving the approval of the Department of Indian Affairs. They forwarded a letter documenting that when Peter Paul Osunkherhine, Abenaki Congregationalist Missionary (and Masta's uncle), had acquired a lot at Odanak in 1866, during his brief tenure as Indian Agent, he was told by the Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs that he must cancel the transaction or face legal action.[57]

Another social division among the Abenaki is evident in papers reporting the deliberations of the General Council (all Abenaki voters – males of the age of majority) and a letter dated January 16, 1894, written in support of Obomsawin. The signatories maintained that the land in question belonged to Obomsawin, and if it did not, then it should belong to the band. That being the case, with the consent of the band, Obomsawin should be given a lot to clear for a home. This letter was composed by Chief Henry

[57] This may have been the event which precipitated Osunkherhine's final departure from Odanak.

Masta and signed by 24 or 25[58] other Abenaki, many of whom represented families with a stronger orientation to the United States throughout the whole of the 19th century.[59] This dynamic, however, did not account for all individuals on each side of the conflict, and by the 1890s both Henry Masta and Joseph Laurent were, according to Indian Agent Robillard, doing a greater business in the U.S. than any other Abenaki.

Complicating any simplistic reading of this conflict is a property dispute which arose in the wake of Edwin Benedict's readmission December 10, 1889 (confirmed by Ottawa the following month; RG10, Vol. 2440, File 91,717). On June 8, 1900, several years after having regained his rights at Odanak, Benedict wrote to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs asking for advice about land he once owned at Odanak; the land in question was then owned by his cousin, Henry Masta. In 1873, Benedict had mortgaged the property as security for a loan of $15 from William Hurst, a white man then living in the village,[60] to be repaid when he returned from Divinity School in Faribault, MN. He did not, however, return to the region until 1884, and then re-entered the basket trade at Saratoga Springs. During this period, Hurst sold the land to Henry Masta.

In 1886, when he became schoolmaster at Odanak, he learned that he had lost his rights under the *Indian Act*. Although he regained his status, he was obliged to give up his claims to land in the village. Now, having consulted the *Indian Act* of 1876, he

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[58] It is unclear whether two Louis Tahamonts were represented on the document, one as a signatory, one as a witness, or whether it was the same Louis Tahamont (the younger of two individuals of the same name).
[59] The letter was signed by Chief H. L. Masta, Frank X Annance, Joseph X Portneuf Jr., Edwin Benedict Teacher, Joseph X Portneuf Sr., Louis X Denis, John X Msadoquis, Frank X Msadoquis, William X Obumsawin, Ambroise X Denis, Ignace X Masta, Frank X Portneuf, Frank Wdodoson, John B. Alumkassett, Samuel Watzo, Joseph Alumkassette, John B. X Msadoquis, Pierre X Msadoquis, Louis X Capino, Louis X N. Obumsawin, Louis X Tahamont, Adolphus X Msadoquis, Louis P. X Denis, Daniel X Emmett, and Henry X Watso. The signatures were witnessed by Chief H. L. Masta, Lewis Tahamont, Samuel Watzo, and Joseph Alumkassett.
[60] William Hurst married Marie Nagazoa, mother of Lucinda (Annance) Benedict, in November 1875 (RAO). He died at Odanak in August 1883 (RAO). The couple likely knew each other in Durham, Quebec, where they had both raised families.

maintained that he had been fooled by the chiefs, and was asking for help to regain the land.

> Did Mr. W. Hurst possess any rights to sell Indian land in the Indian Village, which was only lent to him at that? And did not the chiefs do a great wrong to me, in saying falsehoods to me, in order to keep that piece of land from my hands for so many years? The land in question is about three quarters of an acre. I need it very much as that land was my only possession in the Village inherited from my mother.

Ottawa replied on July 9 that as Benedict had ceased to be "a member of the Abenakis Band of St. Francis," per the *Indian Act* of 1880, and as the land had been in the possession of others for the last twenty-five years, Benedict no longer had a claim to it (RG 10 Vol. 3021, File 223,399).

The issues raised by Benedict's case are very similar to those raised by Obomsawin's. Both men inherited land, mortgaged it to a non-native to raise capital, and subsequently lost their rights on-reserve after extensive periods of time spent not only away from Odanak, but in the U.S. While both Benedict and Obomsawin were readmitted, gaining rights to own land in the village, such rights were not retroactive. Benedict's attempt to claim lost property, however, did not generate the extensive correspondence found in the Obomsawin file, perhaps because it could not be framed in terms of larger social divisions among the Abenaki. Benedict and Masta, after all, were first cousins, Protestants, educated, and (at least) trilingual, and they each had personal and family connections in and beyond old homelands in the U.S.

Instead, Benedict's case resembles an 1896 inheritance dispute between Masta and his wife, Caroline (Tahamont) Masta, and Caroline's sister, Victoria (Tahamont) Paquette. Caroline and Victoria's father, Swassin Tahamont, had died without leaving a will, and Paquette claimed that the Mastas had refused her the half of her father's estate

which was her due. Not surprisingly, as the case developed Henry Masta claimed that his sister-in-law had earlier lost her rights as an Abenaki as she had lived outside of Canada for more than five years, a charge denied by Paquette who maintained that while she had spent considerable time in the U.S., she had never been away from Odanak for more than three years at a time.[61]

Of particular relevance to this discussion, the evidence she presented in support of her uninterrupted band membership included the following:

> My name can be traced again in various papers, census & pay lists of the Band at the Agent's office; for, whenever a member has lost his membership, the chiefs & other members of the band are always quick enough to object to his having a share out of the funds of the band and omit his name until readmitted" (RG10, Vol. 2846 File 174, 255, emphasis in original).

Had Victoria (Tahamont) Paquette lost her rights, her name would not have appeared in band paperwork until she married George Paquette in March 1891 (RAD). By the 1890s, it was common knowledge among Abenaki people that one's name would be removed from the list as soon as one was determined to have lost one's rights.

None of this was the case before the imposition of the *Indian Act* of 1876 and its reduction of aboriginality to the confines of the reserve. Nor was it the case before an increasingly bureaucratic imagination of property was also imposed. In this respect, a dispute between Marie (Obomsawin) Capino, later continued by her daughter Hannah (Capino) Paul Denis, and Joseph Laurent is instructive. The conflict, which began as a

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[61] Victoria Tahamont (1860-1905) did spend a considerable portion of her life in the U.S., and was born at Saratoga Springs in August 1860. In 1875, she was living with her cousin Sarah (Joseph) Couse at the Saratoga Springs Indian Encampment (1875 NY State Census), and sometime later was hired to tour with an Indian theatrical show which worked in the U.S. and Canada (Quebec and Ontario).

dispute over the estate of Louis Hannis,[62] quickly centered around contested claims to a particular piece of land on Isle Ronde, part of Odanak. Hannis and his wife, Marie Capino,[63] sold the land in question to Joseph Laurent, basing their right to sell the land on inheritance from her parents, Joseph-Thomas Capino and Marie-Anne Otôdoson. Marie (Obomsawin) Capino and Hannah (Capino) Paul Denis claimed that Théophile Capino – Marie's invalid husband, Hannah's father, Marie (Capino) Hannis' brother – was a legitimate heir to his parents' estate, and should have received half of the lot that was sold to Laurent. Ultimately, it was decided that as Théophile Capino had lived in the U.S. for many years[64] without returning to Odanak and had thus been rehabilitated in his rights only recently, he had lost his claim to any land he might have inherited during his absence (RG10 Vol. 2498, File 103,020).[65]

While this case ended in a similar fashion to those of William Obomsawin and Edwin Benedict, it developed quite differently. For instance, when Marie (Obomsawin) Capino, assisted by Henry Masta, wrote to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs on October 6, 1890, she stated the following:

> Any member of our tribe has a right according to immemorial usages & customs of our Ancestors to acquire by purchase or otherwise any portion of land in our Reserve without the consent of the band or the approval of the Superintendent General and to dispose of the same in like manner because really it is only the improvements on said portion of land that he acquires or disposes of, and not the land itself, for the Reserve not being sub-divided into lots, every parcel of land therein contained belongs to the band and not to any individual.

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[62] Louis Hannis (ca. 1808-1889) was the son of Jean Hannis and Marguerite Portneuf.
[63] Marie Capino (1816-1882) married Louis Hannis at the Congregational Church in Durham, Quebec, August 28, 1839.
[64] In a letter dated February 8, 1894, Hannah (Capino) Paul Denis put her father's absence at nine years; I would have argued for an absence in excess of 20, although Theophile and Marie (Obomsawin) Capino did periodically return to the Eastern Townships of Quebec during the 1860s, and again in 1876. They baptized their four youngest children at Saint-Michel-de-Sherbrooke in 1861, 1863, 1865, and 1876 (RSMS), and buried two children at the Anglican Church in Ascot in 1863 (RAA).
[65] This despite the fact that Capino took up residence in Canada in 1881, approximately five years after passage of the *Indian Act* of 1876.

Capino (and Masta) demonstrated an awareness and anxiety about conflicting individual and communal claims to reserve land at Odanak and an uncertainty about how such conflicting claims were to be adjudicated – by Abenaki voters? by bureaucrats in Ottawa? according to what set of rules?

At issue were claims which we might, following Anna Tsing (2003), consider as bureaucratic and charismatic.[66] For Tsing, "commodity-property claims" are bureaucratic; they "must be impersonal, passive, context-free, and transferable to be enforced by the state" (2003:31). "Charismatic" claims, on the other hand, must be actively performed, foregrounding aspects of social context and meaning. Building on Tsing's analysis, Don Brenneis has underscored the importance of such performance as "not solely an individual accomplishment...[but]… requiring audiences whose interests and enthusiasms must be engaged and shaped" (2003:220-221). In order for these types of claims "to be effective and authoritative, various audiences must be captured and convinced" (222).

While the property claims being disputed in cases such as this one were thought to be "impersonal, passive, context-free, and transferable," the arguments marshaled by disputants mobilized different conceptions of rights. In a series of depositions, Joseph Laurent and his supporters embedded property claims in an understanding of social context informed by their particular position. For instance, Chief Lazare Wawanolet, age 59, swore that he was acquainted with the land in question, and had always known this property to have been owned and occupied solely by Louis Hannis. Furthermore, he had never before seen Joseph-Thomas Capino or his widow, even though he had resided at

[66] Tsing's inspiration here is, of course, Weber.

Odanak for his entire life, nor had he known Theophile Capino to have ever claimed the land in question before moving to Odanak in 1881.

In another deposition, Joseph Laurent also swore that he had never known Joseph-Thomas Capino or his widow, although he had lived at Odanak all his life (he was 54 at the time). He also swore that a trustworthy person had told him that Capino's widow, Marie-Anne Otôdoson, had subsequently lived with a man named Pamaguimett at Moosehead Lake, in Maine, without ever having been remarried.[67] Laurent had also heard that she died in the U.S.

Solomon Benedict swore a third deposition included in this file. Unlike Wawanolet and Laurent, Benedict did not state that he had always lived at Odanak (he was 58), but claimed to have been intimately involved in the deliberations of the General Council for 37 years (since he reached the age of majority). He never knew Joseph-Thomas Capino, and only knew Marie-Anne Otôdoson at Lake Megantic, in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, 41 years prior (circa 1853, when Benedict was about 17 years old). At the time, she was living with Pamaguimett, apparently without having been married.

Benedict further swore that over the last 50 years, he had not seen Otôdoson at Odanak or heard of her occupying or possessing any land there. He was well acquainted with both Theophile Capino and his wife, the latter being a cousin of Benedict's wife.[68] He attested to the absence of Theophile Capino from Odanak which led to his loss of

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[67] Marie-Anne Otôdoson, aka Molly Ann Swasean, married Pamaguimet Metallick, aka Joseph Pamaguimet, aka Pierre Louis, on December 4, 1825 at the Anglican Church at Ascot, in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. The marriage may not have been common knowledge at Odanak, where marriages performed elsewhere were questioned or unknown in other cases, all the more so when they were not performed in a Catholic church. For more on this couple, see Chapter Four.

[68] Marie (Obomsawin) Capino was the daughter of Jean-Baptiste Obomsawin and Marie-Claire Toxuse. Jean-Baptiste Obomsawin and Mathilde (Obomsawin) Benedict were patrilateral first cousins.

rights and eventual readmission, and noted that while he lived at Odanak previously, Capino had never claimed nor occupied the land in question.

Faced with bureaucratic uncertainty, the parties turned to charismatic claims, with Laurent and his supporters arguing that not only had Theophile Capino lost any claims he might have had to the land due to his long residence in the U.S., but that he never made such claims while he was living at Odanak as a younger man. In fact, no one ever acted as though anyone other than Louis and Marie (Capino) Hannis owned the property during the lifetimes of three community leaders in their late 50s. Marie (Obomsawin) Capino and Hannah (Capino) Paul Denis' claims were new and unfounded, and even the claims that Marie-Anne Otôdoson, the widow of Joseph-Thomas Capino, seem to be dismissed both by her longtime residence away from Odanak (particularly her years in the U.S.), and by her unsanctioned relationship with Pamaguimet.[69] In doing so, Laurent, Wawanolet and Benedict contributed to the growth of a conceptual divide between those Abenaki living on-reserve (and thus able to perform claims to property) and those with extensive residence off-reserve, particularly south of the U.S.-Canada border, even while many Abenaki families had been readmitted to the "St. Francis Band" in the previous decade. Perhaps it is no surprise that few descendants of these readmitted families reside on-reserve today.

Making Homes away from the Village

Despite the importance of Odanak as *home* for many Abenaki even after a generation or more of residence uniquely off-reserve, and its affective import for many others, Abenaki have also long invested themselves in home places within and beyond

[69] All three deponents also weighed in on the dispute surrounding Louis Hannis' donation of land to Marie (Obomsawin) Capino and conflicting wills, taking the side of Louis' son, César, who paid for his father's funeral expenses.

their old homelands in the U.S. (and Canada). Recall Skip Bernier's tour of the Newport area, and its mix of local history and familial proximity. Not only did Skip represent a specifically Abenaki home place, but he performed it as well, staking a claim both quotidian and political.

When Lucinda (Tahamont) Masta, for instance, enrolled her daughter Flora in the Carlisle Indian School[70] in August 1909, she declared her home as Mahopac, NY. Flora's father, Ignace Masta (Jr.), was identified as ½ Indian of a tribe "located at" Lowell, MA and Lucinda was ¾ Indian of a tribe "located at" Old Orchard, ME. Ignace had "left the tribe" 28 years earlier; Lucinda had done the same 50 years earlier. Flora had attended school at "St. Francis Dulac" in "Pierreville Canada," but that is the only reference to Odanak in the application for enrollment.[71]

Like Skip and other Abenaki today, Lucinda was faced with bureaucratic expectations of a reservation home which her own experience greatly exceeded. Lucinda was born in New York in August 1866 and died in Long Branch, NJ, in December 1925, although she was baptized and buried at the Anglican Church at Odanak. Most of her life was spent south of the border and in the company of other Abenaki. Her children were born in New York in the 1880s and 1890s. She was enumerated on the 1892 New York State Census at Lake George (forming a household with her husband), on the 1900 U.S.

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[70] All Carlisle student records are from NARA Record Group 75, Entry 1327.

[71] There was no reference to the term "Abenaki" on the application, either, although other paperwork in the file referred to Flora as such. Carlisle School paperwork, however, referred to her sister Dora and her cousin Laura, however, as Penobscot. Dora attended Carlisle from 1898 to 1905, Laura attended from 1898 to 1903. While Laura was enrolled as Laura Masta by Lucinda (Tahamont) Masta, based on her age and discussions with one of her great-grandchildren, I am certain that Laura was Laura Tahamont, daughter of Louis and Josephine (Gouin) Tahamont. While Laura was considerably younger than Lucinda, they were partrilateral first cousins.

Blanche Newell also attended Carlisle as a Penobscot, however her mother, Victoria Tahamont, was Abenaki, and she was raised with her maternal kin. Carlisle student Philip Lola, on the other hand, lived at Penobscot with his father's family, rather than among his matrilateral relatives at Wôlinak.

Census at Saranac Lake (in her parents' household), on the 1905 New York State Census at Ellenburgh, NY (in the household of Daniel and Adelaide (Benedict) Emmett), and on the 1910 U.S. Census in Carmel, NY, on the shores of Lake Mahopac (in the household of George Paquette). In 1920, she and her daughter were living in Newark, NJ (1920 U.S. Census).

I cannot say why Lucinda identified Old Orchard, ME, as her tribal home, although there were Abenaki who regularly spent their summers there in the late 19th century. Ignace had a sister, niece and nephew in Lowell, MA, which likely led to that identification. Importantly, Lucinda could not have risked identifying her daughter as a "Canadian Indian" – one whose "tribe" was "located" at Odanak – for fear of losing an opportunity to attend Carlisle. Whether or not Lucinda thought of Odanak, Lake Mahopac, Old Orchard, or anywhere else as "home," she clearly possessed a complex sense of place and resisted the reduction of her identity to one specific locale. Such resistance, of course, was predicated on enrollment at Carlisle rather than enrollment under the *Indian Act*.

Other Abenaki took similar approaches to Carlisle applications. In 1906, Robert Tahamont's home "reservation" was the "Encampment at Lake George," although he lived in Newark, NJ. Three years later, his cousin Estelle Tahamont, also living in Newark, was identified on her application as the daughter of Johnson Tahamont, an "Indian of the Abenakis Tribe located at the New York State Agency." Walter Paul's 1908 application, on the other hand, did identify his parents' tribal home as "Canada,"

although he noted that his father ("full Indian of the Abanakee Tribe") "left the tribe" in 1896, and his mother ("1/4 Indian of the Abanakee Tribe") was "never their."[72]

Walter Paul's Carlisle School file is particularly noteworthy given his correspondence with the school after her ran away during his first term. Walter had already attended school at Lakewood, NY, where his father and grandfather lived, and returned the school after Carlisle. When the school sent him a survey to complete in May 1910, he dutifully reported that he was working for a railroad company and building a house "which will by and by be my future home." In response to question 9 – "Tell me anything else of interest connected with your life:" – he provided more detail. He was supporting his parents,[73] "making an honest living," and "getting along fine," and felt that while the Carlisle School might be "a benefit to some Indians that has no chance," he felt that he was better off without it.

He continued later on an Erie Railroad Company telegram form, writing a bit more pointedly. He could not "speak very highly of your school." "I really think that Carlisle School is the last place I would want any of my relation[s] to go to get an education." He had spoken against the school to acquaintances in New York City, and was sending his sister's children to Lakewood High School. His association with Lakewood Village was plain: it was clearly home in comparison to Carlisle, and he wanted his "relation[s] to stay and attend our school."

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[72] Walter Ellsworth Paul was the son of John Henry and Susan (Camp) Paul. John Henry Paul, the son of Ambroise Paul Denis and Magdeleine Stanislas, spent most of his life in the U.S., mostly New York. Susan Camp, the daughter of John Camp and Susan Watso, visited Odanak as a child, but lived in the U.S., particularly at Lake George.

[73] As Walter was very young when his mother died, he was referring to his father and step-mother.

Home was a space of longing for Virginia Paul, Walter's sister, who also attended an Indian boarding school – Thomas Indian School on the Cattaraugus Reservation.[74] Her case file[75] provides only a very partial understanding of Virginia's early life – her (eventually successful) attempts to run away from the school, her unhappiness with the non-scholarly work required by the school – but it includes a letter which is particularly relevant here. Virginia's uncle, Theodore Jamerson,[76] wrote to the school's superintendent on August 14, 1902: "The bearer is Mr. A. M. Paul, grandfather of Virginia Paul. I understand he desires to take Virginia home with him. As I have done what I think is best for her, I don't want to be responsible if Mr. Paul takes her." Home for Walter and Virginia was not tied to the identity politics so often associated with aboriginal North America today.

"We call Lake Lucerne our real home."

The case of Walter and Virginia's cousin, Ann Jane (Paul Denis) Fuller, aka "Falling Star," underscores this point. Thinking back to her early childhood in Durham, Quebec, during her 1899 interview with the *New York Times*, Ann J. recalled her first doll:

> It was made by my great-grandmother [Marie-Hélène (Otôdoson) Saziboet] of corn husks with the corn silk for hair. My first real doll my great-grandmother brought me from Saratoga. That was a great place for Indians, and one time she came home and she had something in the bosom of her dress and when she took it out it was a wax doll with real hair for me. I was the only child that had that kind and every one came to see it. I named it Molly Louise after my mother's sister, because I thought a great deal of her. I don't think I named by first doll; only called it Kujokon, which is the Indian word for doll. (*New York Times* April 30, 1899. Page 23.)

[74] On the Thomas Indian School, see Burich (2007).
[75] Thomas Indian School Records. B0595. Student Case Files, ca. 1892-1957.
[76] Theodore and Emma E. (Paul) Jamerson lived nearby in Brant, also part of the Cattaraugus Reservation. Jamerson was Seneca.

From her earliest days,[77] young Ann's sense of the Abenaki world was grounded in kinship and commerce, ranging from the Eastern Townships of Quebec to the Indian Encampment at Saratoga Springs.

Ann J. was the youngest of three children born to Noel Paul Denis[78] and his second wife, Ellen Lawless.[79] Her father died while she was still a young girl,[80] and Ellen Lawless married Louis Saint-Denis in August 1864.[81] The son of Pierre Saint-Denis and Susan (Marie-Josephte) Alexis, Louis' earliest years were spent away from Odanak[82] until he and his mother moved there in the early 1840s after the apparent death of his father.[83] A few years after Louis and Ellen's marriage, the family moved to Essex County, NY, and some years later,[84] the family relocated again to Luzerne, NY, in Warren County. Ann, as "Falling Star," subsequently made a fateful trip to New York City.

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[77] According to her baptismal record, Ann Jane was born 21 July 1853. She was baptized 5 March 1854 by Rev. Peter Paul Osunkherhine; James Watso and Lazare Tahamont were witnesses. Her brother Noel was baptized at the same time.

[78] Noel Paul Denis' first marriage was to Therese Hannis. Their surviving child, Jean Paul Denis, was raised north of the Saint Lawrence by Msadokous relatives after the death of his mother.

[79] They were married by Rev. Peter Paul Osunkherhine of Odanak's Congregational Church in October 1848. Daniel Annance and Simon Annance signed the record as witnesses.

[80] I have yet not been able to locate a record of Noel Paul Denis' death, but it apparently was prior to 1861 (1861 Census of Canada).

[81] The marriage is recorded in the registers of Christ Church, Sorel, but likely took place at Odanak. Amable Gill and Laurent Tahamont were witnesses.

[82] Members of the Alexis, or "Uauasamit" or "Wasomat," family appear sporadically in the records of Saint-François-du-Lac and Notre-Dame-du-Rosaire, Saint-Hyacinthe; brother Jacques-Joseph Alexis witnessed the baptism of Jacques-Joseph Alumkasset at Notre-Dame-de-Montréal in 1815. The Saint-Denis family appears even more sporadically in Odanak-related records, although one branch of this family does appear in records at Saint-Jean-François-Regis (Akwesasne) and later in the Adirondacks. The apical ancestor of this family was also named Pierre Saint-Denis; according to his burial record he was adopted and brought up within the Abenaki Nation, although he was not born into a native family. (RSFdL 18 January 1811)

[83] The earliest records of Louis Saint-Denis record his name as Louis Suzanne. (RSFdL 17 January 1851, 31 March 1851)

[84] I have not been able to narrow down the date of the family's move to Luzerne. They were enumerated in Chesterfield, Essex County, NY in June 1880. In February 1892 they were enumerated in Luzerne. (1892 New York State Census)

An 1897 story in the *Ogdensburg Advance and St. Lawrence Weekly Democrat* described her "friendless and almost penniless…alone in New York city and pining to get back to the little village of Luzerne, up among the Adirondacks, where her invalid mother and the few remaining members of her tribe live. She had gone to the metropolis on a basket selling expedition, which had been a financial failure." Fortunately, a visit with Mrs. Harriet Maxwell Converse, a patron and friend of the urban aboriginal community, led to better fortunes. "You have a fortune in your face," she was reputed to have told Fuller, and then arranged for her to begin modeling for sculptors and other artists.

She was a hit with New York's artists, and continued selling baskets and other crafts, both in the city and back in the Adirondacks during the summer. The 1899 *New York Times* story described her as a hardworking woman working to support herself and her family. She told the reporter that "I like to be in New York because I can get work and send all the money I do not need for living home. But I would so much rather be back in the woods…We call Lake Lucerne our real home, and we have a cabin there, and we shall always go back, for there we have a lot in the cemetery where the members of our family are buried" (*New York Times* April 30, 1899. Page 23.).

How Lake Luzerne had become her family's "real home" is particularly important, given her history of long-term residence in Durham, Quebec, and Chesterfield, NY. Furthermore, Ann had spent much of the years her family lived at Lake Luzerne away, working in New York City or selling baskets in the northern Adirondacks. It is at Lake Luzerne, however that "we have a lot in the cemetery where the members of our family are buried."

The cemetery lot in question today is marked by stones naming many members of the family. On the front of a large stone is inscribed "Clara Maude Fuller," daughter of Ann Jane, who died in 1894 at only 14 years of age. On one side of the stone "Ellen Minner" is inscribed –Ann Jane's oldest sister, Ellen (Paul Denis) Minor (1849-1873). On another side is listed the family of Ellen's daughter, Sadie E. Minor (1870-?), Sadie's husband Fordice J. Towner (1885-1911) and son Joseph A. Towner (1891-?). On the final side of the large stone are inscribed the names of "Newell Paul" (Noel Paul Denis Jr., 1850-1893)[85] and "Mary A. Jones" (Mary Ann St. Denis, one of Ann's younger sisters, 1865-1893). Additional small stones mark the graves of her step-father, Louis St. Denis ("LD," ca. 1835-1906), and "John Henry," a younger brother who died months after he was born.[86]

My informants and I have not yet located the graves of Ellen (Lawless) St. Denis, Angeline (St. Denis) Degonzague, or Ann Jane (Paul Denis) Fuller herself. That no stone marks her grave in the family plot (and likely the other two as well) is evidence of her mother and step-father's declining fortunes as the basket trade upon which they had depended waned and as their ages advanced. No doubt remittances from New York City provided much-needed support to her family during her final years, and it was Ann who had commissioned and paid for the large stone memorializing her daughter and other family members.

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[85] Newell Paul had been working in the Adirondacks since at least June 1880, when he was enumerated on the U.S. Census at Indian Lake. On April 7, 1893, the *Plattsburg Sentinel* reported the following: "Newell Paul, a lumberman and river driver at East River, near Newcomb, Essex county, committed suicide Monday night by cutting his throat in two places with his pocket knife. For some time he had been acting in a peculiar manner, and from his conversation of late it was apparent that the deed was premeditated." However, a February 7, 1903 *Watertown Daily Times* story reported that Falling Star stated that he had been murdered.

[86] Undoubtedly he had been named for his uncle, John Henry Lawless.

A March 1895 letter to Ann from her uncle John H. Lawless in Durham,[87] replying to on which she had written, provides some insight into the process. The bulk of the letter contains news about John's health and his children, closing with his request that Ann give his respects to John Stone and "cuson Susen," Mrs. Susan (Joseph) Stone.[88] The other side of the page, however, includes a note that "Your aunt got the pictures of the graves all right," and the following list:

> your Mother age is 68 years
> Little Ellen is is 47 years
> Noel Paul 44 years
> Was born June 20 1850

Underneath this is Ann's handwriting, working out exactly how dates of birth and death and ages should be represented on the stones.

"Falling Star's" good fortune in New York City was haunted by tragedy, including the youthful deaths of her daughter, husband and older siblings. Perhaps that is why she pointed to her family's graves as evidence that Lake Luzerne was her family's "real home," and why had used the fruits of her labors in New York to not only support her family but also to erect a substantial stone marking the family cemetery plot. Today the stone stands as a monument to her family and to her financial success, which came to an end when she was crippled in a railroad accident. She spent her last year in poverty at home, Lake Luzerne, before passing away in January 1903.

<u>"What I'd really love to see would be a small iron fence placed around the grave"</u>

Memorializing the dead continues to be a powerful technique of creating sentiments of home among Abenaki people. Many of my informants have made

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[87] Several pieces of Ann's correspondence are in the possession of her great-great-great-niece, whose generosity in sharing them with me is very much appreciated.

[88] Susan (Joseph) Stone's mother, Theresa (Saziboet) Joseph and John H. Lawless's mother, Anastasie (Saziboet) Lawless, were sisters.

associations of home at Odanak, Lake George, and other places where family members are buried during conversations with me. From time to time, however, such an association takes on added layers of meaning. For instance, in 2003 David Benedict inquired about the possibility of marking the reputed grave of his great-great-grandfather, Elijah Benedict.

According to Adirondack lore, Elijah Benedict's body was buried near Lake Durant, next to the road running between Indian Lake and Blue Mountain Lake, NY. In 1902, a crew of local log drivers placed a monument of sorts on the spot where his burial was believed to be located, but without any sign or engraving to identify it as such. I had visited this spot with David in 2002, and he had expressed some concern with safeguarding the site. After a trip to Lake Placid from the Gulf Coast in late January, 2003, David wrote to me, "Hey, do you think this act could be used to get funding to put in a stone and a fence around old Elijah?" The act was the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), legislation designed to protect aboriginal burials and sacred objects on U.S. Federal lands.

David must have been giving this a lot of thought during his trip – the e-mail came just a few hours after he had unpacked. I replied the next morning: "NAGPRA for Elijah's grave... Interesting thought. I wonder what the State of NY has for grave protection laws." David soon replied[89] with some information he'd found on-line detailing the jurisdiction of New York's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in designating "any Indian cemetery or burial ground as a place of historic interest" and their responsibility to protect such burial grounds on state lands and to

[89] The text of his e-mail read: "This might just cover it. I've got a name and a phone number in Albany...I'll try calling them this week. It would be nice to get it taken care of this summer."

consult with Native Americans about the same. A couple of days later, after an inquiry to that office, David sent an e-mail to Charles Vandrei, Historic Preservation Officer at New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. David wrote that he was writing about the protection of an "Indian burial site."

> The site in question is in Hamilton County, NY. This is not a newly discovered grave site, but an old, well documented site. The grave is that of my great-great grandfather, a St. Francis Abenaki Indian. A large and very unique boulder was placed as headstone by citizens of Indian Lake many years ago. My concern is for the protection of the site, which is unmarked.

David continued, pinpointing the location of the site, on New York State property, signaling his concern that, although marked by the "large and very unique boulder," it should be considered unmarked and easily accessible. He worried that it "could be unintentionally defaced."

Having stated his concern, David made his historical case, noting that Elijah Benedict, also known as Lewis Elijah, was the son of Sabael Benedict and Marie Angelique Ignace, and lived from 1797 to 1860. He continued by presenting an *account of historical significance*, situating Elijah and his family in Adirondack history:

> Sabael Benedict and his family were the first family to settle in Hamilton County. Indian Lake, the town of Indian Lake, the hamlet of Sabael and Lake Abanakee were each named in honor of Sabael Benedict. Mount Colvin was originally named Mount Sebille. Sabael Benedict and his family were also the first recorded Abenaki family of the Adirondacks. Our family has lived continuously in the Adirondacks since that time.

He added that the family was "originally…from the St. Francis Indian Village of Odanak, Quebec," and that a number of Benedicts and their cousins lived there, too.

David's historical account included place-names – "Lewey Lake, at the south end of Indian Lake[,] was named in honor of the guide, Louis Elijah Benedict." – and notable moments in Adirondack history in which Elijah figured as a key player.

> Elijah is credited with the discovery of the iron ore at Tahawus, which he sold to a party of speculators which included David Henderson and John McIntyre. Elijah Benedict is also recorded as having been Emmons guide during the years he worked on the first Adirondack Survey.

He added that "the amount of historical data on the Sabael Benedict family, and on Elijah Benedict in particular, is pretty remarkable" and listed Adirondack historian Warder Cadbury, Indian Lake Town Historian Bill Zullo, and the Adirondack Museum as authorities who could verify his information. Finally, he made his request:

> I'm hoping you can advise me as to how I would go about having Elijah Benedict's grave site recorded as a site of historic interest. What I'd really love to see would be a small iron fence placed around the grave, marked with a historic site plaque.

A few days later, February 19, David forwarded me the reply he received from Mr. Vandrei, with the note "Any idea what a[n] 'interpretive sign' is?"

Vandrei wrote that he had "made sure that the regional staff is aware of the location and the need to protect it," and argued that the proximity of a nearby Ranger's home would "assist in the protection of the site." "During the course of the next update of the management plan for the unit the importance of the site will be documented. The region also is proposing to place interpretive signs nearby."

Our conversation continued on-line over the next few days. David wrote that he had asked a friend who works in wildlife conservation about interpretive signs.

> He said that it's hard to tell with the D.E.C. but usually they're pretty nice. What I was thinking of is one of those metal ones you usually see along the road...he said that's one of the types they put up.

Then he noted the D.E.C. bureaucratic challenges infamous among Adirondack residents.

> Knowing that nothing happens fast with the D.E.C. and to erect anything on Park land starts a ten year debate...I might want to agree with him, get the signs in place, then come back with the fence idea this summer…He also didn't say that it would be placed on the Historic Site register, but that's also something to work on later. Might be a whole lot of hoops to jump through.

When he asked me for suggestions about how to proceed, I replied:

> I guess the question is, why would you like to see the site preserved/protected/marked as an historic site with sign, fence, tourist listing? What is your vision and do you think it would appeal to other Benedict kin? How you answer these questions should tell you a lot about how to proceed.

I asked if he thought that other Benedicts might want to visit the spot, and cautioned him about the amount of work involved in a National Register nomination.

David's reply thanked me for my feedback. He wasn't interested in tourists and did not foresee many family members gathering at the spot, "although they might want to visit if they knew of it." He was concerned that he might be the only Benedict interested in the project: "I'm not up for taking on any more projects for the next couple of years!" In the end, he wrote:

> Actually my only thought was to plant a sign to identify the spot as Elijah's grave and erect a fence to protect the stone...just to show a little respect. Nothing more than that.

Home

Anthropologist Laura Hammond has noted that "home is a variable term, one that can be transformed, newly invented, and developed in relation to the circumstances in which people find themselves or choose to place themselves" (2004:10). Like any place, it must be made meaningful by human activity. She has cautioned us that "Different senses of place [are] based on the particular relationship forged though daily practice," and that such practice leads to the development of different understandings of place by different groups of people (2004:9).

In this chapter I have drawn attention to some of the homemaking practices of my informants and their forebears, particularly emphasizing the productive (if confusing) tension between Odanak and Abenaki home places off-reserve, particularly in a

homeland largely south of the U.S.-Canada border. At the turn of the 19th century, Abenaki interviewed at Odanak often identified with home places in the U.S., or demonstrated personal knowledge of the landscape at places such as Norridgewock. To speak of Abenaki as having abandoned their homeland makes little sense when reading old church registers, local histories, and other records documenting a continuous part-time and full-time residence throughout Abenaki country by the children and grandchildren of the very same people thought to have fled for exile in Canada. Indeed, the 1801 petition of Pealpole (Pierre Paul), an Algonquin man who for many years lived along the Sandy River in Maine with his Abenaki wife and their children, described a situation where there was no longer "any other Indian family living Near," but he hosted "so many visiting Indians, it keepeth me excessive Poor."[90] Pealpole moved north soon after gaining approval to sell his land, which had been awarded him for service to the rebels in the American Revolution, but at least one of his granddaughters, Marguerite (Guilman) Annance, was back in the region by mid-century, living on the shores of Moosehead Lake with other Abenaki and Maliseet families.

Even in 1801, however, there was a residential distinction being made by Pealpole. The steady flow of traffic was not indicative of the same type of home making in which his family had been engaged. Unfortunately, such quick glimpses are typically what we are afforded in reconstructing 19th century Abenaki territoriality; an important contrast indexed by a situated knowledge claim, suggesting that obvious continuities on the landscape should not be treated as examples of the same phenomenon. The Abenaki as a group clearly had not abandoned their homelands, but individuals and families were not

[90] The "Petition of Indian Pealpole Coveagme, February 6, 1801" can be found in the original legislative papers (1800 Resolve, chapter 97) at the Massachusetts State Archives in Boston. I am grateful to historian Micah Pawling for sharing his transcription of this document.

all experiencing the territory in the same way, despite common social networks and shared conceptual frames of reference.

Movement back and forth between the village and the homeland provided a series of meaning-making challenges, particularly given the imposition of the *Indian Act* and the end of the Indian Encampments. Abenaki like Anna Capino experienced northern New England as a Canadian Indian, rather than as part of a family that had long called the region home, which was likely the experience of her father.[91] Many Abenaki such as Norman and Angeline (Otôdoson) Johnson thought of home as multiple, including both Odanak and older homelands to the south, only to find that they had lost their rights to a home at the village. Even those who were able to regain these rights rarely had families who stayed in subsequent generations.

Nevertheless, off-reserve Abenaki, even those without immediate family at Odanak, often feel a profound connection to Odanak, and for many it is "home" – at least, in part – and intimately connected to their identification as Abenaki. In many cases this affective link is experienced despite residence in or near an old Abenaki homeland. Some people, such as Susan, have had transformative experiences at Odanak, while others like David have slowly been learning about the reserve over a span of 15 years or more, enjoying periodic visits with distant relatives and building common points of reference. Still others have felt bitter disappointment when they found residents of the village less than welcoming to their Abenaki kin, and/or not living up to the opportunity they picture life on-reserve affording its people.

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[91] Her father, Louis-Joseph Capino, and grandfather, Theophile Capino, had each lived in the White Mountains of nearby New Hampshire, as had the man who raised Theophile, his step-father Pamaguimet Metallic. (See Chapter Four.)

Such shifting and emotionally-charged conceptions of home represent a bind for Abenaki both on- and off-reserve. One Odanak resident recently complained to me that Canadians dismiss the Abenaki as Americans, and Americans are quick to regard them as Canadian; Abenaki are treated as a diaspora no matter where they are, with tenuous claims to a homeland, American or Canadian, depending on the vantage point of the critic. In Abenaki country, however, the horizons of identification[92] are compressed. Odanak and other home-places are enmeshed in histories of travel, economy, difference, affect, and colonial law, posing challenges to Abenaki personhood felt acutely by the family historians and many others with whom I have worked.

[92] Here I evoke the "diasporic horizons" described by Paul Johnson in his study of the Garifuna in Honduras and New York (2007), where St. Vincent and Africa (and Honduras) alternately serve as points of reference for religious practice, in part due to recent transnational Garifuna self-re-imaginings as part of the African diaspora rather than indigenous Caribs. Johnson argued that "*Diasporic horizon* is an apt phrase because it connotes both a spatial edge of longing and a temporal edge of, on the one hand, nostalgia, and, on the other, futurity and desire" (2007:7, references omitted).

Conclusion: From the Past to the Future

As I write the conclusion to this dissertation, Susan Marshall continues to read over her grandmother's papers and sort through old boxes. From time to time she discovers something new or rediscovers something of particular interest. During a recent visit she showed me a letter which she had found the week before, something that I had not yet seen. It was a letter her grandmother, Maude Benedict – not yet Mrs. Nagazoa – had written to her mother, Margaret (Msadokous) Benedict, one April from Lake George. It was almost certainly written in the first few years of the 1900s, and Margaret was apparently at Odanak. Maude told her mother about a recent letter from Kate Dennie – Mrs. Alfred Msadoques. Kate's sister, Margaret (Maggie), was also in touch with Maude, and Susan has become quite interested in a drawing in her grandmother's papers which was signed by J. Lopez – most likely Joseph Lopez of Coney Island, Maggie's second husband.

Dorothy McDermott continues to e-mail me periodically with a question or a new discovery as she works through old newspapers archived on-line. Last spring she sent me a copy of an article commemorating the passing of Mabel Tucker (Bernstein 2007), as well as the results of some inquiries she had made about her in the past. Mabel was a passionate local historian and genealogist from Warrensburg, NY, serving for decades as the official Town Historian. Many Abenaki family historians with Adirondack connections have come across her correspondence with Warder Cadbury and others. Mabel was also a proud descendant of Sabael Benedict and the Lake George Abenaki community that thrived during the era of the Indian Encampments. A few months ago Dorothy sent me a series of newspaper articles detailing the foster homes where Mabel's

mother, Mathilda Camp, and aunts were placed in 1908 after the death of their mother, as well as notes regarding subsequent visits with their elderly father and their half-brother.

Such social and familial ruptures haunt other Abenaki, such as Denise Watso. She has purchased a video camera and hopes to conduct a series of oral history interviews with Abenaki elders in the coming year, with a primary focus on the Albany region and close relatives at Odanak and a secondary focus on the Adirondack-Champlain Valley region. She would also like to record old stories and people speaking the Abenaki language. Time, however, seems hard to come by. She and her partner have jobs, two young children, and volunteer roles in the community. At the same time, elders forget, fall ill, and pass on. Denise has been particularly inspired by the Cherokee Nation's "National Treasures" program for honoring Cherokee citizens "who have made major contributions or a lifetime commitment of perpetuating the Cherokee culture" (http://www.cherokee.org/PressRoom/32418/Press_Article.aspx). Denise, however, feels that all Abenaki elders should be recognized as "National Treasures," and the fact that they were able to survive and raise their families in the face of challenges such as racism, residential schools, and the *Indian Act* merits official acknowledgment and heartfelt gratitude.

Elaine Ricard has been unable to spend much time in the archives over the last couple of years, having been occupied with family, renovations to her family home, and service as an executor of a friend's estate. She keeps in touch with relatives working to secure Indian Status and stays abreast of developments in Abenaki history and Abenaki-related current events as best she can. When she recently found herself with some free time, she and a friend took a trip to Ogdensburg, NY, where her grandfather, Levi

Paquette, grew up. After reading a draft of this dissertation, Elaine wrote to me that she missed doing research. "The need to search for those ties which binds us to [our] Abenaki ancestors is almost unexplainable."

David Benedict has also had other commitments and projects occupying much of his time of late. He is hard at work building a house in the Champlain Valley, bringing the same tenacity, attention to detail, and desire to learn to this project as he has to historical research. He produced maple syrup for the first time this past spring and plans to make birch bark canoes in his new workshop space. David still thinks that someone should make a film about Abenaki history in the Adirondacks in the style of Ken Burns' "The Civil War,"[1] using historic photographs and items in the collections of museums and Abenaki people.

Histories for the Future

For each of these individuals, as for so many indigenous peoples, there are high stakes in the production of aboriginal histories. In settler colonial states such histories inform struggles over land, political recognition, education, community health, and more. A considerable volume of writing has been produced in recent years taking up the question of "*how* to know what happened" in histories of settler-indigenous relations, "particularly in courts and tribunals where indigenous claims are examined and indigenous histories are often presented in evidence" (Johnson 2008:97, emphasis in original).[2] For instance, in a comparative analysis of the forms of history produced

[1] This model has been very influential in the world of documentary film – see Starowicz's account of the making of "Canada: A People's History" (2003:40-41, 147-148).

[2] Some attention has also been paid to more "everyday" aspects of settler history-making, notable examples include Elizabeth Furniss' ethnography of the "frontier cultural complex" in and around Williams Lake, British Columbia (1999), and Eva Mackey's important study of multiculturalism and Canadian nationalism (2002[1999]), based in part on fieldwork in southern Ontario. Mackey has also explored these themes in

during aboriginal rights litigation in Canada, New Zealand and Australia, historian Miranda Johnson has argued that while "historical evidence prepared for treaty claims…derives from styles of argumentation in torts cases…In Native title cases, the major historical issues are temporal questions of cultural continuity and change" (2008:107).[3] This has yielded a situation in which Maori legal struggles in New Zealand have been framed largely by a history (and a public) brought into being through the treaty process itself. In Australia, however, no treaties were ever signed and aboriginal people must prove an ongoing and unique connection to lands in question rather than an historical dispossession. "Claimants must prove that they are who they say they are and that their identity has continued to be substantially the same through time. If their subjectivity is *too* historical – too affected by the traumas of colonization – then they may be proved less than indigenous" (2008:107; see also Povinelli 2002a).

In Canada (and the United States) complex histories of colonization and geographically uneven use of treaties and other techniques of recognition have led to more varied approaches to history and culture. In a recent essay on aboriginal museums, archives, and libraries in the Klamath River region of northern California, Brian Isaac Daniels has pointed to key differences in such institutions among the Hupa, Yurok, and Shasta, linking them to local contexts and history-making projects (2009). The Hoopa Tribal Museum preserves and displays material culture – their own collections and family-owned regalia loaned to the institution when not in use at dances – at a center of Hupa social life next to the reservation's shopping complex, which includes a grocery

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land claims conflicts in Ontario and New York (2005). See Richard Flores' study of the Alamo and the "Texas Modern" for a similar engagement with legacies of Anglo-American expansionism (2002).

[3] Anna Tsing (2007) has recently presented another comparative perspective on the articulation of indigenous rights claims that complements Johnson's, but is broader in scope and less concerned with the twin problems of history and litigation.

store, post office, and tribal court. Off the beaten path, it is not a tourist destination but the museum does interpret Hupa culture in a region where the definition and documentation of culture has been at issue in a set of court battles with the U.S. National Forest Service.

The Yurok, on the other hand, as part of their ongoing efforts to establish a strong aboriginal government after achieving federal recognition in 1988, have engaged with bureaucratic discourses of cultural resource management (CRM), establishing the position of Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) "charged with identifying and maintaining inventories of culturally significant properties, nominating properties to national and tribal registers of historic places, conducting reviews of government agency projects on tribal lands, and developing educational programs" (2009:291). "With five national forests, five national wilderness areas, one national park, and additional Bureau of Land Management properties in the Klamath River area, there are ample government properties over which the Yurok can make cultural claims for purposes of preservation" (Daniels 2009:292). Such claims are made in part by the creation of a large archive – the Northwest Coastal Information Center – documenting over 2,000 cultural and historic sites. This archive is of no interest to tourists and school groups, and of little interest to Yurok community members. It does, however, allow the Yurok government to engage with CRM-related concerns, exercise limited control over information related to their history, and provide potential "knowledge that can be used for future action for the benefit of the tribe" (2009:293).

Finally, the Shasta have created a very different sort of archive in support of their bid for federal acknowledgment. "A labor of love for the few people involved with it"

(Daniels 2009:296), this archive contains newspapers, scholarly publications, census and enrollment records, CRM reports, and documents relevant to a consideration of Shasta history. "The onus is on the people who call themselves Shastas to gather historical artifacts in the hope that they will have, in their cumulative impact, the political effect of demonstrating that the tribal nation exists in a legal sense. History dangles the promise of future sovereignty" (2009:295).

Such analyses have much to offer students of Abenaki history-making as they link institutional contexts, histories of aboriginal-settler relations, regimes of evaluating and interpreting knowledge claims, and local aspirations for the future.[4] There is, however, much more to historical practice in Abenaki country than litigation and institutions. Much of what has been discussed in preceding chapters stands apart from explicitly political realms and from institutions operating as part of or in conjunction with aboriginal polities. Most of the lay and family historians with whom I have been collaborating over the past several years are not "the same people who actively participate in the global indigenous empowerment movement via the Internet, conference travel, and informal indigenous activist networks" (Willow 2010:43).

In a way, many of my historically-engaged interlocutors resemble their non-native counterparts in local historical societies and formal and informal genealogical networks. Some of them have been able to pursue their activities largely because they have achieved some level of financial security, often a result of regular employment or, as is

[4] As anthropologist Anna Willow has written of the Anishinaabe people with whom she has worked: "For activists at Grassy Narrows, cultural revitalization is an optimistic view that not only draws on a perceived need for change but also inspires its achievement. It is a forward-looking vision that aims to ensure a better life for future generations. It is not [as Willow's informants reminded her] about living in the past. It is about converting imaginings of the past into conscious vehicles for self-presentation and the active construction of an affirmative twenty-first-century Anishinaabe identity" (2010:43).

more often the case, retirement. The latter group will not surprise anyone who has spent time with local historical and genealogical societies, or in centers such as the Archives nationales du Québec à Montreal where most of the genealogical researchers appear to be at least 50 years old.[5] Indeed, the genesis of much of the historical work I consider in this dissertation owes much to the recent North American "history craze" associated with heritage tourism, the production and sales of biographies and other non-fiction works of history, and the rise of the genealogy industry, phenomena linking leisure and history. Canadian historian Margaret MacMillan has recently argued that this "craze" is the result of "mature economies" which have led to higher levels of education, "more leisure time," and lower retirement ages. "Not everyone," she argued, "wants to retire to a compound in the sun and ride adult tricycles for amusement" (2008:3). History has an entertainment value as well as a role "in making sense of the world we live in" (2008:3); it can be "fascinating, even fun" (2008:3).

While some are more passionate than others, many of my informants enjoy conducting research, discussing their projects, and undertaking various sorts of historic preservation activities. Some have even transformed part of their homes into small museums displaying baskets made by family members and/or friends, photographs old and new, and souvenirs of visits to other First Nations.[6] Ed Lush's basement is emblematic of such spaces, containing not only such items but also contemporary works of art including an impressive painting of Rogers' Rangers 1759 assault on Odanak by

[5] The rise of on-line businesses such as ancestry.com seems to be leading to a more age-diverse, if virtual, community of genealogical researchers.

[6] Here I draw a distinction between such museum-like spaces and a more diffuse aboriginal theme which may be found in the homes of many Abenaki. Many of my informants have baskets, drums, old photographs, art with pan-Indian motifs, etc., spread throughout their houses or apartments.

Georges Ille, Monique Nolett's husband. Ed has described this (in)famous attack as being of particular interest to him; he "can't learn enough about it."

It is in such orientations to the past – specific interests and projects – that Abenaki historians clearly differentiate themselves from other "history crazed" North Americans. Such interests and projects are born out of individual biographies, family histories, the struggles of the Abenaki people, and the realities of settler colonialism. Rogers' Rangers have long been celebrated heroes of the Seven Years War/French & Indian War, and their sneak attack against the Abenaki village has been the subject of a well-known novel, *Northwest Passage* (Roberts 2001[1937]), and feature film of the same name. Abenaki I know, however, commemorate rather than celebrate the event,[7] condemning the tactics employed by Rogers and his men, lamenting the loss of life, homes, and church, commenting on the Rangers' calamitous retreat south while being pursued by Abenaki men who had been away hunting, and noting the survival of the Abenaki people and the continuing presence of Odanak despite such a horrific act of violence. They implicitly and explicitly reclaim their dignity (and that of their ancestors) in spite of Hollywood's portrayal of the "St. Francis Indians" as bloodthirsty savages.

Such action has been identified by historian Robin Brownlie as characteristic of aboriginal historical writing. She has argued that "Historical thinking and writing have been important in Aboriginal resistance to colonization for a number of reasons" (2009:21):

> First and most simply, the elucidation of historical events and processes has been essential to Aboriginal efforts to understand their own losses and the difficulties they have faced. Second, Aboriginal people who encountered the self-justifying

[7] On the importance of this distinction, see Rudin's discussion of Passamaquoddy and Mi'kmaq involvement in public historical events surrounding the 400th anniversary of Champlain's arrival in Acadie (2009:Chapter 4).

> colonial histories of white society immediately perceived what was at stake in these constructions and sought to counter them with their own understanding of what had occurred and why.
>
> There is a third significant reason for the recurrent attention to history in Aboriginal writing, namely, the denial of historicity to 'Indians' in white colonial mythology…Such thinking placed Indigenous people outside history and rendered them as mere relics of an earlier stage of human development that were doomed to be superseded by those who had taken their land. (2009:21-22)

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, very few Abenaki are writing history as books or articles like those discussed by Brownlie,[8] however this analysis pertains nonetheless to much of my informants' activities.[9] Abenaki family historians often develop better understandings of the losses experienced by their ancestors, and some of the impacts of those losses in their own lives. They typically become more attuned to the weaknesses and self-justifications of colonial historical writing. They certainly see themselves and their ancestors as possessors of a history that dates back thousands of years prior to the

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[8] Trudy Parker's *Aunt Sarah* (1994) and Elaine Ricard's *The St-Francis Abenaki Paper Trail* (2006), are the only Abenaki-authored historical texts I have identified, although Sylvain Rivard has recently edited a volume of Joseph Laurent's correspondence (2009). David Benedict submitted an article (1995) about his grandfather's ancestry to *The Benedict Family News*, an on-line genealogy newsletter, and Réjean Obomsawin co-authored an important article about Théophile Panadis with historian Alice Nash (Nash & Obomsawin 2003). Perhaps more articles like these exist. Instances of Abenaki writing about traditions and politics are also rare, although Michel Durand Nolett's 2008 *Plantes du Soleil levant Waban Aki: Recettes ancestrales de plantes médicinales* is an important example of the former, and includes photographs taken by well-known Abenaki photographer André Gill. Also noteworthy here are three children's books (2005[1977], 2008, 2009) recently written by Christine Sioui Wawanoloath.

A more extensive bibliography has been established among other Wabanaki First Nations. Such work includes Donna Loring's account of her time as the Penobscot Nation's representative to the Maine State Legislature (2008), Mi'kmaq poet Rita Joe's autobiography (1996), Allen Sockbasin's *An Upriver Passamaquoddy* (2007), Donald Soctomah's important series of Passamaquoddy history books (2002, 2003, 2005, 2009) and a children's book (Soctomah & Flahive 2009), and Penobscot Reuben "Butch" Phillips' reflections on canoeing in northern Maine (2007). Charles Norman Shay, a Penobscot, has also been involved in important historical work, republishing two recent essays about his mother (Kennedy 2005) and his aunt (McBride 2002), making them much more available to the local (and regional) community. He also wrote the preface to a recent edition of his grandfather's *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man* (Nicolar 2007[1893]).

[9] Her analysis is useful when considering the late 19th and early 20th c. writings of Laurent and Masta and other Abenaki historical practices discussed in Chapter 2, as well as Penobscot, Maliseet, and Mi'kmaq historical practices of the same period, such as the writings of Joseph Nicolar (2007[1893]), Mary Alice (Nelson) Archambaud aka Molly Spotted Elk (2003[1938], Germain Alexis aka Jerry Lonecloud (in Whitehead 2002), and Henry "Red Eagle" Perley (Williamson et al. 1997; see also Potts 2007), and the performances of individuals such as Frank Loring aka "Big Thunder" (Prins 1998) and Lucy Nicolar aka "Princess Watahwaso" (McBride 2002).

arrival of Europeans. Beyond this, they seek to recover, preserve, and share the details of generations of Abenaki who came before them, sometimes as a means to an end, sometimes as a moral duty, sometimes for the sheer pleasure of understanding.

The tremendous diversity among Abenaki family and lay historians, the differing scales and orientations of their projects, and their uneven distribution throughout the Abenaki population should not be understood as evidence of the marginality or relative unimportance of Abenaki historical practice. Intentionally or not, Abenaki historical practice as described in this dissertation has become an "indigenous cultural means…whereby people engage one another in the making of meaningful worlds" (Lederman 1986:24-25), and a workshop for framing and pondering questions of profound importance to the future of the Abenaki people, and perhaps of all First Nations across the North American continent.

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Jane Barber continues to learn more about her Lagrave/Braziell ancestors. She has tracked down and corresponded with long-lost cousins on-line to learn more about the fate of other branches of the Braziell family and the lives of her great…uncles and aunts in the 19th century. She even attended for the first time an Abenaki gathering just outside of Albany. Jane and her father, Robert Hiveley, have assembled a particularly rich set of data[10] pertaining to her maternal grandfather, William Martin Braziell.[11] According to genealogical and biographical notes assembled by Jane's father, William ("Bill") was born on December 18, 1892 in Poughkeepsie, NY, and was raised in the

[10] As Jane has pointed out to me, much of this data derives from her father's recollections of his father-in-law, as well as those of his wife – William's daughter, Elva.

[11] William was the grandson of Peter Brazill aka Pierre Lagrave, an Abenaki who was born at Odanak, spent most of his youth at Sharon Springs, and later lived throughout the Mohawk Valley, working in farming and carpentry.

town. He excelled at school, serving as class president his junior year and class treasurer his senior year. He ran track and held leadership positions in the Irving-Webster Debating Society where, ironically, his team was once selected to argue that "Resolved, that the American Indian has received more benefits and less injuries at the hands of the White Race than the Negro."[12] After graduation, he attended Cornell University to study architecture, his tuition paid by a family friend (and future matrilateral uncle). Apart from military service during World War I and a brief period of residence in Ohio during his final years, his home as an adult was in Pittsburgh, PA, where he worked as an architect, and designed many residential, ecclesiastical, and commercial buildings. Jane has also learned that he secured a patent for lighting fixtures. In addition to his design work, he also did architectural drawings for the Historical American Buildings Survey and his family is also in possession of some remarkable pastels.

In contemplating the prospects of an Abenaki national historiography, I have asked myself whether William Martin Braziell may be considered an *Abenaki* architect and artist. For the sake of this study he certainly was: he had unambiguous Abenaki ancestry and ties to the broader community more recent than the turn of the 19th century. I suspect, however, that my informants would have mixed opinions were the question posed to them. Viewed from a *group* whose boundaries are contested, often half-heartedly, it would be an open question, but one whose stakes come into view periodically. What might result from including him in Abenaki national historiography, were such a thing to exist? Would he take his place as a talented artist and successful

[12] It should be noted that I have no idea how William Braziell felt about his Abenaki grandfather and relations, nor do we know whether or how his Abenaki family history led him to identify with "the American Indian" figured in the terms of this debate.

architect, alongside other celebrated Abenaki such as Jean-Paul Nolet[13] and Alanis Obomsawin? Or would he always be kept at arm's length, a distant relative, an outsider whose biography may have been grounded in Abenaki experience, but whose Abenaki social networks did not extend far beyond his immediate family? All of this anticipates another question: should his children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc., be included within the *appartenance* of a rights-bearing group? Or of any other sort of Abenaki collectivity?[14]

As Jane met other people attending the Albany event, she was met with some puzzlement by Abenaki people who had never met her and did not know members of her immediate family. However, when she told them that she was related to the Lagrave family, there was a moment of recognition of shared histories and kinship. It was not unqualified acceptance, but even such basic historical knowledge clearly creates the potential for new relationships to develop.

Given histories of settler colonialism, labor migration, and cultural rupture, questions of belonging, territoriality, authority, and knowledge itself are not easy to answer for my informants. The work of Abenaki family historians (and perhaps of the scholars they have and will come to know) highlights, extends, and contextualizes the

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[13] Jean-Paul Nolet (1924-2000), son of Charles Wawanolett aka Charlie Nolett and his wife, Marie-Louise Degonzague, was a celebrated Radio-Canada radio and television host from 1944 to 1989 (http://archives.radio-canada.ca/emissions/833-14695/page/1/).

[14] A comparative example might bring these last questions into clearer relief. For instance, the Adirondack Museum has in its collections a quilt created by Mrs. Jennie Ordway and her sister-in-law, Katherine (Watso) Ordway (Adirondack Museum 2008.028.0001). Kate (ca. 1871-?) was the daughter of Joseph-Louis and Alice (Johnson) Watso and a lifelong resident of the southeastern Adirondacks. According to accession records, the quilt in question, known as a "crazy quilt," was fabricated between 1905 and 1915 and was "consistent with other Johnsburg [NY] quilts that indicate that the area's quilters obtained pieces for their work from the shirt factories in North Creek, Warrensburg, and Chestertown." Mrs. Ordway's daughter, Helen (Ordway) Cornwall, told museum staff that her mother "put the blocks together" and remembered that her "Aunt Kate did all the decorative stitching."

How might the hybrid character of this quilt be reckoned? Was it an *Abenaki* quilt? Importantly, like William Martin Braziell's descendants, Kate (Watsaw) Ordway's great-nieces and –nephews find themselves ineligible for Indian status at the dawn of the 21st century.

challenges and opportunities they represent. These are historical dilemmas with profound implications for the future.

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RICTR = Registers of L'Immaculée-Conception, Trois-Rivières, Quebec, Canada.
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ROA = Registers of the Anglican Church, Odanak First Nation.
RSFD = Registers of Saint-Frédéric-de-Drummondville, Quebec, Canada.
RSFdL = Registers of Saint-François-du-Lac, Quebec, Canada.
RSFdS = Registers of Saint-François-de-Sales, Odanak First Nation.
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