

# State Recognition and the Dangers of Race Shifting: The Case of Vermont

*Darryl Leroux*

Since the 1970s, a high-profile movement actively trying to reconstitute the Abenaki people in Vermont has emerged. The St. Francis/Sokoki Band of Abenakis of Vermont (now, Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi), based in Swanton in Franklin County, was the first self-identified Abenaki tribe in the state, dating back to its formal incorporation in 1974. Since then, at least sixteen other separate entities have emerged in the state to represent Abenaki people, all claiming to be the descendants of a hitherto unknown population of Abenaki who inhabited the state in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

In 2011 and 2012, the State of Vermont formally recognized four “tribes,” all of which have their origins in the original Swanton-based organization. State recognition was the culmination of over thirty-five years of effort by the Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi (ANM) and allied organizations. This “revitalization movement,” as the ANM called it in its 1982 petition for federal recognition, has led to several significant gains by the organizations, including millions of dollars in state and federal educational funding, lifetime fishing and hunting licenses for members, and authorization for its members to sell products under the federal Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990. More than anything, the “tribes” have been almost universally welcomed by Vermonters as a salve for the region’s history of colonialism. The most notable exception has been vocal and consistent opposition by the actual descendants of the Abenaki people who inhabited the Green Mountain State for much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, organized primarily at Odanak across the border in Québec, who maintain that they share no kinship relations whatsoever with the “Abenaki tribes” in Vermont, including the four that are state recognized.

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*Making Sense of the “Abenaki” Turn in Vermont*

Scholars of white identities in the United States have been documenting the move away from whiteness for over a generation.<sup>2</sup> Most associate the rise of white ethnic consciousness to the civil rights movement, which, according to historian Matthew Jacobson, “introduced a new and contagious idiom of group identity and group rights on the American scene.”<sup>3</sup> Eager to disassociate itself from a legacy of racist violence, white society found solace in a search for its European immigrant past: hyphenated Irish, Scottish, Italian, Norwegian, Swedish, and Polish American identities became *de rigueur*. Sociologist Mary Waters’s ground-breaking 1990 study illustrated how the turn to ethnic minority identification among white Americans in the 1960s and 1970s contributed to the reproduction of established racial hierarchies,<sup>4</sup> echoing the arguments made by Michael Omi and Howard Winant a few years earlier.<sup>5</sup> Jacobson has usefully contended that the public prominence of calls for racial justice “prompted a rapid move among white ethnics to disassociate themselves from white privilege. The popular rediscovery of ethnic forebears among the descendants of nineteenth-century European immigrants became one way of saying, ‘We’re merely newcomers; the nation’s crimes are not our own.’”<sup>6</sup> These newly hyphenated Americans increasingly thought of themselves as “not-quite-white,” a remarkable new social reality that would have been unthinkable in most of the United States in the 1950s.<sup>7</sup>

A corollary to the creation of this type of ethnic “not-quite-whiteness” was the widespread turn to “Indigenous” identity among white Americans who could trace their ancestry further back in time to the earliest European settlers. Historian Philip Deloria has explained the long history of “playing Indian” at the center of US white identity, a process that sought to “indigenize” American settlers to differentiate them from their European brethren. Deloria, however, concedes that there were limits to these performances: “Indian play was a temporary fantasy, and the player inevitably returned to the everyday world. But the world to which one returned was not that of Indian people, and, in that sense, play allowed one to evade the very reality that it suggested one was experiencing. It offered the concrete ground on which identity might be experienced, but it did not call its adherents to change their lives.”<sup>8</sup> The last decades have witnessed a move beyond fantasy in which white Americans re-organize their social and political lives to *become* “Indigenous,” permanently transforming their everyday world accordingly.

The rise of white claims to Indigenous identities in the United States and Canada has also occurred in lockstep with the development of a new regime of colonial governance that foregrounds what Glen Coulthard has called the “politics of recognition.” As Coulthard maintains: “Since 1969 we have witnessed the *modus operandi* of colonial power relations in Canada shift from a more or less unconcealed structure of domination to a form of colonial governance that works through the medium of state recognition and accommodation.”<sup>9</sup> Coulthard proceeds to argue that despite this purportedly progressive shift in governance, settler colonialism remains committed to the dispossession of Indigenous Peoples of their lands and self-determination. The rise

of the politics of recognition, exemplified in the United States by the Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) creation of the Office of Federal Acknowledgment (OFA) in 1978, has also marked the contemporary dynamics of the federal regulation of Indigenous sovereignty in the United States. Notably, Coulthard demonstrates how these frameworks of recognition have eroded First Nation self-determination and operated at the expense of Indigenous citizenship orders and law. One particularly perverse effect of the current recognition regime is that it has opened up possibilities for white peoples to seek and receive recognition as "Indigenous" from governments, in a form of settler governmentality that in fact claims and erases actual Indigenous Peoples.

On the topic of the symbiotic relationship between whiteness and indigeneity, Aileen Moreton-Robinson has made a strong plea for analyses in Indigenous studies that center race and whiteness. "The production of knowledge about cultural specificity," Moreton-Robinson asserts, "is complicit with state requirements for manageable forms of difference that are racially configured through whiteness."<sup>10</sup> In other words, Moreton-Robinson urges us to theorize "how racialization works to produce Indigeneity through whiteness,"<sup>11</sup> and thus, to consider just how the "white possessive" is embedded in the landscape of settler colonial societies. The movement from "playing Indian" to "becoming Indigenous" that has transpired over the past few decades in Vermont embodies forms of the white possessive that dispossess Indigenous Peoples and their sovereignties.

Sociologist C. Matthew Snipp's research on the US census provides telling statistics that bring into focus the interrelated emergence of the transformation in white identities, the politics of recognition, and the white possessive in the 1960s and 1970s, the period in which the "Abenaki" movement in Vermont took flight.<sup>12</sup> For instance, in the 1980 census, a whopping 77 percent of individuals who indicated having "American Indian" ancestry (5.2 million persons) also selected their "race" as white.<sup>13</sup> Snipp's careful analysis illustrates that this group of self-identified white individuals with unspecified Native American ancestry mostly resembled white, middle-class Americans when measured by several socioeconomic and cultural indicators.<sup>14</sup>

Discussing his experiences encountering this phenomenon while he was executive director of the National Congress of American Indians from 1964 to 1967, historian Vine Deloria Jr. describes the sudden move among white Americans to claim Indigenous identity as the "Indian-grandmother complex:"

It doesn't take much insight into racial attitudes to understand the real meaning of the Indian-grandmother complex that plagues certain whites. . . . While a real Indian grandmother is probably the nicest thing that could happen to a child, why is a remote Indian princess grandmother so necessary for many whites? Is it because they are afraid of being classed as foreigners? Do they need some blood tie with the frontier and its dangers in order to experience what it means to be an American? Or is it an attempt to avoid facing the guilt they bear for the treatment of the Indians?<sup>15</sup>

Not satisfied with the move to white ethnic "minority" identities, many white Americans began mobilizing fuzzy and self-serving family lore about "Indian" princesses and grandmothers in the 1960s and 1970s to secure a clearer form of "not-quite-whiteness."

A significant aim of this political movement was to claim forms of government recognition that at once authorized the escape from whiteness and erased Indigenous Peoples from the recognition equation. As we will see, the ANM's own petition for federal recognition, submitted in 1982, was heavy with the kind of family lore that actively expunged the ongoing presence of the Abenaki people in Vermont throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

With these changes in white identification, the overall Native American population ballooned by 348 percent between 1960 and 2000, an increase anthropologist Circe Sturm largely attributes to "racial shifters,"<sup>16</sup> white Americans who rely on often unverified ancestry to move away from their white identities. According to Sturm, who conducted dozens of interviews with white individuals shifting their identities, "The vast majority of these racial converts described their experience of contemporary whiteness as being plagued by guilt, loneliness, isolation, and a gnawing sense of racial, spiritual, and cultural emptiness."<sup>17</sup> Moving to an Indigenous identity provided white race shifters in Sturm's study with a new identity suddenly valued by their peers and, importantly, white power brokers such as politicians, academics, and government.

Overall, the Native American population, as captured by the US census, grew from 552,000 to 9.7 million in the sixty years between 1960 and 2020,<sup>18</sup> an explosive rate of increase that is nearly ten times the rate of population growth in the United States over the same period. Prior to the emergence of the race shifting phenomenon in the 1960s, the Native American population grew at a stable if below average rate vis-à-vis the general US population from 1890 onwards.<sup>19</sup> The social and political movement that took shape in the 1960s led a growing number of white Americans to shift their identities, particularly to various forms of "Indigenous" identities. As Sturm argues, "These [white] people are fleeing not from political and social persecution, but from whiteness."<sup>20</sup> An examination of US census returns points to similar demographic changes in the State of Vermont.

The number of Indigenous persons enumerated in the decennial federal census in Vermont between 1860 and 1950 varied between five and no more than thirty-six. Franklin County recorded no Indigenous person in seven of the ten censuses during this period, ultimately recording one individual in 1960.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the lack of recorded Abenaki presence for nearly a century in the US census, several influential public reports in the first half of the twentieth century confirm that no Abenaki *community* actively existed in Vermont. In the 1930s, pathbreaking Mohegan anthropologist Gladys Tantaquidgeon conducted a survey of New England Tribes for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs at the US Department of the Interior. In her report, filed in 1934, she identified nine tribes in four New England states (Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut), none of which was Abenaki or in Vermont or New Hampshire.<sup>22</sup>

A second report, this time by anthropologist William Harlen Gilbert Jr., focused on identifying Indigenous collectivities in the eastern states. Reviewing 1930 census returns as well as historical and anthropological works, Gilbert concluded that no group of Indigenous peoples lived in Vermont, though some individuals were scattered throughout the state.<sup>23</sup> Another alliance of anthropologists from the Smithsonian

Institution set out to identify and document Indigenous tribes in the northeastern states in the 1960s. William Sturtevant and Samuel Stanley documented the presence of a small Abenaki community of twenty-five people in upstate New York, the forbearers of many of the Odanak Abenaki who now live in the Albany metropolitan region. Yet, they concluded, as did their peers from Tantaquidgeon onwards, that no Abenaki tribe existed in Vermont.

By 1980, however, 422 individuals in Franklin self-identified as “Native American” in the census, a number that increased more than 50 percent to 684 in 2000, the most of any county in the state.<sup>24</sup> In fact, according to my analysis of 2010 US census returns, Franklin County and its westerly neighbor, Grand Isle County—the only two counties adjacent to Lake Champlain and the border with Québec—had the highest proportion of individuals identifying as “Native American” in Vermont, more than double the state average. The overall increase in self-identified Native Americans in the census for Vermont between 1960 and 2000 far surpasses even the remarkable increase seen on a national level during this same period.<sup>25</sup>

Vermont presents an ideal social laboratory for race shifting. On the one hand is a large and closely knit white ethnic minority (Franco-Americans) with a history of ambivalent acceptance in the state. The descendants of this group are thus encouraged to embrace the type of family lore, based in the “Indian-grandmother complex,” that has become prevalent among white peoples across the United States and Canada in order to escape the void of whiteness. On the other hand, we have a self-consciously “progressive” state with a history of imagining itself “as not *just* white, but a special kind of white,”<sup>26</sup> one that “emphasizes that Vermonters are unusually ‘tolerant,’ with a strong respect for notions of equality.”<sup>27</sup> In this social context, the politics of state recognition have been largely embraced as a progressive move in this age of racial accommodation. The emergence of the reconstituted Abenaki in the 1970s and the recognition of the four associated tribes in 2011 and 2012 usefully deflects “the need for contemporary examinations of issues of racism” in Vermont.<sup>28</sup>

The move away from whiteness and, especially, from accountability in ongoing forms of racist violence, combined with the politics of recognition and the white possessive, led to changes in social identification starting in the 1960s. For millions of white Americans, turning away from whiteness involved claims to an “Indigenous” identity and efforts to attain government recognition, as evidenced in part by the Abenaki revitalization movement that originated in the mid-1970s in Franklin County, Vermont.

### *Race Shifting Made Possible by Lack of Tribal Presence*

The shifting dynamics of US white identities and the erosion of Indigenous self-determination generated by the politics of recognition cannot fully account for widespread race shifting in Vermont. In fact, one of the key takeaways from Sturm’s study is that there is a great deal of opposition to the race shifting movement among Native Americans. That opposition, combined with a strong tribal presence, ensures that, “race shifters tend to avoid states with a large Native American population either historically or at present.”<sup>29</sup> Previous research in Canada bears out this conclusion: the

five provinces with the lowest proportion of Indigenous Peoples according to the 2016 Canadian census are home to virtually all of the self-identified Indigenous organizations in the country.<sup>30</sup> First Nations have opposed the glut of new organizations in the region, whether through tribal government proclamations, letters to government officials, and intervention through the courts.

In comparing the increase in the Native American population from 1960 to 1990, sociologist Karl Eschbach found that states with little historical Native American population grew at six times the rate as those with a prominent historical population.<sup>31</sup> These same results led sociologist Joane Nagel to conclude that, “*the ‘new’ Indians are much more likely to be from states with historically small Indian [sic] populations.*”<sup>32</sup> Examining what occurred in a neighboring New England state between the 1990s and 2010s further illustrates the role that a strong tribal presence can play in stanching race shifting.

The “Wesget Sipu Tribe” (WST) emerged in 1998 claiming to represent a mix of Mi’kmaw, Maliseet, and Acadian peoples in Maine. Just as the ANM, the WST, based in Fort Kent, is in a town with a long history of French Canadian immigration; in fact, most of the population today is Acadian and speaks French. In another parallel, the WST has not been entirely clear about the supposed Indigenous ancestry of its membership, as it received a nearly \$600,000 grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services in late 2009 to conduct genealogical research for its members. The WST explained that “The first objective [of the project] was to verify and document the family genealogy of at least 360 (75 percent) of Wesget Sipu Tribal members.”<sup>33</sup> Not unlike the ANM, who launched the “Abenaki” movement in Vermont without any genealogical corroboration or other evidence of kinship relations with existing Abenaki individuals or communities, the WST was founded as a Native American “tribe” based primarily on self-identification and family lore among white French descendants. Testimony provided by the Maine Indian Tribal State Commission to the Maine Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary also confirmed that, prior to the creation of the WST, several of its eventual members sought citizenship in the Aroostook Band of Micmacs in northern Maine. They were all denied citizenship in the tribe because they could not verify their genealogy in following the established tribal citizenship process, after which time the WST was created.<sup>34</sup>

Despite the lack of any evidence to support the WST’s claims to an “Indigenous” identity, the State of Maine’s Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (DIFW) began granting lifetime hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses to WST members in 2002, following its practice with the four federally recognized tribes in the state. In doing so, the state openly violated the established citizenship laws of the Mi’kmaq, who had previously rejected WST’s identity claims, ensuring that the politics of recognition took precedence over tribal sovereignty. The legislature was also considering three bills in 2011, which together would have enshrined into law DIFW’s previous decision as well as provided WST members with free tuition in state post-secondary institutions and twenty-five moose hunting tags annually.<sup>35</sup> However, all three bills were successfully protested in legislative committee by the four tribes, who continued to refuse recognition of WST’s claims to Indigenous identity. Later in



2011, Passamoquoddy representative Madonna Soctomah submitted a bill that was adopted by the legislature clarifying that only members of the four recognized tribes are eligible for free fishing, hunting, and trapping licenses as Native Americans in the state. It also made it an offense in Maine for any entity other than the four tribes to claim to represent the Passamoquoddy, Penobscot, Maliseet, and Mi'kmaq. With that public rebuke, the WST has mostly faded from the headlines, though according to its entry in the Greater Fort Kent Area Chamber of Commerce database, it continues to host an annual powwow and to "educate students about the Native American culture throughout the school year."<sup>36</sup>

In the case of the WST, we have a well-established white ethnic minority (Acadians) who sought to shift into an unspecified "Native American" identity based on the "Indian-grandmother complex" common to white Americans with settler roots in the Northeast. Despite opposition to their claims by the Mi'kmaq people, who refused to recognize them as kin, these Franco-Americans forged ahead and managed to convince a state agency to grant them the same fishing and hunting rights as Native Americans in the state. The WST was eventually able to rally enough support from state politicians and bureaucrats to nearly enshrine additional rights into law, but a last-ditch effort by the Passamoquoddy, Penobscot, Maliseet, and Mi'kmaq put a stop to its pretensions. The different treatment reserved for the WST in Maine vis-à-vis its white French-descendant peers in Vermont can be at least partly explained by the organized political presence of Indigenous Peoples in Maine.

Besides the lack of tribal presence in Vermont, the white, French-descendant "Abenaki" movement in the state has been empowered by the presence of the international border, which continues to impact Abenaki sovereignty. Even though a significant proportion of Odanak Abenaki live in the United States and have dual citizenship, the border reinforces the idea that they are "Canadian" and have no business in "American" affairs. As Moreton-Robinson asserts, "It takes a great deal of work to maintain Canada, the United States, Hawai'i, New Zealand, and Australia as white possessions. The regulatory mechanisms of these nation-states are extremely busy reaffirming and reproducing this possessiveness through a process of perpetual Indigenous dispossession."<sup>37</sup> The lack of tribal presence combined with a deeply flawed state-recognition process have ensured that even the so-called Abenaki tribes in Vermont exist to dispossess the actual Abenaki people, building the settler colonial geography of the United States at the same time. Through state recognition, these groups in Vermont have been empowered to produce Abenaki cultural property and entrusted with Abenaki human remains, two particular intimacies that speak to the everyday dispossession that constitutes the white possessive.

However, the Abenaki people continue to resist their erasure from the US body politic. The Odanak government's opposition to the ANM and allied "tribes" has been consistent since at least 2003, when it sent a council resolution and letter to the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation protesting its practice of repatriating human remains and artifacts to the ANM. Gilles O'Bomsawin, chief of Odanak at the time, explained in the letter, dated September 2: "Please be advised that we have no knowledge of the [Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi's] alleged connections to our

ancestors. We knew nothing of them until the 1970s and they have done nothing to prove their identity to us. . . . Accordingly, we request that you no longer deal with this organization and instead begin to deal with us on all matters related to our ancestors.”<sup>38</sup> Chief O’Bomsawin could not have been any clearer that the Abenaki are not related to those represented by the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi.

The Abenaki once again extended their opposition across the US border in an April 2019 resolution adopted by the Odanak Abenaki government: “We declare that the W8banaki Nation doesn’t recognize any of the ‘Abenaki’ groups in Vermont and New Hampshire; . . . Among these groups, their ‘leaders’ self-identify as chiefs, councillors, spiritual guides, and etc. and speak on behalf of the W8banaki and propagate, often in an error-filled manner, Abenaki culture.”<sup>39</sup> The resolution was followed by a public event hosted by the University of Vermont’s Department of History in April 2022, in which three tribal leaders from Odanak, an Odanak citizen raised in the United States, and a Penobscot community organizer in Vermont and Maine all spoke out forcefully against the state recognition of the four “Abenaki tribes” in Vermont in front of an in-person and virtual audience of nearly one thousand people. Several organizers with the Tribal Alliance Against Frauds traveled from across the United States to attend the event in person and spoke about the impacts of Indigenous identity fraud on tribal communities.

The Abenaki opposition to the self-declared Vermont “tribes” stands in stark contrast to their inclusive vision of kinship-based citizenship. The Odanak and Wôlinak tribal councils brought a constitutional case against the Government of Canada on behalf of three members of the Odanak community alleging continued sex discrimination in the *Indian Act*. In 2015, the Québec Superior Court ruled in favor of the Abenaki, ensuring that tens of thousands of individuals are now eligible for Indian status across the country, including potentially hundreds of Abenakis. Consequently, they have been clear and consistent that they are willing to fight for and include kin who have been disconnected from Odanak through blood quantum logics *and* oppose the “tribes” in Vermont who falsely claim to be kin.

There is no doubt that the Western Abenaki people historically inhabited the present-day states of Vermont and New Hampshire, parts of western Maine, significant portions of north central Massachusetts, and most of southeastern Québec.<sup>40</sup> For nearly two centuries, the Abenaki were closely allied with the French in their battle against British supremacy in northeastern America. As such, the Abenaki were on the front lines of European warfare in the Northeast and, by the 1680s, refugees from parts of New England filled the Catholic mission at Sillery, just next to Québec City.<sup>41</sup> In 1700, the Jesuits established a new mission farther west on the St. François River at the site of a growing Abenaki village to accommodate over six hundred residents.<sup>42</sup> That community, known as Odanak (or St. François, for the river along which it is located), is the center of Abenaki cultural and political life today. It is located 150 kilometers straight north of Swanton.

As part of the eighteenth-century Abenaki movement north, another significant village was created on the banks of the Missisquoi River next to Lake Champlain near present-day Swanton, Vermont, in the early 1700s. The Missisquoi Abenaki lived in



this part of Vermont on and off for several decades, aiding the French in their war against the British. Missisquoi, located along the river of the same name, was approximately five kilometers south of the present US-Canada border. The community is well documented in the historical record, as are its ties with its larger kin grouping at Odanak.<sup>43</sup> It is widely acknowledged that in the decades immediately after the American Revolution, the Missisquoi Abenaki moved north to Odanak to join their relatives.<sup>44</sup> The Abenaki abandoned Missisquoi village by 1800, though, according to its petition for federal recognition, the ANM and its allied “tribes” claim to descend from remnant families who hid in Vermont for nearly two centuries before emerging again in the 1970s.<sup>45</sup> However, extensive evidence indicates that the Abenaki people continued to visit and even live in parts of their traditional territory throughout the period in question and are not related to the ANM’s forebears.

Anthropologist Christopher Roy, whose hometown is in Franklin County, briefly self-identified as Abenaki and worked for the ANM in the 1990s “before disproving one family story of aboriginal ancestry and learning enough about Abenaki history to no longer consider the other such story credible.”<sup>46</sup> His experience led him to connect with Abenaki individuals living in and around their homelands in New England and New York and to record the continued Abenaki presence in this region throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Roy documents how Abenaki families—all with kinship connections across the border at Odanak—set up encampments at several locations in the region, including near Intervale, New Hampshire, and at Indian Lake, Lake George, and Saratoga Springs in or near the Adirondacks, in New York.

Aided by his detailed historical and genealogical research and the knowledge and research of his Abenaki informants, Roy convincingly demonstrates that the children and grandchildren (and great-grandchildren, etc.) of the Abenaki who fled to the relative safety of their kin at Odanak at the turn of the nineteenth century have continued to live throughout their territory, despite the US government refusing to grant them any form of legal or political recognition. “The Abenaki people are said to have abandoned their homeland for the mission of St-François-de-Sales, currently . . . known as Odanak. And yet,” Roy explains,

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 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.<sup>47</sup>

In other words, the Abenaki did not so much disappear—a popular rendition in New England historical consciousness and one the ANM’s revisionist history relies upon—as disperse across the region, with Odanak (and to a lesser extent, the much smaller community of Wôlinak farther east in Québec) as a home base.<sup>48</sup> This diaspora continues to exist into the twenty-first century, as Roy has documented. Several

hundred Abenakis live in or near Albany, New York, and another hundred live in Waterbury, Connecticut. For the most part, these individuals have been granted “Indian status” by the Canadian government, which allows them, among other things, to vote and run for office in Odanak elections.

As for Vermont, Roy documents a family of eleven Abenaki siblings, all born at Odanak, who ended up settling in and around Newport, Vermont, in the first half of the twentieth century. According to his source, who continues to live in Orleans County near the south end of Lake Memphremagog, dozens of Abenaki people who descend from that one family live in Vermont and are registered at Odanak.<sup>49</sup> Members of this family formed the “Odanak Abenaki of Vermont” in the mid-2000s to oppose the self-identified Abenaki movement in the state, exemplified by the ANM and its allied “tribes.”<sup>50</sup>

In short, Western Abenaki people historically inhabited much of New England, from the northern reaches of Lake Champlain and the Green Mountains of Vermont and the White Mountains of New Hampshire to central Massachusetts. Contrary to popular belief, many Abenaki families continued to live in several enclaves in and near the Adirondacks and the White Mountains throughout the nineteenth century, eventually establishing strongholds in Albany, Waterbury, and Orleans County, by the mid-twentieth century. These communities are bound through kinship relations to individuals at the main Abenaki reserve community in Québec (Odanak) and are distinct from the self-identified Abenaki represented by the four state-recognized tribes, who, I will demonstrate, primarily represent the descendants of white, Franco-Americans who immigrated to Vermont in the nineteenth century.

The Vermont Senate reinforced the centrality of the international border in January 2011 when it banned non-Vermont residents from testifying as part of the state-recognition process, ensuring that several Abenaki leaders living in Québec and New York who had originally been invited to testify before the relevant Senate committee were ultimately barred from participating.<sup>51</sup> The ban on the participation of Abenaki people in the state-recognition process as well as clear conflicts of interest in the process ensured that segments of the largest white ethnic minority in the state eventually realized their decades-old objective of receiving some form of government recognition as Indigenous people. Among the many benefits for the members of the four state-recognized tribes is access to permanent hunting and fishing licenses granted in July 2020, a first-of-its-kind in the state.

### *Flaws in the State-Recognition Process*

The state recognition of tribes is not in itself a new phenomenon; legal scholars K. Alexa Koenig and Jonathan Stein point out that Connecticut, New York, and Virginia first recognized tribes prior to the creation of the United States,<sup>52</sup> while North Carolina recognized the Lumbee Tribe in 1885.<sup>53</sup> Undoubtedly, however, both the number of states recognizing tribes and the number of state-recognized tribes has increased substantially in the past three to four decades. In their 2016 national survey, Indigenous studies scholars David Wilkins and Heidi Stark identify more than

sixty tribes recognized by at least sixteen states.<sup>54</sup> From a response to the increase in self-identification,<sup>55</sup> to the Reagan-era devolution of federal government power to states,<sup>56</sup> to the major flaws in the federal recognition process inaugurated in 1978,<sup>57</sup> scholars have identified many reasons for the increased turn to state recognition since the 1980s.

As such, there is no easy consensus on the politics of state recognition. On the one hand, as Koenig and Stein convincingly point out, state recognition can be a means to afford much-deserved legitimacy to a tribe's long-standing social and political claims,<sup>58</sup> which is particularly relevant when tribes struggle to affirm their claims because of anti-black racism, as has been the case with tribes in the south/east.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand, state recognition can amount to little more than "pure politics,"<sup>60</sup> as Sturm has called it, or what one of political scientist Aaron Mason's informants called "doing favors for voters."<sup>61</sup> In highly competitive electoral districts, recognizing the claims of hundreds or even thousands of constituents might be enough to tip an election. Generally, state recognition falls within the framework of recognition theorized by Coulthard, in which government intervention in tribal affairs is normalized.

According to my research, there appears to be an inverse correlation between the presence of federally recognized Native American individuals and tribes in a state and the likelihood of an active state-recognition process. Of the eight states that ranked in both the top ten by the number of federally recognized tribes,<sup>62</sup> and by the proportion of the national Native American population in the 2010 census,<sup>63</sup> none has an active state-recognition process.<sup>64</sup>

In fact, Oklahoma, the state with the largest proportion of the national Native American population (14.6 percent) and third-highest number of federally recognized tribes (thirty-eight) has specifically barred the practice of state recognition due to opposition by tribal governments in the state.<sup>65</sup> The Cherokee Nation has even opposed the development of state-recognition processes in several *other* states, "framing such recognition as a threat to federal recognition and federally recognized tribes by draining resources, distorting Indian history, perpetuating identity theft, and otherwise harming the interests of federal tribes and surrounding populations."<sup>66</sup> The case of the State of Vermont's state-recognition process illustrates the concerns raised by the Cherokee Nation.

Three bills passed into law in 2010 laid the groundwork for state recognition in Vermont (Sections 851, 852, and 853). At least three aspects of the state-recognition process contained in these laws cast a shadow over the entire process, one presented as a progressive initiative to right past wrongs. The first was the constitution of the Vermont Commission on Native Affairs (VCNA). From its beginning, the nine-member VCNA—responsible as it is for overseeing the state-recognition process—has almost exclusively included leaders, members, and former employees of the now-recognized four "tribes." For example, its original chair was Luke Willard, the former "chief" of the Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk Abenaki Nation, which was legally recognized on April 22, 2011, under his chairmanship. Despite these clear conflicts of interest, none of the members or leaders of the "tribes" under examination by the

VCNA has recused themselves in proceedings involving their own organization, which normally includes dozens of their family members.

The participation of parties sympathetic to their political and economic interests was enshrined into law, as Section 852 mandates that once a “tribe” has been recognized, “a qualified candidate recommended by that tribe shall have priority for appointment to fill the next available vacancy on the commission,”<sup>67</sup> ensuring that white, French descendants continue to control the commission and the state-recognition process to this day.

The second aspect that raises doubts about state recognition in Vermont is that the process does not require any genealogical substantiation. Section 853 (b)(2) indicates that “a substantial number of the applicants [must be] related to each other by kinship and trace their ancestry to a kinship group through genealogy or other methods,” while (b)(3) mandates that “the applicant [must have] a *connection* with Native American tribes and bands that have historically inhabited Vermont.”<sup>68</sup> These passages are vague and open to interpretation; the first affirms that members must be related to each other and to an undetermined “kinship group,” without specifying any relationality to Indigenous Peoples. In that sense, any extended, multigenerational family could meet the requirement. The second affirms that members must demonstrate some form of connection to Native American tribes—but, again, the nature of that connection lacks precision. Does being a friend or a coworker with an Abenaki person meet the connection requirement?

The lax recognition criteria have been interpreted by the VCNA, the applicants, and the review panels to mean that *any form of evidence* that suggests a connection is sufficient. For instance, the four successful applicants produced documentary and oral evidence that the forebears of their current membership could be traced back to the mid-1800s primarily in rural Franklin County, where historians agree that a sizable Abenaki community resided throughout the 1700s *prior* to the immigration of French Canadians. Their presence in what was formerly known as the Abenaki village at Missisquoi (today’s Swanton, Vermont) was sufficient to suggest that their ancestors were Abenaki.

In addition, due to the problematic nature of the state-recognition criteria, none of the four tribes produced any completed genealogies for their members, nor did they submit any primary documents to support their stories about genealogical connections. In other words, at no time have they had to provide any evidence that they are the descendants of the Abenaki people who inhabited that region or any other region of the Green Mountain State. The VCNA and the review panels simply interpreted connection to mean *geographical proximity*, in that the ancestors of today’s tribal members lived near the location of a historical Abenaki village(s). If the review process required any genealogical evidence, it would have surely demonstrated that virtually all members of the four “tribes” are white Franco Americans.

The third aspect of the state-recognition process that ensured the approval of the four “tribes” is the constitution of the three-member review panel for each application. Section 853 (d)(3) indicates that the panels shall be appointed “cooperatively by the commission and the applicant,” again ensuring that the new Abenaki “tribes”

in the state control the appointment process.<sup>69</sup> Of the seven different reviewers who evaluated the four applications for recognition, six had a long, demonstrable history of employment with at least one of the “tribes,” as presented in their own biographies to the VCNA. One of the reviewers was even a VCNA member and a member of one of the “tribes” at the time of the review *and* prepared two of the other successful applications for recognition. The VCNA made no effort to hide the clear professional conflicts of interest between commission members, reviewers, and applicants.

Ensuring that out-of-state Abenaki people were barred from testifying at legislative hearings that involved individuals falsely claiming to be Abenaki sealed the deal. The small but dedicated portion of the white, French-descendant population of the state calling itself Abenaki can now sell “authentic” Native American artwork and inter repatriated human remains, and have been empowered to lobby governments for land, participate in state-wide curriculum initiatives, access state and federal funding for social programs, and dress up in stereotypical “pan-Indian” costumes at their annual powwows—all under the guise of the state’s progressive white populace. Perhaps the biggest winners are the residents of Vermont who can now forget about their legacy of violence that forced the Abenaki to flee north in the first place. Instead, they can construct a new historical narrative whereby the Abenaki were always present, waiting for the right moment to emerge. In a way, recognition of the “Abenaki tribes” cements the construction of white Vermonters as the ideal, twenty-first century American subject: progressive and anti-racist, yet largely rural and woodsy.

## FRENCH CANADIAN IMMIGRATION TO VERMONT

Just as the Abenaki were migrating north to Odanak at the end of the eighteenth century, French Canadians began migrating south to find seasonal work in Vermont, especially in agriculture and the lumber industry. French Canadian immigration to New England was widespread at the time, as emerging capitalist agricultural production in the rural counties south of the St. Lawrence River to the Vermont border led to a growing population of landless laborers.<sup>70</sup> The towns dotting the Richelieu Valley, whose namesake river flows north from Lake Champlain, and the villages of the Eastern Townships were home for most of these immigrants.<sup>71</sup>

Historians estimate that over five hundred thousand French Canadians immigrated to New England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. What began as a trickle of single men crossing the border to Vermont in the aftermath of the American Revolution grew after the War of 1812 when families started to settle in the northwestern counties.<sup>72</sup> The thirty-year period between 1830 and 1860 saw Vermont as the state of choice for French Canadian families seeking employment opportunities in New England.<sup>73</sup> Franklin County, in the northwestern corner of Vermont along Lake Champlain, became home to many of these immigrants. According to US census records for 1850 and 1860, Franklin County had the largest proportion of French Canadians, accounting for 30.1 percent and 27.6 percent of the state’s totals, respectively. Swanton and neighboring St. Albans counted over five hundred French Canadians each in the 1850 census.<sup>74</sup> By 1900, Vermont’s French Canadian population

had reached forty-five thousand or 13.1 percent of the state total, nearly tripling from midcentury.<sup>75</sup>

The historical experience of French Canadians in the Green Mountain State was marked by discrimination and prejudice. As Vermont was historically in the borderlands of French and English wars for continental supremacy, Anglo-Vermonters met French Canadian immigration in the 1800s with skepticism. A clear hierarchy was established; for instance, by 1860, well over 70 percent of French Canadian men in Franklin County worked as laborers, the highest such proportion in the state.<sup>76</sup> The transient nature of French Canadian labor, particularly the large contingent of day laborers, combined with Anglo-Saxon dominance, ensured that French Canadians in Vermont were associated with treachery and deceit. Anti-Catholic and anti-French sentiment in the state bubbled up as French Canadian numbers increased dramatically in the 1830s and 1840s. Public figures and commentators were often quick to attack French Canadians as a threat to Vermont's pristine Yankee pedigree.<sup>77</sup> In other words, French Canadians were not openly accepted into the "white race."

The backlash against French Canadian immigration culminated in a focus on French Canadians in the Vermont Eugenics Survey (VES). As the largest immigrant group by ethnicity to Vermont, French Canadians were regarded as of principal concern by Henry Perkins, who established the VES in 1925. Perkins was excited at the prospect of studying French Canadian "mental incompetence," as he sought to correlate one's degree of French Canadian ancestry with "data from mental testing, educational attainment, and various cultural factors, including the influence of Catholicism and the degree of participation in the social and civic life of the community."<sup>78</sup> Swanton was one of two towns targeted for closer study by the VES in 1929, though stated reasons focused more on economic decline than ethnic identity. While the decision to have the VES profile French Canadians may have been partly due to the association residents of Vermont made between the French and Indigenous Peoples—after all, the Abenaki often spoke French, were largely Catholic, and had been long-standing allies of the French throughout the eighteenth century—available evidence suggests that these families were selected because they were French Canadian.<sup>79</sup>

As a result of this history of prejudice, in 1975, the Vermont Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights formed a subcommittee to investigate issues of civil rights as they pertained to the state's Franco-American population. The resulting report, though sympathetic to the historical experience of discrimination faced by French Canadian immigrants to the state, concluded that Franco-Americans had largely attained parity with fellow white Vermonters on several key socioeconomic indicators.<sup>80</sup> Such findings accord with scholarly studies of other white immigrant groups in the Northeast from the same period, such as Irish, Italian, and Eastern European Jewish immigrants.<sup>81</sup>

Overall, French Canadians were a leading immigrant group to Vermont in the 1800s. French Canadian immigration lasted for over a century, ensuring that upward of a quarter of Vermont's population now count French Canadians among their ancestors.<sup>82</sup> It is likely, though, that by the mid-twentieth century the Franco-American descendants of these immigrants were widely considered "white," as were



the descendants of other European immigrant groups in the region. The politics of the 1960s led many of their descendants in northwestern Vermont to move away from their white identities into a new “Abenaki” identity.

## WHEN YOU’RE NOT WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE: FRENCH CANADIANS BECOME “INDIGENOUS” IN VERMONT

For the first three decades of ANM’s existence, Homer St. Francis was its most high-profile leader. Under his leadership, the ANM prepared a petition for federal recognition, submitted to the BIA under the leadership of its second “chief,” Leonard “Blackie” Lampman, in 1982. The petition was rejected in 2007. In its petition, the ANM explained that the “Abenaki Tribal Council” grew out of informal meetings in St. Francis’s kitchen in the 1960s. By the early seventies, a seven-man council was established.<sup>83</sup> Within a few months, St. Francis had succeeded the original chair of the organization (Wayne Hoague), a position he retained from the organization’s incorporation in 1974 until 1980, and then again from 1987 to 1995.<sup>84</sup>

Among the many problems with the petition presented by the ANM were its changing genealogical claims and broad membership criteria. In the 1982 petition, the ANM confirmed that individuals were granted membership based primarily on family lore linked to the fact that Swanton was located at the former Abenaki village at Missisquoi; genealogical evidence was not required.<sup>85</sup> From its inception, ANM members and those of their allied tribes have never had to provide any evidence that they are the descendants of Abenaki ancestors. Instead, they have simply demonstrated that they are the descendants of individuals who lived in the northwestern corner of the state in the mid-1800s.

For an organization that has had its claims of Abenaki identity widely accepted in the past few decades, they have been remarkably unclear about their supposed Abenaki kin. In 1982, the ANM claimed that its membership was related to fifteen root ancestor families. By 1986, when it submitted its first petition addendum, the number of families the ANM was claiming had grown more than tenfold, from fifteen families to “an extensive community numbering at least one thousand Abenakis in over two hundred families which emerges slowly and steadily in the records down to the mid-19th century.”<sup>86</sup> The ANM offered no logic for the sudden change, though the time frames, family names, and locations all coincided with the first major wave of French Canadian immigration to the state. The ANM submitted a second addendum in 1995, which included family descendance charts for twenty “primary” families, replacing the previous claims it had submitted in 1982 and 1986. Gone were the hundreds of “Abenaki” families from the 1800s, transformed into a narrower list that mostly overlapped with its 1982 submission, with about a dozen of the same families.

The ANM also adopted a new constitution in 1996, whose membership criteria continued to cast a wide net. Article 2(b) states that, “Any person of Abenaki descent as determined by the Chief and Tribal Council . . . is eligible for citizenship.”<sup>87</sup> Again, no process for determining Abenaki ancestry was included. Besides the lack of process meant to shed light on one’s parentage and ancestry, Article 3 of its membership

criteria confirmed that individuals who are “closely affiliated” with a current member would be eligible for membership.<sup>88</sup> The meaning of “close affiliation” was left open to interpretation, as the ANM has built a membership process that skillfully avoids any mandatory evidentiary requirements, ensuring that its members never have to prove their Abenaki ancestry. Instead, it has relied almost exclusively on the “Indian-grandmother complex” astutely theorized by Vine Deloria Jr. around the same time that Homer St. Francis and a few collaborators sat around a table in Swanton discussing their “Abenaki” identities.

The ANM submitted a complete membership list to the BIA in 2005, which included 1,107 members tied to at least one of the twenty primary families (or root ancestors) identified in 1995.<sup>89</sup> I reconstructed the genealogy of each family using publicly available sources such as the Research Program in Historical Demography (RPHD) database at the Université de Montréal and the ANM’s own family history charts. In addition, I triangulated the genealogical data with vital and census records for each family.

As we will see, the ANM’s claims to Abenaki identity fall apart under the weight of easily available genealogical and archival evidence. Before continuing, it must be noted that French Canadian genealogy is among the most developed for any specific ethno-national community in the world. For instance, the RPHD, one of several university-based, publicly funded historical demography projects, has existed for over half-a-century, and documents 1.7 million birth, marriage, and burial records contained in Catholic and civil registers in Québec from 1621 to 1849. Researchers can sign up for a free account and access the complete database with a few clicks. It is fitting that these widely available genealogical records are known today as a “genealogist’s paradise.”<sup>90</sup>

After reconstructing the genealogical history of each family back eight to twelve generations to their arrival in either New England, New York, or New France, I can attest that only two have any Abenaki ancestry: the O’Bomsawin family is descended from Simon O’Bomsawin, who was born in Odanak and lived in Vermont for a time in the twentieth century, and the Nepton family is descended from Jean-Charles Nepton, who was born outside of Québec City in 1824. Eight of Simon’s and sixteen of Jean-Charles’s descendants, or 2.2 percent of the ANM’s total membership, were included in the 2005 membership list, though neither was included in prior lists of primary families or members dating back to 1982. The remaining eighteen core families are primarily French Canadian, with one German American family that immigrated to New York state in the late seventeenth century (Lampman/Moritz) and one English family that immigrated to Vermont at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Barratt).<sup>91</sup> In other words, according to the primary families submitted by the ANM, 97.8 percent of their membership has no Abenaki ancestry.<sup>92</sup>

Another key feature of these eighteen families is that they are all recorded in Vermont for the first time in the nineteenth century, the only exception being the Cheney/Gibeau family, which first shows up in 1924. The rest appear in Vermont between 1808 and 1878, with a mean year of 1846, which coincides with the period that saw the highest rates of immigration from Québec. Besides their immigration

history, these families all settled in northwestern Vermont, primarily in Swanton, but also in four other towns in Franklin County (Highgate, St. Albans, and Franklin) or in adjacent Grand Isle County (Alburgh), all within twenty kilometers of Swanton. The specific histories of these families map directly onto successive waves of French Canadian immigration to Vermont from the Richelieu Valley and adjacent regions spanning the 1810s and 1890s (see Appendix 1).

To verify my genealogical findings, I searched for available federal and state records, notably US census returns and State of Vermont vital records, for descendants of six of the most common ANM primary families: the first four (St. Laurent, Hoague, Colomb, and Hakey) because they are used by a majority of members and the next two (St. Francis and Lampman) because they were used by the organization's first two "chiefs" (Homer St. Francis and Leonard Lampman). From there, I selected all the records that identify the individual's race.

Together, these six primary families account for just over 60 percent of the ANM's 2005 membership. I identified 165 of these six families living in Vermont in 104 separate census and vital records between the 1830 US census for Swanton and a 2007 State of Vermont death certificate (see Appendix 2). In every archival document, these individuals were only ever recorded as "White" (see Appendix 3). While descendants of these key ANM families were only ever recorded as white, Native American individuals were clearly recorded in every census in Vermont from 1860 to 1950, though none of them was related to the ANM's main primary families.

To conclude, most of the ANM's forbears were recorded as living in a small stretch of northwestern Vermont in the mid-1800s, at the same time and place that French Canadian immigration was most prominent in Vermont. Not only did their trajectory match the broader demographic changes occurring in northwestern Vermont at the time, but virtually all ancestors of these primary families were from Europe, mostly France, but also England and Germany (in far fewer cases, also Italy, Holland, and Belgium). Nearly 98 percent of the ANM's 2005 membership has no Abenaki ancestry whatsoever because the individuals from the mid-1800s whom they identified as their Abenaki ancestors in successive petitions to the US government were French Canadian. Four to six generations later, some of the descendants of these primarily French Canadian families have convinced a wide swath of Vermont—from politicians, to academics, to media—that they are the long-lost Abenaki people of Vermont.

## CONCLUSION

For the past few decades, white Americans have taken the notion of "playing Indian," as theorized by Deloria, to new heights. In the case of Vermont's state-recognized "Abenaki tribes," a few thousand white Americans with no known Abenaki ancestry have captivated the state with their peculiar brand of pan-Indian performance. Assuaging the guilt of its progressive white populace, the "tribes" have found an outsized audience for their particular brand of performative politics. The "revitalization" movement in New England is moving east to New Hampshire, where several allied "tribes" continue to lobby state legislators for state recognition.

One of the enduring lessons of recent scholarship on Indigenous identity and belonging has been the importance of kinship relations. The Odanak Abenaki, who are known for their broadly inclusive understandings of citizenship and belonging, have been clear that the Vermont “tribes” are not their kin. From a context in which white Americans have savagely stolen from Indigenous Peoples for centuries comes another key lesson about the enduring nature of the white possessive. As the case of Vermont suggests, some Americans are willing to undertake decades of self-serving labor to erase their true origins as white colonizers, to once and for all *prove* that they are indeed “Indigenous.” The ancestral history of the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi’s primary families could not be clearer: they are among those celebrated for their seventeenth-century contributions to the settlement of the “New World.”

Studying white identities requires that we adjust our scope to take into account what might normally be outside of its range. What can we learn from groups of white people who deny their whiteness, who successfully become “not-quite-white?” And, what might we learn from those who are only too ready to accept their claims to an “Indigenous” identity? I invite us to consider how we come to accept race shifting in the face of consistent, vocal Indigenous opposition.

## NOTES

1. In addition to the four “tribes” with state recognition, these are the following: Green Mountain Band of Abenakis (circa 1977); Missisquoi Band of Abenakis (circa 1978); Abenaki Nation-Vermont, Inc. (1979); Eastern Woodlands Band of the Abenaki Nation/Eastern Mountains Band (circa 1979); Coos Band of the Abenaki Nation (circa 1981); Eastern Woodlands-Coos/Abenaki Republic of VT/NH (circa 1983); Northeast Woodlands-Coos Band (circa 1985); North American People of the Dawn, Sovereign Nation (circa 1993); Traditional Abenakis of Mazipskwik and Related Bands (circa 1995); Algonquin Wabanaki Sovereign Nation (circa 1995); Cowasuck-Horicon Traditional Band (prior to 2006); Clan of the Hawk (circa 2012); and Koasek Traditional Band of the Sovereign Abenaki Nation (prior to 2011).

2. Richard Alba, *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

3. Matthew F. Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 19.

4. Mary C. Waters, *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

5. Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1986).

6. Jacobson, *Roots Too*, 21.

7. *Ibid.*, 22.

8. Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 184.

9. Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 25.

10. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive: Property, Power, and Indigenous Sovereignty* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), xvii.

11. Ibid., xviii.
12. C. Matthew Snipp, "Who Are American Indians? Some Observations about the Perils and Pitfalls of Data for Race and Ethnicity," *Population Research and Policy Review* 5, no. 3 (1986): 237–52.
13. The number increased to 8.9 million in 1990, 9.1 million in 2000, and 19.8 million in 2010, almost all of whom identified as white. See Carolyn Liebler and Timothy Ortyl, "More Than One Million New American Indians in 2000: Who Are They?," *Demography* 51, no. 3 (2014): 1101–30.
14. Karl Eschbach, Khalil Supple, and C. Matthew Snipp, "Changes in Racial Identification and the Educational Attainment of American Indians, 1970–1990," *Demography* 35, no. 1 (1998): 35–43; Liebler and Ortyl, "More than One Million."
15. Vine Deloria Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 3, 4.
16. Circe Sturm, *Becoming Indian: The Struggle over Cherokee Identity in the Twenty-first Century* (Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2011), 5.
17. Ibid., 87.
18. Circe Sturm, "How the Native American Population in the US Increased 87% says More about Whiteness than about Demographics," *The Conversation*, accessed December 15, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/how-the-native-american-population-in-the-us-increased-87-says-more-about-whiteness-than-about-demographics-170920>.
19. Jeffrey S. Passel, "The Growing American Indian Population, 1960–1990: Beyond Demography," *Population Research and Policy Review* 16, no. 1 (1997): 11–31.
20. Sturm, "How the Native American Population."
21. Census figures from Office of the Attorney-General of Vermont, "State of Vermont's Response," 48.
22. Gladys Tantaquidgeon, "New England Indians," 1934, Commissioner of Indian Affairs at the US Department of the Interior.
23. William Harlan Gilbert Jr., "Surviving Indian Groups of the Eastern United States in Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution," 1948, 407-38.
24. US Census. 2012, Vermont Counties, <http://censusviewer.com/counties/VT>.
25. As part of her employment at the US Department of the Interior, Mohegan anthropologist Gladys Tantaquidgeon presented her survey of Native American tribes in New England to the commissioner of the Office of Indian Affairs in 1934. She identified nine tribes in four states (Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut), but none in Vermont; nor were the Abenaki identified as an existing tribe in New England.
26. Robert M. Vanderbeck, "Vermont and the Imaginative Geographies of American Whiteness," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 96, no. 3 (2006): 646; emphasis in original.
27. Vanderbeck, "Vermont and the Imaginative Geographies," 649.
28. Ibid., 654.
29. Sturm, *Becoming Indian*, 18.
30. Darryl Leroux, *Distorted Descent: White Claims to Indigenous Identity* (Winnipeg, MB, University of Manitoba Press, 2019).
31. Karl Eschbach, "The Enduring and Vanishing American Indian: American Indian Population Growth and Inter-marriage in 1990," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18, no. 1 (1995): 89–108.
32. Joane Nagel, "American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Politics and the Resurgence of Identity," *American Sociological Review* 60, no. 6 (1995): 952.
33. Department of Health and Human Services, State of Maine, 2013, <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/notices/2013/020613.html>
34. Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission, 2011, <https://www.mitsc.org/>

35. 125th Maine State Legislature, 2011, "An Act To Extend the Same Privileges to the Wesget Sipu - Fish River Tribe as Are Extended to Other Maine Indian Tribes," [https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/display\\_ps.asp?LD=427&num=125](https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/bills/display_ps.asp?LD=427&num=125)
36. Greater Fort Kent Area Chamber of Commerce, 2022, <https://fortkentchamber.com/member/wesget-sipu/>.
37. Moreton-Robinson, *White Possessive*, xi.
38. Abenaki of Odanak, letter to Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, September 2, 2003.
39. Abenaki of Odanak, Band Council Resolution #ROB-001-19-20, April 1, 2019.
40. See the following for a discussion of Western Abenaki territory: Geneviève Treyvaud, Suzie O'Bomsawin, and David Bernard, "L'expertise archéologique au sein des processus de gestion et d'affirmation territoriale du Grand Conseil de la Nation Waban-Aki," *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* 48, no. 3 (2018): 81–90; Colin G. Calloway, *The Western Abenakis of Vermont, 1600–1800: War, Migration, and the Survival of an Indian People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 4–5.
41. Olive Patricia Dickason, "The French and the Abenaki: A Study in Frontier Politics," *Vermont History* 58, no. 2 (1990): 87–88; Colin G. Calloway, "Green Mountain Diaspora: Indian Population Movements in Vermont, c. 1600–1800," *Vermont History* 54, no. 4 (1986): 221–22.
42. Dickason, "French and the Abenaki," 88; Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 16.
43. Gordon M. Day, *Identity of the Saint Francis Indians* (Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press, 1981).
44. Gordon M. Day, "Western Abenaki," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northeast*, ed. W. C. Sturtevant and B. G. Trigger (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 148–59; Colin G. Calloway, "Green Mountain Diaspora," 221.
45. Abenaki Nation of Vermont, "A Petition for Federal Recognition as an American Indian Tribe," October 1982, 52–70.
46. Christopher Roy, "Abenaki Sociality and the Work of Family History" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2012), 5.
47. *Ibid.*, 202.
48. Amy E. Den Ouden, *Beyond Conquest: Native Peoples and the Struggle for History in New England* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).
49. Roy, "Abenaki Sociality," 201–14.
50. *Ibid.*, 206.
51. Denise Watso, "Vermont Senate Attempts to Silence Abenaki Voices," Denise Watso's Abenaki Journal, February 3, 2011, <http://abenakinews.blogspot.com/2011/02/vermont-senate-attempts-to-silence.html>. Also, Shay Totten, "Fair Game," *Seven Days*, February 9, 2011, <https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/the-fix-is-in/Content?oid=2142553>.
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53. Malinda Maynor Lowery, *Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South: Race, Identity, and the Making of a Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
54. David E. Wilkins and Heidi Kiiwetepinesiik Stark, *American Indian Politics and the American Political System* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017).
55. Sturm, *Becoming Indian*, 151–52.



56. Aaron Mason, "The Changing Face of Tribal Identity: State Recognition of Indian Tribes," *Oklahoma Politics* 16 (2007), 154.
57. Matthew L. M. Fletcher, "Politics, History, and Semantics: The Federal Recognition of Indian Tribes," *North Dakota Law Review* 82 (2006): 487–518; Amy E. Den Ouden and Jean M. O'Brien, eds., *Recognition, Sovereignty Struggles, & Indigenous Rights in the United States, A Sourcebook* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Lorinda Riley, "Shifting Foundation: The Problem with Inconsistent Implementation of Federal Recognition Regulations," *New York University Review of Law & Social Change* 37, no. 3 (2013): 629–68.
58. Koenig and Stein, "State Recognition."
59. Renée Ann Cramer, *Cash, Color, and Colonialism: The Politics of Tribal Acknowledgment* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005); Lowery, *Lumbee Indians*; Samuel W. Rose and Richard A. Rose, "Outside the Rules: Invisible American Indians in New York State," *Wicazo Sa Review* 30, no. 2 (2015): 56–76.
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61. Mason, "Changing Face of Tribal Identity," 163.
62. Federal Register, "Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services From the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs," 80, no. 9 (2015): 1942–48.
63. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Tribal Population," 2015, <https://www.cdc.gov/tribal/tribes-organizations-health/tribes/state-population.html>.
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65. Mason, "Changing Face of Tribal Identity," 169.
66. Koenig and Stein, "State Recognition," 121.
67. State of Vermont, "Vermont Statutes, § 852 Vermont commission on Native American affairs established; authority," 2010, <https://casetext.com/statute/vermont-statutes.title-1-general-provisions.chapter-23-native-american-indian-people.section-852-vermont-commission-on-native-american-affairs-established-authority>.
68. State of Vermont, "Vermont Statutes, § 853 Criteria and process of State recognition of Native American Indian tribes," 2015 [amended from 2010], <https://law.justia.com/codes/vermont/2015/title-1/chapter-23/section-853/>.
69. State of Vermont, § 853.
70. Leslie Choquette, "French Canadian Immigration to Vermont and New England (1840–1930)," *Vermont History* 86, no. 1 (2018): 1–8.
71. Peter A. Woolfson and André Sénécal, "The French in Vermont: Some Current Views" (1983), Center for Research on Vermont Occasional Papers, 11, <https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/crvoc/11>
72. Michael F. Dwyer, "19th Century French-Canadian Immigration to Vermont: From Hypolite Prunier to Fred Plumtree," *Walloomsack Review* 18 (2016): 20–29.
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74. Ralph D. Vicero, "French-Canadian Settlement in Vermont Prior to the Civil War," *The Professional Geographer* 23, no. 4 (1971): 290.
75. Choquette, "French Canadian Immigration," 4.
76. Vicero, "French-Canadian Settlement," 293.

77. Joseph-André Sénécal, "Nos ancêtres les Gaulois: Ethnicity and History in Vermont," *Vermont History* 71, no. 1 (2003): 65.

78. Nancy L. Gallagher, *Breeding Better Vermonters: The Eugenics Project in the Green Mountain State* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 95.

79. Gallagher's study of the VES is the most comprehensive to date and catalogues Yankee prejudice toward French Canadians in Vermont. Gallagher uncovered no evidence that Abenaki people in Vermont were targeted in the VES archives, despite political efforts by leaders of the "Abenaki" movement in Vermont to popularize this notion since the 1990s.

80. Peter Woolfson, "A Civil Rights Perspective on Franco-Americans in Vermont," Vermont Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights, 1983.

81. Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salemo, eds., *Are Italians White? How Race is Made in America* (New York: Routledge, 2003); David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

82. Dwyer, "19th Century French-Canadian Immigration," 20.

83. Abenaki Nation of Vermont, "Petition for Federal Recognition," 104.

84. *Ibid.*, 105.

85. Abenaki Nation of Vermont, "Petition for Federal Recognition," 169–70.

86. Abenaki Nation of Vermont, "Addendum to the Petition for Federal Recognition as an American Indian Tribe," January 10, 1986, 132.

87. US Department of the Interior, Office of Federal Acknowledgment, "Summary under the Criteria for the Proposed Finding on the St. Francis/Sokoki Band of Abenakis of Vermont," November 9, 2005, 111, [https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/as-ia/ofa/petition/068\\_sfaben\\_VT/068\\_pf.pdf](https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/as-ia/ofa/petition/068_sfaben_VT/068_pf.pdf).

88. *Ibid.*, 168.

89. A significant proportion of members counted more than one primary family among their ancestors.

90. Darryl Leroux, "A Genealogist's Paradise: France, Québec and the Genealogics of Race," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38, no. 5 (2015): 718–33.

91. The attorney general of the State of Vermont conducted its own review of the ANM's petition for federal recognition. It verified the identities of the twenty primary families submitted by the ANM in its 1995 addendum by searching archival records. It found that these families were virtually all French Canadian immigrants to the state in the 1800s. Though they did not trace these families back beyond their arrival in Vermont, they concluded: "The petitioner has not submitted evidence to show that its current membership is descended from the historic Abenaki tribe that once occupied the Missisquoi region." Office of the Attorney-General of Vermont, "State of Vermont's Response to Petition for Federal Acknowledgment of the St. Francis/Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation of Vermont," 194, access date June 1, 2021, <https://ago.vermont.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/RESPONSE-to-Abenaki-Petition-Jan2003v.pdf>.

92. The same is true of the leaders of three other state-recognized "tribes," all of which are offshoots of the ANM. For example, Donald Stevens Jr., former member of the ANM and now "chief" of the Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk-Abenaki, has no Abenaki ancestry. Roger Longtong Sheehan, "chief" of the Elnu Abenaki Tribe, has no Abenaki ancestry. Paul "Gwilawato" Bunnell, "chief" of the Koasek Traditional Band of the Koas Abenaki Nation, has no Abenaki ancestry. Their mostly French Canadian ancestors immigrated to New England in the 1800s.

## APPENDIX 1

TABLE—PRIMARY FAMILY INFORMATION

Primary Family	Members (2005)	Ancestry from 1600s	Abenaki Ancestry	Arrival in Vermont
1. Barratt	71	English	No	1820s marriage to Morits in Swanton
2. Belrose	19	French	No	Root ancestor born in Swanton in 1872
3. Cheney	5	English and French	No	Marriage in Swanton in 1924
4. Colomb	215	French and Belgian	No	1833 birth of a child in Swanton
5. Desmarais (Demar)	94	French	No	1857 birth of first child in Vermont
6. Gardner	90	French	No	1830s birth of first child
7. Hakey	207	French and Belgian	No	After 1868 birth in Massachusetts
8. Hance	23	French and English	No	1854 birth of fifth child
9. Hoague	218	French	No	1870 birth of eighth child in Swanton
10. Lafrance	49	French	No	1867–68 birth of sixth child in Highgate
11. Medor	49	Unclear	No*	1832 birth of second child in Swanton
12. Morits	60	German	No	1826 birth of second child in Highgate
13. Nepton	16	Abenaki	Yes	
14. O'Bomsawin	8	Abenaki	Yes	
15. Ouimette	27	French	No	1878 marriage of second child in Swanton
16. Partlow	84	French, English, German, and Dutch	No	1839 birth of root ancestor in Alburg
17. Phillips	166	French, African American, English	No	1846 birth of fifth child in Highgate
18. Richard(s)	38	French	No	1814 birth of root ancestor in St. Albans Bay
19. St. Francis	138	French	No	1841 birth of grandchild in Vermont
20. St. Laurent	297	French	No	1808 birth of first child in Swanton

\*I was unable to reconstruct the genealogy of the Medor family, which represents less than 5 percent of the ANM's total 2005 membership. For my conclusion, I relied on twenty-five census and vital records identifying thirty-eight different Medor descendants only as white between 1860 and 1948. The documents and descendants are all included in Appendix 3.

## APPENDIX 2

TABLE—ARCHIVAL RECORDS CONSULTED

Primary Family	Number of Descendants	Number of Documents	Type of Documents
St. Laurent/ Colomb	31	16	1870–1940 US Census (11) 1910–1967 State of Vermont death certificate (2) 1914 State of Vermont birth record 1921 State of New Hampshire marriage record 1922 State of Vermont marriage certificate
Hoague	23	20	1870–1920 US Census (6) 1911–1939 State of Vermont marriage certificate (6) 1955–1983 State of Vermont death certificate (6) 1908 State of Vermont birth record 1910 New York State marriage certificate
Hakey	21	22	1880–1940 US Census (7) 1913–1948 State of Vermont marriage certificate (7) 1908–2007 State of Vermont death certificate (5) 1912–1931 State of Vermont birth record (3)
St. Francis	24	19	1870–1940 US Census (9) 1951–1997 State of Vermont death certificate (5) 1923–1942 State of Vermont marriage certificate (3) 1928–1945 State of Vermont birth record (2)
Lampman/Morits	66	27	1830–1940 US Census (17) 1901–1995 State of Vermont death certificate (4) 1920–1941 State of Vermont marriage certificate (2) 1875 Minnesota State Census (2) 1881 Census of Canada 1915 State of Vermont birth record
<b>Total</b>	165	104	1830–1940 US Census (50) 1901–2007 State of Vermont death certificate (22) 1911–1948 State of Vermont marriage certificate (19) 1912–1945 State of Vermont birth record (8) 1875 Minnesota State Census (2) 1881 Census of Canada 1910 New York State marriage certificate 1921 State of New Hampshire marriage record

## APPENDIX 3

### LIST OF PRIMARY FAMILY DESCENDANT NAMES AND DOCUMENTS

#### *Colomb-St. Laurent*

1870 US Census, Town of Swanton (Page No. 5): Joseph Colomb (40 years old), Laura (Mosey) Colomb (35), John (12), Mary (10), Louisa (8), and Josephine (5), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 134, Enumeration District No. 115, Page No. 5): Mitch St. Francis (39 years old), Delia (Cordelia Coulomb) St. Francis (37), Esther (15), Nelson (13), Mitchel (14), Joseph (3), and Clara (4), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District 134, Enumerator District No. 115, Page No. 4): Lewis Colomb (74 years old) and Sophia (St-Laurent) Colomb (72), both identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Supervisor's District Vt., Enumeration District 120, Sheet No. 23): Mitchell St. Francis (65 years old), Delia (Colomb) St. Francis (50), Clara (24), and Isaiah (7), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Supervisor's District Vt., Enumeration District 120, Sheet No. 23): Joseph St. Francis (23 years old), Mamie (24), Louise (3), William (2), and Joseph (1 month), all identified as white;

1910 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District 301, Enumeration District 117, Sheet No. 5): Lewis Colomb (48 years old), identified as white;

1910 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District 1, Enumeration District 89, Sheet No. 4): Nazare St. Francis Jr. (28 years old), Florence (Hakey) St. Francis (23), Dorothy (5), Irene (4), and Harold (3), all identified as white;

1910 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District 301, Enumeration District 117, Sheet No. 15): Nazaire St. Francis (40 years old), Clara (Hoag) St. Francis (40), Nazaire Jr. (18), Mitchell (16), George (15), Louisa (13), Eugene (9), Ida (6), and Nellie (3), all identified as white;

State of Vermont death record for Cordelia (Colomb) St. Francis (66 years old), 17 March 1910, identified as white;

State of Vermont birth record for Dorothy St. Francis, 5 March 1914, identified as white;

1920 US Census, St. Albans City (Supervisor's District 1, Enumeration District 85, Sheet No. 18B): Joseph Cusson (27 years old), Louise (St. Francis) Cusson (25), Julia (5), and Joseph (2), all identified as white;

1920 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District 1, Enumeration District 89, Sheet No. 3B): Clara (Hoag) St. Francis (43 years old), identified as white;

State of New Hampshire marriage record for Joseph St. Francis (44 years old), 24 October 1921, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage record for Katherine Alice Cusson (30 years old), 22 January 1922, identified as white;

1940 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District 1, Enumeration District 85, Sheet No. 18B): Joseph Cusson (47 years old), Louise (St. Francis) Cusson (46), Joseph (21), Nellie (20), Catherine (18), Edward (16), Robert (14), Leo (12), and Mary Jane (3), all identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for George St. Francis (67 years old), 12 January 1967, identified as white.

### *Hakey/Ethier*

1880 US Census, Highgate (Supervisor's District No. 137, Enumeration District No. 107, Page No. 27): Narcisse Hakey (53 years old), Josephine (Duhaime) Hakey (36), (Eli) Adelard (9), and Mary (6), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Supervisor's District Vt., Enumeration District 120): Eli Hakey (29 years old), Delia (Martel) Hakey (24), Della (7), Florence (3), Nelson Jr. (1), Nelson (father, 76), and Josephine (mother, 58), all identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Narcisse Etier (86 years old), 29 August 1908, identified as white;

1910 US Census, North Brookfield, Massachusetts (Supervisor's District 119, Enumeration District 1791, Sheet No. 4): Adelard (Eli) Ethier (40 years old), identified as white;

State of Vermont birth record for Fred Alfred Hakey, 17 September 1912, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Mary Ethier (19 years old), 12 July 1913, identified as white;

State of Vermont birth record for George Hakey, 16 September 1914, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Ernest Erno (Hakey) (19 years old), 27 November 1914, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Della (Hakey) Howes (22 years old), 2 December 1916, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Dorothy Louise Ethier (17 years old), 16 October 1919, identified as white;

1920 US Census, Swanton Village (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 81, Page No. 12B): Nelson Hakey (21 years old), identified as white;

1930 US Census, Swanton Village (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 6-25, Page No. 10B): Lucius Richard (30 years old), Louise D. (Hakey) Richard (28), Delwin L. (9), D. Ardelle (4), Arnold (1), and Alfred (1 month), all identified as white;

1930 US Census, Swanton Village (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 6-25, Page No. 12A): Eli Hakey (60 years old), Delia (54), Alfred (17), and George (15), all identified as white;

State of Vermont birth record for Betty Lucille Richards, 13 October 1931, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Howard (Hakey) Erno (34 years old), 23 November 1932, identified as white;

1940 US Census, Swanton Village (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 6-36, Page No. 17B): Lucius Richards (40 years old), Louise (Hakey) Richards (38), Delwin (19), Ardelle (14), Arnold (11), Alfred (10), Elizabeth (8), Gloria (6), and Donald (5), all identified as white;



State of Vermont marriage certificate for Elizabeth L. Richards (16 years old), 9 October 1948, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Eli Hakey (84 years old), 12 January 1952, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Ernest Edward Erno (58 years old), 7 September 1952, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Louise Dorothy (Hakey) Richard (86 years old), 23 October 1988, identified as white

State of Vermont certificate of death for Betty Louise Thompson (75 years old), 9 September 2007, identified as white.

### *Hoague*

1870 US Census, Town of Swanton (Page No. 47): Fayban (Flavien) Hoag (49 years old), Adele (Belair) Hoag (39), Mary (15), Rosalie (14), Louise (10), John (9), Zebada (7), James (2) and Peter (1), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 134, Enumeration District No. 115, Page No. 3): Flavia Hogg (50 years old), Adell (Belair) Hogg (49), John (21), Peter (19), Napoleon (17), Ambrose (13), Agnes (10), Frank (7), Hulomen (4), and George (2), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Supervisor's District No. Vt, Enumeration District No. 120, Page No. 9): Frank Hoag (27 years old), Hattie Hoag (33), and Frank (nephew – 4), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Supervisor's District Vt., Enumeration District No. 120, Page No. 11): Poly Hoag (38 years old), Josephine (30), Mary (17), Joseph (12), Rosa (7), Fred (3), and Josephine (9 months), all identified as white;

State of Vermont birth record for Willie Hogue, 12 November 1908, identified as white;

1910 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District No. 301, Enumeration District No. 117, Sheet No. 10): Napoleon Hoag (64 years old), Josephine (Chartier dit Sharkey) Hoag (48), Rose (18), Fred (14), Josephine (11), Louisa (7), and Ruth (5), all identified as white;

1920 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 90, Sheet No. 11A): Poly Hoague (56 years old), Josephine (50), Fred (22), Ruth (15), and Ardelle (7), all identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Rosie Hoag (19 years old), 22 July 1911, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Josephine Hoag (18 years old), 26 June 1915, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Ardelle Hoague (17 years old), 8 December 1928, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Alfred Hoague (24 years old), 18 February 1930, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Ruth Hoague (28 years old), 22 February 1934, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage certificate for Fred Hoague (41 years old), 7 March 1939, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Joseph Hoague (51 years old), 1 November 1944, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Josie Zeb Hoague, 15 January 1965, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Mary L. (Hoague) Winters, 2 October 1972, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Ruth (Hoague) Perry, 12 October 1976, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Josephine (Hoague) Lampman, 6 January 1979, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Ardell (Hoague) Jerry, 23 August 1983, identified as white

State of Vermont certificate of death for Napoleon Hoague, 23 April 1956, identified as white.

### *St. Francis*

1870 US Census, Town of Swanton (Page No. 60): Michael St. Francis (32 years old), Cordelia (Coulomb) St. Francis (30), Mary (7), Esther (5), and Ezra (3), all listed as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 134, Enumeration District No. 115, Page No. 5): Mitch St. Francis (39 years old), Delia (Cordelia Coulomb) St. Francis (37), Esther (15), Nelson (13), Mitchel (14), Joseph (3), and Clara (4), all listed as white;

1910 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District No. 301, Enumeration District No. 117, Sheet No. 15): Mitchell St. Francis (70 years old), Clara St. Francis (daughter, 30), Nazaire (grandson, 16), all identified as white;

1920 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 89, Sheet No. 3): Michel St. Francis (27 years old), Jennie (Lavigne) St. Francis (29), and Charles (7), all listed as white;

1920 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 89, Sheet No. 4): Nazare St. Francis (52 years old), Clara (Hoague) St. Francis (48), George (20), Nellie (16), Eugene (10), Ida (8), Leo (6), Julia (3.5), and Willie (1.5), all identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage record for Nellie St. Francis (21 years old), 4 October 1923, identified as white;

State of Vermont birth record for Rosie St. Francis Lapman, 20 February 1928, both parents identified as white;

1930 US Census, Rutland City (Supervisor's District No. 2, Enumeration District No. 11-41, Sheet No. blank): Nellie St. Francis (32 years old), identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage record for Julia St. Francis (18 years old), 4 November 1933, identified as white;

1940 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 2, Enumeration District No. 11-41, Sheet No. blank): Andrew Greene (46 years old), Nellie (St. Francis) Greene (35), and Andrew Jr. (8), all identified as white;

1940 US Census, Easthampton, Massachusetts (Supervisor's District No. 1-E, Enumeration District No. 8-24, Sheet No. 6B): Walter Riel, Juliette (St. Francis) Riel (24), Richard (5), Norman (4), Donald (2), and Raymond (3 months), all identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage record for Nellie Lampman (19 years old), 5 September 1942, identified as white;

State of Vermont birth certificate for Mitchell St. Francis, 16 June 1945 in Swanton, both parents identified as white;

State of Vermont death record for Mitchel St. Francis (28 years old), 4 August 1951, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Clara St. Francis (76 years old), 7 February 1953, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Eli St. Francis (52 years old), 7 October 1960, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Nellie (St. Francis) Greene (76 years old), 18 May 1979, identified as white

State of Vermont certificate of death for Nellie (Lampman-St. Francis) Cook (74 years old), 30 January 1997, identified as white.

### *Lampman/Moritz*

1830 US Census, Swanton: Mathias Lampman, eleven free white persons in the household only, including 6 under 20 years old (Hiram. Isaac, Abram, Nelson, Jane, and Betsy);

1840 US Census, Malone, New York: Matthew Lampman, two free white persons in the household;

1850 US Census, Town of Ellenburg, New York: Peter Lampman (42 years old), Cynthia (37), Isaac (16), Stephen (13), Daniel (11), Mary (7), Eleanor (5), and Sarah (1), all identified as white;

1850 US Census, Town of Ellenburg, New York: Abram Lampman (27 years old), Betsey (25), Cyrena (7), Francis A. (4), Charles P. (3), and Henrietta (5 months); all identified as white;

1850 US Census, Town of Ellenburg, New York: Ira Lampman (50 years old), Delia (53), Julia A. (21), Peter (19), Isaac (16), and Nancy A. (14), all identified as white;

1860 US Census, Westport, New York (Page No. 42): Isaac Lampman (42 years old), Huldah (Decker) Lampman (32), Fanny M. (15), Isaac (12), John (9), Mary A. (3), and Baby (8 months), all identified as white;

1870 US Census, Town of Highgate (Page No. 37): Isaac Lampman (55 years old), Huldah (Decker) Lampman (45), John (18), Mary (7), and Eliza (7), all identified as white;

1870 US Census, Town of Hudson, Minnesota (Page No. 2): Abram Lampman (45 years old), Emma (29), John (17), Demeries (15), Lillie (13), Mary (8), Cora (3), and Ida (11 months), all identified as white;

1875 Minnesota State Census, Hudson (Douglas County): Abraham Lampman (50 years old), Emma (35), Douglas (16), Mary (13), Cora (8), Ida (5), and Alice (3), all identified as white;

1875 Minnesota State Census, Hudson (Douglas County): John Lampman (23 years old), Josephte (16), and Pearce (newborn), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 134, Enumeration District No. 115, Page No. 11): Huldah (Decker) Lampman (53 years old), John (26), Mary (23), Mary (7), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Town of Union, Wisconsin (Supervisor's District No. 3, Enumeration District No. 123, Page No. 13): Stephen L. Lampman (44 years old), M.A. (39), Julia (19), W.N. (15), G.E. (13), P. (11), S.E. (9), I.O. (7), M.V. (3), all identified as white;

1881 Census of Canada, Brome (District No. 60, Page No. 38): John Lampman (31 years old) and Fanny (33), both identified as German in origin;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Supervisor's District Vt., Enumeration District No. 120, Page No. 18): Luther Winters (72 years old), Mary (Lampman) Winters (42), Huldah M. (17), Isaac (16), Christopher (14), Violetta (10), Cleveland (7), and Betsy (2), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Supervisor's District Vt., Enumeration District No. 120, Page No. 18): Fannie Lampman (52 years old) and Henry (15), both identified as white;

1900 US Census, Eau Galle, Wisconsin (Supervisor's District No. 9, Enumeration District No. 83, Page No. 13): Stephen Lampman (64 years old), Mary (59), Peter (19), Omer C. (17), and Miney A. (14), all identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Fannie Rogers Lampman (55 years old), 3 September 1901, identified as white;

1910 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District No. 301, Enumeration District No. 117, Sheet No. 5): John (Herbert) Lampman (55 years old), Martha (Morits) Lampman (43), Walter (24), Lorenzo (23), Herbert (19), Dewey (12), and Florence (6), all identified as white;

State of Vermont birth record for Arthur Lorenzo Lampman, 13 June 1915, identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage record for Isaac Winters (35 years old), 31 July 1920, identified as white;

1920 US Census, Durand Township, Wisconsin (Supervisor's District No. 9, Enumeration District No. 146, Sheet No. 13B): William Lampman (58 years old), Stephen (84), and Mary (82), all identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for John Lampman (70 years old), 26 August 1922, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Mary Ann (Lampman) Winters, 26 February 1926, identified as white;

1930 US Census, Swanton Town (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 6-28, Sheet No. 3): Lorenzo Lampman (39 years old), Frances (Kennedy) Lampman (31), Arthur (14), Louisa (10), Clem (10), Dorine (7), Della (4), all identified as white;

1940 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 1, Enumeration District No. 6-39, Sheet No. 10): Herbert Lampman (44 years old), Josephine (Hoague) Lampman (41), Leonard (18), and Theresa (9), all identified as white;

State of Vermont marriage record for Clem (Cleveland) Lampman, 8 February 1941, identified as white

State of Vermont certificate of death for Theresa (Lampman) Sise, 14 December 1995, identified as white.

### *Medor*

1860 US Census, Town of Milford, New Hampshire (Page No. 70): Peter Medor (60 years old), Julia (St-Pitié) Medor (53), Edward (8), and Matilda (5), all identified as white;

1860 US Census, Swanton (Page No. 63): Peter Medor (25 years old); Mary (Lajeunesse/Freemore) Medor (21 years old); Joseph (7), Edward (5), Sarah (3), and Charles (2), all identified as white;

1870 US Census, Town of Swanton (Page No. 49): Peter Medor (59 years old), Julia (St-Pitié) Medor (55), Edward Medor (25), Salina Medor (22), and Matilda (18), all listed as white;

1870 US Census, Town of Swanton (Page No. 54): Peter Larabee (25 years old), Julia (Medor) Larabee (26), George Medor (5), Julie (2), and Alice (2), all listed as white;

1870 US Census, Town of Swanton (Page No. 71): Peter Medor (38 years old); Mary (Lajeunesse/Freemore) Medor (33 years old); Joseph (16), Edward (14), Sarah (13), Charles (12), and William (3), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Town of Brandon (Supervisor's District No. 134, Enumeration District No. 115, Page No. 24): Peter Larabee (36 years old), Julie (Medor) Larabee (30), George (14), Julia (12), Ella (7), Lillie (6), and Joseph (2), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 137, Enumeration District No. 170, Page No. 4): Edward Medor (35 years old) and Salina Medor (37), identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 137, Enumeration District No. 170, Page No. 8): Peter Medor (65 years old) and Mary (St-Pitié) Medor (63), both identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 137, Enumeration District No. 115, Page No. 1): Peter Medor (46 years old); Mary (Lajeunesse/Freemore) Medor (43 years old); William (14), George (10), Peter (5), and Nellie (3), all identified as white;

1880 US Census, Swanton (Supervisor's District No. 137, Enumeration District No. 115, Page No. 1): Charles Sisco (36 years old), Matilda (Medor) Sisco (28), Amanda (9), Eddie (6), and Lavina (3), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Sheet No. 24): Peter Medor (65 years old), Mary (Lajeunesse/Freemore) Medor (62), Peter (25), and Nellie (16), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Sheet No. 25): Edward Medor (54 years old), Ellen (Lowell) Medor (37), and George (11), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Sheet No. 25): Charles Medor (40 years old), Mary Medor (37), Lizzie (16), Dora (14), and Geneva (11), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Sheet No. 25): Peter Laraby (54 years old), Julia (Medor) Laraby (60), Joseph (20), Walter (18), and Permit (14), all identified as white;

1900 US Census, Swanton Township (Sheet No. 6): Charles Sisco (49 years old), Matilda (Medor) Sisco (48), Eddie (24), Frank E. (22), Alice (19), Charles (13), Minnie (11), Jessie (9), Harry (7), and Bessie (4), all identified as white;

1910 US Census, Swanton Town (Sheet No. 8): Peter Larabee (68 years old), Julia (Medor) Larabee (59), Joseph (28), Peter Jr. (26), and Permitt (22), all identified as white;

1910 US Census, Holyoke City, Massachusetts (Sheet No. 21): Edward Medard (65 years old), Ellen (Lowell) Medard (47), George (20), and Olive (11), all identified as white;

1920 US Census, Swanton Town (Sheet No. 11): Julia (Medor) Larraby (65 years old), Joseph (35), Permitt (31), and Walter (30), all identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Edward Mador (47 years old), 28 May 1903, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Peter Medor (73 years old), 28 June 1908, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of marriage for Minnie (Medor) Sisco (20 years old), 18 January 1909, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Edward Medor (70 years old), 13 June 1915, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of marriage for George E. Medor (26 years old), 30 October 1915, identified as white;

State of Vermont certificate of death for Julia Larabee (78 years old), 30 December 1921, identified as white

State of Vermont certificate of death for Nellie (Medor) Lamphere (71 years old), 11 June 1948, identified as white.

### *Editorial Note*

Our publication recognizes that discussions of identity are sensitive and often contentious. We have been contacted by an organization regarding this article. We have indicated to them that the AICRJ is always open to additional commentary, research, and opposing viewpoints. Accordingly, we have extended to them an invitation to submit a commentary for our standard peer-review.