

**“Life Languages” of the Francophone and Germanophone
Diaspora: Preserving Louisiana French and Pennsylvania
German through Written and Non-Written Life Narratives**

by

Holly Rebecca Lawton

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Central Lancashire

April 2023

RESEARCH STUDENT DECLARATION FORM

Type of Award Doctor of Philosophy

School School of Humanities, Language and Global Studies

1. Concurrent registration for two or more academic awards

I declare that while registered as a candidate for the research degree, I have not been a registered candidate or enrolled student for another award of the University or other academic or professional institution

2. Material submitted for another award

I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award and is solely my own work

3. Collaboration

I declare that this thesis was completed without contribution from an external body

4. Use of a Proof-reader

No proof-reading service was used in the compilation of this thesis.

Signature of Candidate: _____



Print name: Holly Rebecca Lawton

In Memory of

Kevin Lawton

1943-2022

ABSTRACT

In recent years, there has been increased interest in the multilingual cultural production of creators in the United States (cf. Li and Wen, 2015; Rim, 2009), particularly in the context of increasing discrimination against multilingual agents in the nation from members of the public (cf. Acevedo, 2019; Díez, 2019), from English-only movements (Barker et al., 2001; Schildkraut, 2003) and from public figures (CNN, 2015). However, while research in some areas of multicultural and multilingual identity continues to grow (cf. Li and Wen, 2015; Rim, 2009), there remains little focus on the French- and German-speaking communities that reside there, despite the long heritage of these groups (cf. Ancelet, 1994; Loudon, 2016; Rabalais, 2017, 2021).

This means that there is little understanding of the way in which the French and German languages are used in the United States and how these communities have preserved their unique identity as Francophones and Germanophones in a predominately Anglophone country, nor is there much information on how members have signalled their belonging to said community through life narratives.

This thesis seeks to bring attention to the methods of depicting life used by these communities, with a focus on the way in which the languages spoken by these communities – namely Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German – are utilised, both in their written forms and in conjunction with non-written forms of narrative, as a method of linguistic and cultural preservation. Using life writing theory (Lejeune, 1989; Smith and Watson) and theories on cultural and linguistic *métissage* (cf. Bakhtin, 1981; Bradley, 2019; Glissant, 1989), this thesis problematises the concept of “life writing” informed by biopolitical theory (e.g. Agamben, 1998; 1975, 1997, 2004; Puumeister, 2009) with the aim of determining the effectiveness of

writing as a means of portraying and preserving 'life' for these communities (e.g. Romaine, 2008).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
Making the case for Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German	3
The question of minority versus heritage language.....	10
The question of language versus dialect.....	13
The question of authenticity	14
Statement of Originality	16
Research Questions	19
Thesis Outline.....	20
CHAPTER ONE: EXPLORING THE POSITION OF LOUISIANA FRENCH AND PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN.....	26
Exploring the position of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German through biopolitical thought.....	28
The importance of multilingualism in the United States today	37
The role of life writing in a multilingual United States.....	48
Conclusion.....	57
CHAPTER TWO: REFINING THE POSITION OF LOUISIANA FRENCH AND PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN.....	58

Refining the position of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German within the biopolitical <i>habitus</i>	58
The importance of multilingualism for the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities	69
The role of life writing in a multilingual United States.....	79
Conclusion.....	87
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	89
Approach One: Close Reading of Theoretical Texts.....	90
Approach Two: Analysis of Cultural Artefacts.....	92
Approach Three: Semi-Structured Interviews.....	96
Conclusion.....	102
CHAPTER FOUR: LOUISIANA FRENCH WRITTEN NARRATIVES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE.....	103
Cheremie, <i>Lait à mère</i> , and <i>Julie Choufleur</i>	104
Waggoner and <i>Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel</i>	117
Conclusion.....	132
CHAPTER FIVE: LOUISIANA FRENCH NON-WRITTEN NARRATIVE FORMS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE	134
The Lost Bayou Ramblers	135
<i>Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent</i>	146
The Significance of Festivals in Francophone Louisiana.....	156
Conclusion.....	163

CHAPTER SIX: PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN WRITTEN NARRATIVES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE	165
Moll, Madenford, and <i>Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof</i>	166
Fritsch and <i>Der Haahne Greht</i>	181
Conclusion	194
CHAPTER SEVEN: PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN NON-WRITTEN NARRATIVE FORMS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE	196
Fritsch and <i>Scherenschnitte</i>	197
Hybridity in the Work of Yoder	206
1The Kutztown Folk Festival and the Performance of Pennsylvania German Narratives	216
Conclusion	223
CONCLUSION	226
Limitations.....	238
Areas of Further Study	243
Research Impact	246
CORE CULTURAL ARTEFACTS	253
BIBLIOGRAPHY	254
ELECTRONIC RESOURCES	272
LIST OF FIGURES.....	285
LIST OF TABLES	286
GLOSSARY	287
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW WITH PATRICK DONMOYER	290

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW WITH CHASE CORMIER.....	338
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW WITH DOUGLAS MADENFORD	367
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW WITH NATHAN RABALAIS.....	408
APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW WITH JOSHUA R. BROWN	435
APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW WITH MARK L. LOUDEN	466
APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW WITH BARRY JEAN ANCELET.....	506
APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW WITH JENNIFER SCHLEGEL.....	539
APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM DONNER.....	562
APPENDIX J: INTERVIEWS WITH CHRISTOPHE LANDRY	596
APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW WITH DAVID CHERAMIE.....	620
APPENDIX L: INTERVIEW WITH MARGUERITE JUSTUS.....	642

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisors – Mark Orme, Daniela Flint, and Yvonne Reddick – for all of their support. I will forever be grateful for their guidance and support over the last three years, without which this thesis could not have been completed.

I would also like to express my immense gratitude to every member of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities who gave their time to share their experiences as members of these groups: Barry Ancelet, Joshua R. Brown, David Cheramie, Chase Cormier, Patrick Donmoyer, William Donner, Marguerite Justus, Christophe Landry, Mark L. Loudon, Douglas Madenford, Nathan Rabalais, and Jennifer Schlegel. Thank you so much for trusting a researcher from across the pond with your experiences; I can only hope that I have done justice to these communities, for whom I have the deepest respect.

Thank you also to those who helped with sourcing the cultural artefacts used throughout this thesis: Masthof Press, Professor Dana Kress, and Dr. Gregory Hanson. I am immensely grateful for your kindness and generosity.

To Scott, who supported me for three years and helped me get to grips with life as a researcher and the challenges that came with it: Thank you for all of your guidance. The advice you have given me will stay with me for years to come.

To Andrew Butcher, Doris Dohmen, Richard McDowell, and the late Helen Lockyear: For seven years, you all taught me that the study of languages was a path that I could – and should – pursue, and that it was being academically inclined was a good thing. You inspired me to follow this path, and I am so thankful to all of you.

To Buddhika, Michael, Penny, and to everyone at the wonderful PhD Forum: Thank you for your company and your support over the last two years. You have all been a hugely grounding influence, particularly in these unusual times of working from home, and you have

reminded me of the joys of academia, of research, and of the writing process, even when they seemed a dim memory.

I am also extremely thankful for those who supported my dreams of becoming a researcher, even as an undergraduate at Lancaster University. I would especially like to thank Charlotte Baker, Jill Harpley, Cyrille Rollet, Simone Schroth, Birgit Smith, and Pieter Vanhove, all of whom encouraged me to follow my dreams of entering the world of academia wherever they may take me.

I would also like to express my immense gratitude to Sofia Anysiadou and Lisa Simpson at the Worldwise Centre, Dr Frédéric Brayard, Dr Daniel Waller, and Dr Adina Zemanek for all of their support over the last three years. I will always remember our chats about the ups and downs of research, and your kindness and encouragement throughout the entire PhD process.

Finally, thank you to my Mum and Dad, my sister, Amber, my brother, Lee, Poppy, and my friends – Alexandra Avilés, Lisa Bailey, Emily Barnett, Cathy Castling, Sarah Jayne Griffiths, Sophie Hawker, Gillian Holt, Tara Kenyon, Ellie McFadden, Katie McPeake, Rosie O’Riordan, Zoé Ruchaud, Lucy Stonier, Cassandra Weinstein, and Kenneth Wilkinson-Roberts – for all of your support and patience over the last three years. I know that it isn’t easy to live with a PhD researcher, but I cannot express my gratitude enough. Without you, I would not have started this in the first place, let alone have finished it, and I will be grateful to you for the rest of my life.

INTRODUCTION

I understand the term ‘melting pot’, it’s what most people will use. I prefer to use the term a ‘quilt’, for a couple of reasons. One: quilts are, [the] Pennsylvania Dutch are associated with quilts, but if you know anything about quilt making, you take a bunch of scraps of cloth and you put them together, and you make a giant quilt, but when you stand back and look, that quilt is all together and you think, ‘Oh, that’s one unified piece, that’s brilliant.’ But when you get up close, you can see the individual squares or the individual pieces of cloth, and those individual pieces of cloth have not changed, but they have become part of a bigger picture. And that’s how I view the Pennsylvania Dutch. We are one of those pieces of cloth in the quilt that is America. You stand back, we’re in it, we’re part of it, we’re tied to it, we’re stitched to it, but when you get up close, you can still see our individual little piece of cloth that is our piece, and it didn’t change [...] Melting pot’s fine, but my problem with melting pot is that that would signify that we gave up who we are to be part of this amalgamation, where in a melting pot, you can’t see the individual aspects anymore, but for me, in a quilt, when I look at a quilt, I can see that, and to me, that’s how I view America, and it doesn’t make my little piece any less American than any of the other pieces in that giant quilt (Madenford, 2020, in a discussion with the author of this thesis; pp. 405-406).

The ‘melting pot’ analogy described above is perhaps one of the most popular metaphors used to describe the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity of the United States of America. With anywhere between 350 and 430 languages currently spoken across the nation (Translators Without Borders, no date), it seems certain that the United States will likely remain as such well into the 21st century thanks to those multilingual individuals and communities who continue to actively practise these languages.

Yet when one seeks to explore the unique phenomenon of being a multilingual American, there is an overwhelming amount of contemporary research dedicated to only a few select communities, namely the Spanish-speaking, Asian-American, and Native American communities (e.g. Leonard, 2020; Macías et al., 2000; Ovando, 2003; Ramsdell, 2004; Rim, 2009). This is reinforced by the primary focus on Spanish in relation to the growing English-only (also known as ‘Pro-English’) movement in the United States, which seeks to enshrine in law the position of English as an official national language (cf. Barker et al., 2001; Pac, 2012; Schildkraut, 2003). This is despite other languages – such as Mandarin, Tagalog, and Arabic –

emerging as some of the most widely-spoken languages in the United States (U.S. Census, 2013), while others, including French and German, have been utilised in the United States for several centuries (Ancelet, 1994; Loudon, 2016).

Furthermore, when one examines existing scholarship exploring these multilingual expressions of identity, culture, or heritage – both within and outside of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities – there is often an overwhelming focus on the written as a means of cultural production (cf. Loudon, 2016; Rabalais, 2021; Van Allen Caulfield, 1998). There are few scholars who view these artefacts within the context of the creator’s own community, or who seek to understand the way in which language pervades all areas of a creator’s life and becomes a formative part of their lived experience – a concept which I have named ‘life language’.

In this thesis, I will shed light on the role of these two latter languages, with a focus on the communities that have maintained their use since the 17th century: the Louisiana French and the Pennsylvania Germans (Ancelet, 1994; Loudon, 2016). In doing so, I seek to demonstrate the significance of such heritage languages in continuing to express one’s identity and lived experience, be it in the form of poetry, prose, or non-written narrative methods, including visual art and music. Consequently, I will also advocate for further research in these areas, which are currently overlooked in diasporic research on the Francophone and Germanophone worlds.

In addition, I will explore the use of prose alongside alternative forms of media specific to the cultures that will be researched (e.g. *Lost Bayou Ramblers*, 2017), including those which combine the written and non-written forms (Fritsch, 2008; Yoder, 2022). The *métissage culturel* (cf. Glissant, 1989) of these forms has led to the creation of narratives which are entirely unique to the context to which they belong and, like the diaspora that they represent, have not been researched in great depth (Brosman, 2013 and Köstler, 2014 are examples of

recent research on Louisiana French literature; no texts of this sort have yet been found which reference the Pennsylvania German community). In combining these two unique features, my study thus sheds light on two lesser-known areas of the diaspora and their efforts, through a combination of cultural practices and literature, to pass their linguistic heritage on to future generations (cf. Romaine, 2008).

Making the case for Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German

Before we can engage in any detailed analysis of the communities at its heart, it is essential to explore the status of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German in the 21st century and demonstrate precisely why these languages should be regarded as ‘overlooked’. In doing so, I will highlight their unique place within the fields of American Studies, Francophone Studies, and Germanophone Studies, and the potential my dissertation provides for breaking new ground within these fields.

Louisiana French – also known as ‘Acadian French’ or ‘Cajun French’ – originated in modern-day Canada in the 17th century as a result of colonisation of the region, although French was also observed in Louisiana at this time (Ancelet, 1994; Rech, 2019). In the mid-18th century, the language spread as a result of the *Grand Dérangement*, where the Acadian people were

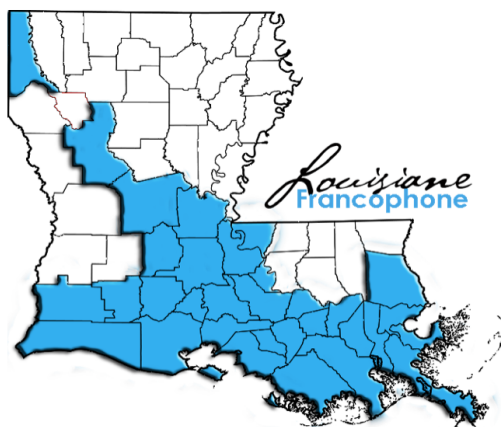


Figure 1: A map of Louisiana. Parishes where Louisiana French is spoken (as of 2011) are shown in blue (Landry, 2011).

forcibly expelled by English colonial groups. The transportation of the Acadians to other regions of North America (including Louisiana) led to the evolution of the language (Rabalais, 2017). Said evolution continued over centuries as increasing

waves of migration to the region – both voluntary (as in migrants from the Hispanophone world) and forced (as with those brought to the region as slaves) – brought new influences to the language and culture.

Pennsylvania German – which is also known in the community as ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’, although this is something of a misnomer resulting from an inaccurate translation of the term ‘*Deutsch*’ (p. 408) –

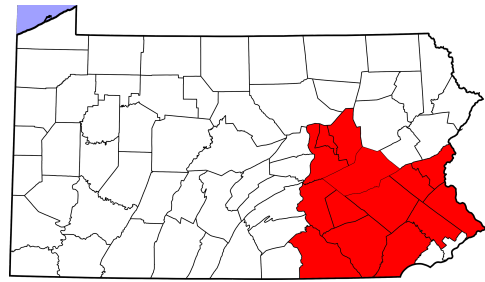


Figure 2: A map of Pennsylvania. Areas where Pennsylvania German is spoken are shown in red (Lanzer, 2016).

was also first recorded in the United States in the mid-17th century (Louden, 2016). Like the Louisiana French, the first members of the community arrived as part of the early colonisation of the Eastern United States. However, unlike the Acadians, whose land had previously belonged to indigenous Americans (cf. p. 338, p. 620), the Pennsylvania Germans purchased and settled on land that had previously been colonised by the English in decades prior (Louden, 2016), before the community expanded to nearby regions, such as Wisconsin, where the language can also be heard. In addition, like Louisiana French, the language (and, to a lesser extent, some aspects of the culture) has been shaped somewhat by the peoples with whom the Pennsylvania Germans interacted, although their influence on Pennsylvania German is ‘overstated’ (Louden, 2017). Yet unlike the Louisiana French, the Pennsylvania German language has not been greatly influenced by later waves of migration from German-speaking Europe; as Louden (2016) notes, there was little interaction between these migrants and the Pennsylvania Germans, as the latter considered themselves to be separate communities with little in common.

Both languages share a lack of research from outside of their respective regions with regards to their usage and their cultural practices. The scoping phase of this study revealed that there is little published material available on either the Louisiana French or the Pennsylvania

German community, nor their positions within wider American society, nor the relationships between them and their respective diaspora. While there are some readers that make brief mention of the Louisiana French community, these texts make relatively little reference to the region in comparison to other Francophone regions of North America like Francophone Canada and the Francophone Caribbean. For instance, the *Palgrave Handbook of Comparative North American Literature* (Nischik, 2014) devotes three chapters to the Francophone literature of the continent (cf. pp. 129-181). Yet it is evident that their primary focus is the literature of Francophone Canada, with little written on any other French-speaking community in North America. Of these three chapters, two are entirely dedicated to the exploration of Francophone Canadian literature (cf. Vautier, 2014, pp. 129-147; Morency, 2014, pp. 149-163), while only Giacoppe's chapter (2014, pp. 165-181) refers to the French-speaking communities of the United States. This thesis must also stress here that, when stating that there is little writing on the Francophone communities of the United States, the present author refers not only to the Louisiana French community, but to all those residing in the United States of America for whom French (or a variant or derivation thereof) is among their first languages. This category includes: French speakers who have migrated to the United States in recent years, or are immediate descendants of French-speaking migrants; speakers of other French variants found in the United States, such as New England French (Price, 2015); indigenous Americans whose communities now utilise a variant of French, such as the Métis and Houma peoples (cf. Giacoppe, 2014; p. 620); and those who use a Creole language that is related to – or derived from – French, including speakers of Louisiana Creole (Klingler and Neumann-Holzschuh, 2013).

This lack of representation is even more pronounced when one considers the German-speaking communities of the United States. While the preliminary literature review conducted during the scoping phase of this research project did identify two texts which are dedicated

solely to the Pennsylvania German community (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Louden, 2016), these readers are edited and penned by members of the community who are based in academia; in other words, while there is at least a certain amount of interest in Louisiana French from scholars outside of the region, there are no handbooks or readers, similar to that edited by Nischik (2014), focusing on the German-speaking communities of the United States from an outside perspective. Furthermore, there are no contemporary works which are devoted entirely to the literature of Germanophone America; while Bronner and Brown (2017) and Louden (2016) both reserve chapters for the literature of the Pennsylvania German people (Bronner and Brown, 2017, pp. 164-183; Louden, 2016, pp. 179-236) the most recent texts focused solely on this matter were published over fifteen years prior to the completion of this thesis (cf. Fluck and Sollors, 2002; Kluge, 2007).

One of the potential causes for this lack of scholarship may be the continued development of postcolonial and diasporic studies. As both areas are still developing in the context of this regions (cf. Li and Wen, 2015; Rim, 2009), it is natural that there is little written material on either community, or on the impact felt by other multilingual American communities. This argument is supported by the fact that discussion on the postcolonial legacy of nations like Germany has only entered the mainstream in recent times (e.g. Tagesschau, 2022).

However, within the context of the United States of America, this argument is weakened by the presence of several studies exploring the effects of bilingualism among the Hispanic community, both from a sociological standpoint and from the artistic standpoint of its cultural production, coupled with growing research into the use of several East Asian languages in the United States (e.g. Li, 2016; Li and Wen, 2015; Rim, 2009). I argue in this thesis, therefore, that such research undermines the previous argument that the field should eventually reach the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities; rather, if this

growing research trend is followed, this increases the risk of there being little to no outside perspective on these regions, their languages, and their cultural practices.

Why is the lack of an outside perspective crucial? After all, when seeking to understand the life and culture of a community, surely it is best to view them from the direct perspective and lived experience of the community itself? While this is beneficial to one's understanding, the lack of critical attention from a wider audience – in this case, from those with no connection to the community, either geographically or linguistically speaking – suggests that these groups are not considered of similar importance to speakers of other minority or heritage languages. There are certainly other contributing factors to this that cannot be ignored, such as the general lack of interest in Germanophone diaspora and the German colonial legacy, both in the English-speaking world and in Germany itself – as noted earlier – yet this thesis maintains that this alone is not responsible for the lack of research into these regions. Instead, as several interviews undertaken for this dissertation noted (cf. p. 338, p. 539, p. 596), there is something of an underlying stigma with regards to these languages and their supposed importance within the modern United States. In a discussion regarding the work undertaken at Kutztown University – the only higher education institution that offers a course in Pennsylvania German in the United States (Kutztown University, 2022) – Schlegel reinforces this point, noting that ‘we can't regularly offer the introductory language class – because the interest, you know, an exceptional thing, like this – so that's been a problem [...] [a]nd part of it is the institution and part of it is that those of us who are involved in it, it's like one of fifteen responsibilities, so we can't dedicate the time and energy to it that it needs and deserves' (pp. 545-546). It can therefore be inferred that the issue of underrepresentation of these communities is not only a matter of a simple lack of research; it could be argued that there is a systemic lack of acknowledgement of these communities beyond the regions in which they reside.

Yet defining the position of these languages is not the only issue with which this thesis must contend. It is also essential to define the terms with which I will refer to both languages in this thesis, particularly given the potential for confusion with other languages. ‘Louisiana French’, for instance, is often used interchangeably with the term ‘Cajun French’ and is also similar in name to ‘Louisiana Creole’ (also known as *Kouri-Vini*). While all these terms appear relatively similar, there are substantial differences between the two languages. For instance, while Louisiana French and Louisiana Creole may share certain aspects of their vocabulary, they have distinct grammatical rules that can be used as a means of differentiation (cf. LSU, 2022; Rabalais, 2021). This is shown, for example, in the case of personal pronouns; while those in Louisiana French are similar to their European counterparts, Louisiana Creole utilises entirely different pronouns.

English	European French	Louisiana French	Louisiana Creole
I	<i>Je</i>	<i>Je</i>	<i>Mo</i>
You (singular, informal)	<i>Tu</i>	<i>Tu</i>	<i>To</i>
He	<i>Il</i>	<i>Il</i>	<i>Li or ça</i>
She	<i>Elle</i>	<i>Elle or alle</i>	<i>Li or ça</i>
It	<i>On</i>	<i>Ça</i>	<i>Li or ça</i>
We	<i>On or nous</i>	<i>On or nous</i>	<i>No or nou or nouzòt</i>
You (plural, formal form of the singular)	<i>Vous</i>	<i>Vous-autres</i>	<i>Vos or vouzòt</i>
They	<i>Ils or elles</i>	<i>Ils or eux-autres</i>	<i>Yé</i>

Table 1: A table comparing personal pronouns in English, European French, Louisiana French, and Louisiana Creole. Louisiana French and Louisiana Creole pronouns derived from LSU, 2022, and Klingler and Neumann-Holzschuh, 2013.

Another key, albeit more implicit, difference between the terms ‘Louisiana French’, ‘Cajun French’, and ‘Louisiana Creole’ is the demographics of those who speak these languages. As Landry (2016) notes, the term ‘Cajun’ emerged in the late 20th century as a means of creating a divide within the existing Louisiana French-speaking population (for whom ‘Creole’ was a universal term) according to ethnicity. White speakers of the language

began to identify themselves as ‘Cajun’ – itself derived from the French ‘*cadien*’, for the Acadian region in which the community initially resided (ibid.; pp. 103-162) – while speakers of colour retained the term ‘Creole’ and were also designated as such by white members of the community. This divide has also persisted into contemporary Louisiana French society, with the terms still carrying these connotations (ibid.; Rabalais, 2021; p. 596). For this reason, I will avoid using ‘Cajun’ and ‘Creole’ as markers of identity in this thesis, unless these terms are utilised in cultural artefacts from the region.

While there are no such issues of race within the Pennsylvania German community, there is still some debate as to which term is preferable. Within the community, there are three terms which are used, in varying amounts, to refer to the language associated with the region: ‘Pennsylvania German’; ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’; and ‘*Deutsch*.’ While the latter term is the sole term for the language in the language itself (and therefore is undisputed), there remains some difference in opinion with regards to the first two terms and their usage. In interviews that were conducted as part of this research project, it was noted on several occasions that ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ is the term favoured and utilised by the community itself, with ‘Pennsylvania German’ most frequently employed in scholarship to avoid confusion regarding the origins of the language (Louden, 2016; p. 285, p. 367, p. 435, p. 466). However, as Madenford also noted (p. 367), the term ‘Dutch’ is related to the regions from which the community originated, which, despite being part of German-speaking countries today (including Switzerland), was historically considered ‘Dutch’; according to Louden (2016), this is due to a corruption of the term ‘*Deutsch*’ when translated into English. Therefore, by using the term ‘Pennsylvania German’ in academia, those writing about the community avoid confusion with regards to the origins of the language and the community, even if the term itself is not reflective of the community’s own identity.

Why is this of significance to this research project? The choice to use ‘Pennsylvania German’ over ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ may seem evident given that the community itself uses the former term in scholarship. However, by not acknowledging the significance of the term ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ for its members, I, too, would be engaging – to an extent – in the erasure of the community in that I would be refusing to utilise the term with which most members of the community identify¹. This also has the potential of creating a further divide between outside scholarship (that is, research on the community undertaken by those who do not identify as a member of said community) and the people at the heart of such scholarship. Therefore, while this thesis will utilise the terms ‘Louisiana French’ and ‘Pennsylvania German’ to prevent confusion and achieve parity with those texts which currently exist on this subject, this thesis also seeks to fully acknowledge the terms with which these communities identify, and, in those cases where the terms appear in cultural artefacts, will use the terms as written².

The question of minority versus heritage language

At this stage, it is also necessary to consider how one might define the concepts of a ‘minority language’ versus a ‘heritage language’, and thus how Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German should be regarded in this study. It is generally accepted that a minority language is considered to be one that is spoken by fewer people in the relevant nation; for instance, Welsh could be considered a ‘minority language’ within the United Kingdom, as only a certain proportion of the British population have competence in the language. Consequently,

¹ This is evidenced by the interviews undertaken as part of this thesis, wherein every member of the Pennsylvania German community favoured ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ to describe their identities.

² This includes the term ‘*Deitsch*’, which is the Pennsylvania German term for the language and is the term from which the English translation ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ is derived.

given that there are fewer than 200,000 speakers of each language (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013), one could argue that, in the context of the United States of America, Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German are minority languages.

Yet the term ‘minority language’ also implies a further negative connotation: by utilising the word ‘minority’, this researcher believes that there is an inherent Othering of the language and its interlocuters (Ridanpää, 2018). As a result, this could lead to the implicit positioning of said interlocuters as less than those who actively practice the use of the state’s *lingua franca*, which, in the case of the United States, is English. The Othering of such language groups can be observed in the presence of growing English-only sentiment, both through the creation of formal ‘English-only’ organisations and through discrimination documented in mainstream American media (e.g. Acevedo, 2019; CNN, 2015; Díez, 2019). Therefore, by utilising the term ‘minority language’, one might inadvertently assign said community a position of subaltern or *homo sacer* (Agamben, 1998; Spivak, 1994; pp. 26-88) that is not merited. This may result in the sensation of these communities being considered ‘in the shadows’ (Topinka, 2016) in comparison. This also increases the feelings of marginalisation experienced by members of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German groups, as shown in their respective cultural analyses (cf. pp. 103-222).

This issue is somewhat compounded by the fact that there is no official language in the United States of America. To return to the previous analogy, while Welsh is a minority language in the context of the wider British populace, it is, through an Act of Parliament, also considered an official language of the United Kingdom and one in which its speakers may freely communicate (*Welsh Language Act 1993*). Yet in the United States, there is no such regulation; rather, the freedom of expression (and by extension, the freedom to express oneself in one’s own language) is considered a constitutional right (U.S. Senate: Constitution of the United States, no date). While this could be deemed advantageous to Louisiana French and

Pennsylvania German, in that this may prevent English-only movements from ratifying any formal language policy, this also results in a lack of formal protection for minority languages that might prevent the language decline observed today.

Another reason that ‘minority language’ might not be wholly appropriate within the context of this thesis can be seen in the fact that Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German – despite the relatively small number of interlocuters each have – have existed in the United States for several centuries, with the early forms of these languages having been observed in the United States at the same time as English (cf. Loudon, 2016; Rabalais, 2017). Therefore, to categorise these as ‘minority languages’ may again lead to a sense of marginalisation, as though these languages are not sufficiently ‘legitimate’ in the eyes of the state (Culp, 2017).

How could one, therefore, categorise these languages? An alternative term, perhaps, for said groups is that of ‘heritage language’. This term acknowledges the historical ties between the speakers, the language, and the state without consciously positioning the community as Other. This would mean, therefore, that the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German languages would be regarded as similar to American English with regards to their longevity in their respective regions, given that they have all existed, in various forms, in the United States since the 16th and 17th centuries (Loudon, 2016; Rabalais, 2017).

With regards to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, I will favour the term ‘heritage language’ in this thesis, although the term ‘minority language’ will also be employed where I wish to emphasise the liminal status of these communities. In doing so, I acknowledge the long history of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German in the United States while also signifying that these languages should not be considered on a par with indigenous American languages.

The question of language versus dialect

Another question that must be answered with regards to Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German is whether the term ‘language’ is appropriate, or whether these languages could be considered ‘dialects’ of their European counterparts. This question is essential for this thesis, as shown by the fact that it has been posed to several interview participants (e.g. p. 285, p. 338, p. 408, p. 435).

One of the greatest issues in distinguishing a language from a dialect is the ambiguous criteria by which one could seek to define a method of communication as such. Some argue that those variants with little substantive change in grammar or vocabulary, bar a few words, should be considered a ‘dialect’ of a more widely spoken ‘standardised’ language. For instance, in the case of Louisiana French, one might regard the language as sufficiently similar to its European counterpart – with only a few variations to account for concepts that would have been new to the Louisiana French when they arrived in the region (p. 620) – as a dialect of metropolitan French.

However, to deem the language as such could be considered reductive and a means of Othering the community despite its long history of communicating in Louisiana French (Spivak, 1994; Yuval-Davis, 2006). As Rabalais (2017) notes, there has been continued growth and development of the language since the 17th century. Given its evolution, it could therefore be deemed inaccurate and unfair to the Louisiana French community to dismiss this as no more than a variant. For this reason, this thesis argues that Louisiana French is a language of its own, which has developed independently of its European counterpart, and therefore should be defined as such.

In the case of Pennsylvania German, the argument for defining this method of communication as a language is more clear-cut. Despite the connections with modern-day

dialects found in the Rhineland Palatinate (*Hiwwe wie Driwwe*, 2021), there are substantial differences in vocabulary between Pennsylvania German and *Hochdeutsch*, or so-called ‘Standard German’; this is evidenced by the multitude of orthographical systems that can be observed in the language, which render the language unintelligible from its European counterpart in some instances (cf. Louden, 2016). Therefore, despite the relatively small speakership – there are fewer than 200,000 first-language speakers of the language (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013) – it is evident that Pennsylvania German is a standalone language, despite the belief among members of the community that it is a dialect of German (cf. p. 285, p. 435).

The question of authenticity

Another question that will emerge throughout the entirety of this thesis is that of authenticity, and how one might determine whether cultural production can be deemed ‘authentic’ – a concept which is intertwined with the notion of ‘nativeness’, and what it means to be a ‘native speaker’ of Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German. Could someone be deemed ‘inauthentic’ for not actively participating in certain cultural practices, even if they are competent in the language? For instance, might a fluent speaker of Pennsylvania German be deemed ‘inauthentically’ so for not dressing in certain clothes, or participating in such phenomena as the *Grundsau* Lodge? Could the work of a Louisiana French artist or musician be deemed ‘authentically Louisiana French’ only if it incorporates certain elements dating back to the early days of the community?

This dilemma is of greater significance today than ever before, especially when one considers the context in which younger generations of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German speakers have been raised. Due to the decline in both languages throughout the 20th

century (cf. Louden, 2016; Rabalais, 2021), there has been a reduced uptake in the language from generations born post-World War II. This reduced uptake is partly driven by the increased need for English, especially in a country where the speakership of these two languages is low in comparison (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013); however, as demonstrated by interview participants such as Brown, Cormier, and Schlegel (p. 435, p. 338, and p. 539 respectively), there was also little opportunity to learn the language in childhood, with any exposure taking place via older relatives who did not pass on much of the language. In addition, as highlighted by Cormier and Donner (cf. p. 338, p. 562), there are also ties to trauma experienced by Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German speakers in their youth, particularly among the Louisiana French, whose language was more forcibly removed via the education system (Rabalais, 2021; cf. p.620). This led to these generations – some of whom are now parents and grandparents themselves (p. 338) – refusing share the language for fear of such trauma being reignited in younger generations of the community.

It is also necessary to reflect upon the art forms featured in this study, particularly in the context of those art forms which are more explicitly connected with the language in its written or spoken form, such as the music of the Louisiana French and the Pennsylvania German art forms of barn stars and *Fraktur*, to name a few. Can these art forms be regarded as ‘authentically’ Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German if the creators do not have an active connection with the language, and practice it on a regular basis? The author of this thesis believes it is unfair to exclude such artists and dismiss their work as inauthentic when the connections that they might have had between their cultural identity and the language belonging to said identity have been weakened through historical language decline. If one were to regard such works as ‘inauthentic’, one risks marginalising such creators, thus further disconnecting them from their cultural and linguistic heritage, in an act not too dissimilar from the initial ‘exile’ imposed upon the languages previously – in brief, one would render these

creators as *homines sacri* (Agamben, 1998), not only from wider American society, but from their own communities.

The question of authenticity, and the criteria by which one should deem a work to be definitively authentic, is highly complex and will not be resolved entirely in this dissertation. Given the disconnect that exists between younger generations of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German people and the language spoken by their ancestors – despite identifying as part of the community (Yuval-Davis, 2006) – this thesis will regard as ‘authentic’ any work of art which is produced by someone with an active and prolonged connection to either the Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German community. This includes, for instance, the work of Loudon (2016), who, despite not being Pennsylvania German by birth, has spent several decades working with the Pennsylvania German community and has gained a deep understanding of the culture and language.

Statement of Originality

The previous sections of this chapter have demonstrated that I seek to break new ground in this thesis and examine two areas of the United States – and of the Francophone and Germanophone diasporas – which have previously received little scholarly attention. As stated previously, there are no recent publications which discuss the Louisiana French or Pennsylvania Germans penned by scholars based *outside* of these communities, with the most recent works on Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German culture authored solely by those who reside in these communities and express belonging to these groups (cf. Yuval-Davis, 2006), such as Loudon (2016) and Rabalais (2017, 2021). Furthermore, when these communities are the subject of mass media based outside of the community – both in the United States (e.g. *Louisiana Considered*, 2022) and elsewhere in their respective diaspora (*L’invité*,

2014; Luterbacher, 2017) – they remain a subject of curiosity or novelty, rather than being ‘legitimised’ (Culp, 2017) as heritage languages of the United States.

Consequently, my study makes great progress in shedding light on the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans of the 21st century. In seeking to demonstrate how their respective heritages are preserved through written and non-written narratives, this thesis reasserts and *relegitimises* the position of these communities within both the history and formation of the United States, and within the American cultural *habitus* of the 21st century (Bourdieu, 1993).

In this thesis, I must also reemphasise the lack of existing scholarship within the fields of French and German Studies. As stated previously, at the time of writing, there are few publications which consider the Louisiana French community – or its cultural production – from an outside perspective (Giacoppe, 2014), while Pennsylvania German cultural production is not featured at all in scholarship outside of the region. In addition, in the case of the latter group, they are part of a Germanophone diaspora that is chronically underresearched, with examinations of the German colonial project only emerging in mainstream media in the last two years (Menger, 2021; Tagesschau, 2022). Consequently, this thesis breaks new ground in the field of both French and German Studies; not only does it broaden the scope of existing research on Francophone North America, but it highlights the legacy of Germanophone colonialism – both from Germany and from other Germanophone countries in Europe – which this researcher believes is an essential step forward in decolonising the German curriculum in the United Kingdom while simultaneously furthering discussions on the *Francophonie* in a postcolonial context.

Additionally, the work undertaken in Chapters One and Two to create a framework – upon which analysis of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German narratives is set – provides a novel, multi-faceted approach by which the communities can be analysed in their current

contexts. By combining biopolitical thought, multilingual theory (including Bakhtinian thought and the notion of translanguaging), and life writing theory, I seek to determine the ongoing significance of these languages within their respective communities, not merely in the abstract, but in the context of a 21st-century United States where pro-English attitudes have become increasingly prevalent (cf. Acevedo, 2019; CNN, 2015; Díez, 2019). Therefore, Chapters One and Two serve to break new ground for the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, while also expanding existing scholarship on the Francophone and Germanophone diaspora (cf. Nischik, 2014).

Finally, this research combines media and narrative methods traditional to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities – including music from the Louisiana French community (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012, 2017), Pennsylvania German *Scherenschnitte* (Fritsch, 2008), and the role of folk festivals in both communities (cf. p. 167, p. 228) – with narrative methods that are more conventional to 21st-century Anglophone cultural production, namely poetry and prose (e.g. Chéramie, 2007; Moll and Madenford, 2015; Waggoner, 2011). The combination of written and non-written narrative methods – and, crucially, the comparisons drawn between the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities – are entirely unique to this thesis, with any existing texts on Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural production focusing on one community (e.g. Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016) or focusing on one portion of the community or its narrative methods (e.g. Rabalais, 2021). As a result, this thesis also advocates for a new approach to research in the fields of modern languages and cultures, which, through comparing and contrasting cultural and linguistic heritages, creates a transcultural understanding of what it means to practice a heritage language in the 21st century.

Research Questions

In seeking to explore the life writing of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities and the way in which they interact with the respective languages and cultures, one must first question why these languages are still actively practiced in a nation that does not necessarily provide for the use of languages aside from English (Beaudrie et al., 2021; Macías, 2000). Therefore, the first, and perhaps most pressing, research questions must be: **Why do the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities continue to make use of their own dialects? How does the choice to use these dialects affect the cultural output of the regions in question? What effect does a continued use of these dialects have upon the communities that use them?**

Once this thesis has established the significance of this practice in 21st-century America, it is essential to consider how those involved in cultural production might combine their respective community languages with the *lingua franca* of English and any other language which is deemed relevant to the region (cf. Chermie, 2007, pp. 42-43 for an example of Louisiana French combined with Spanish, another language commonly found in Louisiana). Therefore, Chapters One and Two will also ask: **How does the use of multiple languages affect the depiction of life? To what extent is such a fluidity of language helpful, or detrimental, to the community which the author is representing?**

Following this, the final field which must be explored is that of life writing, namely how one might utilise life writing as a means of depicting the lived experiences, not only of oneself, but of the community as a whole and its heritage. In doing so, a range of questions will be answered: **Is life writing the best way to give an account of life? To what extent do the Pennsylvania German- and Louisiana French-speaking communities use this concept of life writing, if at all, to represent their lived experiences? How has the use of oral tradition**

been affected by the introduction of the written form? How does a combination of written and non-written art forms affect the intended narrative? How do writers and artists from these communities combine these art forms to convey their intended narrative? To what extent do these non-written forms help or hinder attempts to increase awareness of these languages and communities?

The exploration of these questions in Chapters One and Two – and the answers that they may uncover within the context of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities – will provide a theoretical foundation upon which further culture-specific analysis can be built.

Thesis Outline

Following this introductory chapter, this thesis will engage in three phases of analysis, culminating in the final chapter drawing together the findings of each chapter to provide answers to the research questions listed above. The first phase of analysis, which will feature in Chapters One and Two, is the examination of these research questions in the context of seminal and current thought on three key areas: biopolitics; the interaction between language and identity; and life writing. Chapter One will engage in detailed analysis of seminal works related to these notions, including: the work of Foucault (1975, 1997, 2004) and Agamben (1998) – coupled with that of Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004); the notions of polyphony and heteroglossia proposed by Bakhtin (1981); the concept of identity in a postcolonial context, as theorised by scholars based in the Francophone Caribbean (Bernabé et al., 1990; Glissant, 1989); and the exploration of autobiography and life writing (Kadar, 1992; Smith and Watson, 2010) in the context of its audience, and the way in which said life writing might be positioned according to its composition and its intended audience (Bourdieu, 1993). The exploration of

these key theoretical works will create an initial understanding, upon which further exploration of these concepts can be built.

Following the creation of this initial understanding, Chapter Two will transpose these core concepts into contemporary scholarship in order to refine the arguments formulated in Chapter One. The concepts of biopolitics, heteroglossia, and life writing will be examined through the lens of 21st-century research (e.g. Atkinson and Bradley, 2017; Creese et al., 2017) in order to further define what it means to be Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German in 21st-century America and how one might express one's identity as such in the form of life writing. The conclusion of this chapter will mark the creation of a theoretical framework that will underpin the remainder of the thesis.

Before embarking upon a critical reading of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural artefacts, however, this thesis must also outline the methodology by which it seeks to evaluate such artefacts and, by extension, answer the research questions posited previously. Chapter Three will elaborate upon the three-pronged methodological approach that this thesis utilises to do so. In this chapter devoted to methodology, the author of this thesis will justify the use of critical analysis of cultural works alongside a series of one-to-one interviews which, when combined with the theoretical framework from Chapters One and Two, will form a strategy which will allow this thesis to partake in an in-depth analysis of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German identity in relation to the cultural production of the 21st century. In addition, this chapter will outline the ethics process undertaken to ensure the highest level of research integrity is maintained throughout this study (p. 93).

The following four chapters of this thesis will then embark on culture-specific analyses related to the written and non-written artefacts produced by the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities respectively. Each of these four chapters is dedicated to either written or non-written narrative methods within a specific community – with

comparisons made throughout between the various cultural artefacts featured in these chapters – with a view to providing a detailed picture of cultural production in the two communities: Chapter Four will engage with Louisiana French written narratives; Chapter Five will analyse Louisiana French non-written narrative methods; Chapter Six explores Pennsylvania German written narratives; and Chapter Seven engages with Pennsylvania German non-written narrative methods. The cultural artefacts selected for these chapters have all been published in the last twenty-five years – with all but one (Cheremie, 1997) having been released in the last fifteen years – and their examination will be informed both by the theoretical foundation established in Chapters One and Two and by the one-to-one interviews undertaken for this thesis, all of which were conducted with members of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities with ties to academia or cultural production within their respective regions.

Chapter Four examines the written narrative methods of the Louisiana French community through the lens of two contemporary Louisiana French writers and academics: David Cheremie (1997, 2007) and May Rush Gwin Waggoner (2011), the sole female writer to be explored in this thesis (an exploration of this can be found from pages 117 to 132). In this chapter, there will be an exploration of several pieces of prose and poetry written by the two, with a particular focus on the following works:

- *Les post-partum blues de Carême-prenant* (The post-partum blues of Shrovetide’) by Cheremie (2007)
- *O.E.D.* by Cheremie (1997)
- *souvenirs de sneaux* (*Memories of snow*) by Cheremie (1997)
- *Contre vents et marées* (*Against the Wind and Tide*) by Waggoner (2011)
- *Counterclockwise* by Waggoner (2011)
- *Histoire Acadienne* (*Acadian History*) by Waggoner (2011)

- *Les Deux Soeurs (The Two Sisters)* by Waggoner (2011)

In doing so, this chapter will seek to understand the significance of these two writers expressing their identities as Louisiana French speakers while also evoking the lived experiences of previous generations of Louisiana French speakers, their struggles against linguistic and cultural prejudice, and their positions – having been exposed to the latter stages of this trauma – as active members of the Louisiana French-speaking community and the Francophone world.

This analysis will be followed, in Chapter Five, by the exploration of Louisiana French non-written cultural production. In particular, it will home in on the work of the band Lost Bayou Ramblers – namely, their latest albums, *Mammoth Waltz* (2012) and *Kalenda* (2017) – and the album *Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent* (2018), a collaborative effort which features a number of Louisiana French musicians, including Zachary Richard, Anna Laura Edmiston, and members of the bands *Feufollet* and Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys.

This exploration will be featured alongside an analysis of the current offering of folk festivals that seek to highlight the culture of the Louisiana French community. In the context of the Louisiana French, this entails an examination of the *Festivals Acadiens et Créoles* and the *Festival International de Louisiane*. These analyses will determine how the offerings of these events shape the narratives that are conveyed – regarding the Louisiana French community – to those visiting from elsewhere.

Chapter Six will then focus on the written narratives of the Pennsylvania Germans in order to determine the significance of written media in a community whose language is, at heart, grounded in oral tradition (cf. Loudon, 2016). There are two works that will be the focus of this chapter: *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015) and *Der Haahne*

Greht (Fritsch, 2008). These collections of prose and poetry (respectively) will be analysed, not only in the context of the community itself and the heritage that they seek to convey, but also in comparison to the works featured in Chapter Four, their themes, and the rhetorical devices that they employ. It should be noted here that *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* is, in its origin, the oldest collection in this thesis, having originally been penned and published in the mid-20th century (cf. p. 367). However, as Chapter Six asserts (pp. 165-193), the work undertaken by Madenford to edit, compile, and translate the collection can be deemed sufficiently transformative to consider this a 'new' work, or at least a new edition of said work.

Chapter Seven will then conclude the culture-specific analyses with an exploration of non-written narrative methods as employed by the Pennsylvania Germans today. This will begin with a continuation of the examination of *Der Haahne Greht* (Fritsch, 2008), with a focus in this chapter on the *Scherenschnitte*, created by Fritsch, that he presents throughout the collection alongside his poetry. The exploration of this art form, in combination with the previous analysis of his poetry, will highlight how the two art forms interact, thereby examining its efficacy as a means of representing Fritsch's lived experience as a speaker of Pennsylvania German and a practitioner of Pennsylvania German culture.

This chapter will also feature analysis of the Pennsylvania German artist Rachel Yoder's oeuvre, from her creation of barn stars (Donmoyer, 2013) to her landscape work in the style of Gladys Lutz (Kline, 2016; Yoder, 2022), with in-depth analysis also focusing on the *Aa Halde* project, which combines *Scherenschnitte* with *Fraktur* to create a sculpture which seeks to represent the voices of previous generations of Pennsylvania German speakers.

The analysis of Yoder's work will be followed by an exploration of Pennsylvania German folk festivals – primarily the Kutztown Folk Festival, one of the largest folklife events, not only in the Pennsylvania German community, but also in the United States (Wenger and Bronner, 2017) – with a view to understanding how the culture presented in these events has

shaped the presentation of the community to the outside world in the 21st century, and how the effects of this festival may differ from those of the Louisiana French community.

My study will then conclude by collating the conclusions drawn from each of these chapters to provide conclusive answers to the questions posed earlier in this chapter (p. 19). Said conclusion will compare the findings derived from Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven, with a view to determining how the variations in narrative style affect the way in which such narratives perceived by those who do not belong to these communities. This will be followed by an examination of how this study may be utilised as a basis for further research – namely through the extrapolation of its findings to other heritage and minority language communities – and will identify such areas for further study while also taking into consideration the potential limitations of this research project.

CHAPTER ONE: EXPLORING THE POSITION OF LOUISIANA FRENCH AND PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN

As noted in the introduction, there are several questions that must be answered before we can embark upon a critical reading of the core cultural texts. These questions are primarily:

- Why do the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities continue to make use of their own dialects?
- How does the choice to use these dialects affect the cultural output of the regions in question?
- What effect does a continued use of these dialects have upon the communities that use them?
- How does the use of multiple languages affect the depiction of life? To what extent is such a fluidity of language helpful, or detrimental, to the community which the author is representing?
- Is life writing the best way to give an account of life?
- To what extent do the Pennsylvania German- and Louisiana French-speaking communities use this concept of life writing, if at all, to represent their lived experiences?
- How has the use of oral tradition been affected by the introduction of the written form?
- How does a combination of written and non-written art forms affect the intended narrative?
- How do writers and artists from these communities combine these art forms to convey their intended narrative?
- To what extent do these non-written forms help or hinder attempts to increase awareness of these languages and communities?

To provide answers to these questions, this chapter explores the seminal works of three fields:

- i. Biopolitical thought, with a focus on the work of Foucault (1975, 1997, 2004), Agamben (1998), and Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004);
- ii. The relationship between active multilingualism and identity in the context of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, with a focus on heteroglossia, polyphony, and the concept of *métissage culturel* (Bakhtin, 1981; Bernabé et al., 1990; Glissant, 1989, 1997);
- iii. And seminal works on life writing, ranging from the definition of autobiography (Lejeune, 1989) to the notion of life writing as a more universal concept (Smith and Watson, 2010).

Each of these fields has been selected in order to shed new light on each aspect of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, their languages, and their cultures, both within the United States and within their respective diaspora. The field of biopolitics will be utilised to determine the position of these groups within American society – an area which has previously been unexplored by scholars from outside of these regions (e.g. Ancelet, 1999; Loudon, 2016) – while the concepts of multilingual cultural production and life writing will be directed towards the contemporary cultural output of these communities.

In following this approach, the questions listed above will be explored through the lens of the applicable theories, thus providing a clearer understanding of the significance of practicing Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German in 21st-century life writing. The findings established here will then be utilised in the following chapter, in conjunction with more recent scholarly thought in these three areas, to provide a foundation upon which analysis of the selected core cultural artefacts can then take place.

Exploring the position of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German through biopolitical thought

As stated above, before I can explore the cultural production of these communities, an understanding of the position of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities in 21st-century America is vital. Crucially, this section will seek to determine why the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities continue to make use of their own languages today, how the choice to utilise these languages affects the cultural output of these communities, and the effects experienced by these communities as a result of continued language usage.

The first of these points is most important, especially given the prevalence of English as the *de facto* national language of the United States (Beaudrie et al., 2021; Schildkraut, 2000). Based on the position of English within the United States and its usage by the state, one could view the continued usage of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German as incongruous with the linguistic practices of the nation as a whole, especially as many members of these two communities also speak English (Hurst and McConnell, 2010; Loudon, 2016).

Yet contemporary biopolitical thought (cf. Agamben, 1998; Foucault, 1997, 2004; Hardt and Negri, 2000, 2004) provides a greater understanding of the motivations of those who actively practice either of these languages, in addition to developing an awareness of the circumstances that have led to an increasingly visible cultural output (cf. *Hiwwe wie Driwwe*, 2021; *Télé-Louisiane*, 2021). As the use of English became increasingly prevalent throughout the United States, the Anglophone population – as the largest linguistic group – became what Foucault (1997) might term the ‘superrace’, thus categorising the interlocuters of any other language as ‘subraces’. In doing so, this draws the population of the United States into a ‘race war’ in which it will always necessarily be engaged:

The war that is going on beneath order and peace, the war that undermines our society and divides it in a binary mode is, basically, a race war. At a very early stage, we find the basic elements that make the war possible, and then ensure its continuation, pursuit and development: ethnic differences, differences between languages, different degrees of force, [vigour], energy, and violence (Foucault, 1997. pp. 59-60).

As Foucault (1997) notes, the term ‘race war’ – now associated most commonly with the conflict around race and ethnic differences – can be used to refer to several types of divisions across society, including several forms that were not mentioned here, such as differences in religious practice, lifestyle, class, and so on. In interpreting the race war here as a conflict centred upon linguistic differences, Anglophone and non-Anglophone America are positioned as opponents whose ‘race war’ has been further provoked in recent years through the increasing prevalence of English-only movements (cf. Díez, 2019; Johnson, 2009).

Foucault posits that this binary division, and the alienation that is felt by those who do not belong to the ‘superrace’ or affiliate with those in power, then leads to a reframing of the State’s history. There is no longer a general history which encompasses the whole of the State; instead, there is ‘a principle of heterogeneity: The history of some is not the history of others’ (1997). This development of a ‘counterhistory’ seeks, therefore, to bring attention to those who, as Foucault describes, have found that their voices are not represented distinctly (if at all) in the history of the state as a whole, and, as a result, decide to ‘speak and to tell of [their] history’ (1997). With regards to the subjects of this thesis, this may be one of the primary motivations behind the continued cultural output of these linguistic groups: to construct their own counterhistories which represent the culture and history of the regions from their unique perspectives – a notion which is in keeping with the heterogeneity that Foucault proposed.

Agamben’s concept of *homo sacer* (1998) would also suggest that these minority language-speaking regions have been separated from wider society. Similarly to Foucault, Agamben proposes that there is a power imbalance across society, with those in power having the authority to consign others to the position of *homo sacer*. This space, in which an agent

may not be sacrificed and yet – paradoxically – may be killed without consequence, creates a new liminality in which one is no longer a part of the *bios* (or political life), but is only regarded in terms of the *zoē* (or natural life). Such a state is similar to that in which the Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German speaker finds themselves: having ‘revolted’ against the increasing Anglicization of the state (cf. Appendix J, wherein Landry discusses this in greater depth), these communities are abandoned by the American *bios* and consigned to the realm of *homines sacri*. This then leads to the ‘natural’ decline of these communities, along with the decline and eventual death of their languages and cultures.

However, while Agamben seeks to determine the point at which the *homo sacer* is formed and where they stand in relation to society as a whole, he does not elaborate in great detail on the life of such an individual and how it might be shaped by the position imposed upon them. Although he uses the example of the concentration camp to demonstrate how those interred were reduced to *homines sacri*, this does not provide a universal example by which the lives of *homines sacri* can be examined today. Despite the fact that this omission can be resolved by incorporating the Foucauldian concept of counterhistories (Foucault, 1997), this illustrates the importance of the narratives produced in these regions, which become necessary in order to shape and demonstrate their cultural identities to a wider audience.

It is also crucial to note that, in reading *Homo Sacer* (1998), Agamben implies that the only way in which one can become *homo sacer* is to be deemed so by those in authority, which does not account for the possibility that an individual or a collective might elect to become *homo sacer*, thus actively placing themselves in the margins of wider society. Thus, groups like the Amish and Mennonite communities of Pennsylvania, who speak Pennsylvania German (Louden, 2016), are not fully represented by the theories Agamben presents. For this reason, it is even more important that these regions maintain a cultural output that represents not only those who have been confined to a liminal space in society by others, but those who are

members of the liminal space by choice. In maintaining this output, the groups in question are given the opportunity to create their own space and give themselves, as subalterns, a voice (cf. Spivak, 1988) which, in turn, may evolve into a new form of *bios* with its own, alternative, means of production (Hardt and Negri, 2000).

However, as stated previously, any marginality imposed upon, or willingly adopted by, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities – or, for that matter, any multilingual community within the United States – is heightened by the recent growth of English-only movements (Barker et al., 2001; Pac, 2012). When considering these movements and their motivations, one of the more commonly held arguments by their proponents is that is easier for society if everyone is able to communicate in a single *lingua franca* (cf. Díez, 2019; Schildkraut, 2003). In addition, by creating a monolingual United States and maintaining it as such, it is easier for the State and its powers – including the federal government, state government and law enforcement – to control the population using language as a form of ‘disciplinary mechanism’ (Foucault, 1997).

Yet I posit that any engagement with such movements is counterintuitive and may actually promote a rise in speakers of minority and heritage languages – not only Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German, but any language that is perceived by supporters of a monolingual United States as a ‘minority language’. By protesting the use of languages other than English in American society, these English-only movements present themselves as superior to those communities who do make use of other languages, thus leading to the ‘superrace’ suggested earlier. As this sense of superiority transitions from ‘virtual’ to ‘actual’ (cf. Deleuze and Parnet, 1987), this might compel minority language speaking-regions to not only persist in using said languages, but also promote their usage on a wider scale. In my view, there are two reasons that this may be the case:

- i. **Resistance:** Interlocutors may elect to continue using the minority language, not necessarily with the aim of maintaining the language itself, but as a means of resisting against the prevailing use of English in the United States and those who would seek to enshrine this usage in law.
- ii. **Preservation:** Other members of these communities may continue to communicate in a minority language as an act of preservation, thus protecting the language against the superiority introduced by those supporting the exclusive use of the English language.

Regardless of the rationale, the continued use of minority languages like Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German serves as a means of (directly or indirectly, depending upon the rationale behind their usage) opposing the opinions of those calling for the use of the English language. By setting themselves in opposition against Anglocentric thought, as in the second category given above, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German-speaking regions thus engage in a form of revolt as a means of defending their cultural and linguistic heritage against the ‘conduct’ (Foucault, 2004) observed among English-only movements. As a consequence of this revolt, greater attention is brought to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German regions, and their regional identities. Additionally, this revolt highlights the inextricable ties between the culture, history, and languages of these regions. The latter phenomenon is exemplified most clearly by the cultural output of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, which serves to strengthen and represent these communities, their respective languages, and the values with which they identify. Therefore, it could be argued that the revolt undertaken by these communities is not a physical revolt, but rather a cultural revolt, which sets both Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German at the heart of the ‘movement’.

This cultural revolt can also be observed in the case of other minority and heritage languages, where, as I previously implied, the growth of English-only movements may lead to an increased uptake of those minority languages that are threatened by such groups. This is evidenced, for example, by the inclusion of languages like Hawaiian and Navajo as part of mainstream language-learning apps like Duolingo (Schwartz, 2020). As support for courses in these languages increases, minority language-speaking communities possess a means, not only of raising awareness of the threat posed to their respective societies' linguistic and cultural heritage, but also of broadcasting these heritages beyond their communities to a global audience. In the context of this thesis, the most tangible examples of this include the Pennsylvania German publication *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* (2021) and the Louisiana French television station *Télé-Louisiane* (2021), both of which produce digital content that can be accessed globally.

As briefly mentioned earlier, the continued and conscious use of languages other than English could also be perceived, in Foucauldian terms, as a means of revolt against the conduct encouraged by the State (Foucault, 2004). During the course of his lectures, Foucault refers to 'conduct' as the way in which the State encourages the population to act and the rules which the population ought to follow so that the State may operate as efficiently as possible. In other words, it is a means by which the State is able to assert its power over the populace with the least cost to society as a whole (Foucault, 1975).

This final statement, which is derived from the concept of the Leviathan (Hobbes, 2018), is crucial when seeking to understanding the actions of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. While it might be more efficient for the State to encourage the use of a *lingua franca* in order to govern the population most effectively – as suggested by supporters of the English-only movement (cf. ProEnglish, 2020) – doing this comes at a cost to any group that favours another language. Consequently, despite the fact that English-only movements

continue to encourage a movement towards a solely Anglophone United States – a move which is indirectly encouraged by the State itself, through the English language requirements set by the State in cases like that of becoming an American citizen (cf. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2022) – these communities continue to revolt against the conduct that is imposed upon them. This is achieved through the use of the languages that they have used for centuries and, through the advent of social media, the continuation of education around the languages themselves and the regions to which they belong (e.g. *Hiwwe wie Driwwe*, 2021; *Télé-Louisiane*, 2021). This not only strengthens the communities in question and the way in which they identify themselves, but it also allows for their linguistic and cultural heritages to be shared on a far wider scale, which could then lead to said identities being validated and recognised on an international level (cf. Hardt and Negri, 2000).

Yet there remains one issue that is not sufficiently addressed by either Agamben or Foucault: the issue of what precisely constitutes the nation or the State. In Foucault's view (1997), the nation is far more than merely geographical or political borders. Instead, one could group a country and its inhabitants into several nations, according to whatever criteria one selects. For example, within the country of the United States, its population could theoretically be grouped into nations according to whether they are Democrats, Republicans, Greens and so on; alternatively, the population might be categorised according to age groups, religious beliefs, household incomes, class, occupations, and so on. As the criteria are to be established by the person who is seeking to categorise the populace, this means that, hypothetically, several nations could be created within the United States according to the languages spoken. This would encompass not only the English-speaking United States, but anyone speaking any language, including Pennsylvania German and Louisiana French. This could therefore permit these communities to regard themselves as 'nations' separate from any other language groups

in the United States, thus resolving the issue raised earlier of those who might deem themselves to be *homines sacri* (Agamben, 1998).

Such a grouping has already been made evident in several ways: for example, many of the Native American communities in the United States are able to govern themselves to a certain extent – which, as a result, also places these communities in a liminal space, albeit by choice rather than by force (Agamben, 1998) – while those who speak the Gullah and Geechee languages have named the region in which they reside as the Gullah/Geechee Nation (Gullah/Geechee Nation, 2022). This self-determination is vital, not only in terms of identity, but also in terms of seeking legal protection for a group’s linguistic and cultural heritage. For instance, the creation of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) by Louisiana state legislature has given them the power to ‘do any and all things necessary to accomplish the development, utilization, and preservation of the French language as found in Louisiana for the cultural, economic and touristic benefit of the state’ (CODOFIL, 2020); however, no such entity exists for the Pennsylvania German language, thus making this goal of self-determination harder to achieve for the community.

Hardt and Negri (2000; 2004) propose a similar method of dividing the people into nations. However, while Foucault’s model implies that a nation is determined by those who meet the given criteria, Hardt and Negri consider the people instead as a product of the nation, with the nation being formed of several ‘multitudes’ of people. Once combined, these multitudes are transformed into a singular ‘people’ that ‘tends toward identity and homogeneity internally while posing its difference from and excluding what remains out of it’ (Hardt and Negri, 2000). This suggests that, as with Foucault, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities are considered as separate ‘peoples’ who are united through their shared language, while the United States, through its diversity, would be regarded as a multitude

which is yet to reach Hardt and Negri's proposed goal of transforming the multitude into a people (2000).

However, this view is contradicted through Hardt and Negri's assertion that peoples could be formed of other entities, both within a nation-state (as above) and on an international scale; these 'peoples' include the concept of diaspora, wherein multitudes composed of several nation-states are united through a common language. If one regards the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German-speaking regions through this lens, then one might conversely conclude that they are not peoples by themselves, but part of a larger form of people: the Francophone and Germanophone diaspora, respectively.

Hardt and Negri (2000) support this view through their proposal of 'subaltern nationalism' as a means by which diverse communities form a united people. While, in their view, colonialism has '[constructed] figures of alterity', subaltern nationalism leads these groups to reject the perceived inferiority that the dominant powers have accorded them. In some cases, this results in diverse populations (that would previously be considered a multitude) uniting despite their differences and proclaiming themselves as a nation (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Such a concept would be compatible with the position of French Louisiana and German Pennsylvania as individual nations within the larger 'nation' of diaspora, as Hardt and Negri note below:

In cases of diasporic populations, too, the nation seems at times to be the only concept available under which to imagine the community of the subaltern group—as, for example, the Aztlán is imagined as the geographical homeland of “la Raza,” the spiritual Latino nation in North America (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 107).

In this regard, one could view subaltern nationalism as a variation of Agamben's *homo sacer*. While the *homo sacer* is placed into exile by wider society (mirroring the way in which the dominated community is rendered as subaltern), the subaltern region declares itself as

separate from the colonial powers; that is to say, they establish themselves as *homines sacri* and create a space in which they can speak for themselves (cf. Spivak, 1988). This also gives the groups the freedom to represent themselves, as the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania communities do, through their own media, art, literature, and so on.

Thus, a nation is far more than the borders and lands it possesses; rather, it is the people within that form countless nations of their own within the same country (cf. Foucault, 1997; Hardt and Negri, 2000). This more anthropologically focused way of approaching nationhood also demonstrates why the divides between different nations can be so profound and thus oppositions and conflicts between the nations persist. In Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven (pp. 103-222), I will examine whether such oppositions are visible in the cultural output of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, and, if so, how these are expressed to the audience.

The importance of multilingualism in the United States today

While the exploration of biopolitical theory is useful for understanding the current situation faced by minority language-speaking communities in the United States, it does not explain the benefits of said communities making use of their own languages. Therefore, it is essential that I examine several areas of linguistic and cultural theory to determine the significance of using these languages, either on their own or in conjunction with another language. In doing so, I will evaluate how the use of multiple languages affects the depiction of life according to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, and, in addition, whether such a fluidity of language aids the representation of these groups.

When considering these languages within the context of their communities and the United States as a whole, it is essential to consider the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, namely his

thoughts on polyphony, polyglossia, and heteroglossia (cf. Bakhtin, 1981; Hirschkop and Shepherd, 1993). As Dentith notes (1995), these theories are of such significance that they remain a subject of analysis today, and thus, while Bakhtin first named them several decades ago, they are an important foundation upon which other linguistic theories can be explored in Chapter Two (p. 69).

In his critique of Dostoevsky's body of work (1984), Bakhtin determines that there is 'a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses' that, as a leitmotif of Dostoevsky's writing, serves to give depth to the world that he presents to the reader. Bakhtin asserts that the effects of such a polyphonic novel are twofold; not only is Dostoevsky able to showcase several aspects of himself, each of which is represented through its own character, but he also breaks away from the then-traditional monologic form of the European novel to create a dialogue, not only between the multiple narrators, but also between his characters and his readership. This dialogue thus permits the reader to observe the story from several perspectives while also gaining the ability to question the reliability of the narrators and their accounts.

In recent years, such a narrative style has emerged in literature from across the Francophone diaspora (cf. Blais, 1965; Condé, 1989). Like Dostoevsky, these authors make use of a polyphonic narrative to better show its readers the context in which the story is based; for instance, in Condé's *Traversée de la Mangrove* (1989), her use of multiple narrators demonstrates Guadeloupe's rich cultural history – alongside its cultural divides – to the reader. Such a tradition can also be found in the Francophone writing of the United States, as will be demonstrated in Chapter Four (cf. Waggoner, 2011; p. 117).

There are also texts emerging from the Pennsylvania German community which make use of the polyphonic narrative structure, namely Moll and Madenford's *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (2015). Unlike Condé, who uses a polyphonic structure akin to that of Dostoevsky,

Moll and Madenford channel the narratives of each subject through a single unnamed narrator as each character speaks from beyond the grave to tell their stories. This specific use of polyphony, along with its effects upon the reader, will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Six (p. 166).

At this stage, it is vital to mention that Bakhtin does not ignore the use of dialects instead of a standardised national language; on the contrary, he engages with this concept in detail throughout the second essay of this text, entitled 'From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse'. In this essay, Bakhtin makes several references to folk languages, or, as he deems them at one point, 'vulgar folk languages' (1981, p. 77), and the way in which such dialects interact with both the national languages from which they were derived and the cultural output itself.¹ In doing so, he describes the 'intense struggle that goes on between languages and within languages' (p. 66).

Although Bakhtin only briefly refers to this struggle, these statements support the theory posited in the previous section regarding the difficulties faced by Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German, not only in the face of other languages, but also between the dialects and the standardised forms that are more widely used and taught (cf. p. 28). In addition, the allusion to folk languages as 'vulgar' may, to some extent, explain why the Pennsylvania German community continues to make use of *Hochdeutsch* in their religious texts (an argument that will be explored further in Chapters Six and Seven). This therefore implies that, in this instance, it is beneficial to maintain a multilingual outlook, not only to communicate effectively with wider American society, but also to somewhat 'legitimise' one's status as an American.

Yet Bakhtin does not solely investigate language as an abstract concept. In *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), he also examines in detail the effects that language might have in practical

¹ Although my study will explore several forms of cultural output, including the visual and musical arts, Bakhtin chooses to focus upon literature, particularly the novel.

terms upon the writer, the audience, and the form of the text itself. In 'From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse' (1981, pp. 41-83), Bakhtin explores the relationship between the style of writing found in the novel, the authors that pen them, and the communities from which such language is derived. For him, the novelistic word owes much to folkloric culture:

The novelistic word reflected a primordial struggle between tribes, peoples, cultures and languages – it is still full of echoes of this ancient struggle (1981, p. 50).

This quote further supports the two motivations – listed in the previous section (p. 28) – behind the continued efforts to preserve Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German in the first place. As Bakhtin proposes, the written word (specifically prose) is a representation of the conflict that has been experienced between those who primarily communicate in the *lingua franca* of a state and those who also make use of minority languages. By producing works that utilise these languages, the communities in question do not preserve them through their cultural output, but they reflect the challenges that they have experienced – both historically and today – and the choice to resist and persist in making use of these languages. As a result, the audience can better perceive the challenges that these regions still experience and can determine for themselves how the relationship between minority language-speaking groups and the predominately Anglophone state might develop in the future. Chapters Four to Seven of this thesis will explore further evidence of this in the cultural output of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities.

Throughout most of *The Dialogic Imagination*, Bakhtin makes frequent references to folklore and its influences upon language; at this point, however, we must focus again on the comments made by Bakhtin in the second essay, *From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse*.

In this essay, Bakhtin is not concerned necessarily with the movement between languages, as he would be in the final essay of *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981, pp. 259-422).

Rather, he focuses upon the language of the novel and the way in which it has now developed beyond its cultural context, the author's own perspective, and even the very language in which it is written, despite the latter previously being derived from folk languages. He implies that the language of the novel is no longer connected directly with the author as it was before, when it was tied to folklore (cf. Bakhtin, pp. 38-39), noting that:

[T]he creating artist began to look at language from the outside, with another's eyes, from the point of view of a potentially different language and style (Bakhtin, p. 60).

This argument is reminiscent of Barthes' *Death of the Author* (1977), in which it is posited that the intentions or context behind a work are 'without history, biography, psychology: he is simply that *someone* by which the written text is constituted' (p. 148). Coupled with the above citation, this suggests that, while language might have been a significant aspect of literature previously, it is no longer necessary to consider the historical context behind the author's linguistic choices when regarding their work; in other words, the use of multiple languages (including minority languages) would not affect the depiction of life to any great extent, as this is no longer an important factor for the reader.

Bakhtin devotes much of *The Dialogic Imagination* to linguistic theory and, as will be shown shortly, generic theory, especially that of the novel. However, of all the concepts that he introduced, including polyphony, chronotopes, and dialogism, it is the notion of heteroglossia² that is most significant and most relevant in terms of the effect that a fluidity of

² It is important to distinguish between polyglossia and heteroglossia, as they are used almost interchangeably by Bakhtin throughout *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981). As Ivanov (1999) points out, heteroglossia refers primarily to the relationship between languages that are used simultaneously in a text, while polyglossia is used in reference to the coexistence of multiple languages. Polyglossia will also be referenced at a later stage in this section.

language might have upon a community and its cultural output. In *Discourse in the Novel* (1981, pp. 259-422), Bakhtin introduces these ideas with the following quote:

At any given moment in its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word [...], but also – and for us this is the essential point – into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, “professional” and “generic” languages, languages of generations and so forth (pp. 271-272).

As demonstrated here, ‘heteroglossia’, while focused on the use of language, does not exclusively refer to the language itself as polyphony does. Rather, heteroglossia incorporates the context in which a language is used, such as the region in which it is used and the people that are likely to make use of said language. In doing so, the audience gains a more detailed understanding of the context of a work, as a result, can better perceive the diverse range of viewpoints that are contained within texts like *Schtimme aus’m Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015). As Coghlan and Brydon-Miller note (2014), it is ‘conflict and inequity that distinguish the idea of heteroglossia from that of polyphony’. As minority language speakers in a predominately Anglophone United States, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities find themselves in precisely this situation: they are in ‘conflict’ with the Anglophone communities and, as minority language speakers, could be considered as ‘beneath’ the English-speaking community, if the reaction towards Spanish speakers is interpreted as a general attitude towards non-Anglophones (cf. Díez, 2019).

Furthermore, the above interpretation of heteroglossia, when viewed in the context of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German regions, agrees with the argument previously made in the analysis of Agamben’s *homo sacer* (1998), which suggested that these communities could be considered as *homines sacri* in relation to the United States of America as a whole. This may explain the choice made by some of the creators featured in this thesis – such as Fritsch (2008) and Moll and Madenford (2015) – to provide English translations

alongside the writing they have produced in dialect. By utilising both the language of their communities alongside the English translation, they are better able to bridge the gap between themselves and the Anglophone United States. Therefore, producing heteroglossic texts – not only in terms of social languages, but in terms of switching between languages – could be regarded as extremely helpful to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German-speaking regions, as they are able to move themselves out of this liminality and into a new position between being pure *homines sacri* (Agamben, 1998) and being part of wider society.

Yet there are several omissions in *The Dialogic Imagination* which weaken this argument. For instance, while Bakhtin describes in detail the way in which polyphony and heteroglossia can be identified within a text, and how the use of such techniques can be used to determine the genre of a written text, he does not explore in depth the impact that such methods might have upon the written text. This means that, using Bakhtin's theories alone, it is difficult to determine the effect that a fluidity of language has upon the depiction of life.

In addition, many of the texts and authors cited by Bakhtin are relatively archaic references, with much of his attention focused on ancient Roman and Greek texts, a lesser focus in the latter stages of each essay on post-Renaissance literature, and very little focus at all on literature from the 19th century onwards. As a result, many of Bakhtin's arguments are outdated given that the core cultural artefacts of this thesis were published in the last twenty-five years, even though many of his points regarding the combination of several social languages are apt, given that the creators of these works are also English speakers.

If we are to better understand the effect that language mobility might have upon the depiction of lived experience, then we must turn to other areas of the diaspora that have experienced a similar struggle with language and identity: The Francophone Caribbean.

As a result of the various groups that migrated to the Francophone Caribbean over several centuries (Premdas, 1996), there were several efforts, particularly in the 20th century,

to create an identity to which all those in the Francophone Caribbean could belong. Glissant (1989, 1997) proposes that those who reside in the Caribbean have an identity that is unique across the entire Francophone diaspora, which he terms *antillanité*. Unlike its predecessor, *négritude*, '[a]ntillanité does not stress the static confrontation of cultures that is central to the ideas of *négritude*' (Glissant, 1989, p. xliii).

The similarities between this concept and those laid out by Bakhtin previously are evident: the two ideas focus on the interaction of multiple perspectives and ways of experiencing the world. In the context of the Louisiana French, where there were several waves of migration from various locations (cf. Rabalais, 2017), this notion highlights the significance of continuing to utilise the local languages alongside 'national languages' (Bakhtin, 1993) such as English and French. Thus, by producing texts that are penned in both the regional and the national languages, those communities who can make use of multiple languages are able to proclaim their identities on multiple levels, as is done by the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities (e.g. Fritsch, 2008; Waggoner, 2011).

Alternatively, Bernabé et al. (1990) originated the concept of *créolité*, which, like *antillanité*, served as a response to the *négritude* movement which it succeeded. Parallels can be drawn with Glissant's concept in that *créolité* also acknowledges the diverse background of the Caribbean people; however, in contrast to *antillanité*, *créolité* focuses more on the way in which these identities have combined to create a new identity which is free from colonial dominance. In other words, there is a new space that has been created for the Creole people by the Creole people; the subaltern speaks for itself (Spivak, 1994).

However, although both theories address the relatively universal issue of identity, neither appears to have spread beyond the islands for which they were intended. While this is to be expected of *antillanité*, given that the concept is focused solely on the Caribbean, it is surprising that *créolité* has not achieved wider attention outside of the region. The notion of

Creole identity is not exclusive to the Caribbean (nor is it used solely in reference to specific ethnic backgrounds) and there are several other regions of the world – including Louisiana – in which the term ‘creole’ is used as a means of expressing identity (Landry, 2016). In the case of the Louisiana French community, this term was employed almost universally to describe its members until the bifurcation between Cajun and Creole that occurred in the early 20th century (ibid.). It therefore stands to reason that one could adopt the *créolité* movement in this case to describe a group that are ‘neither Europeans, nor Africans, nor Asians, [...] [but] Creoles’ (Bernabé et. al, 1990).

Moreover, while there is reason to believe that the *créolité* movement was not well-received by those who supported *antillanité* (cf. Moudileno, 2013), I have found that they have more in common than it first appears (cf. Constant, Mabana, and Nanton, 2013). For example, Glissant agrees with the concept of ‘creolization’ (Rodríguez, 2010), although, for him, this is merely part of the process by which *antillanité* is then created, while other theorists (e.g. Moudileno, 2013) have suggested that the term *littérature-monde* may be more suitable if the goal is to ‘replace other more loaded terms such as ‘French’, ‘Francophone’ or ‘postcolonial’ (Constant, Mabana, and Nanton, 2013, p. 7).

In addition, while some believe that the *créolité* movement requires further contextualisation (Hardwick, 2014), Glissant does consider the creolisation process crucial to recognising one’s own identity:

Et sans doute, elle se situe dans un espace qui, selon Glissant, s’élargit au monde, à une planète terre qui se “créolise”
(Rodríguez, 2010, p. 61).

And without a doubt, [creolisation] is located in a space which, according to Glissant, opens out to the world, to a planet Earth that ‘creolizes’ itself

It appears, then, that while *antillanité* and *créolité* are sometimes positioned as opposing perspectives on Antillean identity, the two notions taken together are extremely

helpful for understanding the way in which a territory (albeit one which is still tied closely to a former colonial power) has reflected upon and shaped its own identity in the postcolonial context. I therefore posit that the two concepts are not mutually exclusive, and that the concepts of *créolité* and *antillanité* can co-exist as part of a *métissage culturel* (Glissant, 1997) of social languages which can be observed in other former colonies and settlements, including those of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans. By classifying these two concepts as part of a wider *métissage culturel*, I am able to acknowledge the fact that identity is, for several individuals, a complex matter. For instance, some interview participants expressed their belonging to multiple types of heritage (Examples here); others identified as Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German despite having minimal knowledge of the language, or even not being descended from Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German speakers (Louden eg). The concept of *métissage culturel* embraces these multiple identities and heritages and creates a space wherein one's belonging to a community can be fluid. In other words, those who express belonging to these communities are, through *métissage culturel*, better able to 'feel' their culture and their heritage in the form they choose (Baloy, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006).

However, it is also essential to note that the concept of *métissage culturel* may also be considered reductive to those communities which are under threat, such as those of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans. This is due to the fact that *métissage culturel* – while acknowledging the range of heritages with which an individual or community may identify – blurs the boundaries between cultures, to the point where heritage or minority cultures may be relegated to 'the shadows' (Topinka, 2016) by larger cultural groups. Consequently, *métissage culturel* may, paradoxically, contribute to the position in which these communities find themselves: that is, the position of *homo sacer*.

Within the context of the United States, there is term, similar to that of *métissage culturel*, by which American identity – and the 'creolisation' thereof – is defined, albeit one

which carries the more negative connotations outlined above: the ‘melting pot’. Egan notes, however, that this ‘melting pot’ does not benefit those who are Other, as ‘the most prominent white autobiographers defined America by means of their own lives’ (1991, p. 83). Therefore, even a group such as the Pennsylvania Germans – who, though white, were not of the number or prominence of their Anglophone counterparts – would be at risk of losing their identity through the process of assimilation. This sentiment is shared by Madenford, in a quote, presented at the beginning of this thesis, that is presented here again due to its significance in addressing the concept of the ‘melting pot’:

I understand the term ‘melting pot’, it’s what most people will use. I prefer to use the term a ‘quilt’ [...] when you stand back and look, that quilt is all together and you think, ‘Oh, that’s one unified piece, that’s brilliant.’ But when you get up close, you can see the individual squares or the individual pieces of cloth, and those individual pieces of cloth have not changed, but they have become part of a bigger picture. And that’s how I view the Pennsylvania Dutch. We are one of those pieces of cloth in the quilt that is America. [...] Melting pot’s fine, but my problem with melting pot is that that would signify that we gave up who we are to be part of this amalgamation, where in a melting pot, you can’t see the individual aspects anymore, but for me, in a quilt, when I look at a quilt, I can see that, and to me, that’s how I view America, and it doesn’t make my little piece any less American than any of the other pieces in that giant quilt (pp. 405-406).

As seen above, while Madenford is somewhat accepting of the concept of a ‘melting pot’, he also argues that this metaphor does not sufficiently acknowledge the diversity of lived experiences, cultures, and languages that form the United States as it stands today. Rather, Madenford favours another concept – derived from his own lived experience as a Pennsylvania German – which recognises (in their own right) the communities that form the United States while also celebrating the unity of the nation as a whole. Based on these sentiments, one can therefore deduce that the process of ‘creolisation’ suggested by the proponents of both *antillanité* and *créolité* can be found on a wider scale than originally thought (Ozaki, 2011 provides an example of this whereby the notion of *créolité* is adapted in the context of Japanese identity) and, significantly, can be applied to other non-Francophone contexts such as the

Pennsylvania German community. This process serves as a catalyst that leads a community to determine its own identity, and it is through this process that the multiple voices and contexts of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans are united in a *métissage*, not of *créolité* or *antillanité*, but of German/French-Americanness. The choice made by members of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities to embrace their identities as such is evocative of the *opacité* posited by Glissant (1997) in that, rather than acquiescing to the assimilation of the ‘melting pot’, these communities favour a position which simultaneously celebrates their unique heritage and acknowledges their role within wider American society. Within this space, they proclaim the right to *opacite* (ibid.), thereby also proclaiming their belonging as German/French-Americans (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

Thus, the heteroglossia of regional languages and national languages that can be found in their literature is of benefit as creators have the freedom to explore what it means to belong to their respective communities in a space that they themselves have created; a space in which the *homo sacer* (Agamben, 1998) can reposition itself as the subject.

The role of life writing in a multilingual United States

The previous sections of this chapter sought to determine the reasoning behind active practice of a minority or heritage language and the role that such multilingualism plays in the context of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. In order to better understand how narrative methods are shaped by this choice, however, I now turn to the field of life writing, its wide variety of forms, and the effects that these have upon both the creators and the audiences associated with Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural output.

Before moving on to a deeper exploration of the seminal texts on life writing, it is important to add that it was not until relatively recently that the term ‘life writing’ was used

more widely among contemporary scholars (Howes, 2020; Kadar, 1992). This is acknowledged by Smith and Watson (2010), who use the terms ‘autobiography’, ‘life narratives’, and ‘life writing’ interchangeably throughout their text, because, for them, autobiography ‘is an umbrella concept rather than a single genre’ (p. 218). Indeed, many of the texts featured in their reader speak of autobiography as opposed to life writing, even though their thoughts might also be applicable to a greater audience than the autobiography as defined by scholars such as Lejeune (1989).³

However, I am not convinced that ‘autobiography’ is a suitable term to describe the entire field, especially given the vast amount of variation in style and narrative method that can be found within this area. Furthermore, those who have written on autobiography previously have sought to define this term with great care. For example, Lejeune defines autobiography as:

Retrospective prose narrative written by a real person concerning his own existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality (1989, p. 4).

This classification, as Lejeune goes on to demonstrate, is extremely narrow in its terms, and there are several genres that are identified as not belonging to the realm of autobiography, including memoirs, journals, and what he terms ‘personal novels’ (Lejeune, 1989), even though these narrative styles also permit the writer to reflect upon, and present, lived experience and, if writing for publication, transmute it into an art form.

Smith and Watson’s reader on autobiography (2010) provides a wide-ranging analysis of contemporary scholarly thought, not only on autobiography, but on several areas of life

³ It should be noted, however, that more recent publications by Smith and Watson use ‘life writing’ as opposed to ‘autobiography’ (cf. Smith and Watson, 2017). In addition, there are texts which do make use of the term ‘life writing’ instead of autobiography (e.g. Kadar, 1992; Leader, 2015).

writing. Throughout the text, they explore the various styles of life writing that have been produced, with much attention devoted to Anglophone life writing, although there are references to works that were penned outside the West, including those of authors from the former East Germany, like Christa Wolf.

However, one criticism of this work is that, while much mention is made of prominent authors such as Frederick Douglass and Benjamin Franklin, there is little critical attention on smaller communities that are positioned at the margins of wider society. That is not to say that there is not any such criticism; on the contrary, Smith and Watson refer on several occasions to life writing produced by former slaves and colonised peoples, whose texts often reflect on their identities as members of these communities (cf. Smith and Watson, 2010, pp. 120-121 for an example of this). Yet any texts to which Smith and Watson refer are penned predominately in English, and there are only short commentaries on anything outside of the Anglosphere that are interspersed throughout. It is my belief that, while the intent of Smith and Watson's work was not to devote large amounts of the work to non-Anglophone life writing, it is necessary to examine the way in which non-Anglophone communities, such as those of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans, are able to convey lived experience through life writing. The lack of attention regarding non-Anglophone texts also implies a lack of acknowledgement of these minority language-speaking groups by wider society, which may lead to a lack of connection or rootedness for writers from these groups. This is related to the experiences faced by Doubrovsky, who, throughout his time in the United States, 'is narratively cast as decisively rooted in neither and therefore always operates in a state of lack' (Jones, 2007).

Despite this omission, there are some references to American life writing that are evocative of the difficulties faced by Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German authors today. For instance, Smith and Watson refer to the life writing produced by immigrants to the United States as 'stories of assimilation' (2010, pp. 66-67). This, in my opinion, implies that the

authors of such texts have rejected the culture and, in some cases, the language in which they were raised so that they may assimilate. Such a scenario was also raised by Donmoyer, who has explored this phenomenon previously:

What we found [...] is that usually within just two to three generations, the descendants of those immigrants were no longer reading the language, perhaps, maybe not even speaking it as folks were essentially going into English only or, at the very least, predominantly English education with maybe ESL or English as a Second Language to start, for some of those students, but then eventually embracing a full English curriculum (pp. 306-307).

In his description of language loss across generations of migrants, Donmoyer illustrates not only the difficulties faced by multilingual writers in the United States, but also the significance of the writing that is still being produced by the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German people in their own languages. While languages that are brought over to the US by immigrant communities tend to be lost almost completely within two or three generations, the Louisiana French, and particularly the Pennsylvania German, have been able to maintain usage and promotion of their respective languages throughout the region. It should also be noted, however, that this does not mean that all those who are descended from speakers of Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German are fluent in, or even have knowledge of the language; this is acknowledged by several of the interview participants from these regions with whom I spoke (cf. Appendix B, p. 338; Appendix H, p. 539).

With regards to the use of non-written media as part of life writing, there is little attention accorded to narrative styles that are not digital. For instance, Smith and Watson (2010) acknowledge that the field of digital literatures is still relatively new, and, at the time of writing their text, there was little coverage of this. Despite this, they do go on to address such phenomena in summary, using the term ‘automediality’ in reference to the new media being utilised (p. 168).

Yet, while this focus on digital literatures and automediality is necessary given the modern context of their work, Smith and Watson ignore other examples of non-written narrative methods that have existed far longer than their digital counterparts. For instance, *Scherenschnitte* as an art form has been present in Germany for several centuries, with its popularity peaking in the 19th century (cf. Bilotti, 2006; MacLeod, 2015). The same is true of the music found in the Louisiana French community, where artists and groups including Zachary Richard, Feufollet, and The Lost Bayou Ramblers have produced several albums in recent years. As a result of these omissions, such art forms remain relatively unknown outside of the communities from which they originate, thus making any depictions of lived experience in these media less accessible to wider society. It is evident, therefore, that automediality was prevalent – although it was not named as such in this work (cf. Moser, 2019) – for longer than thought, and that it is only through the use of digital literatures that a deeper exploration of the field has emerged.

But how do authors make use of these mixed narrative methods to convey their intended narrative, and does this combination of methods help the communities from which they originate? A clear example of mixed media is the video series *PA Dutch Live!* (Madenford, 2021). In this monthly series, Madenford interviews members of the Pennsylvania German community regarding their work, while also introducing the audience to poetry and music in the language that are based around the time of year; for example, in the April 2021 edition, the poem focused on spring (ibid.). By combining the interviews with written poetry – which he reads aloud, accompanied by an English translation – and traditional music from the community, Madenford creates another *métissage* (Glissant, 1997), a collage of Pennsylvania German life narratives that creates something altogether new in the digital sphere. He also hearkens back to the work of other Pennsylvania German writers and poets that have also employed such methods, as Fritsch has done with poetry and *Scherenschnitte* (2008; p. 197).

As both Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German are historically oral languages (cf. Ancelet, 1999; Loudon, 2016), I surmise that written narrative forms would do much to help preserve the traditions that have long existed within these communities. For instance, the radio series *Asseba un Sabine*, a popular radio series broadcast in Pennsylvania German throughout the 1950s and 1960s, has since been transcribed and is now available in book form (Hanson, 2019). Furthermore, tales that would once have been part of the regional folklore – such as the *Bouki et Lapin* stories of the Louisiana French community (Rabalais, 2021) – have, through their transcription, been made available and accessible to an audience far beyond the regions in question (Ancelet, 1994). Therefore, while non-written narrative forms are a core aspect of the way in which these groups pass their stories from one generation to the next, they have, to some extent, hindered their ability to reach wider audiences; however, this is now changing through greater use of the digital realm, as seen with the work of *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* (2021) and *Télé-Louisiane* (2021). This again supports the notion that the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities have created their own unique spaces which ‘transformed the principle of identification itself, of Americanness, for good’ (Eakin, 1991, p. 9).

It is not only the act of producing these narrative forms that is significant, but also how they might be received by those who encounter them. Bourdieu’s notion of the *habitus* (1993) asserts that works which have a high amount of cultural capital must necessarily have a low amount of social capital, and vice versa; for instance, poetry is considered by Bourdieu to be ‘high art’, while works of folk culture would be deemed ‘low culture’ (ibid.). Yet, as my analysis indicates in Chapters Six and Seven (pp. 165-222), the oeuvres of artists like Fritsch (2008) traverse these boundaries, producing ‘high art’ for a ‘low culture’ audience, thus contradicting the argument Bourdieu presents.

With regards to Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German life writing more generally, it is evident that, while these works have intrinsic cultural capital within their own communities,

they do not hold much social capital, as they are not well-known beyond the regions from which they originate. This contradicts Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, which is predicated on the idea that, if one has a high amount of capital in one area, then one is also bound to have a low amount of capital elsewhere; in fact, Bourdieu does not address such a situation in which this is not the case. Yet Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural output has a relatively low amount of all types of capital, although some have accrued cultural capital over time, such as Kirby Jambon, who received the *Prix Henri de Régnier* from the *Académie Française* in 2014 (Jambon, 2014).

This issue is known to some who have produced cultural artefacts in these languages; for example, Barry Ancelet argued that one of the greatest hindrances to the spread of Louisiana French literature is 'distribution', and that, if works from the region could be distributed more widely, then knowledge and appreciation of these languages might increase on a national and international level (cf. pp. 506-525). The fact that there is some awareness of the dilemma further supports the theory stated earlier (p. 28) that these communities are *homines sacri* within the wider American context. However, it is not enough to say that they have been rendered *homines sacri* by wider society; rather, I would argue that there is, to some extent, a willingness to serve as such on the part of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities and it is possible that they are positioned as *homines sacri* by choice. In doing so, these groups are then able to generate a new *habitus* of their own in which they can perform their cultures more freely. This idea is somewhat supported by Smith and Watson, whose critique of agency in the autobiographical subject suggests that agency can also be perceived as 'changing the terms of one's own social relations, as an oppositional tactic of resistance, as self-empowerment, as public visibility and participation' (2010, p. 55).

Another possible explanation for this willingness to position oneself as *homo sacer* is tied to the performativity of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German, particularly with

regards to the use of oral narratives. While Lejeune (1989) considers the semantic side of life writing in his exploration of what constitutes the autobiographical text and narrator, Smith and Watson also bring into question the motivation behind texts with deep ties to the cultures from which they were derived. In their analysis of the ‘sites of storytelling’ (2010, p. 69), they discuss the significance of the site in which the narrator speaks and ‘how particular sites of narration perform cultural work, how they organize the personal storytelling on which they rely’ (ibid.).

This allusion to performativity in the act of narrating life – which Smith and Watson illustrate using the example of a family gathering (2010) – highlights the effects that a non-written or paratextual component, such as *Scherenschnitte* (cf. Fritsch, 2008), can have on the way in which a culture and its narratives can be maintained and introduced to interested parties outside of the communities themselves. Such an effect was demonstrated in several of the interviews undertaken as part of this research project, wherein participants reflected on the presentation of cultural practices and narrative methods via folk festivals in a range of styles. A clear example is given by Patrick Donmoyer (pp. 285-324) who, as one of the organisers of the Kutztown Folk Festival, reflects in detail on the ‘performance’ of Pennsylvania German culture in the context of the festival – a concept which is explored in greater detail in Chapter Seven (p. 216). He notes that the Festival aims ‘to put the culture on display, not just to pay attention to what people say and how they perform and what they do onstage and what can be written down, but also those things that you can only really capture through experience, through visual culture, through tactile experiences, and this will be everything from foodways to the arts’ (p. 318), and lists such ‘performative, cultural events’ (p. 300) as the Liars’ Contest, noting that:

[T]hey're very self-conscious kinds of activities, they're meant to be performative for people to hear about and learn about, so they're not the same kinds of used language as what you would hear in the home or on the farm (ibid.).

This reference to performativity, within the context of the Liars' Contest, highlights its significance for a group of such a size and status as the Pennsylvania German community. While it might be assumed that performativity is negative, as it can lead to misconceptions and stereotypes – a subject which is also raised by Donmoyer and Brown with regards to some of the more tourist-focused businesses in Pennsylvania (cf. p. 285, p. 435) – the combination of performative aspects with depictions of the culture that may be deemed more 'accurate' or 'authentic' in today's context allows the outsider a perspective which they might not otherwise be able to access, while also allowing the community to reverse the dynamic between themselves as minority language speakers and monolingual Anglophone communities within the United States. In this space where narrative methods of all kinds are combined and presented as one, it is the monolingual English speaker that occupies the marginal space; they become *homines sacri* (Agamben, 1998).

In summary, it is my opinion that life writing is an effective way to represent the lived experience of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, in that this concept affords its 'writers' space freely to express, represent, and interpret perspectives from the community across a diverse range of narrative methods, including prose (cf. Moll and Madenford, 2015; Waggoner, 2011), poetry (cf. Cheramie, 2007), and non-written media including music (cf. Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017) and *Scherenschnitte* (cf. Fritsch, 2008). By making use of the term 'life writing', as opposed to 'autobiography', this also permits the narrators to practice narrative styles that are more accessible to a modern audience while also honouring traditional cultural media. Moreover, by utilising digital spaces as Madenford has done, these groups are able to practise and maintain non-written narrative methods for future generations more effectively. The range of media employed becomes more than '[a complex

site] of negotiation, appropriation, adaptation, resistance, and reformation’ (Smith and Watson, 2010, p.179); it also becomes a site of celebration and preservation.

Conclusion

Having now completed a preliminary analysis of each of the core issues of this thesis, one conclusion that can be drawn is that the notion of *métissage* is prevalent throughout all of these issues. It is the combination of these themes that creates the unique spaces in which the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German people can ‘perform’ their linguistic and cultural heritages outside of wider American society, and it is the creation of these spaces that has been essential in their repositioning. These spaces give the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans voice to their lived experiences in their own languages, thus allowing them to move away from being *homines sacri* in what is still a predominately Anglophone United States.

The following chapter will examine these hypotheses further in the context of more recent publications, both from the communities in question and from outside sources. In doing so, it will refine this theoretical framework, which can then be used to inform the analyses of the culture-specific artefacts featured in Chapters Four to Seven (pp. 103-222).

CHAPTER TWO: REFINING THE POSITION OF LOUISIANA FRENCH AND PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN

The previous chapter engaged with seminal scholarly thought on biopolitics, heteroglossia, *métissage*, and life writing to establish a theoretical framework which will inform the rest of this thesis. The texts that were explored in the previous chapter provide the foundations of this framework, but the study of these works alone is not enough. This is because the authors either developed their theories in the realm of the ‘virtual’ (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987), or because the subjects of their own research are wholly irrelevant to this thesis, as seen with Bakhtin’s exploration of Dostoevsky (1984). Therefore, while my findings presented several reasons as to why minority language communities *in general* might continue to make use of their own languages, they have not yet shown in great detail why *these* groups – that is, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans – would do so, particularly as there have been frequent efforts to establish English as the sole national language (cf. Schildkraut, 2003).

This chapter, therefore, will explore in greater depth the concepts of biopolitics, heteroglossia, *métissage*, and life writing in the context of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German-speaking communities. In doing so, it will refine the theoretical framework that was developed in the previous chapter, while also seeking to determine an appropriate methodology by which the research questions outlined in Chapter One can be answered in the later chapters of this thesis.

Refining the position of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German within the biopolitical *habitus*

In contemporary discussion on biopolitics, there are several scholars who provide heavy criticisms of Agamben's notion of *homo sacer* while simultaneously regarding Foucauldian biopolitics in a more favourable light (cf. Puumeister, 2019; Revel, 2009). These scholars hold the common interpretation that *homo sacer*, as a concept, is too restrictive in the modern era and thus is not compatible with the biopolitical system that is currently in use. In fact, in his paper on biopolitical subjectification, Puumeister (2019) argues that we should do away with Agamben's theory altogether. He observes that the position of *homo sacer* renders the agent a permanent part of the biopolitical system, despite being entirely excluded from it; therefore, in Puumeister's view, the agent is unable to escape the system and reconstitute themselves as Subject in a new space as others have asserted (cf. De Beauvoir, 1949; Spivak, 1994). Instead, he posits that a 'freedom' of sorts can be created within the biopolitical realm using a revised version of Foucault's biopolitics.

Similarly, Revel (2009) comments that Agamben has formulated a biopolitics in which there is little clear distinction between the position of *homo sacer* and those who have not been excluded from wider society. She contrasts this with the Foucauldian concept of biopolitics, which appears to be more concrete in its definitions:

Foucault rejected the idea that there could be an outside of power, since resistance can only take place from inside a complex web in which resistance and power, subjectivation and objectification, strategies of liberation and subjection, substantialization and the logic of becoming, are interwoven (p. 49).

While Puumeister's theory that 'freedom' is only possible while still part of the biopolitical *habitus* is compelling, I regard his interpretation of *homo sacer* as too literal in its assumption of Agamben's concept. For instance, Puumeister (2019) argues that one can be objectified and thus 'exiled' by wider society with no means of exiting the system that has accorded this exiled status. Yet if this exile is interpreted in the metaphorical sense, then there

is evidence, even today, of groups which – despite being considered *homines sacri* by wider society – have achieved subjectification in spaces that are exclusive to them. Several such examples of this can be found among the sectarian communities of Pennsylvania who speak Pennsylvania German. In creating a community that is relatively insular in nature (Louden, 2016), these communities have positioned themselves such that they can become Subjects in a *habitus* of their own making (Bourdieu, 1993), while simultaneously being able to engage with members of wider American society when necessary – a status which also permits these communities to practice their language and culture more freely, including in the realm of cultural production (cf. p. 28). Therefore, it is also possible that communities that are not ‘closed’, such as the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans and the Louisiana French, are able to achieve the status of Subject in their own spaces.

Moreover, while Puumeister favours Foucault’s theory over that of Agamben, it must be stated that Foucault’s biopolitical thought was not fully conceived prior to his death. Fassin (2009) agrees with this criticism, adding that, although it was intended to be a central theme of his 1979-1980 lecture series, Foucault does not elucidate further on this concept beyond the first two or three lectures as other topics begin to take prevalence. Agamben himself also agrees with this point, although his commentary on this is deemed to only be ‘right for the most part’ (ibid., p. 46). As a result, it is essential to take this into account in any reading of Foucault; without the elaboration on biopolitics that Foucault promised to provide at the start of his lecture series, we are left to determine his thought for ourselves. While there is some indication of what was intended to be found in previous lecture series (cf. Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004), Foucault’s vision of biopolitics will never be known in its entirety. Agamben (1998), however, did outline his vision of biopolitics in full and presented them in the written format he intended to use, unlike Foucault’s public lectures, which were transcribed at a later date (cf. Foucault, 2004, which briefly outlines this process).

Despite the arguments posed by Puumeister and Revel, I posit that there is more that unites Foucault and Agamben at the core of their biopolitical thought than separates them. One notable example of this is the concept of ‘abandonment’, to which Foucault alludes by referring to the process of ‘letting die’. While Puumeister (2019) and Lemke (2011) both state that Foucault’s theory ‘maintains a critical distance from theories that view life as the object of politics’ (Lemke, 2011, p.33), I disagree fundamentally with this statement. On the contrary, the idea of ‘letting die’, while admittedly more passive in nature than the active positioning of the agent as *homo sacer*, is based entirely on the objectification of the intended subject in order to eradicate it at a later stage.

It is therefore my view that, rather than active expulsion *à la* Agamben, minority and heritage language-speaking groups are removed from the biopolitical *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993) and abandoned to ‘let die’, not by actively ‘exiling’ these groups (Agamben, 1998), but by a more passive omission. In such a case, it then becomes incumbent on the communities themselves to bring attention to their own cultural issues, rather than outside organisations (such as the media) doing so on their behalf, unlike in Foucault’s view of the biopolitical *habitus* (2004, 2009), in which these groups would remain despite being in the margins.

Hesse (2007) further supports the argument of passive omission (rather than active exile) through his discussion of the ‘marking’ of certain groups as inferior via ‘cultural racialization’. While this process of inferiorising the Other is not as strong as the ‘letting die’ of Foucault, this idea is similar to the sentiment, expressed in Schildkraut’s work (2003), that ‘minorities [are] not American and immigrants [are] unwanted – [which] reveals a belief that some people are just not able to be as American as others’ (Schildkraut, 2003, p. 491). This sentiment is also evidenced in the public sphere through stories and videos – which have received attention both on social media and in mass media – in which non-English speakers of various backgrounds

are treated with contempt and subjected to verbal abuse as a result of them communicating in their native language (e.g. Acevedo, 2019; Mervosh, 2019).

While there have been no recent cases of abuse that have been documented in the media against speakers of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German, I believe that this pro-English sentiment has led to the inferiorisation of other languages, as proposed by Hesse (2007), to the point where some groups might be positioned as ‘living in the shadows’ (Topinka, 2016), a position which, in his view, places these groups in an increasingly precarious position in relation to those living in the ‘light’:

[A]s a shadow is absent direct light, so migrants live absent the direct protection of the law, the security of the nation-state, and the day-to-day stability such protections afford (Topinka, 2016, p.445).

At this point, it must be emphasised once more that the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans groups that migrated to the United States in the 16th and 17th centuries (Louden, 2016; Rabalais, 2017). The founders of these communities arrived as colonisers and settlers in the same period as English and Spanish colonial groups and – in the case of the Louisiana French – continued to migrate over the course of several centuries (Ancelet, 1994; Louden, 2016). Therefore, although these languages and their respective speakers might be ‘in the shadows’ in comparison to anglophone America (Topinka, 2016), the stigma faced by Latin American or Asian American groups who have migrated to the United States in recent years is entirely different, as it stems from systemic racism (cf. Acevedo, 2019; Díez, 2019).

However, despite being ‘in the shadows’ (Topinka, 2016), Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans have experienced some form of discrimination, even though most are perceived as white (Landry, 2016). As both Cormier and Madenford point out, both Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German speakers have faced lasting effects from historical discrimination, which took several forms:

[I]t's very important to understand the gravity of when speaking still today to people who learned Louisiana French as their first language, so this being older people who then started learning English, just the gravity of the effect that their upbringing had on their perception of French and of the fact that they speak French and [...] the level of shame and guilt that comes with that, and, you know, a lot of people really struggle to talk about it, they struggle to explain what French means to them and how it's impacted their lives, because a lot of people really suffered as a kid. [...] [E]ven now, whenever you talk to some of these people, they still truly believe that the French that they know, [...] they still believe that it's not good, and that it reflects something lesser and that it's seen as inferior (pp. 361-362).

[It] also helps [people] reconnect with a part of their culture and their history that they've been denied because of previous generations saying, 'Well, this is different, this is something I don't want to pass on,' or they were forced not to pass it on, 'Well we don't talk that language anymore, you're American, speak English,' and that mentality was strong for two or three generations, and understandably so given our history with the two World Wars and this push post-World War II to – you know, this amalgamation of America, the idea of the immigrant story not having as much of a strong part in our history, even though it still does and still should (pp. 369-370).

As a direct result of discrimination against the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German languages and cultures – through a more direct oppression in the former case, and a more indirect form in the latter – a sense of shame has developed and is experienced by older generations of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German speakers. These members of the communities in question gained the impression that their languages were 'un-American', either as a result of the education system deeming the language as such (cf. Chapter Four and Appendix K, where this is explored in greater detail) or as a result of stigma brought on by historical events like the two World Wars (cf. Appendix F). Consequently, several members of the two communities chose not to pass the language on for fear of future generations facing similar issues (pp. 349-350), meaning that the latter may not feel a strong connection with the language, even if they can relate to the culture (cf. Appendix E, wherein Brown notes the connection to the culture experienced by his siblings despite a lack of connection to the language).

Alternatively, younger generations of these communities were encouraged by their ancestors to learn English – or other minority languages with a larger speakership – in favour

of continuing to use their heritage language in the belief that this would be more useful in the future, even if they stayed in the region. These sentiments have been expressed several times in the interviews conducted for this thesis, with speakers of both languages noting these feelings among their own communities. Schlegel, in her response to the notion of Pennsylvania German being revived among the non-sectarian community, emphasises that:

[U]nless there is a collective effort with public support, as you suggest... With states, even though many of the Pennsylvania Germans I spoke to have said, 'No, the state shouldn't get involved because it's just a dialect. Our children should learn Spanish. They shouldn't learn this, they should learn Spanish, because Spanish is going to be useful. This isn't useful, so no, we shouldn't put resources towards it,' – but unless there's a collective effort that somehow is able to unite public interest, private interest, non-profit interest, scholarly interest, I'm not optimistic, I'm not. But you see something like the revitalisation of the Wampanoag language in Cape Cod – like, singlehandedly brought back by one person – so... Languages don't die, people do, and as long as there's some interest, there's hope (pp. 559-560).

While Schlegel concludes optimistically that such a revival is possible if sufficient interest is maintained for an extended period – as seen with the Wampanoag language – it is clear that there remains a stigma towards the Pennsylvania German language (particularly when compared to more widely spoken heritage languages, such as Spanish). As a result, younger generations of non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans remain disconnected from their heritage language and culture.

This sense of disconnect is not unique to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans; in her investigation of aboriginal groups in Canada, Baloy (2011) highlighted the consequences such a disconnect can have on a community's language and culture. This rift, which is expressed as the inability to 'feel' the language, leads, in Baloy's view, to language decline and, eventually, language death. She argues that, by incorporating the linguistic activities found in the rural aboriginal homelands – where these languages are predominately situated – into the urban space of Canada's cities, it would be possible to counteract aboriginal

language decline and acknowledge the significance of the language and culture to the community which practices them.

While the historical discrimination faced by the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans may not have been as extreme as that experienced by minority language-speaking communities today (including indigenous North Americans), I am convinced of the notion that, once a forced decline and oppression of native American languages had been undertaken by the predominant Anglophone administration of the time, attention then turned to other colonial languages in order to create a monolingual ‘cultural container’ (Sloterdijk, 2013), with anyone who did not conform to the constraints of this space being considered as *Other* or *homo sacer*. The perpetuation of a managed linguistic decline, coupled with increasing urbanisation, led to a disconnect between the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities and their respective heritages and cultures wherein they were unable to ‘feel’ their language (Baloy, 2011). They are thus doubly objectified: they do not belong within the space of the monolingual, Anglophone United States, but they also no longer belong within their own cultures. This theory hearkens back to the notion of identity as expressed in the previous chapter (p. 28) and the role identity plays in cultural production and expression.

Yet, as outlined by several interview participants (cf. Appendices B, C, and F), there are reasons to be hopeful that these cultural spaces can be revived and recreated for those with non-Anglophone heritages. Baloy (2011), for instance, lists several potential strategies for reversing the forced marginalisation of these communities, including the introduction of the language into urban spaces where they may not previously have existed, the creation of educational resources to encourage schools to teach their students about the local indigenous communities, and the use of the Internet to help counteract previous biopolitical subjectification (Puumeister, 2019). This chapter will now briefly explore the use of the latter

two methods within the contexts of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, and the implications that their usage might have on the future of these languages.

Through the creation of two *Alliance Française* chapters in the state, along with the establishment of CODOFIL in 1968 (CODOFIL, 2020), there remain several opportunities to learn Louisiana French. There are now twenty-six immersion schools across the state where students are educated in French by first-language French speakers (CODOFIL, 2022), although Louisiana French is not necessarily their first language (cf. Appendix D). In addition, the *Alliance Française* chapter in Lafayette offers (as of September 2022) online courses in Louisiana French and *Kouri-Vini*, also known as Louisiana Creole, alongside more traditional courses in metropolitan French and the use of French in tourism (*Alliance Française de Lafayette*, 2022). This combination of more conventional methods, along with distance learning, allows both children and adults to access materials on the Louisiana French and learn both the language and their culture. In doing so, this allows French to spread once again among the population of Louisiana, which, by extension, may strengthen the links between Francophone Louisiana and the *métropole* (cf. Horne, 2017). Thus, Louisiana French speakers are able to explore their identities, not only as French-speaking Americans, but as part of a transnational *Francophonie*. By also making use of the digital sphere (e.g. *Télé-Louisiane*, 2021), the Louisiana French community is able to archive its language in both the written and oral forms, which allows outside observers to experience the language as the community intends it to be shown.

In the case of Pennsylvania German, however, there is no primary or secondary schooling that is available in the language for non-sectarian members of the community, and there is only one course available in higher education that, according to Schlegel (p. 539), is only taught when there is sufficient demand. There have been attempts, however, to create virtual realms where the language can be taught. For instance, there has been a concerted effort

to establish a Duolingo course in the language, following the increase in interest that has been observed in other minority languages that have been included (cf. Schwartz, 2020). In his interview, Madenford compares the lack of success in establishing a Pennsylvania German course on Duolingo to the efforts of those who have successfully created courses in invented languages:

There are languages that Duolingo does that I think to myself, ‘Who is learning this?’ Klingon! Okay, great, I get it, there’s a lot of Star Trek people out there, but you’re willing to invest time and money to create Klingon – great! There are a lot of really cool ethnic minority languages *in* the United States that you don’t have programmes for yet, that you should be embracing, like Native American languages, like us, like Pennsylvania Dutch, like Yiddish¹, that’s still spoken in some parts of the United States. [...] Maybe it’s just a matter of time (pp. 413-414).

As seen above, the frustration regarding the creation and propagation of courses in fictional languages (including Klingon and High Valyrian) demonstrates the sense of Othering that members of the community continue to experience today – both intentionally and unintentionally – at the hands of the Anglophone American community. This additionally suggests that even the digital realm, as with the ‘real’ realm (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987), can be utilised as a means of marginalising communities and positioning them as subaltern (cf. Spivak, 1994).

Yet in many ways, the digital realm has proved an extremely rich source of Pennsylvania German cultural content. The only newspaper to be published in the language, *Hiwwe wie Driwwe*, is made available online, and Madenford is one of several Pennsylvania Germans who provides online content on the language, with his videos including lessons on vocabulary, music, and discussions of the culture with other Pennsylvania Germans (Madenford, 2021). Similarly to the Louisiana French, the establishment of the language in the

¹ Since this interview was undertaken, Yiddish has since been introduced on Duolingo and is currently (as of September 2022) available to English speakers.

‘virtual’ realm has created a space where they can be rendered Subject (cf. De Beauvoir, 1949; Deleuze and Parnet, 1987), although without the schooling system that has been created in Louisiana, there is still the sense that, for non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans, the language is in decline in the ‘real’ (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987), even if that is not necessarily true.

Therefore, I am of the opinion that the Internet will become an increasingly vital resource for minority and heritage language groups as a means of archiving the language, both as it was historically and as it is today. In using digital spaces like the Internet, these communities can preserve their languages while simultaneously showcasing the cultural aspects that have been produced, such as art (e.g. Yoder, 2022; p. 206). In this virtual space, these groups can become Subject and move out of the ‘shadow’ (Topinka, 2016) that has been imposed on them.

In addition, by making use of the Internet and social media, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans have the ability to escape some of the myths that have been propagated through mainstream media, which, as Madenford points out, can have lasting effects:

So what we’re battling right now, and Patrick [Donmoyer] would echo this right away, is that the vast majority of Americans, if they know anything about the Belsnickel [a cultural figure within Pennsylvania German folklore], it’s because of Dwight Schrute on *The Office*, and yeah, there are some things that Dwight did and said that are true, but the vast majority of the things he did and said were overblown characterisations, and some things downright were wrong. [...] So, things like that bother me, but at the same time, I get it (pp. 370-371).

The references Madenford makes here to American popular culture – namely *The Office*, and the character of Dwight Schrute, who is portrayed as being related to the Amish community – further highlights the sense of disconnect between the authentic Pennsylvania German culture and wider American society. In addition, these characterisations, which Madenford describes as ‘overblown’, appear to have persisted several years after the conclusion of the series, thus potentially leading to an increased disconnect among younger members of the Pennsylvania German community from their authentic cultural practices.

In summary, the positioning of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities as Other (or *homines sacri*) has led to lasting misconceptions which have caused a sense of disconnect, not only between the speakers of these languages and Anglophone American society, but also potentially between these speakers and their heritage as Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German. If one is unable to ‘feel’ their language (cf. Baloy, 2011), then as a result, one might also be unable to identify with the heritage and community from which one descends.

Therefore, by utilising a combination of traditional methods of cultural production alongside technology and digital means of cultural production, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German regions are able to create spaces – which are, crucially, *within* the biopolitical *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993; Puumeister, 2019) – and actively reposition themselves as Subjects. Thus, rather than letting the cultures and languages die, they are ‘making live’ (Foucault, 1997).

The importance of multilingualism for the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities

While we now understand why these communities are ‘making live’ (Foucault, 1997), it is still essential to determine exactly how such a making of life is undertaken today in these regions. It is at this point, therefore, that this chapter will develop an understanding of how Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German might be used today alongside other languages – namely English, among others – and the effect that this has upon the languages themselves, on identity within these communities, and on their cultural output.

It is important that I preface this section by stating that, of the theories that have been produced with regards to multilingualism in the United States and heritage language

maintenance, critical attention is overwhelmingly devoted to Spanish-speaking communities, with more recent papers only now beginning to explore other groups, such as the Asian American community (e.g. Rim, 2009).

This focus on the Spanish-speaking community is both helpful and detrimental to our analysis of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German people. On the one hand, as another European language that arrived in North America at a similar time to French and German, the experiences of heritage Spanish speakers may be comparable to those of these latter groups. If this in the case, then much of the research that has been published on heritage Spanish speakers could, theoretically, be applied to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities to great effect.

On the other hand, given the prevalence of Spanish in comparison to other minority languages, it could be argued that many of the issues experienced by heritage Spanish speakers are unique to them. For instance, of the many instances of language discrimination that have been shared on social media (cf. Acevedo, 2019; CNN, 2015), the majority of these feature Spanish speakers as the target of such discrimination. While there have been cases of language discrimination recorded in the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, as stated earlier (p. 28), such discrimination is predominately historical in nature. That is not to say that this hasn't left an effect on those who speak the languages today; as seen in the previous section (p. 58), there are still speakers like Madenford who feel that they should alter the way they speak or choose not to practice their heritage language for fear of being subjected to stereotypes about their heritage (cf. Appendix C), thus leading to the language decline and death spoken about previously. Both Donmoyer) and Macías (2000) observe this, stating that heritage languages in the United States tend to disappear completely by the third generation. What is crucial here, however, is that this is not the case for Louisiana French and Pennsylvania

German. On the contrary, as Donmoyer states (see Appendix A), these languages have survived long past the third generation, a statement which is supported by Loudén (2016).

It is now time to turn to the impact of such continued multilingualism among these communities. Multilingualism, and its effects on wider society, was covered as early as the start of the millennium by Barker et al. (2000) in their exploration of official English policy. They discovered that, even at the start of the 21st century – twenty years prior to the completion of this thesis – the movement favouring English-only policy was growing exponentially; given the increased attention on language discrimination in the media (Acevedo, 2019; Díez, 2019), this thesis can therefore deduce that this movement has only grown in the intervening period.

Barker et al. allege that, when questioned, those who spoke Spanish or another language as their first language over English favoured the use of English publicly as much as white Anglophones (2001). At first glance, this appears to contradict the pride which Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German interview participants expressed in knowing their respective languages (cf. Appendices C, G, K, and L); instead, this statement suggests that there is an implicit sense of acknowledgement among those who speak English as a second language that, regardless of the personal significance of their own language, it is essential that one knows English to participate in American society. Yet similar sentiments are also shared by several interview participants; Loudén, for instance, points out that, while there have been ‘occasional city dwellers or town dwellers that have spoken [Pennsylvania German]’ (cf. Loudén, 2016; p. 459), those who continue to practise the language are overwhelmingly of a rural or agrarian background. This is due, in part, to the rural nature of sectarian communities, many of which are somewhat isolated from urban Pennsylvania, while several non-sectarian practitioners are tied to their rural communities through their ancestry (Loudén, 2016; p. 539).

However, these findings also suggest that the use of language as a biopolitical apparatus has not only been prevalent, but it has been rather successful. In controlling the languages in

which one may communicate in the public sphere, the State is able to create an exclusionary space in which only those with ‘sufficient’ English in the eyes of the State can participate. Such a space thus excludes not only those with lower English proficiency – which may include multilingual speakers from less affluent or more rural backgrounds (cf. Barker et al., 2001; p. 466) – but also those whose communities have existed alongside Anglophones in the United States for centuries, such as the Louisiana French, the Pennsylvania Germans, and even the indigenous American communities whose languages predate the arrival of English. This philosophy has caused great harm to these groups, particularly in the 20th century where a ‘failure’ to use English could lead to punishment (cf. Rabalais, 2021 for examples of the repercussions Louisiana French children faced for speaking the language in the classroom).

Barker et al. (2001) also raise an intriguing point regarding the effects multilingualism has on one’s identity and attitude towards official English policy. They make the case for English as *lingua franca* using the ‘melting pot’ argument, which they describe as a policy of ‘assimilation into the “wider” American society’ (2001, p. 17). However, as several interview participants have noted (cf. Appendices C, D, and J), speaking another language aside from English does not prevent an individual from being part of American society as a whole; rather, it allows one to occupy a space that is unique to the American experience as a speaker of a minority language – to become part of the ‘patchwork quilt’ that constitutes the nation (cf. Appendix C for a more in-depth explanation of this argument).

Despite this, I refute the claim made by Barker et al. (2001) that they examine both sides of the official English argument. While they do, to an extent, incorporate both sides of this argument and advocate for speakers of other languages to be handled with greater care by the American government, this overwhelming support for the adoption of an official English policy – even among research participants who do not speak English as a first language (or as

their only first language) – creates the sense of an implicit bias towards the adoption of English as an official language of the United States.

In addition, while the participants of this study are overwhelmingly in favour of enshrining the position of English in law as an official language, this study explicitly deals only with Spanish-speaking communities (as stated previously on page 68), although there are brief references made to other languages (primarily indigenous languages). While the need to focus on this one group is understandable, due both to its size and due to the unique historical and cultural contexts that inform each community (cf. Rabalais, 2017 for a deeper understanding of the Louisiana French community's complex history), this focus produces an outcome that is not representative of the view of several multilingual American communities, including the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans.

More recently, there has been growing interest in the interaction between languages within a multilingual society, and the impact this might have on the local community. The Translanguaging Project (TLANG), spearheaded by Angela Creese (2017), is a recent attempt of this. The project was centred around communities across four different British cities with a particular focus on the effects of multilingualism in the realms of business, heritage, law, and sport. As Bradley emphasises (2017), the 'overarching aim of the project is to understand how people communicate multilingually across languages and cultures.' Bradley's statement is particularly crucial within the context of this thesis due to its assertion that culture is as much a means of communication – a 'language' (Borland, 2021) – as any spoken or written language. This opinion is supported by scholars based in the Francophone diaspora such as Zhang (2012), whose exploration into cultural and linguistic intimacy (with relation to identity) explores similar questions to those examined in this chapter.

Furthermore, the focus on an ethnographic approach (cf. Bradley, 2017) is similar, in part, to my intended methodology, although this eventually could not take place (see Chapter

Three and the conclusion of this thesis for further detail). In employing an ethnographic approach, Bradley is able to understand the target community in greater depth, while also according them greater agency and a larger presence in her research as a result. Consequently, those who have participated in this project may be better able to articulate the value of their languages in contemporary society, regardless of their level of competency in said language (cf. Beaudrie et al, 2021).

Of the various projects undertaken as part of the TLANG project, the LangScape curators project (Atkinson and Bradley, 2017) is the most relevant for this study. With a view to encouraging critical engagement with language, Atkinson and Bradley hosted a series of sessions that utilised both written and non-written creative methods in order to allow children of primary school age (all of whom were speakers of multiple languages) to describe and evaluate their environment critically. These methods included: drawing and naming parts of the body in various languages; interviewing members of the local community; and making collages of their hometown, inspired by Atkinson's own work as an artist.

In combining written and non-written methods, the children were able to better consider their identity within the wider community, while also evaluating the identity of the community as a whole (ibid.). Thus, this process fostered a bottom-up approach to thinking about identity similar to that previously cited by Creese et al. (2017), an approach which, one might argue, was also favoured by Foucault (1997, 2004) when dealing with biopolitical thought. However, I refute this belief, given that Foucault's discussion of biopolitics appears to focus primarily on those in positions of power, with only brief reference made to those at the bottom of the hierarchy and almost no reference made to the experiences of these latter groups (cf. Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004).

Regardless of whether this approach is actually similar to that of Foucault, it is evident that this mixed-method approach is like that found among the Louisiana French and

Pennsylvania German people today, and is a method that could be employed on a wider scale in terms of determining community identity on a wider scale. Such a methodology could be adapted for the local context to favour art forms that are more bespoke to the community at its heart. The Louisiana French community, for instance, could be encouraged to create music that relates their sense of identity as speakers of the language, while Pennsylvania German speakers may favour *Scherenschnitte* or barn stars as a means of evoking a sense of belonging to their community, just as other migrant communities have utilised their traditional art forms as a means of maintaining a ‘cultural bridge’ (Waseda, 2020) between their community and the ‘homeland’ from which these forms originated. As Beaudrie et al.’s study (2021) has already evidenced, this could lead to the increased appreciation of the two languages alongside an increase (albeit relatively slight, depending upon the methods selected) in the participants’ heritage language skills. The effects of this, for the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, would surely be magnified given the relatively small number of speakers of both (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Therefore, a move towards traditional art forms may increase the sense of cultural and linguistic intimacy (Zhang, 2012), not only with the languages themselves, but with the art forms as languages in their own right (cf. Borland, 2021).

However, there are areas where the TLANG project is limited in its approach and, consequently, in the impact it might have for future research on minority and heritage language-speaking communities. The first, and perhaps most obvious, weakness of the project is its relatively small scope. While the project is quite well distributed in terms of its geography, the groups with which the researchers work are small in comparison, while other researchers only mention a handful of individuals in their papers (e.g. Bradley, 2017²).

² Bradley does work with larger groups in her work with other researchers (cf. Atkinson and Bradley, 2017). However, in the papers where she is the sole researcher, such as her paper on liquid methodologies (2017), she focuses on a small number of individuals from across the four research sites.

Furthermore, while the TLANG project has provided great insights into the practices of multilingual communities around the UK, its primary focus is on the presence of such groups in large cities and metropolitan areas and the effects that multilingualism has on these areas. While it stands to reason that any research in a relatively new field (such as translanguaging) would first explore larger areas where a large multilingual cohort is likely, this also means that some of the findings of this project are not applicable to communities, like the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans, where their speakers are generally based in rural areas.

Furthermore, there are no ongoing studies into the phenomenon of translanguaging in American communities, despite the high concentration of multilingual speakers in the United States (cf. Barker et al., 2000; Schildkraut, 2003). Therefore, while the findings of the TLANG project provide a foundation upon which further research can be built, they may not be entirely relevant to the communities that are the focus of this study.

Despite these limitations, the TLANG project is a first step in transposing the theories of Bourdieu (1993) and Bakhtin (1981) from the ‘virtual’ to the ‘real’ (Deleuze et. al, 1983), as was posited in the previous chapter (pp. 26-55). Through this project, the reader can observe the implications of language usage for both the speakers and the communities of which they are a part. In addition, the TLANG researchers make a compelling argument in favour of translanguaging as a means of heritage preservation (cf. Creese et al., 2017), which would be compatible with some of the strategies employed by the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities (e.g. Loudon, 2016; Rabalais, 2021).

Yet we must also question how the multilingual practices featured in the TLANG project directly relate to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. As Yuval-Davis (2006) states, the continued use of these languages – even though the majority of Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German speakers will also speak English (cf. Loudon, 2016) – is a means of demonstrating ‘belonging’. This ‘belonging’ may not refer solely to the notion

of literally belonging to the group or region, although this certainly can be observed through the continued practice of the *bougeries* and *Versammlinge* (cf. Loudon, 2016; Appendix B); this belonging may also be spiritual in nature, as practitioners of these languages ‘feel’ (Baloy, 2011), through speaking the language, their ties to their environs, and to the environment in which their ancestors made home.

Like the TLANG researchers, Yuval-Davis (2006) makes a case for the use of multiple languages to assert ‘belonging’ to the wider group, while adding that there is also the potential for a ‘forced’ identity. This forced identity could be based around any criteria chosen by the dominant group, including language. Therefore, despite Barker et al.’s claim (2001) that many Hispanophone participants were comfortable and agreed with the notion of making English the sole official language, Yuval-Davis (2006) positions herself indirectly against any such movements. In fact, in her work regarding the position of Quebec and its French speakers within Canada, Yuval-Davis asks whether ‘Quebecois form a separate nation from Canadians, or one with its own boundaries’ (2006, p. 204). The significance of this question in relation to Francophone Louisiana and Germanophone Pennsylvania is crucial when considering how these communities, and any other minority or heritage language-speaking groups within the United States, might separate (or, alternatively, reconcile) their multilingual and multiheritage identities. In doing so, these communities can consider their position both within the wider biopolitical *habitus* of the United States (cf. Bourdieu, 1993; Puumeister, 2019) and as ‘nations’ within their own right, whose cultural and linguistic capitals have an inherent value.

While the TLANG project is an excellent example of translanguaging in practice, it would also be prudent to examine translanguaging theory in order to better understand the influences behind this project. For this, we must turn to the origins of the theory as proposed by Cen Williams and his colleagues (Conteh, 2018). It is perhaps ironic to note that the term ‘translanguaging’ – like many of the terms proposed by Bakhtin (1981) – does not have English

origins; rather, Williams first coined the term in Welsh as *trawsieithu* in his examination of bilingual teaching materials in the late 20th century (Conteh, 2018). While this may seem relatively trivial, I consider it highly significant to this thesis that the first to fully examine the concept was not a monolingual Anglophone researcher (or a monolingual researcher at all), but one who had their own lived experience of being bilingual, along with the challenges that came with this.

The space that Williams occupies as bilingual is one that can also be observed across both the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities in their cultural output. For instance, the core cultural works featured in this thesis are all created by bilingual artists (cf. Cheramie, 2007; Fritsch, 2008; Moll and Madenford, 2015; Waggoner, 2011), while all of those who have participated in interviews for this thesis are also bilingual. As these interviews reveal, the choice to write in one language or another is not solely driven by personal preference; Cheramie, for instance, wrote in Louisiana French because he wanted his language to be recorded in the written form, while Madenford's translation of Moll's original columns was driven by both a sense of capturing Moll's narrative style and passing on elements of Pennsylvania German culture and history to readers from outside of the community (cf. Appendices C and K). They, like Williams, occupy a space of their own in which they can be themselves as bilingual Americans; their work therefore becomes a celebration of the culture of their heritage and the communities to which they each belong.

In summary, I believe that the use of multiple languages in Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural production creates pieces that are more authentic to the authors' lived experiences as bilingual Americans, which provides the audience with an opportunity to share in this experience and better understand the perspective of those communities whose heritage is often excluded from narratives on life in the US post-colonisation.

I am also of the opinion that movements like the Translanguaging Project, if conducted on a wider scale, could provide great insight into the effects of various forms of multilingualism (based upon different combinations of languages, for example, or different ethnic backgrounds) and the interaction of languages and cultures around the world. In addition, the fact that many of the working papers that resulted from this project address their respective research sites globally (as opposed to focusing on specific languages found at those sites) would be particularly effective in communities, such as the Louisiana French, where the heritage of its speakers is also relatively diverse (cf. Appendix J).

The role of life writing in a multilingual United States

Having briefly mentioned life writing at the end of the previous section, this chapter will conclude by considering once again the effects of narrative styles upon the communities reflected within those narratives. Although this topic was explored in a more general sense in the previous chapter, this section will investigate further the effects of specific life writing forms on the cultural output of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans.

During the interviews that I conducted as part of this research project, the concept of oral narratives – also known by several Louisiana French participants as *oraliture* (cf. Appendix B) – appeared on several occasions. This notion is often mentioned in reference to the provenance of these communities' most recent works, with several participants adding that these stories remain popular to this day (e.g. Appendices D and G). In his monograph, for example, Rabalais (2021) notes the strong ties to oral tradition that are still present in Louisiana French literature, with its writing offering a 'remarkable reflection' (Rabalais, 2021, p.2) of the region's rich history. This oral tradition is the primary focus of his work, with Rabalais choosing to omit any written narratives which refer to Louisiana French folklore figures so as

to highlight their folkloric origins and the impact these figures still have in the community today.

In his analysis of Louisiana French and Creole folklore figures, Rabalais (ibid.), like Ancelet (1999) before him, refers frequently to the Aarne-Thompson-Uther Index (also known as the ATU Index), which seeks to categorise all folktales and group them around common themes. It is not my aim to determine whether this system of categorising folktales is effective within this thesis; however, in making use of the ATU Index, both Ancelet (1999) and Rabalais (2021) highlight how Louisiana French folklore (and subsequent written narratives) is derived from, and linked to, Francophone folklore around the world, in addition to showing the links that were also formed with local Native American communities. This therefore demonstrates not only how integral these themes are to the Francophone world at large, but also further cements the place of Louisiana French as ‘legitimately’ (Culp, 2017) Francophone.

There is also much evidence of the links between Pennsylvania German written narratives and their folkloric heritage. Louden (2016) and Bronner and Brown (2017), however, focus not only on the importance of these figures historically. Rather, they also demonstrate the significance of Pennsylvania German folkloric figures in their community today; for instance, the ‘[a]ppreciation of Pennsylvania German folklore’ (Louden, 2016) is viewed as a core tenet of *Versammlinge*.

While I understand the motivations behind a system (like the ATU Index) to catalogue the varied forms of folklore that have existed and have been derived from pre-existing forms, I must admit that I do not agree with its usage on such a specific level as that found within the ATU Index. In my opinion, this attempt to standardise the world’s folkloric traditions is akin to the issue raised in the previous chapter with regards to the standardisation of life writing styles (see p. 48). By attempting to ‘define’ each subgenre within the confines of a specific narrative form, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine and appreciate the unique

elements of each culture's folklore, the method in which it is presented to the audience, or the culturally specific variations that are made. In addition, due to its restriction to the written form alone, such a system would only serve to hinder these communities in spreading awareness of other traditional art forms like *Scherenschnitte* or *Fraktur* (pp. 196-222).

Furthermore, as several theorists have argued (e.g. Borland, 2021; Welch et al., 2020), the current catalogues that are used by many theorists – including the ATU Index – remain skewed towards Western folkloric traditions (namely Anglophone traditions, although there are several folktale 'styles' included from other parts of Europe and North America) at the expense of folklore from the East or from marginalised communities around the world. That is not to say that I regard all forms of categorisation as negative; on the contrary, it is essential to acknowledge the connections between folk narratives and the communities in which they are found – Ancelet (1999), for instance, has written a great deal on the various themes and subgenres of Louisiana French and Creole folktales in relation to the Francophone diaspora. However, I do not believe that such categorisation should be exhaustive as it is within the ATU Index, as this practice risks reducing the variety of narrative forms to a list of criteria to be fulfilled, to the detriment of the artistic and creative methods employed.

Outside of more conventional written narrative forms, the ties to previous folklore – or folklife, a term which is generally preferred among Pennsylvania German scholars (cf. Yoder, 2011; Appendix A) – can also be observed in other forms of media, both in the real and virtual realms (Deleuze et. al, 1983). Within the folk art of the Pennsylvania German community, there are still several leitmotifs that have survived since the community's establishment. Such motifs include the *Wassernix* (Mermaid), the *Distelfink* (An artistic rendition of the goldfinch), and local flora, all of which can be seen in the work of local artists today (cf. Ancelet, 1999; Donmoyer, 2013; Yoder, 2022). In addition, there are several artists that make use of these

motifs and techniques in the 21st century, as Chapter Seven of this thesis will demonstrate (cf. pp. 196-222).

With regards to the art forms preferred by the Pennsylvania Germans, there are still three media that are particularly popular among contemporary artists: *Fraktur*, a highly detailed form of calligraphy that is presented alongside illustrations of local leitmotifs (such as those listed above); barn stars, which are circular paintings in bright colours that are commonly found on the sides of barns in the non-sectarian community (Donmoyer, 2013); and *Scherenschnitte*, a form of paper cutting for which Fritsch was particularly known.

While folk art is not as prevalent among the Louisiana French (cf. Appendix B), their folkloric heritage can still be found outside of written narratives in the form of their music, which utilises instruments brought to the community over several waves of migration. Cormier notes these ties to the varied heritage of the Louisiana French people, stating that:

[T]he German diatonic accordion that was developed in the late 19th century [...] was brought here with German immigrants and, you know, before that, music was already very strong in Louisiana. The violin was huge and then as instruments were introduced, the music evolved and it was happening very quickly, especially with, you know, finding oil in Louisiana in 1902, then you have, like, the steel guitar that showed up, so... You know, the music sort of developed as people immigrated to the state (p. 350).

The continued use of these traditional instruments and techniques in the 21st century – as described by Cormier above in his description of ‘traditional’ Louisiana French music – has also attracted a larger audience than those that might consult the literature of these regions. The music of Zachary Richard and the Lost Bayou Ramblers, for instance, have attracted critical attention and acclaim both across the United States and throughout the Francophone world (cf. Brasted, 2018; GRAMMY, 2022; *L’invité*, 2014).

While the Pennsylvania German community’s folk art is not as well-recognised critically, it also remains popular across the country, with barn stars having become a popular souvenir for those visiting the Pennsylvania German-speaking regions of the state. These

souvenirs are popular even with other members of the community – a phenomenon with which

Brown is familiar:

You can buy these mass-produced [barn stars] and take them home. My sister, for example, wanted one, because she's Pennsylvania Dutch. She wanted one, and so she bought this little tiny one and put it on her shed outside and it – for me, as an academic [...] it was interesting for me to see how a modern Pennsylvania Dutch person who isn't that invested in the culture wanted something for outside, and she went for something that's tied to our people [...] [S]he felt she needed the [barn star] and, instead of going on a barn, it went on this shed for her lawnmower and things. It was kind of this modern (Laughs) tension that I just saw of Pennsylvania Dutch identity and what it has turned into, almost, is this commodification of Pennsylvania Dutch identity (p. 456).

The choice made by Brown's sister to utilise the barn star in a new context – one which celebrates her connection to the Pennsylvania German community, although the art form itself is disconnected from its traditional usage – highlights the new ways in which members of the community actively connect to their cultural heritage in the 21st century. While the format of this barn star may not be entirely authentic (cf. Donmoyer, 2013), the nostalgia it evokes is sufficient to allow Brown's sister to 'feel' her Pennsylvania German heritage (Baloy, 2011), even if it may be considered a commodified version of this heritage.

While Chapters Four to Seven will explore the culture-specific folklore traditions of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans in greater detail, this section must also briefly address contemporary scholastic thought on these traditions. There are several academics who have published works on the writing of the Pennsylvania German community in the 21st century (e.g. Donmoyer, 2013; Yoder, 2011). However, unlike Louisiana French-based academics, from whom there have been entire monographs dedicated to Louisiana French writing (e.g. Ancelet, 1994), the current academic thought that is available on contemporary Pennsylvania German writing consists of several chapters spread across edited works (e.g. Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016). This highlights two phenomena that will be addressed further in Chapters Four to Seven:

- The Pennsylvania German-speaking community makes less use of written narratives as a means of preserving cultural and linguistic heritage. This may be due to an increased prevalence of oral literature, or even due to the fact that many Pennsylvania Germans previously used *Hochdeutsch* (or a variant thereof, known as Pennsylvania High German) as a means of expressing themselves in written form (Louden, 2016).
- There has been a greater focus in recent years on Louisiana French writing and Louisiana French narrative forms in general. This is evidenced by the establishment of CODOFIL in the 1960s – which led to increased promotion of the narrative forms – and archival work undertaken to catalogue the narrative forms employed by the community (Ancelet, 1994; Appendix G). It cannot be said that this is to the detriment of the oral narratives, however, as there are extensive archives held by such institutions as the University of Louisiana at Lafayette which hold recordings taken of Louisiana French speakers throughout the 20th century (e.g. Center for Louisiana Studies, 2022).

Both languages, and thus both communities, have therefore experienced a relative surge of critical attention following the mid-20th century, where scholarly focus on the subject was in decline. During the scoping phase of this thesis, I found that there was very little published on either group between approximately 1960 and 1980, with many texts on the groups having been published in the 1930s and 1940s (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Louden, 2016; Rabalais, 2021). This not only highlights the difficulties by both communities in the wake of the Second World War (cf. Appendices F and K), but also demonstrates the relative success with which both groups have been able to continue to practice their languages and even increase their voice and presence in the last forty years.

But how do these non-written narrative forms relate to their written counterparts? Lindahl's (1978) analysis of life writing in folk communities, and the 'border' between oral and written art, critiques those who, in their combined analysis of 'folklore' and 'literature', go no further than finding 'traces of oral tradition buried in written art' (ibid., p. 95). Doing so, according to Lindahl, is indicative of an approach which either isolates the folk elements of a work (at the expense of its inherent artistic value) or, conversely, seek to analyse the art while leaving its folkloric elements 'to be discarded' (ibid., pp. 95-96). These approaches – especially the latter – fulfil Bourdieu's (1993) claims that folk art is accorded a lower level of cultural capital than 'high art', while Lindahl's argument corroborates the hypothesis expressed in the previous chapter (pp. 26-36) that these communities (and, by extension, their cultural output) are deemed to be somewhat 'lesser' and are thus isolated from wider society.

Lindahl does have a great amount of experience in some of the regions in which this thesis is situated through his collections of folktales from across the United States, which include members of the Louisiana French community and German speakers in Appalachia (e.g. Lindahl, 2009). Yet he, like others from outside of the Louisiana French community (and even some within the community – cf. Landry, 2016), chooses to distinguish between Cajun and Creole speakers along the lines of race, with the entire region being referred to as the 'Cajun prairie', in which the 'French-speaking black Creoles [...] lived alongside the Cajuns' (ibid., p. xxxv). This distinction implies two things: first, that there is still not enough literature which fully addresses the history of these terms or, by extension, this community, even though there are moves to rectify this (Landry, 2016); and second, that this further highlights the way in which the works of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German scholars resist these commonly-held stereotypes in favour of celebrating their 'true' heritage, and also emphasises the increasing need for texts based in the community, written by members of the community, in order to give a more accurate and authentic picture of the art forms there. I therefore argue

that, while the absence of writing on these non-written narrative forms indicates that their continued use is a hindrance to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities (at least in terms of increasing awareness of their situation as multilingual Americans), the use of non-written narrative forms in the 21st century serves both as a means of celebrating the cultural heritage of these communities and creating an accessible point of entry for other interested parties that requires further critical attention.

That is not to say, however, that there have been no attempts in the latter half of the 20th century and beyond to incorporate non-written narrative forms into studies of folk culture. Yoder's creation of the field of 'folklife' (2011) is one of the most notable examples of this, particularly as he himself was Pennsylvania German. In his study of folklife, Yoder (2015) focused on more than the written form; in fact, the written form was not an area of interest in his work. Rather, Yoder engaged with community practices, including the practice of language or local folk beliefs like *powwowing*. Folklife has since been defined in a more concrete form as the following:

Folklife is the living traditions currently practiced and passed along by word of mouth, imitation, or observation over time and space within groups, such as family, ethnic, social class, regional, and others. Everyone and every group has folklore.

But what does this mean? We are talking about the traditional stories, songs, customs, activities, objects, and beliefs that people pass along (Bowman et al., 2005).

It is my view that the study of folklife – despite having no connection to systems like the ATU Index – does resolve some of the issues raised previously with regards to the omission of non-written life writing forms (cf. p. 48). This means that, through folklife studies, Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German art forms receive critical attention, not only alongside their written counterparts, but, due to their popularity among the wider community (cf. Appendix G) on a greater level than that of the written form. Therefore, it can again be inferred from this

that such art forms are of benefit to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, as they are more accessible to the wider population than a work which requires a certain competence with the language.

In summary, I believe that writers and artists from the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities use their respective art forms, not only to enhance those stories that have been captured in writing, but to tell their own stories. The narratives depicted through these art forms are not necessarily the same as those found in the written forms, as Chapters Five and Seven will note. However, I believe that they are a great help in terms of increasing awareness of these groups and their languages, due to the accessibility of their forms to the wider public.

Conclusion

Having examined the three primary areas of interest – biopolitics, multilingualism, and life writing – through a more contemporary lens, we have developed a clearer picture of what it means to be Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German within the greater United States, and, furthermore, what it means to these groups to continue to make use of traditional cultural practices and narrative methods today.

It has been noted on several occasions, both in this chapter and its predecessor, that there is very little recent writing on either of these two communities, aside from a select number of academics from these groups who have produced texts on the subject (e.g. Landry, 2016; Loudon, 2016; Rabalais, 2021). In addition, there are fewer texts still that address the non-written art forms indigenous to these communities, although these works will feature in the later chapters of this thesis (cf. p. 156, p. 216). This lack of writing – and the lack of high-profile writing outside of the two communities in question – is something that, in my opinion,

ought to be addressed in the coming years in order to ensure that group like the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans are able to continue to make use of their languages and cultures (see the conclusion of this thesis for further recommendations regarding this matter).

At the conclusion of this chapter, I have now created a theoretical foundation which will underpin and inform the culture-specific analyses of Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven (pp. 103-222). Yet while Chapters One and Two of this thesis have answered the research questions (p. 19) in the ‘virtual’ (Deleuze and Parnet, 1987), it is now essential that we turn to the ‘real’ (ibid.) with a view to determining the significance of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German narrative methods in the 21st century. To do so, I must determine an approach that is sensitive to the individual contexts of these communities and their respective cultural outputs. The following chapter will outline this methodology in further detail with a focus on the methods selected and the way in which the theoretical underpinning developed in Chapters One and Two will be utilised alongside these methods to produce a nuanced picture of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German life writing today.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapters, I examined seminal and contemporary texts on a range of subjects – namely biopolitics, multilingualism, and life writing – in order to establish an understanding of current critical thought in the context of the research questions previously posed (cf. p. 19). This was conducted with a view to creating a theoretical framework that would underpin further exploration of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural production. Having now established this theoretical framework, it is essential that I determine and outline the methods required to provide a response to those questions within the context of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. Therefore, I will adopt a three-pronged strategy throughout my research, with each strategy being interdependent on the others. By utilising this approach, I will ensure that the two communities and their cultural production are addressed in depth from various perspectives. These three ‘prongs’ are:

- i. A close reading of the seminal theoretical texts in order to create a theoretical underpinning which will support the analysis of any collected data. The reading of these texts has already been explored in depth in Chapters One and Two (pp. 26-88), and therefore I will not go into further detail on this work in this chapter;
- ii. A close reading and analysis of the cultural output of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities respectively; and
- iii. A series of interviews undertaken with current and former academic researchers who are part of, or have spent time researching, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities.

This chapter will explore in greater depth the ways in which the cultural artefacts featured (including the core cultural texts) have been selected for this thesis, and the methods by which

they will be analysed. It will also explain further the approach that was taken with regards to the interviews, including: The logistics of conducting these interviews; the selection of research participants; and the interview methodologies that have been employed. In addition, this chapter will elaborate on the ways in which each of the three strategies listed above will interact with each other in order to provide answers to the research questions that were previously outlined in the introduction to this thesis (p. 18). This chapter will then conclude with the limitations of the methodologies listed, along with the constraints placed on this thesis by external factors.

At the conclusion of this chapter, I will have outlined in full the methodological approach which will inform the cultural analyses in later chapters, the justification for this approach, and the potential limitations of such a strategy, which will also be explored in the conclusion of this thesis (p. 226).

Approach One: Close Reading of Theoretical Texts

As stated above, this chapter will only briefly summarise this first approach as it has already been featured in Chapters One and Two, which were dedicated to the analysis of scholarly material. In these two chapters, I sought to develop a theoretical framework in which the cultural analyses could be situated and which could provide, in part, answers to the research questions listed (p. 18). To achieve these aims, I engaged with scholarly works on the following areas of thought:

- Biopolitical thought (e.g. Agamben, 1998; Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004; Hardt and Negri, 2000, 2004)
- Theories regarding the use of multiple languages, including polyphony, heteroglossia, and translanguaging (e.g. Bakhtin, 1981, 1984; Glissant, 1989, 1997)

- The field of power, with a particular focus on Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1993)
- Life writing theory (e.g. Lejeune, 1989; Phipps and Kay, 2014; Smith and Watson, 2010)

In each of these areas, I have considered the works of leading scholars, from whom many of the later works addressed in Chapter Two drew inspiration. With each school of thought, I compared and contrasted each theory with its contemporaries in order to determine whether the theory would sufficiently account for the phenomena encountered in the culture-specific works and their respective communities, and, where it did not, where the theory could be adapted so that it did sufficiently account for these phenomena. Through the critical analysis of these theories, I demonstrated the significance of cultural maintenance and preservation for the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, and, furthermore, showed how these minority language speakers are able to 'defend' their cultural and linguistic heritages, thus preventing them from extinction.

Regarding the structure of said theoretical analysis, I have chosen to separate the review of scholarly material into two chapters. The first of these focused on the key texts and scholars from each discipline, with several of the authors having been among the first to write on their respective subjects (e.g. Bakhtin, 1981; Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004; Glissant, 1989). From this, the second chapter then provided a more detailed evaluation of the response to these texts in 21st-century research, alongside recent projects that have been undertaken which have these subjects at their heart (e.g. Phipps and Kay, 2014). By spreading the review of seminal and contemporary scholarship across two chapter, I was able to analyse in greater depth the way in which the fields in question have evolved since their inception, while also highlighting areas that have not been addressed previously.

After a theoretical foundation was established in these two chapters, I then utilised this as the basis from which the cultural analyses of later chapters will emanate. Therefore, Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven will reference these concepts where appropriate. For instance, in Chapter Four, reference is made to Agamben's notion of *homo sacer* (1998) at several points where the subject of the text appears to be isolated from the wider community, be that from the place in which they live or from Anglophone American society – such an example can be found in the analysis of the Cheramie poem *O.E.D.* (Cheramie, 1997; pp. 104-117).

Furthermore, by utilising this theoretical framework as a point of reference for the rest of the research project, I can emphasise the areas in which there has been little critical attention and the manner in which my research is able to address those areas. For instance, as both Donner (2017) and Loudon (2016) assert, there are few scholars who are interested in the Pennsylvania German-speaking people (particularly the non-sectarian speakers of Pennsylvania German) who have not been personally involved with the community to some extent, nor are there a great number of scholars from overseas who engage with this group. Therefore, by employing the findings from the literature review as a foundation for the remainder of this study, I will be able to respond to these issues and provide potential solutions.

Approach Two: Analysis of Cultural Artefacts

The second approach, which will be employed throughout the following culture-specific chapters, is the critical reading of texts from the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities alongside the analysis of other cultural artefacts (such as the music and visual art) of the regions featured in this study. This approach was undertaken alongside the interview phase, which will be addressed in greater detail later in this chapter. These two approaches combined provided data which, when analysed in relation to the theoretical underpinning

developed in the literature review chapters, could then answer the research questions outlined previously in this thesis. Thus, the three angles from which I approach this research project complement each other and intertwine in order to formulate a detailed response to the research questions that were previously outlined.

In this phase of data collection, I focused first on the key culture-specific texts which were identified in the scoping of this study. These texts are listed below, with the three Louisiana French texts being followed by those representing the Pennsylvania German community:

- *Lait à mère (Mother's Milk)* (Cheremie, 1997)
- *Julie Choufleur: ou Les Preuves d'amour (Julie Choufleur: or Expressions of Love)* (Cheremie, 2007)
- *Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel: Poésies et proses (The Song of the Rainbow: A Collection of Poetry and Prose)* (Waggoner, 2011)
- *Der Haahne Greht (The Rooster Crows)* (Fritsch, 2008)
- *Schtimme aus 'm Kaerrichhof (Voices from the Graveyard)* (Moll and Madenford, 2015)

These four authors have been selected for several reasons. First, each of them has promoted their respective dialects and culture, not only through their published works, but through education; each has promoted these languages and regions at a collegiate level through their work, including the publication of these works at university publishing houses (e.g. Kutztown University, 2021; UL Press, 2021; University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2021). Furthermore, the selected works represent a relatively diverse cross-section of each diaspora; there is a mixture of male and female authors, and of poetry and prose. One text, Waggoner's *Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel* (2011), utilises a combination of poetry and prose, while another, Fritsch's *Der Haahne Greht* (2008), provides a combination of written and non-written art forms, which leads to this work being analysed across Chapters Six and Seven (pp. 165-222). There are also two bilingual

texts – Moll and Madenford’s *Schtimme aus ’m Kaerrichhof* (2015) and Fritsch’s *Der Haahne Greht* (2008), both of which feature translations in English by the authors themselves – which provide an angle from which the effects of translanguaging can be explored in greater detail and will allow me to apply the biopolitical and sociological contexts that were determined in the first and second chapters. However, one key limitation of this selection is that there are no authors of colour featured in Chapters Four and Six. In the case of the Louisiana French community, this is due to a lack of recently published works by speakers of colour (although this does not mean that there are no texts written by people of colour, as Rabalais, 2021 demonstrates), while the Pennsylvania German community is almost exclusively white, thus explaining the lack of texts by writers of colour.

While there is seemingly an imbalance between the two communities, given that the Louisiana French community has greater representation among the core cultural texts listed above, there is good reason to incorporate two of Cheramie’s works as part of this research project. In the earlier of the two, *Lait à mère* (Cheramie, 1997), there are several poems, such as *O.E.D.* and *souvenirs de sneaux*, that are inspired by Cheramie’s childhood experiences as a speaker of Louisiana French, while *Julie Choufleur* is inspired by Cheramie’s travels as an adult in combination with other fictional elements (cf. Appendix K). Therefore, by incorporating excerpts from both collections, there is the opportunity to examine a wider range of lived experience, similar to the memories Fritsch depicts in *Der Haahne Greht* (2008).

Alongside the analysis of these culture-specific texts, the later chapters of this thesis will also incorporate texts focused on the historical and cultural background of the Louisiana French- and Pennsylvania German-speaking communities, including the literary history of these regions (e.g. Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016). With regards to these texts, I have aimed to select works that were written (at least partially) by authors who speak the language or have first-hand experience of the communities in question. For example, while

Louden (2016) did not grow up in the Pennsylvania German community, he has gained Pennsylvania German cultural and linguistic knowledge over several decades and is frequently engaged with events and research focused on this area. By using texts authored by those who are connected to the cultures, and which also include some of their personal experiences as speakers of the language (cf. Loudon, 2016), I am able to develop a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the regions, their languages, and their cultures. Examining these non-fictional works will thus provide a cultural context which will inform the way in which the cultural artefacts of later chapters are analysed. Furthermore, their inclusion will permit a greater examination of the way in which these languages have evolved over the latter half of the 20th century and the 21st century.

Once the analysis of the written narratives of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities is complete, I will then embark on a critique of the non-written narrative methods employed in these two regions. In each region, the non-written methods varied widely, and thus those chapters which incorporate such methods incorporate these variations within the context of their respective communities. For the Louisiana French community, there is greater attention given to the music of the region, as this remains a popular means of passing traditional folk narratives from one generation to the next (cf. Feufollet, 2010, 2015; Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2019; Appendix B). However, in the case of the Pennsylvania German people, it is visual art that is more prevalent, with phenomena such as barn stars and *Fraktur* remaining a popular media for members of the community (cf. Rachel Yoder, 2018). The combination of this analysis, coupled with the critical reading of the written narratives listed earlier, will create a stronger understanding of lived experience through narrative methods that are specific to the communities at the heart of this thesis, while also exploring how – in the case of multimedia works like *Der Haahne Greht* (Fritsch, 2008) - the written form is affected by the incorporation of other media.

Approach Three: Semi-Structured Interviews

In this third methodological approach, I have undertaken a series of semi-structured interviews with academics and artists who are well-versed in the study of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German-speaking communities and who are all speakers of one of the two languages. In total, I conducted twelve interviews, with six focused on the Pennsylvania German community and the remaining six working with academics who are speakers of Louisiana French. All of the interviews took place virtually, with videoconferencing software used as a substitute for the in-person interviews that were originally planned. The use of videoconferencing software was driven by several factors, such as: the inability to conduct in-person interviews as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic; the wish to ensure that interviews were accessible to all potential participants, thus ensuring that the environment in which said interviews were conducted was similar for all who took part; and my belief that, in using videoconferencing software, I would be better placed to ensure that participants were comfortable and happy to participate at all times (e.g. Through studying participants' body language, hesitations, and so on).

While these interviews will not be the central part of my thesis, it was essential to undertake these discussions to develop a better understanding of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities today, which would, in turn, produce more nuanced analyses of the cultural artefacts cited. Consequently, I refer to these interviews throughout this thesis, including in previous chapters, where it is appropriate to do so. These perspectives are then used alongside the core cultural texts to form a robust response to the research questions that were demonstrated previously.

In order to conduct these interviews, it was essential, first and foremost, to engage with the ethics process at the University of Central Lancashire in order to ensure the highest level of

integrity moving forward. This involved considering, among other factors, the security of videoconferencing software (as interviews were conducted remotely), the use and storage of data pertaining to the interviews, and the methodology utilised throughout the interview process. Following this process ensured that participants had a full understanding of the process and created a space wherein the researcher and participants could communicate openly and honestly throughout.

Each of these interviews took place on a one-to-one basis, with all interviews lasting between one hour and two and a half hours in total. The participants for these interviews were identified first through the scoping phase of this study. In this scoping phase, I read several texts which focused on the region, both fictional (e.g. Cheramie, 1997, 2007) and nonfictional (e.g. Loudon, 2016), in order to develop an understanding of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. I also had an informal conversation with Douglas Madenford – a participant whom I would later interview as part of this study (cf. Appendix C), who offered the names of several members of the Pennsylvania German community who may wish to take part in similar interviews. This was followed by an interview with Patrick Donmoyer – which formed the pilot study for this project – wherein I was able to practise the semi-structured approach that I would utilise for each interview. Consequently, this interview was the longest, as can be seen by the length of the transcript (cf. Appendix A).

From the above conversations (and, in the case of the Louisiana French community, the first phase of reading scholarship from the region), I then identified several eminent Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German scholars whom I invited (via email, in the first instance) to take part in formal interviews. When selecting participants, I sought to engage with participants from a wide range of industries, age groups, and ethnic backgrounds (among other characteristics, such as gender), with a view to ensuring that the data collected was representative of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities at large.

However, as stated later in this thesis (p. 238), this was achieved on a smaller scale than I had originally envisaged.

During preliminary research on potential interview participants, I also discovered that several of the (then unconfirmed) interview subjects had written texts on the regions in question. In addition to this, two prospective interview participants had contributed to the core cultural texts analysed in Chapters Four and Six: Douglas Madenford was responsible for editing and translating *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015), while David Chermie is the author of *Lait à mère* (1997) and *Julie Choufleur* (2007), two cultural artefacts that will be explored in depth in Chapter Four (pp. 104-117).

Following these initial interviews, I then received recommendations as to other colleagues from the communities that might be interested in participating in this project. This explains, for example, the relatively high number of participants that are connected to Kutztown University, although another likely cause for this is that this is the only higher education facility in the United States that offers a course on Pennsylvania German (cf. Appendices A and H). The initial choice to engage with Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German speakers based in academia and research was driven by a wish to obtain a perspective which was informed not only by participants' lived experiences, but also by their experience working in the study and research of their respective languages. Donmoyer, for instance, spends much time working with aspects of the Pennsylvania German language and culture as Director of the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center (cf. Appendix A). Following the completion of each interview, I then stored video and audio recordings from each interview in secure cloud-based storage owned by the University of Central Lancashire. This ensured that I would be the only individual who could access the data collected from these interviews. It is for this reason that I also chose to transcribe the interviews myself, as opposed to using transcription software or a third party.

The list of interview participants from the Louisiana French community is as follows:

- **Professor Barry Ancelet:** Professor Emeritus of Francophone Studies at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; Ancelet has also published poetry and lyrics under the *nom de plume* of Jean Arceneaux and helped to produce the album *Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent* (2018), which is examined in Chapter Five (p. 146).
- **Dr. David Cheramie:** CEO of the Bayou and Vermilion District and author of *Lait à mère* (1997) and *Julie Choufleur* (2007), which are analysed in Chapter Four (p. 104).
- **Chase Cormier:** PhD Researcher at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and editor of *Feux Follets*, a journal dedicated to art, poetry, and prose in Louisiana French from the Louisiana French community.
- **Dr. Marguerite Justus:** Community Development Specialist for the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL).
- **Dr. Christophe Landry:** Language activist and genealogist at Ancestry.
- **Dr. Nathan Rabalais:** Fellow of the Center for Louisiana Studies at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and author of *Folklore Figures of French and Creole Louisiana* (2021).

The following participants are all speakers of Pennsylvania German:

- **Professor Joshua R. Brown:** Associate Professor in Languages at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.
- **Patrick Donmoyer:** Director of the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center.
- **Dr. William Donner:** Professor of Anthropology at the University of Kutztown.
- **Professor Mark L. Loudon:** Alfred L. Shoemaker, J. William Frey, and Don Yoder Professor of Germanic Linguistics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

- **Douglas Madenford:** Translator of *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichhof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015) and presenter of the YouTube series *Your PA Dutch Minute* and *PA Dutch Live!*
- **Dr. Jennifer Schlegel:** Professor of Anthropology at the University of Kutztown.

To ensure academic integrity, in advance of each interview, I sent all participants a participant information sheet and consent form, which was signed and returned to me. At the start of each session, I sought verbal consent again from each participant to ensure that they would be comfortable with both audio and video recordings being taken of the interviews, and to be certain that they consented to any data being provided in this thesis without being anonymised. The presentation of non-anonymised data approach was chosen due to the relatively small size of the field and the personal nature of the interviews, as, even with anonymisation, it would likely be possible to identify participants. As stated previously, all documents pertaining to the interviews, including the recordings, were then stored in a secure online location.

When approaching the interviews, I employed a semi-structured format as this would allow for a more organic interview process wherein the interview participants would be able to speak more freely without fear of intervention or interruption. To do this, I prepared a series of questions that was bespoke to each subject; although there were several questions that would be asked of each participant, by tailoring the topics to the research interests of each interviewee, this created a discussion that was more in-depth and engaging for the participant. These questions were then delivered using an interviewing technique derived from the Biographic-Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM), which allows participants to speak for an indeterminate length of time in response to an open question (cf. Lewis-Beck, Bryman, and Futing Liao, 2004).

However, unlike BNIM, which begins with a single question and then progresses into ‘subsessions’ based on the initial narrative provided, I used a series of questions to which the interviewee could respond freely and from which new questions would be derived (Appendix G). An example of this emerged in the pilot study, when, based on the response given to the question, ‘What does being Pennsylvania German mean to you?’, a question emerged regarding the terminology used to refer to the language and whether members of the community preferred to use ‘Pennsylvania German’, ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’, or ‘*Deitsch*’ (cf. Appendix A). This then led to the inclusion of a question dedicated to terminology, which I asked each of the Pennsylvania German-speaking participants at the start of their interviews.

Following the pilot study, it also became increasingly apparent that, while I had already planned to utilise a semi-structured interview style, it would be more appropriate to undertake more relaxed and informal interviews. The need for this became more evident throughout the first interviews after the pilot study, in which participants would digress from the original question (cf. Appendix G). However, I discovered that these departures from the planned line of questioning were often as valuable as the questions themselves; for instance, approximately halfway through the interview with Professor Ancelet, our discussion moved from the language itself and the written output of recent years to his work as a musician and lyricist. During this, Professor Ancelet elaborated on his most recent project. This project focused on the Louisiana French singer Caesar Vincent, whose songs had been rediscovered and reinterpreted for today’s audience by Ancelet and several musicians from the Louisiana French community. He then demonstrated the work that had been undertaken by playing several of the original songs alongside the modern reinterpretations. As a result, I was able to better appreciate the musical and cultural heritage of the Louisiana French community and the various genres in which each artist had chosen to perform. Consequently, the interview style shifted from being a more traditionally semi-structured format to something that, while still semi-structured in style (with

a list of questions being prepared in advance), was, in practice, closer to a nonstructured interview as I sought to incorporate those areas in which participants spoke most passionately.

This project also intended to incorporate several focus groups with Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German speakers who were not involved in academia. This was inspired by the interviews themselves and the lack of balance in terms of gender and ethnicity, with a view to hosting discussions that focused more on participants who identified as female or as people of colour. However, I did not receive any interest from members of the community – potentially due to the fact that such groups would have to be hosted online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (cf. p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**) – and thus only one-to-one interviews could be included in this study.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the three methodological approaches which are necessary in order to provide the clearest answers possible for the research questions previously outlined (p. 18). This chapter forms the final part of the theoretical and methodological underpinning required before this thesis can analyse the cultural output of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities.

In the following chapters, this thesis will engage in close reading of the written and non-written narrative methods of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. This close reading will be combined with the interviews undertaken for this study – which will be interspersed throughout the following four chapters – with a view to determining how these communities depict lived experience, the themes that are most prevalent in their life writing, and how these narrative methods reflect the hypotheses determined in Chapters One and Two.

CHAPTER FOUR: LOUISIANA FRENCH WRITTEN NARRATIVES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE

In the previous three chapters, I laid the theoretical foundations by which further analysis of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultures can be undertaken. Furthermore, we have established an appropriate methodological framework which is at once comprehensive in nature and yet also allows for a degree of in-depth analysis of the cultural artefacts that are at the heart of this thesis. However, the content of these chapters has been more abstract in nature, with the communities in question only receiving intermittent references. It is therefore time to apply these ideas to the context for which they were created: the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities of today.

This chapter will engage in an in-depth analysis of the written narratives found in contemporary Louisiana French society. The following sections will feature the work of authors David Chermie and May Rush Gwin Waggoner, both of whom are speakers of Louisiana French and have penned texts in Louisiana French in the 21st century. There will also be intermittent references to other prominent authors and poets from the community, including Barry Ancelet (also known as Jean Arcenaux), Jude Chatelain, and Kirby Jambon. In selecting the oeuvres of Chermie and Waggoner, this chapter will shed light on the writing of those Louisiana French speakers who have not received prior critical attention beyond the region in which they reside. This will allow for a better understanding, not only of how the written narratives of the Louisiana French people are viewed among the *Francophonie* or wider American society, but how they perceived *within* the community. Furthermore, the incorporation of Waggoner – as stated in the previous chapter (p. 92) – will permit us to explore one of the few cases of contemporary women’s writing from the region.

Cheremie, *Lait à mère*, and *Julie Choufleur*

This chapter's exploration of Louisiana French life writing will begin with the work of David Cheremie with a focus on his works *Lait à mère* (1997) and *Julie Choufleur: ou Les Preuves d'amour* (2007). These two collections feature Cheremie's writings on his youth and his travels around the world. As will be observed with Waggoner, there are several fictionalised, fantastical moments within the texts; for instance, as I discovered in an interview with Cheremie (see Appendix K for a full transcript of this discussion), the character of Julie Choufleur herself is entirely of the author's own creation. However, much of Cheremie's writing is inspired by his own experiences, be it the story of his own life or the environment in which he is writing – the poem *À 22.000 pieds au-dessus du Canada (At 22,000 feet above Canada)* was written while Cheremie was himself flying over Canada (cf. Appendix K).

Of the themes that are most prevalent throughout these two collections, one of the most prominent is relationships with others, be it familial relationships (as in *Lait à mère*) or the romantic relationship with Julie Choufleur, as depicted throughout the second collection. Despite these two relationships being completely different in nature, I believe that they are described with striking similarity; both involve a certain amount of tenderness, while there are also several conflicting emotions that emerge throughout the two texts (Cheremie, 1997, 2007).

Cheremie also stands alongside his contemporaries in grounding his writing in the environment of Louisiana and the wider Francophone world (cf. Cheremie, 2007, pp. 42-43). However, unlike Waggoner, who intersperses fantastical elements throughout her work, Cheremie, for the most part, keeps to a more realistic setting for his writing. That is not to say, however, that he does not take artistic license where appropriate – the eponymous Julie Choufleur being a prime example of this (cf. Appendix K).

Yet it is curious that even the fantasy elements of Cheramie's writing are still steeped in the Louisiana French culture and grounded in relatively realistic environments. For instance, in the first section of *Julie Choufleur*, Cheramie notes that he hears a version of the song *Jolie Blonde* as sung by Cyndi Lauper. This song, also known as *Jole Blon'*, has never been recorded or performed by Lauper (as of April 2023), thus proving that this element is, at least partially, a figment of the narrator's imagination. However, the inclusion of this song is indicative of its great importance to the Louisiana French community, with it having been named as the 'Cajun national anthem' (Ancelet, 1984).

Travel is one of the key motifs throughout *Julie Choufleur* in particular, with the unnamed narrator (strongly implied to be a fictional version of Cheramie himself – cf. Appendix K) having first encountered the figure of Julie Choufleur at the airport and with several poems being situated either in transit or at a place of transit. Unlike Waggoner, where any long-distance travel is implied to be driven by necessity or by force (as in the story *Histoire Acadienne*, for instance), the narrator's travels are entirely of their own volition. This may represent a yearning on the author's part to connect with his identity as a member of the *Francophonie*, and, by extension, to reconcile this with his identity as a Louisiana French speaker. He thus, through his experiences of the wider Francophone world, asserts the legitimacy of his identity, not by creating an entirely new space, but by incorporating the Louisiana French *habitus* into the wider *habitus* of the Francophone world; he engages in a *métissage* of his identity (cf. Bourdieu, 1993; Foucault, 1997; Glissant, 1997).

The fact that all of these poems remain steeped in the Francophone world and its culture, despite the fact that the narrator moves from one place to the next¹, emphasises the links between the Louisiana French and the wider Francophone world, which, despite the moves

¹ The use of videoconferencing software complicated this as initial contact was made via email, rather than being able to meet in person prior to the interview.



Figure 3: An image of Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport showing signage in English (Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, 2022).

made by groups like the *Alliance Française* (Horne, 2017), is often neglected in texts on the Francophone world (cf. p. 3). By bringing these ties into view for the reader, Cheramie affirms his place, and the place of his Louisiana French-speaking compatriots, as having their own inherent value within the *Francophonie*, thus simultaneously claiming their space within the

Francophone *habitus* and yet, through Cheramie's writing, creating a *habitus* of their own to serve as a starting point for dialogue on the community's history, culture, and language (Bourdieu, 1993).

One of the most significant qualities of travel, in the context of Cheramie's writing, is the way in which he relates it to his identity as a person who speaks Louisiana French. For example, in his poem *Les post-partum blues de Carême-prenant* (2007), the narrator moves between English, French, and Spanish to describe the scene of tourists from around the world who have congregated there. Yet, by referring to New Orleans by its Spanish name, rather than its French equivalent, the narrator simultaneously demonstrates the diversity of linguistic and cultural influences on the region – including on Francophone Louisiana (Rabalais, 2017, 2021; Appendix J) – and the ambiguous positioning of these languages in relation to English. The choice, therefore, to portray the airport as English-Spanish speaking (when, in reality, only English is utilised in the airport's signage, as Figure 3 shows) implies a sense of bitterness that, despite the heritage of Louisiana French, it is not (in the eyes of the narrator) adequately represented in the state's public spaces but is instead relegated primarily to tourist-oriented locations. The choice to engage in English and Spanish translanguaging (cf. p. 69) also suggests that the Louisiana French community, despite its historical ties to the region akin to their

Anglophone colonial counterparts, has at once undergone rejection in favour of a more visible minority language-speaking community (by dint of the size of the community, which is substantially larger than that of the Louisiana French people), and yet also rejects itself the idea that it is inferior to these groups. The community thus is ‘exiled’ from the American *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993), despite its own attempts to become subject (Puumeister, 2019).

However, as stated previously, Cheramie’s portrayal of New Orleans Airport – which is depicted as bilingual – directly contradicts reality, where English is the only language that utilised in the airport’s signage and throughout its infrastructure (see Figure 3). This is not the first instance of writing that is not ‘accurate’ in terms of its relationship with reality, as evidenced by the depiction of *Jolie Blonde* as sung by Cyndi Lauper (cf. 2007, p. 9). There are certain works within *Lait à mère* and *Julie Choufleur* that are set in periods that the author could not possibly recall, such as the period before his birth (cf. 1997, p. 13). On the one hand, one could regard this work as creative writing, as opposed to ‘life writing’, due to the elements of fantasy² interspersed throughout which bring into question the ‘authenticity’ of the lived experience later provided by Cheramie.

On the other hand, as Chapters One and Two demonstrate (pp. 26-88), there is no static definition of what may constitute life writing; rather, the boundary between fiction and non-fiction with life writing is fluid and based around the creator’s interpretation of said boundaries. It is my opinion that the fictional elements of Cheramie’s oeuvre do not discount it as an authentic piece of life writing. Instead, one might regard this collection as an example of autofiction, albeit an example that does not seek to hide its elements of fiction (cf. Jones, 2007; Smith and Watson, 2010). This belief stems from the fact that those fictional or anachronistic elements mentioned throughout are provoked by the author’s perception of his environment

² The term ‘fantasy’ is used here, not in the sense of the supernatural or magical, but with the disconnect between these aspects of the narrative and the reality in which the story as a whole is grounded.

and his emotions regarding his identity as a Louisiana French speaker (Appendix K). In choosing to incorporate moments of fiction, Cheramie therefore highlights the sense of inferiority that is held (in his experience) regarding his own language and culture, thus allowing it to be celebrated to a far greater extent through his work.

In *Les post-partum blues de Carême-prenant*, Cheramie also evokes a spiritual quality to the concept of travel by depicting the collective experience of being in New Orleans and experiencing its culture, despite the varied motivations behind each traveller's journey to the region. This element is shown using terms such as '*pèlerinage*' ('pilgrimage') to refer to a visit to a local bar, Fat Harry's (Cheramie, 2007, p.42). This brief allusion to religion in the context of the bar could be interpreted both as serious – the bar is considered 'iconic' by those residing in New Orleans (cf. Ross, 2010), and thus would be an essential place to visit – but at the same time, there is a certain amount of acerbity that one senses in Cheramie's writing. This can be seen in the following lines:

Been there
Done that
Et elle a got le T-shirt aussi.

Been there
Done that
And she got the tee shirt too.

(Cheramie, 2007, p. 42, translated by the author of this thesis).

Here, Cheramie switches between English and French, perhaps to emphasise his disdain for the students' decision to frequent more tourist-oriented sites over more 'authentically' Louisiana French establishments. When coupled with the other 'souvenirs' that the narrator observes among his fellow passengers, such as the plastic necklaces and their visible hangovers (Cheramie, 2007, p. 42), such acerbity becomes an overt sarcasm, as Cheramie points out to the audience everything that one might expect from someone visiting New Orleans rather than the true cultural sights that he, as a member of the Louisiana French community, might prefer. The use of translanguaging (Atkinson and Bradley, 2017; Creese et al., 2017) – creating a

métissage linguistique (Glissant, 1989) across English, French, and Spanish – evokes the environment in which the poem is set (an airport in a predominately Anglophone country) while also recalling the fact that the student in question, like Chéramie, is Francophone. Yet even this statement is acerbic in nature, with the narrator deriding the fact that the student’s experience of Francophone Louisiana is ‘complete’ without exploring beyond local tourist attractions. Following this interpretation, I therefore posit that Chéramie also wishes to highlight how easily his culture and lived experience can be reduced to stereotypes, while the culture in which he was raised is not observed or appreciated by outsiders.

From the opposite perspective, I also regard this excerpt as a flash of anger directed, not at the tourists in the airport, but at Chéramie’s own community for displaying a performative version of their culture as opposed to that which he has experienced as a speaker of Louisiana French. This perspective is reinforced by several other poems found both in *Lait à mère* and *Julie Chouffleur* (e.g. *souvenirs de sneaux*, or *Memories of Snow*), where he refers to the pain of feeling compelled to speak English (Chéramie, 1997). One can observe similar sentiments towards such performativity in Waggoner’s poems *Mardi Gras* and *Counterclockwise*, two poems which will both be examined in greater detail at a later stage of this chapter (Waggoner, 2011; p. 117).

In addition to the translanguaging found in ‘*Les post-partum blues de Carême-prenant*’, it is essential to note the Gallicised interpretation of the English ‘snow’, as seen in the title of *souvenirs de sneaux* (1997, pp. 41-46). Given that one of the focal points of this poem is the interaction between Chéramie’s dual identity as Louisiana French and Anglophone, his choice to use a Gallicised spelling of the word ‘snow’ – presenting it as ‘*sneaux*’ (ibid.) – is indicative of the struggle the narrator-figure faces in trying to determine where they may make their belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

As Dajko (2018) has noted, this phenomenon is certainly not unique to Cherie's writing. She states that it is common for people in Louisiana to 'play with the language [...] The use of *eaux* to indicate /o/ (presumably taken from well-known French names like Boudreaux, Thibodeaux, and Arceneaux) is well-known nationally from its appearance in support of New Orleans's NFL football team: *Geaux Saints*' (ibid., p. 156). The replacement of the original English by Gallicised form – even if (as with '*Geaux*') it would normally affect its pronunciation – suggests, as Dajko argues, a certain amount of comfort among Louisiana French speakers in playing with the two languages to create a new, hybridised form.

However, I believe that the combination of Louisiana French and English is not one that stems from humour or play. Instead, it is my assertion that such *métissage linguistique* (Glissant, 1989, 1997) – a translanguaging that not only moves across the barrier between the two languages but brings them together to meet in a new linguistic *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993) – stems from an urge among the community not to let its linguistic heritage die (Foucault, 1997), even if its survival must take place through its connection to English. Thus, there is active resistance here against language death and, by extension, the cultural death of Francophone Louisiana (Foucault, 1997, 2004).

The reflections on spirituality previously noted in *Les post-partum blues de Carême-prenant* are interspersed throughout other works penned by Cherie and Waggoner. References to mortality and spirituality are commonly found in the later stages of their works, with poems such as *Les morts ne sont pas morts... (The dead are not dead...)* (Cherie, 2007) and Waggoner's *Retour* (Waggoner, 2011). This theme is more significant in Pennsylvania German written narrative, especially in the work of Moll and Madenford (2015), which revolves around contact with the spirit world and the 'resurrection' of each ghost's lived experience.

While this can be interpreted literally, based on the relatively close ties that remain between the Louisiana French community and the Church (cf. Appendix D), it is my view that there is more to the preoccupation with death and spirituality than what is seen at first glance. In fact, when these recurring themes are re-contextualised within the wider context of the Louisiana French community, it becomes evident that the authors include their language and culture in this death process, as though their physical deaths would hasten the death of the Louisiana French language and culture. This argument is particularly prescient when one considers that these authors did grow up around native Louisiana French speakers and, as Cheramie testifies (cf. Appendix K), used the language in their youth.

Another key theme of Cheramie's writing is the notion of pride in being a member of the Louisiana French community, a motif that is expressed on several occasions in his work. For example, when reflecting on his youth (1997), he makes frequent reference to the use of Louisiana French at home. This is then contrasted with his education, where, as *O.E.D.* notes (p. 14), he was encouraged by his teachers to avoid using the language – a subject which is also observed in Waggoner's writing (2011) and will be examined later in this chapter (p. 117). Therefore, in expressing his pride in being a member of the Louisiana French community, Cheramie engages both in celebration of his culture – as evidenced by the fact that he produced writing in the language in the first place – and resistance against the idea, personified in *O.E.D.* by the figure of the teacher (Cheramie, 1997, p. 14), that the Louisiana French culture and language are inferior to Anglophone culture – a notion that was previously addressed in Chapters One and Two (pp. 26-88).

This combination of resistance and celebration is also seen in Cheramie's choice not to incorporate a glossary of Louisiana French terms into his works, unlike his peers (e.g. Jambon, 2016; Waggoner, 2011). Its omission asserts that Cheramie's language and culture are of inherent value and thus worthy of being acknowledged. However, in doing so, he also risks

reducing accessibility for readers from outside the community, particularly those who do not have high levels of competency in French. Such a loss, while not necessarily of consequence to those within the Louisiana French community, creates the potential for lack of acknowledgement by wider American society.

In addition, by not incorporating a means of translating the Louisiana French vernacular into any other language, Chéramie risks a lack of comprehension, and thereby alienation, from other readers within the *Francophonie*. The choice to do this therefore highlights the alienation that is experienced *within* the Louisiana French community, both when considered in the context of American society as a whole and within the *Francophonie*, in which they are not accorded the same recognition as other North American French-speaking communities (*Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, 2022). Consequently, this is further evidence that the *habitus* this community inhabits is neither entirely American, nor entirely Francophone, but one that is unique to them; those who continue to actively use the language, through this creative decision, actively render themselves a form of *homo sacer* (See Chapter One for more information).

One poem that evokes alienation and belonging particularly strongly is *souvenirs de sneaux* from Chéramie's first collection, *Lait à mère* (1997). This free verse poem recounts Chéramie's sense of belonging to the land of the Acadians 'qui sont pas des Québécois ni des Brayons ni des Canayens. Acadiens'/'[W]ho are not Quebecois nor Brayons nor Canadians. Acadians' (Chéramie, 1997, p. 41, translated by the author of this thesis). This group, with whom he feels kinship, is one that is neither solely American, nor solely French/Francophone; he instead belongs to the 'invisible, inaudible nation, the nation of the American Francophones' (*ibid.*).

This reemphasis of belonging can be interpreted in two ways. The first is more positive, in that Chéramie might be asserting and celebrating his identity as a Francophone American,

and a member of the Acadian ‘nation’. However, one could also view this statement more negatively, in the sense that he and his fellow Francophone Americans (such as the Louisiana French) are not considered a part of wider American society, nor (perhaps more crucially, given the activities of the *Francophonie*) do they feel as though they belong in the wider Francophone world. It is my opinion that it is a combination of the two, given the way that Chéramie goes on to describe the French later in the poem:

Les Français, eux-là, toujours saignants de la guerre de Cent Ans, se procurent leur identité par rapport à l’anglais.

La preuve.

Ça dit là-bas que ça veut en savoir un plus sur nous-autres, nos apporter de l’aide fraternelle, mais ils envoient toujours quelqu’un qui vient pas.

Ça dit là-bas que ça va nous laisser la parole, mais eux, ils nous l’adressent tout le temps en anglais.

The French over there, still bleeding from the Hundred Years’ War, determine their identity in relation to English.

The proof:

They say there that they want to know more about us, bring us some ‘brotherly support’, but still they send someone who doesn’t end up doing anything.

They say there that they want to leave us our language; but them, they always address us in English.

(*ibid.*, translated by the author of this thesis).

This passage highlights both the anger the narrator feels (regarding their treatment at the hands of their European counterparts) and the irony in the perceived view the French (and Louisiana French in turn) have of themselves. As he says, despite the progress that has been made in terms of recognising the French culture and language (via the *Académie Française*, for example), the French and Louisiana French still perceive themselves seemingly as inferior or ‘Other’ to their Anglophone counterparts (Spivak, 1994; Appendix B) – a surprising revelation, given the prevalence of French globally.

Such low esteem of one’s own language may be a result of the Anglocentric viewpoint found in the Global North, which renders non-Anglophone communities ‘other’ within the global *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993). Alternatively, this may be a self-imposed ‘Othering’, with those to whom Chéramie is referring choosing to put themselves in the objectified position

rather than undergoing biopolitical subjectification (Puumeister, 2019). Chéramie's choice, therefore, to use this language in his poetry – not only French, but a form of French specific to his community – could therefore be viewed as a means of resisting both the othering imposed upon him and the self-imposed othering of the *Francophonie* to assert his language and culture as subject.

As this passage also demonstrates, however, the 'self-othering' of the Louisiana French community is not solely caused by their Anglophone peers. In fact, there is much to be said also for the attitude held by the metropolitan French community in terms of how they regard their North American counterparts. In the use of '*eux-là*' (Chéramie, 2007), Chéramie highlights once again the narrator's view – and the view of the Louisiana French community as a whole – that the community is divided from their European counterparts, be it in terms of geography, language, or culture, through the explicit reference to them 'over there'.

Furthermore, Chéramie's note that the community is always addressed in English by the Francophone, despite the similarities in language – while most likely hyperbole – reinforces the bitterness expressed in *Les post-partum blues de Carême-prenant* and *souvenirs de sneaux* regarding the relationship Francophone Louisiana has with the wider *Francophonie* and, in particular, the belief that the metropolitan French regard the community as 'Other'. Despite being 'brothers' (Chéramie, 1997, p. 41), the Louisiana French are considered 'illegitimate' in the eyes of the *métropole* (Culp, 2017), and thus are rendered *homines sacri* (Agamben, 1998). In sum, the community is left to 'make live' alone or 'let die' (Foucault, 1997) – albeit to the detriment of the *Francophonie* as a whole.

Chéramie's discontent regarding this relationship is referenced on several occasions throughout his work. It is even visible in the title of the collection, with *Lait à mère* serving as a homophone for *lait amer* ('bitter milk'). The poem *O.E.D* also stresses Chéramie's discontent;

although the narrator claims not to be angry about learning English, the middle portion of this poem suggests otherwise:

*a présent, je connais dire
sludge pit
pas surprenant qu'il n'y a pas
de mot pour ça en français.
et comment tu dis
chemotherapy?
radical mastectomy?
coastal erosion?
ah oui, c'est une grande langue que l'anglais
avec Shakespeare et tout ça.*

as of now, I know how to say
sludge pit
not surprising that there isn't
a word for that in French.
and how do you say
chemotherapy?
radical mastectomy?
coastal erosion?
ah yes, English is a great language
with Shakespeare and all of them.

(Cheremie, 1997, p. 14, translated by the author of this thesis).

This passage juxtaposes the lines immediately preceding it, thus creating a sharp contrast between the discontent expressed here and the indifference portrayed previously. The positioning of these two contrasting perspectives creates a sense that Cheremie is utilising a tongue-in-cheek approach to point out the 'pointlessness' of the abstract concepts he can express in English versus the Louisiana French language with which he is familiar. This effect is achieved by selecting specialised terms like 'sludge pit' and 'chemotherapy' (ibid.), which, while useful, are not relevant to Cheremie's daily life. Consequently, the narrator highlights the depth of the English language in comparison to Louisiana French (on a scientific basis), while implicitly arguing that Louisiana French is perhaps more artistic, more creative, and tied more closely to his daily life than the English he has learnt.

Furthermore, in switching from Louisiana French to English, Cheremie only employs English terms with negative connotations, such as 'chemotherapy' and 'coastal erosion' (ibid.). In addition, each of these terms speaks of a topic that might be considered uncomfortable or taboo, with each term referring to something being removed or transported – as with the 'sludge pit' – to a marginal area of society. Cheremie thus situates his own community, once again, outside the biopolitical *habitus* by proxy, even if the 'Othering' he observes is not undertaken

by the Anglophone majority (Bourdieu, 1993; Foucault, 1997, 2004). Therefore, I maintain that Cherie's use of translanguaging highlights the way that, in the eyes of the narrator, the Anglophone world views the Louisiana French and other minority language speakers, including the Pennsylvania Germans.

In sum, Cherie highlights the occasionally tenuous relationship between celebration and resistance that is experienced by those who actively use the Louisiana French language. The two collections examined in this section are steeped in these notions, from the way in which Cherie compares his early life against those of his monolingual English-speaking counterparts (1997, p. 14, pp. 41-46) to the critiques he provides on the way his community is viewed in comparison to the wider *Francophonie* (*Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, 2022). Using translanguaging as an extended metaphor for the alienation Cherie's narrator-figure experiences in both worlds – worlds which, to their view, have been shaped by the perspective of the Anglophone and Francophone worlds around them (cf. p. 69) – Cherie emphasises the significance of written narratives in Louisiana French. In presenting the written narrative in his own language – and, perhaps crucially, without any glossary or means by which non Louisiana French-speaking readers could understand and appreciate the unique linguistic features found within – Cherie enters and combines the Anglo-American and Francophone literary spaces in order to create a Louisiana French *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993) that simultaneously takes space within these *habiti* while also creating some distance between the narratives of his community and those on the 'outside'.

Yet, as the interview undertaken with Cherie also demonstrates (Appendix K), his choice to write in Louisiana French is not solely about preserving the language so that it could be used by future generations of Louisiana French people; rather, his choice to use the language is more about preserving it so that it can be observed and recognised as having existed in that moment, regardless of whether or not the language will actually survive or be used in the future.

In that regard, these texts are something of a ‘time capsule’, an artefact that records the language in a way that non-written narrative methods like music (in the performative sense) may not – it is a concrete method of recording the language for what it is in its current form.

However, these two collections only highlight the personal views of one Louisiana French speaker, with the same narrator-figure maintained across his *oeuvre*. While this allows for the reader to better understand the narrator’s personal struggles as a Louisiana French speaker, it is my belief that, in order to better advocate for the significance of written narrative among the Louisiana French community, one must also consider those works which present a greater spectrum of perspectives. The following section will address this through its examination of May Rush Gwin Waggoner’s collection of short stories and poetry, which provide a multiplicity of viewpoints across the Louisiana French community and across its history.

Waggoner and *Le Chant de l’arc-en-ciel*

We will now move on to the only female writer featured in this study – May Rush Gwin Waggoner – and her collection *Le Chant de l’arc-en-ciel*. As the introduction to this thesis notes (p. 3), the scoping phase I undertook as part of this project found that the female authors of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities were generally outnumbered by their male counterparts. For instance, although the Pennsylvania German version of Wikipedia – created by the community itself – lists several female authors, such as Gladys S. Martin, Polly Schropp, and Louise Weitzel (Wikipedia, 2014), many of these have not been prolific or penned their works several decades (and, in the case of Schropp and Weitzel, several centuries) ago. Similarly, *Éditions Tintamarre* – which publishes many authors from the Louisiana French community, including Chatelain, Cherie, Jambon, and Waggoner (*Les*

Éditions Tintamarre, 2022) – lists in their catalogue Sidonie de la Houssaye, a ‘prolific Creole writer’ (ibid.) whose work has attracted critical attention for decades (e.g. Greenwood, 2017; Jones, 2019; Perret, 1966).

Like Cheramie, religion is a major theme of Waggoner’s collection. This also corroborates Rabalais’ (2021) claims regarding the prevalence of this theme throughout the Louisiana French canon. Her depiction of religion – especially organised religion, such as the Catholic Church (e.g. Waggoner, 2011, pp. 61-66) – is generally positive, with several characters demonstrating an appreciation of religion and the traditions associated with religious practice (ibid.). This does not mean, however, that she does not engage in the popular practice within the Louisiana French community of mocking religion (Rabalais, 2021; Appendix D). The character of Samuel personifies this dichotomy most clearly: although his family does not belong to the Catholic Church, his parents do not prevent him from going to the church and admiring the solemnity of their rites and practices, which he regards with awe, curiosity and, to a lesser extent, confusion:

La cathédrale grandiose des Grands Blancs était très différente de sa petite église. Les membres de l’Église épiscopale méthodiste africaine sentaient la musique jusque dans les os ; elle coulait dans les veines, faisait battre le cœur [...] Mais à la cathédrale, on chantait une musique toute autre : la dignité y régnait. Samuel n’arrivait à déchiffrer que quelques paroles isolées : Paradisum, paradis. Agnus, agneau. Immaculata, ma culotte. Décidément on parlait de tout dans cette église!

The “big whites” magnificent cathedral was very different from his little church. The members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church felt the music in their bones; it ran in their veins, made their hearts beat [...] But at the cathedral, you sang an altogether different kind of music: there, dignity prevailed. Samuel could only decode a handful of isolated words: *Paradisum*, paradise. *Agnus*, lamb. *Immaculata*, my underwear. They certainly talked about everything in this church!

(Waggoner, 2011, p.63, translated by the author of this thesis).

As this excerpt indicates, Waggoner engages in a more subtle critique of the Catholic Church and its accessibility through Samuel’s inability to understand the Latin mass – which stands in direct contrast to the services in his own church, which are conducted in Louisiana

French and Louisiana Creole – while simultaneously evoking the numinous experience Samuel has during his time in the church. The use of a distorted form of Louisiana French to convey Samuel’s interpretation of the priest’s chanting is one such exemplar of such anti-clerical humour, in which Waggoner implicitly mocks the pretentious nature of the Mass (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984; Rabalais, 2021). This may also be viewed as an extended metaphor for the relationship between the *métropole* and its Louisiana counterparts; the language barrier between the Church and the Francophone Louisiana community it serves is reminiscent of the barrier expressed in *souvenirs de sneaux* (Cheramie, 1997) and the ‘Othering’ imposed on the Louisiana French community by the *métropole*.

However, the relationship Waggoner portrays between Samuel’s community and the Catholic Church could also be viewed as indicative of the racial tensions outlined by Landry (2016). The narrator notes that the local Catholic church is predominately frequented by white Louisiana French speakers, while Black speakers of Louisiana French favour an evangelical-style service; as a result, Samuel is viewed as something of a curiosity by the local Catholic clerics for his interest in their religious beliefs. (Waggoner, 2011, pp. 62-63). This implicit segregation of the community is reinforced by Rabalais’ statement regarding the ongoing divisions among White and Black Catholics in parts of Louisiana:

[T]here are over 40 Catholic churches, just in Lafayette. [...] I mean Lafayette proper, I’m not counting Youngsville and Broussard and all that – (there are) 120,000 people in Lafayette proper, over 40 just Catholic churches [...] but it’s still very segregated. But I would say that [Black Catholic churches] are fewer. When I go to Catholic church, rarely of my own volition – I was raised a Catholic, of course – but I mean, almost everyone is white in there. It’s very segregated, I think it’s like that everywhere. It’s like James Baldwin said, high noon on Sunday is the most segregated time during the week in America, and it’s kind of the same here (p. 428).

The continued segregation found in Lafayette’s Catholic community – evidenced by Rabalais’ description of majority White and Black Catholic congregations in his local churches – is a recurring theme within Waggoner’s oeuvre. In the short story *Histoire Acadienne* (2011,

pp. 19-42), for instance, segregation becomes a core theme of the narrative alongside the feeling of isolation. This also translates to the structure of the work, with Waggoner utilising a framing narrative, centred around the character of Lucie Broussard, and a central narrative depicted through her ancestor's (and namesake's) journal. The lack of physical connection between the two Lucies – with their only connection taking place through the elder Lucie's diary – and the disconnect between the story found in Lucie's journal and the story known by the wider family demonstrates the difficulty in transmitting narratives across generations without the written form, and thus, the significance of capturing such a narrative in the written form.

Furthermore, there is a disconnect between the reader and both narratives, as neither the central nor framing narrative takes place in a contemporary setting (*ibid.*); rather, the framing narrative takes place in the early 20th century, while the journal entries are situated within the late 18th century during the *Grand Dérangement*. The journal recounts the journey of the elder Lucie's forced expulsion from Acadia and subsequent transportation to Illinois, before making her own way to Louisiana, where she eventually settles. Throughout the story, there is a sense that, despite the community that forms around her as a means of support, there is a perpetual disconnect between Lucie the elder and the world around her. She makes mention of this herself in a later diary entry, where she notes that:

Je me sens toujours exilée ici. [...] Les gens parlent français ici mais ils nous regardent de haut, comme si nous étions des sauvages, et se moquent de notre accent et de nos habits. Et d'autres ne nous voient même pas. On voit des gens de toutes les couleurs qui parlent une Babel de langues. Tout est sale et bruyant et les noms mêmes me font peur.

I feel exiled here [...] People speak French here but they look down on us, as though we are savages, and mock our accents and our customs. And others don't even see us. We see people of all colours who speak a Babel of languages. Everything is dirty and noisy and even the names scare me.

(Waggoner, 2011, p. 31, translated by the author of this thesis).

Unlike Samuel and Cherie's unnamed narrator, whose isolation is driven primarily by a language barrier (Idem., pp. 61-66; Cherie, 1997), the disconnect experienced by the elder Lucie is not driven by the language; instead, Lucie is ostracised due to her heritage, which, as an Acadian from a rural background, stands in contrast to her Francophone peers who are based in more urban areas, like New Orleans, and thus have imported more metropolitan practices to the region (Waggoner, 2011, p. 31). Similar phenomena were observed in the Pennsylvania German community, where, as Loudon (2016) notes, the language and culture were far more prevalent in the rural parts of the state than in their urban counterparts.

Yet despite the disconnect experienced by the elder Lucie in her interactions with wider society, it is evident that the connection she feels to her language and heritage has been successfully passed down to younger generations. As the framing narrative demonstrates, little has changed for Lucie's descendants in terms of their Louisiana French culture and heritage: Lucie Broussard's family live on the same land as her ancestor once did, although the original farmhouse was abandoned after flooding; they maintain a more traditional family structure, with the men in the family undertaking more physical work and the women favouring work in the home (although, as page 38 demonstrates, there are signs of change through Lucie the younger's education); and, most significantly, they continue to speak the language that their ancestor brought with her to the state. These ties to the Acadian culture (from which they are descended) demonstrate the significance of creating a space that is unique to the community. This space is that which this thesis outlined in Chapters One and Two (pp. 26-88); it is a space in which the Louisiana French language and culture are able to exist as subject, free of the imposition of Anglophone heritage.

The interaction between inclusion and exclusion is not the only common theme across Waggoner's collection. Interpersonal relationships – and the relationships between people and tradition – are visible in several other stories, such as *Les Deux Soeurs* and *Contre vents et*

marées, in which one can observe the characters' close ties to Louisiana French cultural practices and the land which the community colonised following their arrival in the region (Rabalais, 2017). *Les Deux Soeurs* introduces Louisiana French musical tradition through the sisters' shared love of the violin – an instrument which remains popular in Louisiana French folk music today (cf. Appendix B) – while in *Contre vents et marées*, Waggoner introduces a 21st-century Louisiana French family that is still based on the farm of their ancestors and the relationships between the family and the land to which they are 'bound'. I will now briefly examine these two relationships – between the Louisiana French people and their cultural traditions, and between the Louisiana French people and the land upon which they have made their home – in the context of Waggoner's writing, with a view to understanding how their use enhances the sense of community that she has fostered.

Among those pieces within Waggoner's collection that incorporate the music of the Louisiana French – including the stories of Samuel, the short story *Vive le roi!*, and the poem *Counterclockwise* – it is *Les Deux Soeurs* which features this most heavily. The narrative is centred around a gifted violinist, Catherine, who is rumoured to possess a magical violin, and her two adopted daughters. This violin, brought to Louisiana during the *Grand Dérangement*, serves to curse those who attempt to harm its owners; the English sailors who take it from Emmeline (its original owner) find themselves falling increasingly ill until it is returned. Likewise, the younger of the two daughters, Cloris, is exposed by the violin's magical tune as having drowned her elder sister, Cécile, out of jealousy (Waggoner, 2011, pp. 45-54).

While it may appear that the violin is the focal 'character' of the story, given that it is responsible for many of the core actions of the story (and the consequences that arise from said actions), Waggoner has chosen to title the short story in French as *The Two Sisters*. This emphasises the complex relationship between the two sisters which is driven by competition and jealousy, rather than the loving relationship that Catherine hopes will emerge as the girls

age (ibid.). The choice to focus the story primarily on the family and its relationships, rather than bringing attention to the magical elements of the story, highlights the significance of community, perhaps not only to Waggoner, but to the wider Louisiana French community. Furthermore, the focus on Cloris' jealousy towards her older sister and her musical abilities – as evidenced by Cloris learning to play the violin following Cécile's death – demonstrates the importance of music for the community throughout its history, as evidenced by Cloris' yearning to continue the tradition started by her sister and adoptive mother. This significance is corroborated by the interviews undertaken with Ancelet and Cormier, both of whom reference the violin as one of the main components of the traditional Louisiana French 'sound' (see Appendices B and G).

Yet, despite the title that was chosen, Waggoner does accord the violin its own 'voice' and, through the use of anthropomorphism, 'names' it as a character on a par with the two sisters. The violin thus becomes a silent witness to the events of the story that is unable to share the truth until its 'voice' is released by Catherine's playing at the dénouement. Alternatively, one could interpret the 'ghostly' voice of the violin as that of Cécile, whose spirit has possessed the violin to reveal her fate. Regardless of how the violin's 'voice' might be viewed, the choice to depict the instrument as having its own voice re-emphasises the significance of music in recounting Louisiana French lived experience and the way in which this music is utilised to depict these experiences; thus, the violin becomes a personification of Louisiana French music as a whole.

Additionally, Waggoner's choice to portray the violin as a distinct character provokes questions, not only about the role music plays among the Louisiana French community as a whole, but also how the violin represents those in the community who do not feel they have a voice, either due to discrimination within the community (Landry, 2016; Appendix J) or due to previous attempts to erase the language and culture from wider American society (Cheramic,

1997; Appendices B and K). The violin's survival might be perceived as a metaphor for the Louisiana French people and how they have survived to tell their story despite the difficulties experienced along the way (cf. Appendices B and K for examples of these hardships, such as the forced exclusion of French in the education system). Subsequently, its destruction and restoration later in the narrative (Waggoner, 2011, pp. 45-54) may also reflect the fractured relationship between the sisters that is reconciled only in their death and the revelations of the violin's tune, or, alternatively, the fractured relationship between the Louisiana French community of the 21st century and the language from which they were previously distanced and now aim to reconnect (cf. Appendix B). If one extrapolates the nature of this relationship to reflect Anglo-American-Louisiana French relations, this therefore implies that it is only through the revelations of the community, and writers like Waggoner, that there can be moves towards a reconciliation of the two communities.

Of these analyses of the violin and its role, it is my view that its position as a metaphor for underrepresented voices (through the use of Cécile's spirit) better reflected the relationship between the Louisiana French and the Anglophone United States. Additionally, this interpretation supports the view that women in the community have not previously had the agency or opportunity to voice their own lived experiences, something which Cécile can only do through the violin.³ *Les Deux Sœurs* thus traverses fiction and non-fiction, especially given the fact that Waggoner is the sole female writer whose work I will examine in depth in this study.

In addition, there have only been two interviews undertaken with female speakers of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German, with Dr Marguerite Justus serving as the sole representation of Louisiana French women today (cf. Appendix L). The lack of female

sense of the supernatural or magical, but with the disconnect between these aspects of the narrative and the reality in which the sto

interview participants implies that, even if marginalised subgroups of the community (like female speakers of the language) wanted to give voice to their lived experience, it remains difficult for them to do so without compromising their ‘belonging’ to the Louisiana French collective experience (Yuval-Davis, 2006). One could argue that these subgroups are therefore *homines sacri* (Agamben, 1998) within a *habitus* already consisting of *homines sacri* (Bourdieu, 1993).

With regards to this sense of belonging, the short story *Contre vents et marées* (Waggoner, 2011, pp. 107-125) evokes this in the greatest detail. While several of Waggoner’s texts are set in the earlier 20th century and before, this is one of the few instances where Waggoner depicts Louisiana French life in 21st century America. One noteworthy feature of this story is that, despite the advancements that have been made in the intervening period in terms of technology, conventions, and language, the life of the Louisiana French-speaking characters Waggoner features remain quite similar in nature to those who lived in earlier periods. For example, the main characters continue to live on their family’s farm with some modern adaptations – this is evidenced by the mention of the emergency generator and the fact that the main character tells the story via a series of emails. Including this story – whose setting is similar to others in the collection, including *Histoire Acadienne* (Idem., pp. 19-42), but where the time period is more recent – Waggoner demonstrates the relatively small extent to which the cultural and linguistic practices of her community have been shaped by the increasing presence of technology. In addition, the setting of this story in a rural environment – one that is not too dissimilar from that of the Broussard family in *Histoire Acadienne* (ibid.) – indicates that, despite the technology from which Olympe and her family are able to benefit, the difficulties that they have experienced are not dissimilar from those faced by previous generations. Such an interpretation also further supports the earlier suggestion that, just as the

struggles against the region's climate persist, there are still linguistic barriers that must be addressed, as I noted in an earlier chapter (cf. p. 69).

Another similarity between *Contre vents et marées* and *Histoire Acadienne* is the use of a framing narrative, with the former opening with a reflection on the friendship between the unnamed narrator and Olympe Dubois, who recounts the central narrative of the hurricane and its aftermath. By employing framing narratives in these two cases, Waggoner likens the emotions of the characters at their heart (the unnamed narrator and the younger Lucie Broussard, respectively) to similar emotions expressed by members of the Louisiana French community today, such as the joy Lucie expresses when she discovers her ancestor's journal (Waggoner, 2022, p. 25); in the case of *Contre vents et marées*, she makes the case for interpreting the unnamed narrator as a version of herself, much as Cheramie does in his writing (cf. p. 104). Therefore, one could argue that, despite the fact that *Contre vents et marées* is technically fiction – although Waggoner did base it upon real-life experiences (2011, p. 125) – the audience is able to perceive it as an immersive piece of life writing through the use of devices that allow them to partake in the lived experience of the characters, and the way in which they are able to feel their belonging as part of the wider Louisiana French community (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

As the analyses in this section therefore demonstrate, the creation and maintenance of community is crucial to *Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel*, as Waggoner seeks to unite all those who she depicts therein through their relationships with each other. I posit that Waggoner is able to achieve such unity through the depiction of the relationships between the Louisiana French people, their language, and, by extension, their culture. This is most strongly evidenced in the first piece of the collection – a poem entitled *Counterclockwise*. The poem's opening stanzas present an unnamed narrator, again implied to be Waggoner (or a literary construct based on her), observing a dance and the reactions of those around them. In doing so, Waggoner joins

the other core authors of this thesis in utilising translanguaging, with English utilised in the second half of the first stanza:

*On danse counterclockwise en Louisiane
jupes en cercles spiralent aux chapeaux de
feutre
sourires et sueur et joues rouge comme du feu
et les touristes applaudissent
isn't that cute
to think that in America
and don't they talk funny*

We dance counterclockwise in Louisiana
circle skirts spinning to felt hats
smiles and sweat and cheeks flaming red
And the tourists applaud
isn't that cute
to think that in America
and don't they talk funny

(Waggoner, 2011, p. 17, translated by the author of this thesis).

Waggoner's use of translanguaging in this opening stanza has two functions. First, the fluidity of the movement between the two languages serves as a metaphor for the dance and its motions, thus adding to the musicality of the piece and helping to ground the reader in the environment in which Waggoner sets the stanza. By using the English 'counterclockwise', the narrator also describes a concept which, as she notes later in the poem, is difficult to do in French without the term sounding convoluted (ibid.). This function therefore highlights a possible advantage to speaking Louisiana French (in the eyes of the narrator), in that one may communicate in multiple languages and occupy a space that is at once not quite 'French', and not quite 'American', but where one can feel the language (Baloy, 2011).

Secondly, Waggoner's emphasis of English in the second half of the stanza gives the audience a sense of the alienation experienced by Louisiana French speakers when encountering monolingual Anglophones – a sentiment also expressed, albeit to a lesser extent, by Cheramie (p. 104) – or perhaps the alienation that is experienced by the Anglophone community when they encounter the Louisiana French. The sudden shift to English in the last three lines of the stanza suggests that the narrator senses condescension from the anonymous English tourists, as though the language and the culture are not as 'legitimate' as the Anglophone culture they embody (Culp, 2017). It may also be, as Agamben might say, a means

by which the Louisiana French speaker is rendered *homo sacer* and cut off from wider American society (Agamben, 1998), thus reflecting the linguistic biopolitics at play and the sense that the Louisiana French language, along with any other non-English language, should be ‘abandoned’ (Foucault, 1997, 2004; p. 25).

However, as the narrator continues, the reader is suddenly transported from 21st century Louisiana to Acadia at the time of the *Grand Dérangement*, while the narrator also changes to become an anonymous, omniscient narrator who watches the expulsion of the Acadians from afar. This tonal shift is highlighted by the use of several rhetorical devices in the final stanza, as seen below:

Counterclockwise	Counterclockwise
<i>à travers le temps</i>	through time
<i>jusqu’au moment où la foule effrayée</i>	To the moment where the frightened masses
<i>les uns blottis contre les autres</i>	Huddled on top of each other
<i>bétail sur les bateaux</i>	Cattle on the boats
<i>regardait monter en spirale</i>	Watched the spirals rising
<i>vers un Dieu indifférent</i>	Towards an indifferent God
<i>la fumée des villages et des vies</i>	The smoke of villages and lives
<i>regardait couler l’eau</i>	Watched the water run
<i>comme leur destinée</i>	Like their destiny
<i>contre la montre</i>	Against the clock
<i>contre le temps</i>	Against time
<i>contre tout espoir</i>	Against all hope

(Waggoner, 2011, p. 18, translated by the author of this thesis).

The final stanza commences with the repetition of the title *Counterclockwise*, which, as the narrator explains earlier, is easier to say in English than in French. One could perceive this as Waggoner implicitly stating that English is easier to use in general than Louisiana French; however, by writing the vast majority of the poem (and the collection as a whole) in the latter language, she highlights the cultural significance of Louisiana French both to herself and to fellow members of the community she portrays. She then utilises a combination of plosives and dentals, as seen in the lines ‘*bétail sur les bateaux*’ and ‘*un Dieu indifférent*’.

These forms of alliteration, especially in the former case, suggests not only anger at the situation of those being expelled from Acadia, but also a sense of bitterness at being forced from the ancestral home of those Louisiana French speakers featured in the first stanza (including the narrator from said stanza). There is also ambiguity in the former phrase, with the term ‘cattle’ serving as a metaphor for the Louisiana French people gathered on the boats as much as it may represent actual livestock.

Similar forms of ambiguity are present throughout *Counterclockwise*. For instance, even in the title *Counterclockwise*, it is uncertain as to the meaning to which the writer is referring. On the one hand, ‘counterclockwise’ could be viewed in a more literal sense, with the title referring to the way in which Waggoner turns back the clock in the final stanza to reflect on the past of her community. In interpreting the title thus, Waggoner draws attention to the bitterness expressed in the final lines of the poem while also referencing the similar emotions expressed in the opening stanza. This viewpoint is also compatible with the anger expressed in the opening stanza at the condescending observers.

On the other hand, one might also perceive the choice of an English title as a means of ensuring greater accessibility to readers who do not speak Louisiana French – at least in the opening lines – before inviting the reader to consider the impact the *Grand Dérangement* has had on the descendants of those who experienced its trauma. In this alternate perspective, one feels that Waggoner is yearning for a time in which her culture and language could be practiced without the influence of Anglophone culture, be it through the *Grand Dérangement* or through the judgement that people like the elder Lucie would have experienced (cf. Waggoner, 2011, pp. 19-42). There is also a certain amount of irony in this interpretation in that Waggoner has opted for an English title despite the negative connotations with which the English-speaking tourists are associated (Idem., p. 17); consequently, this highlights the significant role English

plays for speakers of Louisiana French, regardless of whether they may wish this to be the case (Rabalais, 2021; cf. Appendices B and J).

Yet another interpretation of Waggoner's choice of title is that it is spoken, not by Waggoner or either of the two narrators, but by the English-speaking tourists featured in the opening stanza. The use of an English title over the French alternatives offered by the narrator (Waggoner, 2011, p. 17) suggests that, in Waggoner's view, there is an underlying sense of superiority felt by the English tourists as they watch the Louisiana French community practice their culture. Thus, the English title refers to the way in which an Anglocentric *habitus*, such as that in which the tourists reside, regards the Louisiana French community as living in the past, or living 'counterclockwise' to their modern lifestyle – a view which would support the arguments made in earlier chapters regarding the position of communities like the Louisiana French (Bourdieu, 1993; p. 25). This analysis is also compatible with the closing stanza and the omniscient narrator's description of the impact that the past has had upon the Louisiana French language, culture, and community, with English colonial groups deemed responsible for much of the early cultural trauma caused by the *Grand Dérangement* (Waggoner, 2011, pp. 17-42). Such trauma is also shown in more recent times through the bifurcation of 'Cajun' and 'Creole' identity and the historic eradication of French in the classroom, both subjects which are considered at length in the interviews undertaken for this thesis (cf. Appendices J and K). In using an English title, Waggoner therefore demonstrates the need to reflect on this history and engage in a 'counterclockwise' performance of such cultural practices with a view to reconstructing the Louisiana French *habitus* once again in a new, modern society (Bourdieu, 1993), just as previous generations did after the *Grand Dérangement* (Waggoner, 2011, pp. 19-42). Consequently, I assert that the use of English invites the reader – especially those readers who are monolingual Anglophones – to examine why the community still believes these

performative aspects of the culture to be necessary; it is because of the destruction previously caused by Anglophone society.

Each of the three interpretations impart a bitterness to the audience, particularly when compared alongside the lines spoken by the English-speaking tourists in the opening stanza. Furthermore, the implied patronising tone of the tourists further supports a combination of second and third interpretations as being most appropriate in the context of this poem and the message Waggoner conveys. I am in favour of this approach due to the oxymoronic nature of the poem, which at once has the capacity to attract an English-speaking audience through translingual elements while also inviting them to question the legacy of the English colonial project. The multiplicity of these interpretations and the ambiguity found in these small, yet crucial, aspects of *Counterclockwise* demonstrates anew the significance of the language for the community and the disconnect that is still experienced between elements of the Louisiana French community and the language which they are ‘meant’ to speak. They have again been rendered *homines sacri* (Agamben, 1998), not only from wider American society, but also from their own culture through their inability to ‘feel’ it without engaging in performance (Baloy, 2011).

As this section has demonstrated, Waggoner’s command of language, narrative styles, and rhetorical devices creates a rich literary environment for the reader, who thus perceives the Louisiana she portrays as based on her lived experience and the lived experience of many others across the history of the region. Unlike writers like Cheramie (1997, 2007) and Jambon (2013, 2016), who draw more on their personal experiences and contemporary Louisiana French history, Waggoner’s writing represents Louisiana French speakers of various genders, ethnicities, and from a range of eras, to highlight how their sense of belonging in the community has at once evolved and yet also continued to gain strength, even today.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the written narratives of Cherie and Waggoner to determine how these works reflect the current status of the Louisiana French-speaking community and how they depict issues including: belonging; the loss, and death, of culture and language; methods of creating and transmitting narrative; and, most crucially, what it means to be a speaker of Louisiana French both historically and in the present day. Both authors grapple with several of these areas at once in their writing, particularly when exploring the links between culture, language, and belonging.

Despite this, the two writers diverge when reflecting upon Louisiana French history and the impact that previous trauma has had upon the community at large. Cherie's collections speak more of the impact previous language loss has had upon the narrator-figure as an individual member of the community, isolated from other speakers. While this effectively demonstrates the way the narrator's Louisiana French identity changes according to the attitudes and behaviours of wider society at that time, the reader may also have the impression that the difficulties recounted are unique to this figure alone.

Waggoner, meanwhile, employs a multiplicity of narrator and setting in both the geographical and temporal sense, which creates the impression that her work represents the sentiments of the Louisiana French-speaking community as one, even if this was not the aim of her writing. The diversity in her characters – many of whom appear to be working-class or based in rural settings, but all of which ultimately stem from different backgrounds – assists in creating the impression of a collective voice, with Waggoner's writing serving as a conduit for said voice.

Although it is possible to better perceive the way in which the Louisiana French people have sought to determine their identity in a contemporary context, it must be reiterated here

that written narrative forms are not the most popular way in which these concepts are explored in the region (see Appendix G). Rather, it is through the use of music, among other art forms, that is particularly prevalent in terms of maintaining the use of Louisiana French. In the following chapter, I will address the implications of this and how the use of non-written art forms compares to those narrative styles explored in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: LOUISIANA FRENCH NON-WRITTEN NARRATIVE FORMS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE

In the previous chapter, I examined the written narratives of the Louisiana French community through the work of Cheramie (1997, 2007) and Waggoner (2011). This analysis culminated in the determination, on my part, that the Louisiana French written narrative serves as a means of exploring the relationships between language, culture, identity, and belonging, with works like *Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel* utilising a polyphonic structure to represent the diversity of lived experience in the community (cf. p. 117).

However, while the preceding chapter focused on written narratives found in the Louisiana French community, it should also be noted that there are several prominent artists who seek to capture their narratives in other forms. Of these non-written narrative forms, music is among the most prominent (cf. Ancelet, 1999). While the number of writers producing works in Louisiana French today is relatively small (Arceneaux, 2012; Chatelain, 2012; Jambon, 2013, 2016; Appendix G), there are still several solo artists and bands that do so, including Zachary Richard, Barry Ancelet, Feufollet, and the Lost Bayou Ramblers (cf. *L'invité*, 2015; Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012, 2017; *Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, 2018). Additionally, several members of the community favour local heritage and culture festivals, such as the *Festivals Acadiens et Créoles* (Cajun and Creole Festival) and *Festival International de Louisiane* (Louisiana International Festival), not only as a means of creating and preserving existing narratives, but of transmitting them to future generations of Louisiana French speakers and the wider public, thereby ensuring continued preservation and celebration of one's own cultural heritage (cf. Appendices B and K).

In this chapter, I will focus on the narratives presented in each of these forms through three sections: the first will examine the albums *Mammoth Waltz* (2012) and *Kalenda* (2017) by the Lost Bayou Ramblers; the second will focus on the album *Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent* (2018), which was a collaborative project spearheaded by Professor Barry Ancelet (cf. Appendix G); and the third and final section of this chapter will analyse the role of the folk festival in representing Louisiana French culture, with *Festivals Acadiens et Créoles* and *Festival International de Louisiane* at the heart of this exploration. This will culminate in a comparison between the written and non-written narrative forms and their significance in representing Louisiana French identity today.

The Lost Bayou Ramblers

As stated above, there are several artists that continue to produce music in Louisiana French, with some – such as Barry Ancelet (Arceneaux, 2012; *Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, 2018) – having contributed to both the written and non-written canons. The focal point of this section is the recent work of the Lost Bayou Ramblers, a Louisiana French band who have produced music in the language for over twenty years (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2022). In particular, I will focus predominately on two of their most recent studio recordings: the albums *Mammoth Waltz* (2012) and *Kalenda* (2017).

Unlike their contemporaries in the field of written narratives, the Lost Bayou Ramblers have received much greater critical acclaim from outside of the Louisiana French-speaking community – which, as stated previously (cf. pp. 1-24), is one of the reasons that this group was selected for this study. For instance, the band won the Grammy Award for the Best Regional Roots Music Album in 2018 for the album *Kalenda*, while *Live: À La Blue Moon* was

nominated for Best Zydeco or Cajun Music Album in 2008 (Recording Academy: GRAMMY Awards, 2022).

Yet while this group have succeeded in receiving recognition from wider American society, I would also like to draw attention to the fact that, since a restructuring undertaken in 2012, it has become increasingly difficult for music representing communities like the Louisiana French to gain such acclaim. This is due to the merging of three categories – each of which celebrated music from specific cultures and communities – to form the Best Regional Roots Music Album category (Ramsey, 2011). These three categories were:

- Best Native American Music Album (originally introduced in 2001)
- Best Hawaiian Music Album (originally introduced in 2005)
- Best Zydeco or Cajun Music Album (originally introduced in 2008)

While these three categories had existed for less than ten years apiece, the Academy's decision to merge them might be viewed as a homogenisation of folk music into one category in which these artists – each with their own unique cultural contexts – must then compete. The Recording Academy reasoned that merging the categories 'ups the game in terms of what it takes to receive a Grammy [...] We are talking about the most prestigious, coveted award and it should be a high bar in terms of the measurement of receiving that' (Michaels, 2011). The perceived inferiority of such categories is observed in other Anglophone cultures, too; for instance, the Brit Awards have never included folk or traditional music (e.g. Headliner Magazine, 2021) – neither in the popular nor classical music awards – and there are no major awards ceremonies in the United States or in England which include these genres.¹

¹ There are, however, awards ceremonies in Scotland and the Republic of Ireland which are dedicated to traditional and folk music from their respective regions (cf. RTÉ Radio 1, 2022; Scots Trad Music Awards, 2022).

However, in the years since the categories were merged, seven of the eleven awards given for the Best Regional Roots Music Album have been awarded to artists whose work would have previously fallen into the Zydeco or Cajun category; this includes Terrence Simien, who was part of the original campaign for a separate Zydeco/Cajun category (Ramsey, 2011). While this outcome is evidently positive for the Louisiana French community – given that musicians performing in the language may be exposed to a greater audience through the Grammys – this is to the detriment of indigenous American and Hawaiian musicians whose work does not receive the same attention. For instance, despite Native American musicians receiving nominations, none of these artists have won since the categories were merged (Recording Academy: GRAMMY Awards, 2022). This further demonstrates the marginalisation experienced, not only by the Louisiana French community, but by any linguistic or ethnic minority that does not conform to the expectations of an Anglophone American *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993); all are rendered *homines sacri* from this (Agamben, 1998).

Having examined the context within which the Lost Bayou Ramblers currently perform, it is now time to turn to their music. Of their more recent work, the major themes of the Lost Bayou Ramblers' oeuvre include the notion of remembering one's past – not only the past of oneself individually, but that of the community form which one originates. A key example of this process is found in the song *Kalenda* (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017), which, as this thesis will demonstrate, engages in the act of preserving the past without over-romanticising said past.

Kalenda is described by the band as celebrating 'the complex history and cultural diversity of Kalenda – a caribbean [sic] dance, a Louisiana rhythm, a Cajun rock'n'roll song, and eventually a woman's name – that crossed both the black-white and Creole-Cajun divides in so many forms. [...] The band stands at the crosscurrents of Louisiana culture by inhabiting the gray area between Cajun and Creole, convention and innovation' (*KALENDA*, no date). The description of *Kalenda* is similar to the rich history and cultural heritage of the Louisiana

French people, whose community has been constructed through several waves of migration and the interactions they have shared, be they colonial, descended from slavery, or indigenous Americans (Rabalais, 2017). *Kalenda* could thus be interpreted as an extended metaphor for the culture which the Lost Bayou Ramblers represent through their performances: one whose foundations consist of *métissage culturel* (Glissant, 1997).

In the album recording of *Kalenda*, the song opens with cymbals, an accordion drone, and the voice of Vayasseur Mouton - who recorded a version of the song in the 1930s (Fensterstock, 2017) – stating in English, ‘Two short verses of poet songs which my grandmother used to put me to sleep many, many years ago.’ Mouton’s voice is crackly in nature, thus reflecting the age of the recording that has been used; therefore, through its inclusion, the Lost Bayou Ramblers acknowledge and celebrate the origins of the song and the culture in which Mouton would have performed the song, while simultaneously uniting Mouton’s generation of Louisiana French musicians with their own through the hybrid of these two recordings. This also evokes nostalgia for those listeners who are familiar with Mouton’s version of *Kalenda*, while simultaneously allowing younger generations of Louisiana French speakers to connect with a language and culture that has not always been accessible to them (cf. Appendices B and K).

The song continues *andante*, with heavy percussion – consisting primarily of drums, bells, and cymbals – overlaid by instruments traditionally associated with the Louisiana French; these include the violin and accordion, which play the same sustained notes throughout (Ancelet, 1999). This drone, coupled with the pulsating rhythm created by the percussion and the ‘overdubbed heartbeat’ (Milano, 2017), creates a collage of sound that is dissonant – evidenced by the playing of several instruments either in a different key or in an atonal manner (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017) – and yet resolves itself to form a foundation for the vocals. National Public Radio describes this style as an ‘ambient tone poem’ (Fensterstock, 2017), with

the instrumentation – coupled with the nature sounds recorded by the band (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017) – situating the song in a uniquely Louisiana French *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993).

Yet despite the way in which this song situates itself as uniquely Louisiana French, the instrumentation used in *Kalenda* also serves as a reference for each of those definitions of ‘Kalenda’ that the band outlined previously (*KALENDA*, no date). For instance, the quick drumbeats heard in the instrumental sections of the song are reminiscent of Senegalese *sabar* music (cf. Tang, 2007), perhaps brought to the region by slaves from the region (cf. Rabalais, 2017). The layering of hand drums with instruments like bells and the flute – which is reminiscent of a Native American flute, rather than one from the Western tradition – also evokes the sounds found in indigenous American music, although the flute traditionally was not used in a melodic sense (cf. Browner, 2009). Given the presence of both groups in the formation of the Louisiana French community (Rabalais, 2017), the combination of such instrumentation with Louisiana French lyrics creates a musical *métissage* – an instrumental embodiment of the diversity of ‘Kalenda’ and its origins, which can, in turn, serve as a representation of the constituent communities that form the Louisiana French people (cf. Rabalais, 2017).

With regards to the vocals following the recording of Mouton, the lead vocalist, Louis Michot, repeats the following two verses in Louisiana French:

Dansez Kalenda, G'doum G'doum

Dance Kalenda, G'doum G'doum

Monsieur Mazureau

Mr. Mazureau

Dans son grand bureau

In his big office

Comme un vieux crapeau

Like an old toad

Dans un baille de l'eau

In a tub of water

Dansez Kalenda, G'doum G'doum

Dance Kalenda, G'doum G'doum

Monsieur Mazureau

Mr. Mazureau

Monté dans le bateau

Climbed in the boat

Tombé dedans l'eau

Fell in the water

Mouillé son capeau

Soaked his cape

(Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017).

One might perceive the incorporation of an English introduction – followed exclusively by Louisiana French lyrics – as an attempt to include those listeners who are not proficient speakers of Louisiana French or who are based outside of the community, thus widening the *habitus* (cf. Bourdieu, 1993). However, by then continuing in the language of his community, Michot reasserts his identity as a member of the Louisiana French community, not just in terms of the language, but in terms of the culture with which it is intertwined irrevocably. This active act of belonging is explored by Michot in an interview with VICE, wherein he describes the songwriting process and the vital role that Louisiana French plays for him:

I write all in French, I don't write in English and translate it, I write in Cajun French because I'm fluent in it and that's where I really found my musical voice was when I started singing in Cajun French. [...] I knew some French and I played Cajun music in my life a lot because I was part of a family band, but when I went and did the immersion program and learned how to speak French all the songs that I had been playing my whole life started coming back to me and I had to borrow my grandpa's fiddle and started learning that as well. The old melodies were coming back to me and I was learning the lyrics and I was using the music to help learn the language (Domenighini, 2017).

By making the active choice to utilise the Louisiana French and his own memories – which are brought to the fore, according to the above quote as a direct result of reconnecting with the Louisiana French language and culture – Michot's performance of Louisiana French through music further reflects the significance of remembering and rediscovering one's identity in Louisiana French cultural production. In addition, by continuing to produce music inspired by that of their relatives, the Lost Bayou Ramblers preserve these 'old melodies' (ibid.) for future generations, thus allowing such celebration to continue in the future.

Throughout the performance, the vocals themselves are relatively sparse, with a simple melody that is akin to chanting. Like the percussion in *Kalenda*, this style is akin to those found

among the Houma community and ceremonial music from West Africa, such as that sung by the Serer people (cf. Dione, 2004). The similarities between this style of singing and chanting may be viewed as spiritual in nature, with it being similar to the religious chanting depicted in Waggoner's work (2011); this interpretation further supports the significance of religion among the community. However, when viewed alongside the irreverent nature of the lyrics, this may also play into the humour – particularly anti-clerical humour – that is common among the Louisiana French (Rabalais, 2021) and can be viewed in other core cultural works of this thesis (cf. p. 117, p. 166).

Yet the lyrics might also be viewed as highly irreverent given the references they make both to earlier Louisiana French history (Bernard and Girouard, 1992) and use of simile to compare the figure of Monsieur Mazureau² with a toad (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017). The former is indicative of the perceived importance of songs among the Louisiana French community in terms of passing narratives between generations; the latter, however, demonstrates a certain irreverence or disregard for those in authority that recurs throughout the core cultural texts featured in this thesis, including *O.E.D.* (Cheremie, 2007) and *Histoire Acadienne* (Waggoner, 2011). This is further indicated by the description of his circumstances – all of which are derived from misfortunes experienced by the character of Mazureau – which could be viewed as a metaphor for the derision with which the Louisiana French community regards those in positions of relative power. Such sentiments are not unique to this song, either; for example, in the song *Bastille*, the final lines serve as a 'call to arms' (metaphorically speaking) to the Louisiana French community to stand up against those in power (Lost Bayou

² It is believed that Monsieur Mazureau is based on the figure of Attorney General Étienne Mazureau, who served Louisiana in the 18th century. An older text on the subject (Bernard and Girouard, 1992) asserts that Mazureau was found with his feet in a bathtub to prevent his exposure to the floodwaters that had infiltrated his office.

Ramblers, 2017). This theme will be examined in closer detail shortly, with a focus on *Le Réveil de la Louisiane* (ibid.).

Kalenda could thus be viewed as a time capsule of the Louisiana French-speaking community. As each new version of the song is recorded, the artists capture a fragment of what it means, for them, to be Louisiana French musicians. They also show what it means to belong to the community as a whole, not just as musicians, but as speakers of the language.

As stated above, the sense of calling the community to arms against potential threats to their way of life – be they physical, as in the *Grand Dérangement*, or cultural, as in the erasure of the language in school (cf. Rabalais, 2021; Appendices B, J, and K) – is another common motif across both *Mammoth Waltz* and *Kalenda* – especially in the opening song of the former, which is entitled *Le Réveil de la Louisiane (Louisiana's Awakening)*. This song, like many others across these two albums, contains relatively few lyrics. However, as one of the shorter songs on *Mammoth Waltz*, these lyrics feature across the entire track, rather than serving as something of an interlude between each instrumental portion, as in *Kalenda* (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017).

Part of its significance within the album is driven by the fact that it features two other artists alongside the Lost Bayou Ramblers – Dr John, a country artist from Louisiana who performs in English, and Nora Arnezeder, a French actress from metropolitan France. The combination of these two artists with the Lost Bayou Ramblers – a band who performs almost exclusively in Louisiana French, while also being based in Louisiana – creates the impression that the band are the bridge between the two ‘worlds’ – or *habiti* (Bourdieu, 1993) – of Louisiana (in all its cultural diversity) and the Francophone world (represented here by Arnezeder, as one from the *métropole*). The interplay of all three singing in unison further consolidates the notion that those who speak Louisiana French, or continue to practice its

culture, occupy their own *habitus* that is at once within and distinct from these well-established groups – a space in which they become biopolitical subjects (ibid.; Puumeister, 2019; p. 58).

In addition, the idea of Louisiana ‘waking up’, as inferred from the term ‘*réveil*’, can be perceived as a call to arms to the community to reconnect with their heritage, in whatever form that may take. Such an interpretation is driven by the ambiguity of the word ‘*réveil*’ when translated into English; while the term can mean ‘awakening’ or ‘waking up’ – as stated in the translation of the song’s title – it can also refer to the military reveille, which serves as a wake-up call for those in the armed forces. In considering the latter translation, the notion of Louisiana’s awakening is rendered more active, with resistance against those communities in positions of power (cf. Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004) taking prevalence over celebrating or reconnecting with the culture. This is similar to the lyrics of the track *Bastille* (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012), where the song specifically states ‘*aux armes*’, or ‘to arms’ – a reference, perhaps, to *La Marseillaise* – and serves as a literal call to arms for their compatriots to engage with the Louisiana French culture, or perhaps to ‘rebel’ against those who seek to erase that culture, just as those in the *métropole* had done previously.

Like the French national anthem, the lyrics of *Le Réveil de la Louisiane* contain several lines in the imperative mood (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012); however, unlike *La Marseillaise*, the Lost Bayou Ramblers only utilise second-person forms of the imperative, which suggests that the song was penned with the community in mind. In addition, the Lost Bayou Ramblers personify Louisiana in their call for the state to wake up, as seen below:

Ecoutez ce n'est plus un rêve!
Ecoutez ces puissantes voix
Une immense Hosanna se lève
Du sud et du nord à la fois

Listen! It's no longer a dream
Listen, to these powerful voices
An immense Hosanna is rising
From the south and the north at once

Louisiane, fière reine
Redresse ton front indompté
C'est ta fête, O ma souveraine
La fête de ta liberté

Louisiana, proud queen
Lift your brow untamed
It's your celebration, my supreme
The day of your liberty

*Debout fait flotter ta bannière
Renée à la force et à la foi
Et dans des torrents de lumière
O mon pays réveille-toi
Louisiane réveille-toi!*

Fly your banner upright
Reborn in strength and faith
And in floods of light
O my country, wake up
Louisiana, wake up!

(Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012).

In personifying the state as a '*fière reine*', the band likens the state of Louisiana to other personified entities throughout history, such as Marianne, Lady Liberty – herself inspired by the figure of Columbia (New York Historical Society, 2018) – and Britannia (Kinnane-Roelofsma, 1996). In doing so, the band also draw parallels between their personified Louisiana and the figure of Evangeline, who is widely regarded as a symbol of the Louisiana French people and the struggles that they experienced historically, even though these folk beliefs are something of a 'foundational myth' (Rabalais, 2017, 2021; Appendix D). Thus, while the anthropomorphisation of Louisiana may be an effective 'call' in the context of this song, it also inadvertently reinforces a common stereotype within the Louisiana French community. As a result, the message regarding the celebration of Louisiana French culture becomes skewed, with personal affiliation to these foundational myths taking precedence over the band's, and community's, 'authentic' cultural heritage (cf. p. 14).

Yet there are some positives to personifying Louisiana and rendering this new figure as an emblem of the Louisiana French community. In doing so, the Lost Bayou Ramblers create a symbol with which other speakers of the language can identify. In addition, in creating a figure to which members of the Louisiana French community can align, the band foster a perceived solidarity among speakers of the language (alongside those who do not speak the language, but actively engage with the culture). It is the Louisiana French *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993) personified and situated as Subject instead of Other (cf. Agamben, 1998; Foucault, 1997, 2004; p. 28, p. 58).

Furthermore, by personifying Louisiana, she is positioned by the Lost Bayou Ramblers as equal to other national figures, like Lady Liberty and Marianne, as evidenced by their description of Louisiana, not as a state or a community, but as a country, with the personified Louisiana at its helm. In doing so, the band further assert the creation of the Louisiana French *habitus*, while also acknowledging its unique position as a community of French speakers within the United States (Bourdieu, 1993). It also positions the ‘country’ of Louisiana as something of a bridge between the two nations of metropolitan France and the United States of America through these linguistic ties, as was achieved through the inclusion of Dr John and Nora Arnezeder (cf. Appendix G).

Another significant theme in *Le Réveil de la Louisiane* is the interplay between celebration and resistance, as demonstrated in the lines ‘*C’est ta fête, O ma souveraine/La fête de ta liberté*’ (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012). Although these lines specifically refer to the celebration of Louisiana French culture and its ‘liberation’ – perhaps driven, in part, by its protection by the state (cf. CODOFIL) – this is immediately followed by references to resistance and rebellion. By calling on Louisiana to raise its flag high, and portraying ‘her’ as ‘*[r]enée à la force et à la foi*’, the band invite their audience to consider both as intertwined, as though any celebration of the culture naturally entails a certain amount of resistance against the dominant Anglo-American culture (cf. p. 28, p. 56). This is also demonstrated in *Counterclockwise* (p. 117), although *Le Réveil de la Louisiane* does not address this subject through the lens of the tourist industry and cultural practice.

In sum, the Lost Bayou Ramblers utilise each aspect of the composition – from lyrics to arrangement to ‘paratextual’ elements, like their writing on *Kalenda* (2012) – to perform the Louisiana French culture with which it is associated. By incorporating musical styles akin to those found among those communities which formed part of Louisiana French society and musicians from across the Francophone and Louisiana *habiti*, their recent works serve as an

extended metaphor for the importance of acknowledging and celebrating one's heritage in all its facets. To borrow a commonly held stereotype about the Louisiana French people (cf. Appendices B and K), one could consider it a musical gumbo, a *métissage musicale* (Glissant, 1989; p. 37).

Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent

While the work of the Lost Bayou Ramblers is well-known outside of the Louisiana French community, there are also several artists that have achieved high status within the community for their continued focus on producing music and cultural artefacts in the language. Such musicians include Sam Broussard, Megan Brown, and Zachary Richard (whose work, like that of the Lost Bayou Ramblers, has achieved critical and popular acclaim in the mainstream; cf. *L'invité*, 2014). One of the most prominent musicians, both in terms of output and longevity, is Barry Ancelet (also known by the *nom de plume* of Jean Arceneaux), who has not only produced several albums of his own but has also sought to preserve the narratives and cultural artefacts of others through his ethnographic recordings, many of which are now part of their own archive (Center for Louisiana Studies, 2022). The following section will focus on a project, spearheaded by Ancelet, which combines both of these endeavours: the album *Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent* (2018).

The album – the title of which translates to *Working is Too Hard* in English – consists of twenty tracks, all of which were previously written, recorded, or performed by Caesar Vincent. Outside of the community, Vincent was described as an 'obscure balladeer' (Willging, 2018), a term which stands at odds with the description Ancelet provides when he speaks of discovering these recordings as part of an interview given for this thesis:

Just a few years ago, we sort of rediscovered the songs that were recorded by Harry Oster and Catherine Blanchet of Caesar Vincent singing on his porch. They were collecting singers and storytellers and this Caesar Vincent guy, I knew, was responsible for the first fieldwork recorded version of *Travailler, c'est trop dur*, a song that's become iconic in the French-speaking world. I knew he was the original source of that, but I didn't know he had recorded any other songs, that he had sung any other songs for these folklorists, and I was made aware of that by a conversation that I had with one of his grandnephews over coffee one day in Lafayette, and I started getting curious. So, I went back into the archives and found that he had sung a total of – I think it was forty-four, forty-five different songs – over those fieldwork interviews. When I started looking at them, I realised, 'Oh my God, these things are ancient, they're gems, they're treasures,' and lyrically – and also melodically – the melodies were very interesting (pp. 521-522).

The description of these songs as 'treasures' demonstrates the way in which Vincent and his oeuvre are reframed in the eyes of one who actively 'belongs' (Yuval-Davis, 2006) to the community. For Ancelet, the recovery of these recordings is not a curiosity; rather, it is an opportunity to reconnect to the Louisiana French language and culture practised by previous generations, similar to the experience outlined previously by Michot (Domenighini, 2017).

Of the twenty tracks featured on the album *Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, I have selected five for deeper analysis in this chapter. While all twenty are of merit and are of relevance to the subject of narrative preservation, these five each possess a unique element in their composition which allows for in-depth comparison between these songs. Such exemplars include the first and last tracks of the album, both of which incorporate the vocals of Caesar Vincent as recorded by Oster and Blanchet (cf. pp. 509-510).

Among the music of the album, what is most striking is the variety of genres and styles in which the songs have been presented. While some songs have been arranged in a similar fashion to the works featured in the previous section (p. 135), there are also examples of folk, 'dance music'³ and funk, among others, all of which were demonstrated by Ancelet in the interview conducted for this thesis (Appendix G).

³ I must specify here that 'dance music', with regards to the music of the Louisiana French, is not the same as what one might consider as 'dance music today' – as the liner notes for the album state (*Travailler C'est Trop*

There are also several examples of musical styles derived from other cultures, most likely those that were imported to Francophone Louisiana as part of the waves of migration that constitute the community (cf. Rabalais, 2017). For instance, in the song *Tobie Lapierre*, there is a portrayal of *juré* singing, a style which is believed to have been transposed from Black communities of the United States (Sandmel and Olivier, 1999). The *juré* style itself is reminiscent of the ‘ring shout’, which is commonly heard among Black communities of the United States like the Gullah/Geechee Nation (Gullah/Geechee Nation, 2022). Such styles, with their exclusive use of percussion, are believed to have been derived from slave communities, although this is not confirmed (Sandmel and Olivier, 1999).

Another significant element of this song’s performance is that the performers – Jourdan Thibodeaux and Cedric Watson – are of different ethnicities. While the *juré* style is predominately connected with the Black community (*Travailler C’est Trop Dur*, 2018), it is a hallmark of Thibodeaux’s work as a white (or white passing) musician; furthermore, it is alleged that this style of singing was a source of inspiration for the wider realm of zydeco that emerged in the following period (Sandmel and Olivier, 2018). It could therefore be argued that there is little gatekeeping with regards to the music of the community and that, despite there still being a certain amount of bifurcation along the lines of race (cf. Landry, 2016; Appendix D), the varied styles of music are open to all, regardless of race or gender, as supported by the relatively large number of female vocalists in comparison to female writers (Appendix G).

In terms of the instrumentation found across the album, many of the songs use similar instrumentation throughout – the most common instruments being the violin, guitar (of all forms, including acoustic, electric, and steel), and percussion (namely drums). This creates a certain auidial identity – derived from the musical styles of those groups who formed the

Dur, 2018), dance music is generally more appropriate for folk dances (e.g. Performed in 3/4 time, as opposed to the 4/4 time heard in most popular music).

Louisiana French community (cf. Rabalais, 2017) – that marks each of these songs as ‘belonging’ to the Louisiana French music of today (Yuval-Davis, 2006). However, there are some songs which employ a completely different style of instrumentation. One such example is the song *Les anneaux de Marianson* (*The rings of Marianson*), whose instrumentation is described as seeking to evoke the sound of ‘singing alone in a medieval church’; this is due to the belief that this song had been sung in France prior to the language’s migration to Louisiana (*Travailler C’est Trop Dur*, 2018; Appendix G). As a result, the instrumentation of this song is sparse save for a drone, produced by a Hammond organ (*Travailler C’est Trop Dur*, 2018), the vocals (upon which a reverb effect has been applied to mimic the sound of singing in an empty, vast space), and the intermittent use of strings and acoustic guitar. This contrast emphasises the darker tone found in the lyrics, which speak of the trauma Marianson experiences when she is wrongly accused of adultery and is killed, alongside her child, at the hands of her unnamed husband.

Despite the distant historical connection between *Les Anneaux de Marianson* and the Louisiana French community today, there are still those who can identify with the struggle depicted therein. According to Ancelet, Anna Laura Edmiston (who provides the vocals for this song) had herself recently become a mother at the time of recording. This led to a deeper connection with the song that gave Ancelet confidence, not only for the prospect of the music, but for the prospect of the Louisiana French language, in that she was still able to identify with the song despite its relatively old content (Appendix G).

Les anneaux de Marianson is composed of twenty-five verses, each bearing the same rhythm and melody. The lyrics are sung, for the most part, from the perspective of Marianson herself, with a few verses (also performed by Edmiston) reflecting the dialogue between Marianson, her husband, and the man with whom she is falsely accused of having an affair. As the strings and guitar appear at regular intervals (alongside the drone and vocals, which are a

constant presence), they are often not in harmony with the drone or the melody sung by Edmiston; in fact, the accompaniment is generally discordant when paired with these latter elements. In placing these accompaniments at odds with the melody, Edmiston and Broussard create an unsettling effect, which serves to build suspense throughout the song to its tragic conclusion. There are moments where this dissonance is resolved, as though there is some moment of peace within the song itself. However, these moments are only brief, with the majority of the accompaniment (aside from the percussion and the drone itself) in dissonance with both each other and the melody. This could also be considered a form of pathetic fallacy reflecting the discord between the truth and the false accusation; alternatively, the discord represented might be that between the husband and Marianson. If this is the case, then one might interpret this song as an extended metaphor for the deterioration of the relationship. As the husband is also at war, there is a certain warlike quality to the drone and drums at play here; it is similar – particularly in its percussive elements – to the instruments that might have been heard on the battlefield.

While *Les anneaux de Marianson* hearkens back to music from previous centuries through its instrumentation, there are two songs that do so through their vocals: *Là bas oh dans ces bois* (*Over there in these woods*), which is the opening song of the album; and *Travailler, c'est trop dur*, the closing song. Both songs utilise the original vocals recorded by Caesar Vincent himself. Yet, while the latter presents the original recording of Vincent's a capella performance, the former combines the recording of Vincent's vocals with a new arrangement from Sam Broussard, containing guitars, drums, piano, and backing vocals. The creation of a new arrangement using modern techniques, coupled with the original recording of Vincent's vocals (perhaps with some enhancement of the recording, if only to increase its clarity and remove any static), creates a hybrid (Glissant, 1989, 1997) that fully reflects the past, present, and future of Louisiana French music. In hearkening back to the past and acknowledging the

role Vincent played by including his vocals, Broussard and the curators of the album (namely Ancelet) allow the history of the song to shine in its own right.

The instrumentation of *Là bas oh dans ces bois* is similar to several of the songs heard in the Lost Bayou Ramblers' oeuvre (2012, 2017). The fiddle is prominent and features alongside the harmonica and guitar, which is represented threefold in this song via the use of the acoustic, electric, and mandolin forms. This incorporation of several styles of guitar is further evidence of the combination of past and present that is audible in other songs across the album (*Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, 2018).

Another important demonstration of the harmony between past and present is that, in combining the present-day arrangement with the past of Vincent's vocals, Broussard does not supersede or drown out Vincent. He does not position his vocals as inferior or Other in comparison to his own music (cf. p. 28); rather, he allows the vocals to be heard clearly and to receive attention for the history of said vocals, with several instances where the instrumentation is sparse save for a guitar (and Broussard's own backing vocals) or percussion, such as maracas and a drum (as in the first verse).

One of the most unique elements of this song, however, is the incorporation of spoken word at the start of the track, in which Vincent states that he will sing a song he'd learnt from Edrard David, before adding '*il est bon chanteur, lui*' ('He's a good singer, he is'; Ancelet et al., 2019). By including this – in a technique which mirrors that of *Kalenda* (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017) - Broussard emphasises both the origins of the song and the journey that it has taken to reach the album, with the song having been transmitted orally to Vincent from David, who, himself, likely will have learnt the song from another person in the community transmitting it orally. In addition, this song reflects the close nature of the community, in that Edrard David was not only comfortable with sharing his music, but that Vincent was then comfortable performing the song for the original recording; this creates the sense of a cycle –

supported by the repetition of '*Il est bon chanteur, lui*' at the song's close – that will be perpetuated in the future through the song's continued transmission, including through the version featured in *Travailler C'est Trop Dur*.

The opening song's lyrics speak of the story of a narrator (unnamed, but, given that the singer is male, one could infer that the original narrator is male – this is also corroborated by the fact that the feminine form is used to describe their '*bien aimée*', or 'beloved') who hears the voice of their beloved from the woods nearby. They then go on to express their desire to marry their beloved, noting, with a relatively dark twist at the end, that if their beloved's parents do not consent to the marriage, they will both die in order that '*le puissant Dieu/Nous mariera nous deux*' ('almighty God/ Will marry us together'; Ancelet et al., 2019). At this point, the music changes from a major key to a minor key, with several loud noises – akin to slamming doors or gunshot sounds – which are followed by a final arpeggio from the piano which is left unresolved. The use of such sounds, coupled with the lyrics listed above, implies that the two lovers have died – in a fashion akin to that found in *Romeo and Juliet*, perhaps – in order to fulfil this fate, and thus serves as another example of pathetic fallacy. This interpretation lends a tragic twist to the narrative which is reminiscent of 'star-crossed lovers' found in other languages (cf. Shakespeare and Weis, 2012, for instance).

Additionally, the lack of consent from the beloved's parents may be viewed as a metaphor for the alienation or isolation that the narrator feels from their community, even though they are all part of the Louisiana French-speaking *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993). If one accepts this view, then this implies that, despite the portrayal of the community as united through the language and culture that they share, it, too, has its own divisions and positionings within the *habitus* (pp. 26-88). Furthermore, even if the entire community is rendered *homo sacer* in the face of Anglophone society, that doesn't mean that there aren't *homines sacri* among the *habitus* of *homo sacer*, as this interpretation would suggest (cf. Agamben, 1998).

Another song that focuses on this contrast between old and new (or, in this case, old and young) is the tenth track, entitled *Laissez-moi-t-aller jouer (Let Me Go Play)*. This song is the only one which is performed by children, who the liner notes name as *Les Étoiles de la Louisiane* (The Stars of Louisiana). The name of the group is indicative both of their status as the next generation of Louisiana French speakers and their ‘star’ credit as part of this album. The former, however, is most prescient considering the growing status of French immersion in the community, and the increasing significance placed upon immersion programmes by scholars like Rabalais, who states:

I think it’s just very important to constantly validate and say, ‘This is something very interesting, this is something very valuable, there’s a reason why there are all of these efforts to preserve it,’ like organisations like *Télé-Louisiane*, and university programmes and French immersion programmes, CODOFIL, all of these things have come from the fact that there is value, there’s social, economical, historical, ecological value in keeping these languages alive, including the French in Louisiana, the Creole in Louisiana, Spanish in Louisiana, all of these languages, it’s crucial to keeping other things that are important alive (p. 362).

Rabalais’ description of French immersion as vital to the ongoing preservation and celebration of Louisiana French heritage further consolidates this point. By including a childrens’ choir as lead vocalists, rather than supporting vocalists, *Travailler C’est Trop Dur* highlights the success of the French immersion programme and thereby its significance as a unifier in a community that is increasingly diverse in terms of its linguistic and cultural heritages.

This diversity is demonstrated in several ways throughout the production of *Laissez-moi-t-aller jouer*. It does not only exemplify the diversity of the Louisiana French community in terms of age; the director of *Les Étoiles de la Louisiane*, Jimmy Louis-Marie, - who himself has Caribbean roots (*Travailler C’est Trop Dur*, 2018) – incorporates his personal heritage into the song by using tuned percussion, such as the xylophone, as a counterpoint to the main melody of the song. There is thus a hybridity (Glissant, 1989) between two Francophone

communities that are *not* metropolitan France; a musical translanguaging (cf. Bradley, 2017; Creese et al., 2017; p. 69) takes place.

Unlike some of the other songs referenced in this section, such as *Les anneaux de Marianson*, the lyrics of *Laissez-moi-t-aller-jouer* are relatively nonsensical in nature. The song appears to tell the story of a child talking to their parent (possibly their mother, although this is left ambiguous). The child, who wishes to go outside to play, is attempting to reason with their parent as to why they should be permitted to do so. However, as they fail to convince them, the excuses and stories become increasingly absurd. While each verse is intended to elicit sympathy from the recipient of the song (the parent), the lyrics themselves are humorous in style, with often absurd situations taking place. A prime example of this is in the first verse, where the children describe putting bulls in their pockets and a plough on their heads (*Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, 2018). The rest of the song progresses similarly; although there is generally no connection between each of the verses, the second and third verses do form a cohesive narrative, as seen below:

*Oh j'ai passé auras d'une tite femme qui était
très méchante-re
Oh j'ai passé auras d'une tite femme qui était
très méchante-re
Oh laissez-moi-t-à l'aller,
mais laissez-moi-t-aller jouer*

Oh, I passed by a little woman who was very
mean
Oh, I passed by a little woman who was very
mean
Oh, let me go, let me go to play

*Alle en était assez méchante, alle a filé ses
chiens après moi ça pour voulait me mordre
Alle en était assez méchante, alle a filé ses
chiens après moi ça pour voulait me mordre
Oh laissez-moi-t-à l'aller, mais laissez-moi-t-
aller jouer*

She was so mean, she sicced her dogs on me to
bite me
She was so mean, she sicced her dogs on me to
bite me
Oh, let me go, let me go to play

(*Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, 2018).

Similar to other songs analysed in this chapter, these verses are steeped in the rural environment, with the children singing about such things as farm animals, farming equipment,

or an old lady who lives nearby. By grounding these lyrics in the local environment, Vincent highlights again the significance of community with regards to developing one's identity as Louisiana French and the effect that these close-knit groups have upon the sense of belonging experienced by younger generations of Louisiana French speakers, who, through a lack of education in the language in the home (due to previous repression of the language in the education system), may themselves feel disconnected from the wider Louisiana French community (Baloy, 2011).

As with other tracks, like *Tobie Lapierre*, the diversity of the Louisiana French people is evoked through the instrumentation of this song. Louis-Marie and Guillermo Rojas – who arranged this song (*Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, 2018) – incorporate percussion instruments, such as the vibraphone, alongside more 'traditional' elements of Louisiana French music like the violin. Crucially, the use of the former is widespread in two other genres that are associated with the *Francophonie*: jazz, which originated in Louisiana (Hersch, 2007); and 'tiki lounge' exotica, which combines stereotypical images from several cultures, including those found in the Caribbean and Polynesia (cf. Adinolfi, 2008). Therefore, Louie-Marie and Rojas' incorporation of the vibraphone may be viewed as a means of as a means of both celebrating Louie-Marie's Caribbean heritage – and, by extension, celebrating once more the diversity of Francophone Louisiana and the entire state's musical past – while also parodying the musical *habitus* with which the instrument has been associated and resisting the stereotypes that this *habitus* has brought (Bourdieu, 1993).

In summary, *Travailler C'est Trop Dur* permits the artists to evoke a wide range of historical and cultural viewpoints from across the Francophone diaspora – including the Louisiana French community – to create a soundscape that encompasses the history and culture of the songs which Vincent originally recorded. In doing so, the artists reconcile the Louisiana French 'sound' with that of the wider Francophone *habitus*, thus allowing it to move from its

position of alterity to one that is in closer ties with its linguistic brethren. In addition, by including artists of all generations – especially the children of *Les Étoiles de la Louisiane* – Ancelet and his collaborators have demonstrated clearly to their audience that the Louisiana French language and culture are very much alive today.

The Significance of Festivals in Francophone Louisiana

This chapter has addressed some of the most prolific and well-known Louisiana French musicians of today, and the way in which their music maintains not only the narratives of the community from which their creators originate, but also how they have been able to preserve and maintain narratives whose origins are derived from a multitude of origins that have since converged to form the Louisiana French community of today. Yet, as stated at the start of this chapter (cf. p. 134), the music itself is only one of the ways in which these artists transmit said narratives to their intended audience. The space in which the music is presented to its audience, and how potential listeners access these compositions, is also essential if the lives and lived experiences portrayed in these songs are to be preserved for centuries to come.

Through the creation and maintenance of cultural events – which may include poetry readings (cf. Appendix K), social gatherings (cf. Appendix L), or larger gatherings like those of the folk festival (cf. Appendix B) – the Louisiana French community not only builds upon its existing cultural heritage, but creates a narrative space wherein they are able to transmit said heritage from their own perspective. In this space, the community may become the biopolitical Subject (Puumeister, 2019; cf. p. 28, p. 58), thereby inverting the existing dynamic by inviting ‘outsiders’ to enter their linguistic and cultural *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993).

Consequently, it is prudent at this point to engage in a brief exploration of one of the most prominent spaces in which the Louisiana French culture can be (re)presented and performed for those based within and outside of the region: the festival.

Before embarking on this analysis, it should be briefly noted that, unlike the Pennsylvania German community, the festival is one of the few formal spaces in which Louisiana French is used and practiced socially. That is not to say that there are no social events, held in the public sphere, where the language is actively used; as Rabalais and Chermie note, there are smaller gatherings – such as poetry and literature readings – where the language can be used and celebrated (cf. Appendices D and K). However, unlike the Pennsylvania German community, there are no regular events such as the *Versammlinge*, where socialising and communicating in the language is the primary focus of such events, nor are there spaces dedicated to such practices (cf. Donner, 2016).

There are a multitude of festivals which seek to present the art, culture, and music of the Louisiana French – who tend to be represented at such events by the adjectives ‘Acadian’ or ‘Cajun’ (Appendix D) – people and the State of Louisiana as a whole. However, with regards to the festivals that are designed specifically to celebrate the linguistic and cultural heritage of Francophone Louisiana, there are two which were most frequently cited by interview participants and have been most prominent in the scoping of this study: *Festival Acadiens et Créoles*; and *Festival International de Louisiane*. Both are similar in that they both focus on Louisiana French music; however, the former also incorporates other expressions of the culture, including the cuisine and local crafts, while the latter focuses predominately on Louisiana French music (*Festival International de Louisiane*, 2022). This does not, however, exclude other art forms from being presented at *Festival International* (ibid.); in fact, these art forms can be displayed alongside others as part of a larger cultural presentation. In his interview,

Cormier describes the release of a Louisiana French academic journal at the festival, the scale of the event, and the reception the event received, with great satisfaction:

[L]ast year, whenever *Relever* [the new issue of the journal *Feux Follets*] came out, that was – we did it during *Festival International*, which is just a huge international music festival here, and that was wonderful. [...] I had no plans for any kind of release party or, you know, I said that we should do a poetry reading for the release of it, but that was about as far as I'd thought about the idea. And so [Barry Ancelet] comes to me with this perfect, beautiful plan to publish it and celebrate it, so I said, 'Yeah, let's do it,' and he was actually at the meeting where they were organising the programme for the festival that year whenever he called me, and so that worked out great, they pencilled it in, and it worked out, we got the venue, and the amount of people that showed up – I mean, we filled up the theatre where it was, and we had the band *Feufollet* playing at the event, so [...] [w]e would have the band play a song, and then we would read, you know, four or five poems, the band would play a song, we'd read four or five poems, so it sort of alternated and we had well over fifty people in that theatre and I mean, it was full, I don't know what the capacity is, but it was wonderful seeing that (pp. 348-349).

As Cormier's praise for the launch event indicates, the space provided by the festival gave those involved with *Feux Follets* the opportunity, not only to formally relaunch the journal, but to do so in an environment that is non-academic in nature, thus offering a chance for greater engagement between those involved with the journal (and, by extension, other academic activities related to the practice of Louisiana French) and the entire cohort of Louisiana French speakers. Consequently, the festival becomes both a space of celebration for those who engage in Louisiana French cultural production and a site in which those producers can increase public engagement from the wider community, thus perpetuating future cultural production. It becomes a space in which the lived experiences and narratives of the Louisiana French can be both transmitted and created as new, discrete narratives, as has been observed among other communities seeking to reconnect with their heritages (cf. Baloy, 2011). It must also be noted here that the opportunity for increased public engagement and (re)connection is particularly beneficial in the case of written cultural outputs like *Feux Follets*, which, as has already been noted (cf. Appendices D and G), often only receive attention from those based within the group

in which they have originated – in this case, those speakers of Louisiana French who are also based in academia.

This sense of greater connection to the community is not only felt among those who consider themselves to be Louisiana French or are able to speak the language. In presenting the language and culture in the public sphere, the community can also foster greater interest and engagement with the culture from those based outside of the region, who may have little or no knowledge of what it means to be Louisiana French – however, this may not always be to the benefit of the community itself (cf. p. 104, 117); additionally, this creates a space in which speakers of Louisiana French can connect to their identity as part of *la Francophonie* (cf. George, 1994).

Furthermore, such spaces permit Louisiana French speakers to express themselves in their language without being regarded as ‘other’ or as the lesser party in a ‘race war’ (Foucault, 1997; p. 27). They are able to move away from their position as ‘shapeshifters’ (p. 619) and embody the *métissage linguistique* and *culturel* of which the Louisiana French language consists (Glissant 1989, 1997) in an act of simultaneous celebration and resistance which Rabalais describes as ‘diverse in terms of people’s experiences with French [...] it’s more international, it’s more diverse, it’s more media, and not just music and literature’ (pp. 431-432).

Yet one criticism of these festivals is that – despite the good intentions behind this reassertion and celebration of the community’s heritage and, by extension, its ‘legitimacy’ as an historic language of the United States (Culp, 2017) – such presentations can also be perceived by those within the community as being inauthentic or as inaccurately representing the community or culture that is claimed to be on display. One notable example is the New

Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival⁴, which has been criticised in recent years for a perceived lack of authenticity amid a movement away from the original ‘celebration of the folk’ (Regis and Walton, 2008). Callais (2015) reported that, in the period preceding the 2015 iteration of the festival, there were several who criticised the festival organisers for focusing more on tourists visiting the region rather than local Louisianans who attended the festival. While he deemed these comments as having ‘a morsel of truth in the frustration’ (2015) and acknowledges the lack of connection between New Orleans and many of the more recent acts that have performed at the festival – with many changes being observed post-Hurricane Katrina – he then defends this cultural shift by stating the impact that the festival’s success has had upon other initiatives designed to celebrate and preserve the city’s cultural heritage:

‘[W]hile the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival may seem like it no longer preserves our culture, the literal millions it generates goes directly to the Jazz and Heritage Foundation, whose sole purpose is to *preserve our culture*. And while many locals decry the latest trendy “craft cocktails” or “small plates” establishment taking real estate away from the type of institutions that made New Orleans great, new businesses still bring money into a city that is in historic need of any type of income it can get [...] We must ask ourselves if these compromises are steering us away from a culture that deserves preserving, and, if so, is that worth it?’ (Callais, 2015)

While Callais acknowledges the frustration felt by members of the community who do not view the event as sufficiently representative of their culture, by highlighting the links between the festival, the Jazz and Heritage Foundation, and the businesses that the foundation supports, Callais asserts that these changes – though counterintuitive for those who wish to see the Jazz and Heritage Festival continue in its original form – are of benefit to the culture year-round through the attraction of a greater audience and, therefore, greater financial support. However, the question that he poses is crucial in considering whether such drastic

⁴ While the event itself is not formally connected to Francophone Louisiana, the culture which it seeks to represent and transmit encompasses artists from this part of the state, alongside artists and musicians from across the state.

transformations are truly positive for the community if the opportunity for connection between the culture and new audiences is changed or removed (Baloy, 2011).

On the one hand, the inclusion of other genres and acts from outside of the community is of benefit in that it attracts other audiences who would otherwise not engage with the culture that is intended to be at the forefront of the event – in the case of this festival, Louisiana culture – as Cormier noted earlier (cf. Appendix B, pp. 336-337). Therefore, perhaps paradoxically, there is a concrete benefit to such changes if high attendance – driven by a shift towards an event that is less representative of the community overall – leads to increased funds that will benefit the community in the long term.

Yet on the other hand, this shift is somewhat flawed, especially as the festival has historically been considered as being ‘by the community, for the community’ (Callais, 2015). In moving away from acts that are connected to the region – in other words, those who best understand the heritage and, crucially, the needs of said region – one could argue that the festival is no longer a true representative of the region it claims to depict. This situation creates a form of gatekeeping whereby it is implied that, while the festival is of benefit to the Louisiana community (and New Orleans in particular), it is no longer a space for the community to celebrate the music or heritage with which they identify. This becomes a passive act of ‘othering’ which – if applied to the Louisiana French community – would reemphasise their place as *homines sacri* within wider American society (Agamben, 1998).

Although the above point is not wholly relevant to Louisiana French-specific festivals – given that they are created and organised by those active in the community, such as Barry Ancelet (Appendix B) – there are disadvantages to the focus on folk festivals over other forms of formal cultural gathering. The first of these is that those visiting from outside of the region may not appreciate or understand the cultural practices on display, which could, in some cases, lead to condescension and derision of the community for ‘feeling’ their culture (Baloy, 2011),

as has already been observed in the written narratives of Waggoner (2011) and Chéramie (2007) (cf. p. 104, p. 117). As a result, despite the festival attempting to reassert and reinsert the community in question into the American and Francophone *habiti* (cf. Bourdieu, 1993), the reactions of those observing may serve to encourage further marginalisation of the group.

Another criticism, which was originally raised by Rabalais in his interview (Appendix D), is that, while the *Festivals Acadiens et Créoles* and *Festival International de Louisiane* have both existed for several decades, the Louisiana French community and its diversity were not acknowledged until the late 20th century and early 21st century. This is reflected even in the name of the former, which was known as *Festivals Acadiens* until 2008 (*Festivals Acadiens et Créoles*). This is due to the proclivity to name events as ‘Acadian’ and ‘Cajun’ in the latter half of the 20th century, at a time in which the Acadian movement gained traction (ibid.). This, coupled with the separation of ‘Cajun’ and ‘Creole’ according to ethnicity (Landry, 2016), would likely have contributed to the preference for these terms over ‘Creole’.

This does not mean, however, that such festivals have an entirely negative effect upon the Louisiana French community. Rabalais does also advocate for those festivals – like the *Festivals Acadiens et Créoles* and *Festival International de Louisiane*, which are both based in ‘Cajun Country’ (Ancelet et al., 1998) – that favour the promotion of traditional music and crafts, by relating the reactions of the community to his own feelings as a musician:

[I]t’s surprising for people not from here to see how popular traditional music is, and how present it is, not just in festivals, but just in bars, it’s really... As a musician, if I were to really do that full-time again, that’s pretty much what I would have to do, just play traditional music. So, it’s very popular, even among young people. For narrative – you know, a lot of people don’t understand the French (p. 424).

This statement demonstrates that, for those audience members who identify with the culture on display, one of the main attractions of the festival space is not the language itself, but the social aspect. It is the gathering of the community in which they may assert belonging,

in which they can openly ‘feel’ their culture (Baloy, 2011) without the repercussions that previous generations might have experienced. Although not all areas of the arts are celebrated to the same extent – Cheramie, for instance, notes that Louisiana French folk festivals tend to prioritise food and music over other art forms (cf. Appendix K) – the festival has proved to be an enduring form in which the language is openly practiced.

To summarise, the festival is a space in which the community can openly celebrate their culture and reconnect to it, in whatever form (be it music, art, food, or literature) in which they feel most comfortable. The festival fosters a sense of pride in the shared cultural heritage of a diverse community, while simultaneously asserting to observers from outside of the community the ‘legitimacy’ of their language and culture (Culp, 2017).

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the non-written narrative methods found in Louisiana French cultural production with a focus on its music and its cultural events. Each of the artefacts that have been analysed in this chapter explore such themes as identity, belonging, and pride, both within the artefacts itself and through their ‘paratext’ (cf. *Lost Bayou Ramblers*, 2017), thus creating a space in which (re)connection with one’s language and heritage can occur (Baloy, 2011).

Like the written narratives examined in Chapter Four (pp. 103-132), these works traverse the boundaries between resisting the role of English and Anglophone culture within the community and celebrating Louisiana French linguistic and cultural heritage within its own *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993). Yet in contrast to the written narratives penned by Waggoner and Cheramie – which are steeped in the Louisiana French cultural *habitus* – the artefacts featured in this chapter acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of this shared heritage to a far greater

extent, as evidenced by the *métissage culturel* undertaken by Louis-Marie, Rojas, and the Lost Bayou Ramblers.

This chapter concludes the analysis of Louisiana French narrative methods. In the following chapters, I will examine the written and non-written narrative methods of the Pennsylvania German community to determine the effects that such practices have on a community which – while less diverse in terms of its varied cultural influences – also has a long and rich cultural and linguistic heritage which it seeks to preserve today.

CHAPTER SIX: PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN WRITTEN NARRATIVES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE

The previous chapters of this thesis examined the written and non-written narrative methods of the Louisiana French community, with a view to understanding their significance in portrayed lived experience in this region. It is therefore time to turn to the cultural output of the Pennsylvania German community to determine any similarities or differences in method, and the effects of these upon the linguistic and cultural heritage represented therein.

Although there are fewer examples of Pennsylvania German writing from the 21st century – as was stated previously in the introductory chapter of this thesis (p. 3) – there are still several instances of contemporary writing in the language, such that it may be analysed in this chapter. Therefore, this chapter will commence with an exploration of the collection *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015), which is similar in structure and composition to the writing of Waggoner (2011; p. 117). This will be followed by an examination of Fritsch's work *Der Haahne Greht* (2008) – or, more specifically, the written elements of this work – which is unique among the core written narratives featured in this thesis in that it combines written and non-written art forms in a single narrative. In doing so, I will create a foundation upon which comparison may be drawn between the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, their written narrative methods, and the effectiveness of these methods in preserving and celebrating linguistic and cultural heritage.

Moll, Madenford, and *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof*

Of the core written works from the Pennsylvania German community that have been selected for this thesis, it is most prudent to begin this chapter with the elder of the two: *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford. 2015). This decision is not based solely on chronology; although these texts were written earlier than those of Fritsch, they are also formed solely of written narratives, unlike the poetry Fritsch wrote and presented alongside the *Scherenschnitte* he created (2008). By beginning with narratives steeped in the more 'conventional' written form, there is thus greater opportunity for direct comparison with the written narratives examined in Chapter Four of this thesis (pp. 103-132).

Before embarking on a deeper exploration of this collection of short stories, it is essential that I briefly address any possible confusion with regards to the roles played by Moll and Madenford in creating this collection. Although Lloyd A. Moll was the original author of these stories, with them previously having been published under his name, this collection was compiled and curated by the latter author, with Madenford also digitising these stories, translating them into English, and providing historical context where appropriate (cf. Appendix C). While one might consider Madenford the compiler, editor, or translator of this collection (or a combination of these three terms), I regard Madenford's contributions to the source text as sufficiently transformative to accord Madenford equal authorship alongside Moll in this edition. This is due to the fact that Madenford has provided the first English translation of this collection, has made necessary amendments to the orthography¹, and has sought to educate the

¹ While the orthography is generally unaltered (Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 5-7), there are some minor amendments made for the sake of clarity. This also demonstrates some of the difficulties in capturing Pennsylvania German written narrative through the lack of a set orthography (Louden, 2016); this will be explored throughout this chapter, Chapter Seven (p.196), and the conclusion to this thesis (p. 226).

modern reader in some of the significant events for the Pennsylvania German in previous years (Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 6-7).

In comparison to the other core cultural works featured in this dissertation, *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* stands alone, both in terms of its age – having originally been published in the mid-20th century (ibid.) – and in terms of the changes the collection underwent between its original publication in the early 1940s and the new edition published in 2015. Originally, Moll published each story separately as part of a regular column dedicated to Pennsylvania German writing in the *Allentown Morning Call*, with *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* being the last that he wrote before his death (ibid.) It is significant that the final series Moll wrote and published in his lifetime should be focused both on the life and death of each character among the Pennsylvania German-speaking community; this could be viewed as Moll reflecting on his own mortality, given that he passed away while the column was still ongoing. If so, then parallels may therefore be drawn between the subject matter of this collection – life and death, in the physical and spiritual senses – and the notion of language and culture ‘death’ for the community to which he belonged. This connection is supported by the foreword, in which Madenford states that ‘the most important aspects of Moll and his writings (in particular the **Schtimme** series) is how he not only preserved our dialect but also our culture. In his stories he uses obsolete and obsolescent words and phrases and gives them new life.’ (Idem., p. 6).

Yet Madenford also suggests that the aim of this collection was not only to preserve and celebrate early Pennsylvania German culture, but to engage the 20th- or 21st-century reader in this act of preservation, wherein one may ‘take the roll [sic] of that person [the narrator-figure], [...] feel the pain and joy that the ghosts feel in the retelling of their life stories.’ (ibid.) In other words, by providing texts in the Pennsylvania German language for members of the community to enjoy, Moll created a *habitus* in which these texts, and the language found therein, could be appreciated in their own right outside of their relatively marginalised position

in contemporary American society (cf. Bourdieu, 1993; Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004; p. 28). Thus, it was crucial for these depictions of lived experience to be penned in the language of those Moll sought to represent.

It is also noteworthy that Madenford chose this series to edit and translate over the other works Moll produced. In the interview I conducted with Madenford regarding the Pennsylvania German language and his work as a speaker of Pennsylvania German, he stated that one motivation behind his choice was the lack of existing English translation and the wish to increase accessibility to those who do not speak or understand the language – a point which is reiterated in the foreword to *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 5-7; Appendix C). However, the main motivation for Madenford was falling ‘head over heels in love’ (p. 389) with the writing and the way it conveyed the earlier history of the Pennsylvania German people.

These two reasons, when combined, demonstrate a reframing of Madenford’s identity, not just as a Pennsylvania German speaker, but as an American who speaks Pennsylvania German (a view which is supported by Appendix C). This interpretation is reinforced by the presence of historical notes throughout the collection, which Madenford uses to shed light on events that may not be common knowledge to those outside of the communities involved. In addition, such a reframed identity is supported by the theory opened this thesis, and which is repeated below:

I understand the term ‘melting pot’, it’s what most people will use. I prefer to use the term a ‘quilt’ [...] One: [...] [W]hen you stand back and look, that quilt is all together and you think, ‘Oh, that’s one unified piece, that’s brilliant.’ But when you get up close, you can see the individual squares or the individual pieces of cloth, and those individual pieces of cloth have not changed, but they have become part of a bigger picture. And that’s [...] how I view America. Melting pot’s fine, but my problem with melting pot is that that would signify that we gave up who we are to be part of this amalgamation, where in a melting pot, you can’t see the individual aspects anymore, but for me, in a quilt, when I look at a quilt, I can see that, and to me, that’s how I view America, and it doesn’t make my little piece any less American than any of the other pieces in that giant quilt (Appendix C, pp. 393-394).

I have chosen to repeat this quote in order to emphasise the significance of this new interpretation proposed by Madenford. By reframing the Pennsylvania German community as one ‘patch’ in the ‘quilt’ of America’s linguistic and cultural landscape, Madenford reasserts his position – and the position of all those who speak heritage languages like Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German – as biopolitical Subjects (Puumeister, 2019; cf. p. 28, p. 58). This process of biopolitical subjectification creates a space wherein we, as outsiders to the community, are able to access and ‘feel’ (Baloy, 2011) the cultural and linguistic heritage that is reflected therein; therefore, this perspective informs the way in which I explore and analyse the cultural output of both the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities throughout this study.

Another unique aspect of this work is that, given its focus on the early Pennsylvania German community – with all of the characters (save for the narrator) having lived in 18th- and 19th-century Pennsylvania (Moll and Madenford, 2015) – Madenford includes historical notes where appropriate to outline the history of the community in this period and the conflicts that they experienced, both within their community and with the indigenous Americans whose land they colonised. It is crucial that I acknowledge this latter point, and, in particular, the ambiguous nature of the Pennsylvania Germans’ role in colonising the early United States. The community did not directly colonise land belonging to indigenous Americans; rather, the land they occupied was purchased from earlier colonial groups that had already taken the land (Louden, 2016). This leaves the community in a grey area, in which they are not technically ‘colonisers’, but are not entirely ‘settlers’, given the occasional instances of aggression between the Pennsylvania Germans and nearby indigenous communities, as depicted in the collection (e.g. Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 62-70, pp. 91-96). While Madenford himself favours the term ‘settlers’, I would argue that ‘colonial settlers’ is a more appropriate term in that it

acknowledges both the original process of colonisation and the fact that the early Pennsylvania Germans settled on land that was previously colonised by the English.

To return to the historical notes added by Madenford (*ibid.*), it is also essential to consider what the motivations behind these might be and how they might be of benefit to the 21st-century reader, regardless of whether they belong to the Pennsylvania German community. These addenda – which may be useful, not only for those who do are not part of the Pennsylvania German community, but for those who are, but have no knowledge of its early history – are designed to provide context to the lived experience depicted within several of the stories, particularly in terms of the way the Pennsylvania German people interacted with other communities around them. For instance, one note speaks of Fries's Rebellion (*Idem.*, pp. 84-85), while another addresses the relationship between the community and the indigenous Americans who were situated nearby (*Idem.*, pp. 69-70). What is of great interest to this thesis is that, despite the relatively peaceful state of coexistence that occurred between Pennsylvania Germans and their neighbours, both indigenous and from other colonial groups (cf. Appendices A, D, and F), Moll's collection depicts neighbouring groups in a relatively negative light; one story describes the murder of a Pennsylvania German family at the hands of native Americans (*Idem.*, pp. 62-70), while another deals with the imposition of taxes and laws on the Pennsylvania Germans by the Federalists, who maintained a good relationship with Britain colonising groups (*Idem.*, pp. 84-85). Another example describes the marriage between a Pennsylvania German man and an Irish woman, where, when the wife leaves, the husband is deemed as not being 'man enough' (*Idem.*, pp. 166-175). These accounts are somewhat contradictory when one considers the relatively positive light in which these groups have been described, both in the interviews that I conducted as part of this research project and in recent texts about the Pennsylvania German community (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016; Appendix I).

One possible reason for this apparent contradiction is that the negative portrayals Moll provides were intended to emphasise the spirits' roles as protagonists in their own stories. This interpretation would be appropriate if the only negative portrayals featured English colonial groups, due to the historic marginalisation the Pennsylvania Germans have experienced at their hands, which is recounted on several occasions in *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (e.g. Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 39-45, 78-85).

Yet, given that there are also stories which feature indigenous Americans, and those from other colonial groups, as antagonists, one might also view such portrayals as an attempt on Moll's part to frame the Pennsylvania German as relatively blameless with regards to the colonisation of the region. This is supported by the offensive terms used by some characters to refer to the native Americans (e.g. *Idem.*, p. 108). If this were the case, then this would paradoxically lead to a more negative perception of the Pennsylvania German community as portrayed in *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* due to the perceived attempt to downplay any previous impact their colonisation of the land had upon the indigenous communities who resided there originally².

On balance, I contend that Moll and Madenford did not intend to frame the Pennsylvania German community in a wholly positive or negative light. Instead, I believe that, in including these examples, Moll sought to portray the characters with the flawed beliefs that were common at that time, thus helping to ground these narratives in the historical context in which they are based, be it the 17th, 18th, or 20th century. In viewing the text from this

² One caveat to this interpretation is that the original text was written in the early 20th century, a period whose portrayals of indigenous Americans are considered insensitive today (cf. Berny, 2020; Davis-Delano et al., 2021). As Madenford presents these texts with no edits to the content itself, such an interpretation would be most appropriate in the period in which the stories were originally presented. This would also correlate with the growing interest in Native American culture that was expressed in Germany in the early 20th century (see Lutz et al., 2020).

perspective, one could thus perceive characters like Elsie Kohler – one of those who utilises a slur against the native Americans (Moll and Madenford, 2015, p. 95) – as examples of the opinions that were commonly held at that time to encourage the reader to engage critically with the subject. This strategy would be even more effective today, following the growth in anti-racism movements like Black Lives Matter (Diaz et al., 2022) and moves in several countries to decolonise the curriculum (Begum and Saini, 2019; Lumadi, 2021; Meda, 2020).

In terms of structure, *Schimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015) consists of several stories of varying length, all of which follow a similar formula. Each narrative features an unnamed narrator in Pennsylvania – implied to be inspired by Moll himself (Appendix C) – who arrives at their local graveyard and, through an unknown magic acquired in the first story (Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 8-12), communicates with one of the spirits residing there. Upon making successful contact with a spirit, the narrator then asks them to talk about their life, although the spirit occasionally refuses or presents an alternative narrative (Idem., pp. 149-155).

Although the series is presumably set in a contemporary period – which, for Moll, would have been the early to mid-20th century – there is a timeless quality to the narratives themselves. There are no obvious time markers, for instance, which would indicate the exact period in which the narrator resides, although, of course, the lived experiences of the spirits are limited to the relevant era (often the 17th and 18th centuries). There are also few place markers to determine exactly where each story unfolds, although it is known that the cemetery is based in an undisclosed location in the Lehigh Valley (Appendix C). The relative lack of overt time and place markers, coupled with the use of a first-person narrative style without any description of the narrator themselves, allows the reader to position themselves as the narrator and thus ‘experience’ first-hand the stories told to them by each spirit. This is supported by Madenford,

who questions his own actions had he been in the position of the narrator (Moll and Madenford, 2015, p. 6).

The collection progresses in a conventional chronological format, with each story taking place in the days following the narrator's previous encounter. Throughout the collection, the reader is exposed to several aspects of traditional Pennsylvania German culture that would be recognisable today, both to members of the community and (to a lesser extent) to those outside of the group. Such aspects include the *Belsnickel* and the foodways attached to the community, like apple butter (ibid.).

Like *Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel* (Waggoner, 2011), *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* exposes the reader to the community as it was at that period in time. Of course, one cannot claim this to be a work of non-fiction, as it is highly unlikely that these characters are recounting the objectively true stories of their lives and lived experiences. However, I maintain that one could still consider this collection to be a work of life writing for two reasons:

- i. The lived experiences of the spirits are recounted in this collection. Whether there is any historical accuracy to these experiences is not strictly relevant to the notion of life writing, as demonstrated by such variants as autofiction (cf. p. 48). However, there is – as highlighted by Madenford (Moll and Madenford, 2015; Appendix C) sufficient historical context within the collection that the reader may suspend their disbelief and regard such narratives as plausible.
- ii. While the narratives themselves are works of fiction, the experiences that they depict are steeped in the history, heritage, and culture of the Pennsylvania German people. As members of the Pennsylvania German community, Moll and Madenford have striven to provide realistic reflections of life for this group in the late 18th and 19th centuries, from the industries that would have been common in the region to the cultural events

and practices, all of which are situated alongside the historical context (Idem., pp. 142-148, for example).

Another similarity between the work of Moll and Madenford and the writing of Waggoner is that the writers do not portray their respective communities in isolation from the wider American society of that period. For instance, while the latter author depicts characters residing among their Anglophone counterparts, Moll and Madenford depict the Pennsylvania German people's coexistence alongside both the Anglophone colonial groups that came to the region and the indigenous Americans with whom they, for the most part, had peaceful relations – although, as stated earlier, this was not always the case.

The context in which the spirits all resided – having all lived in the 18th and 19th centuries – is also akin to that in which the characters of *Histoire Acadienne* and *Les Deux Sœurs* would have lived (pp. 103-132). In comparing *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* with these latter texts, this thesis notes the drastic difference in terms of the trauma that is depicted. In Waggoner (2011), for instance, the trauma of these narratives stems primarily from the *Grand Dérangement* and the brutal treatment experienced at the hands of the English. Yet in Moll and Madenford (2015), much of the trauma is more personal in nature and is directly linked to the family or local community, as opposed to the wide-reaching trauma among the Louisiana French. Such trauma can be observed in the narratives of Ella Seiberling and Rofine Schultz (Idem., pp. 62-70, pp. 213-222), who both experience trauma of some form: the former loses her love to an attack by native Americans, while the latter experiences personal trauma as a result of her past experience as an indentured servant during childhood.

Yet one of the major connections between *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015), *Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel* (Waggoner, 2011), and, to a lesser extent, *Der Haahne Greht* (Fritsch, 2008; p. 181) is the significance of community, be that the

Pennsylvania German community at large, or close-knit groups of families and friends. There are several instances where a character will refer to another spirit residing in the cemetery and will often complain about them, be it their habits as a spirit (as in Sam Schwammbach) or something that occurred in life that has aggrieved them. For instance, Yoni Schtettler is referred to in the story immediately preceding his, where Andanni Boetcher states:

[D]er Yoni, der Deihenker, iss die Schuld, das ich unnich dem Grundhiwwel bin. Wann's net fer ihn waer, kennt ich aa noch laafe wie du.

Yoni, that devil, it is his fault that I am under the ground. If it wasn't for him, I could be walking around like you.

(Moll and Madenford, 2015, p. 137, p. 139).

In cross-referencing multiple stories across the different editions – even with temporal gaps, as there would have been at the original time of publication – Moll strengthens the feeling of community for the reader. Despite any complaints that are expressed by the spirits (which, in the case of Andanni Boetcher, is certainly valid), Moll's choice to group several of the stories together through these references creates the sense that the community is thus united against whatever struggles are presented to them, including those surrounding language and culture decline. This is also demonstrated in the story of Yoni Schtettler, wherein he regards the new German doctor's attitude to the culture as follows:

Es waar aerscht karzlich en yunger Dokter noch Ellsdaun kumme, beim Naame Henrich Detwiller, en Deitscher [...] Weescht, die Deitsche wolle allsfatt so gscheit sei! Was denkscht hot der Detwiller die Granke gfrogt? 'Hen ihr Lattwaerrick gesse?' Verflammer Ochs! Eenich epper weess, das mer Lattwaerrick [sic] esst mit Schpeck un Bohne, Sauergraut, Schnitz un Gnepp un eenich Gemies.

After a short time a young doctor came from Allentown, by the name of Heinrich Detwiller, a German [...] You know, the Germans always want to be so smart! What do you think Detwiller asked all of the sick people? 'Did you eat apple butter?' Goddamn ox! Everybody knows that we eat apple butter with bacon and beans, sauerkraut, schnitz und gnepp and other foods.

(Moll and Madenford, 2015, p. 144, p. 147).

The above quote not only demonstrates the feeling of community, and the idea that the community is positioned ‘against’ other groups, as stated previously; there are clear parallels that can be drawn between this excerpt and the poem *Counterclockwise* by Waggoner, and the sense of condescension experienced by the narrator in the latter work (p. 117). By comparing these two works, I believe that the self-imposed sense of inferiority observed in Louisiana French written narratives can also be seen in the Pennsylvania German written narrative, with Yoni Schtettler simultaneously rejecting the ‘folksy’ stereotype experienced among the Pennsylvania German community (cf. Appendices A and C) while also regarding Detwiller through a similar stereotypical lens.

Another core theme of *Schimme aus'm Kaerrichof* – which also corroborates the previous statement regarding self-imposed inferiority in the community – is belonging. In several stories, the spirits speak of the homelands from which they had originated and how they came to Pennsylvania. Such locations include the *Pfalz*, Bavaria, and Switzerland – all of which are known places of origin for the group that would become the Pennsylvania Germans (Louden, 2016) – but also from countries like Ireland, where there would have been little link linguistically to their Germanophone counterparts. Yet despite this, there are spirits from Ireland, like Fitz Fitzpatrick, who proclaim that their ‘[Pennsylvania German] is better than your English’ (Moll and Madenford, 2015, p. 47). The choice to communicate in this language over their first language implies that these spirits feel a greater sense of belonging to their new environment than the regions from which they came originally, thus actively ‘making’ belonging in Pennsylvania (Yuval-Davis, 2006). There is also a certain amount of *métissage culturel* (Glissant, 1989; p. 37) to be found in this act, as cultural practices were maintained despite the language shift, although any cultural mixing is to a lesser extent than that portrayed in Cheramie and Waggoner (cf. pp. 103-132). This indicates that for the Pennsylvania Germans, belonging is not necessarily contingent on being born in the region or having any knowledge

of the language; rather, one can, through being actively engaged in the community, *become* Pennsylvania German via direct experience of the language. This would mean that people like Louden, who has spent several decades in the community despite being born and raised elsewhere (cf. Appendix F), could be deemed equally Pennsylvania German to anyone that is born into the community. The *habitus* is therefore widened to incorporate others whose experiences align with the wider group, and thus would identify as a member of the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993). This statement is also supported by Donmoyer – himself a member of the community, but for whom Pennsylvania German is not his first language - who asserts that asserting one’s belonging to the Pennsylvania German community is not always dependent upon knowing the language:

You don’t even have to be a speaker of the language necessarily, some of the Dutchiest people I know are not speakers of the language. Yet at the same time for me also, the language is such an important part of it, at various stages. As a non-native speaker of the language, I appreciate the language in ways I think that some folks who grew up with the language aren’t really – wouldn’t resonate with, and it’s because of, you know, if it’s an acquired language versus a language of the home (p. 292).

Yet while Pennsylvania German speakers of the 21st century – like Donmoyer – may feel that the language is an asset, but not strictly necessary, if one is to identify as Pennsylvania German, the question of whether one belongs to the community is not always so clear-cut in Moll’s writing. For instance, when Christian Baumer speaks of the pain felt when his wife and children leave without his knowledge, he is told by others around him that his ‘Irish’ wife was too strong for him to handle (Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 166-175). This suggests that, even though his wife became a member of the group through her marriage, one could also easily be rendered *homo sacer* among the Pennsylvania Germans if there is any dissent (Agamben, 1998).

With regards to the language found within the collection, it is relatively informal in nature, despite Madenford noting the presence of several older or more specialised Pennsylvania German terms that required additional research. In particular, the dialogue

between narrator and spirit is often colloquial or, in some cases, abrupt in the way each addresses the other:

Wo! Wo! Was des Dunnerwedder witt du mit mir? [...] Sin des widder vum Schwammbach seine Schtreech? Mach dich fatt!

Wo! Wo! What the hell do you want with me?
[...] Is this Schwammbach's prankster again?
Go away!

(Moll and Madenford, 2015, p. 16, p. 19).

The use of this register is evocative of Pennsylvania German society at the time. Many of those spirits which feature in *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* are from working-class backgrounds – predominately agricultural, but there are also several who are tradesmen of various kinds – and are based in a rural region where education for the working classes would have been less readily available at that time (cf. Bronner and Brown, 2017). Therefore, it stands to reason that Moll would utilise a lower register, which Madenford preserves in his translation.

Yet while many of the spirits use colloquial language, the narration itself is of a slightly higher register. There is also one ghost whose 'voice' is noticeably more formal than his peers: Heinrich Ebberhardt. As a former court composer for a German Prince, he often makes use of more florid language to explain his circumstances. Several instances of this can be found in the description of his concert:

Was en Freed! 'S Orchester hot die Simfonie wunnerbaar gschpielt, yedes Inschtrument hot mit Luscht geklunge. Mir hen yuscht die Eileiding zum Tenor seinre Aria gschpielt un nau singt er, 'Denn es umfangen mich des Todes Bande, un die Becher Belials erschrecken mich. Der Hoelle Bande umfangen mich' un so weiter. Was iss los? Mei Aaage warre drieb, mei Takt waerd wacklich, ich zitter un es iss alles verkehrt var meine Aaage. Die Senger singe yo falsch, un's Orchester schtimmt schrecklich! Die Hoelle hot mich waerklich in ihre Glubbe!

What a joy! The orchestra played the symphony wonderfully and each instrument rang with desire. We had just played the introduction to the tenor's aria and now he sang, 'Then the string of death encircled me, and Belial's pitcher scared me. The bands of hell encircled me' and so on. What was wrong? My eyes were cloudy, my rhythm was weak, and everything was backwards in front of my eyes. The singers were singing incorrectly, and the orchestra sounded terrible! Hell had me in its grips!

(Moll and Madenford, 2015, pp. 32-33, p.36).

Here, not only are there several instances of highly emotive language, accompanied by the idiomatic language of ‘Hell had me in its grips’, but one can also observe a unique case of translanguaging, not between Pennsylvania German and English, but between Pennsylvania German and *Hochdeutsch* (‘Standard German’). In making use of a German closer to *Hochdeutsch*, Moll and Madenford create a metaphor for the contrast in environments between Heinrich’s former occupation and the environment in which he found himself in Pennsylvania. Additionally, this may also be an attempt on Heinrich’s part to distance himself from his life among the Pennsylvania Germans, preferring instead to highlight the elevated position which he occupied previously; this supports Yoni Schtettler’s belief that the Germans regarded the Pennsylvania German community with condescension. If the latter interpretation is held as true, then this suggests that, just as one could ‘become’ Pennsylvania German through active engagement and experience of the community, one might also dissociate from the group despite working frequently among them as Heinrich does; thus, the *habitus* and status of *homo sacer* are as much in the hands of the community as it is those outside of the group (Agamben, 1998; Bourdieu, 1993; cf. p. 28, p. 58).

It is also curious to note at this point that, while Heinrich recites the lyrics of Mendelssohn’s *Lobgesang* as written above, the corresponding lyrics in the actual libretto are in fact as follows:

*Stricke des Todes hatten uns umfassen,
und Angst der Hölle hatte uns getroffen,
wir wandelten in Finsternis.*

The sorrows of death encompassed us
and fear of hell had struck us,
We wandered in darkness.

(Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, 1841).

This alteration of the *Lobgesang*, coupled with the pathetic fallacy of Heinrich’s ‘cloudy’ vision, serves to foreshadow his eventual collapse during the performance, and may

even be considered foreshadowing of the fate he would eventually find upon his recovery, wherein he becomes a social pariah. In utilising the *Lobgesang* as inspiration, Moll and Madenford also demonstrate the strong ties to religious belief that remain in the community today, both among the sectarian and non-sectarian groups (Louden, 2016; Appendices C and F).

In summary, Moll and Madenford present individual lived experience in the context of the wider Pennsylvania German community, and, by drawing parallels between the experiences of different characters, create an opportunity for early Pennsylvania German history and culture to be ‘felt’, both by the characters Moll creates and by ensuring – through Madenford’s additions – that the collection is accessible to all. Like Cheramie and Waggoner (pp. 103-132), Moll and Madenford position the Pennsylvania German community at odds with the other groups around them - including other German migrant groups, which are often considered separate from the Pennsylvania Germans (Louden, 2016) – in order to highlight the significance of the unique *habitus* that the entire group occupies (Bourdieu, 1993). In doing so, a Pennsylvania German reader would not only be able to ‘feel’ their language (Baloy, 2011), but would also be able to ‘feel’ their ancestral ties through this collection – a phenomenon which is highly valued among the members of the community that were interviewed for this thesis (e.g. Appendix C, Appendix H).

The following section of this chapter will examine the work of a Pennsylvania German speaker who was able to connect with his linguistic and cultural heritage and depict this in written form: Peter V. Fritsch. Through the critical reading of *Der Haahne Greht*, it will determine how the effects outlined in this section are transformed by the addition of non-written narrative methods.

Fritsch and *Der Haahne Greht*

Having first examined a textual collection comprised of works of short fiction in Pennsylvania German, this chapter now turns to the work of Peter V. Fritsch – namely his collection of poetry, *Der Haahne Greht* – which combines poetry with the art of *Scherenschnitte*. Of the four core cultural texts that I have selected for analysis in this thesis, Fritsch's is unique in that he is the only one that combines written narratives with another art form – in this case, visual art. These *Scherenschnitte* match the general theme of each poem, with the designs often representing the principal characters or events of the poem to which it is attached. The effects created by incorporating *Scherenschnitte* will only be briefly addressed in this chapter, with a more detailed examination of this art form in Chapter Seven (p. 197).

Fritsch's written style also differs greatly from the poetry cited in Chapter Four (pp. 103-132). In contrast to his Louisiana French contemporaries, who favour a style akin to free verse with occasional instances of rhyming throughout, Fritsch uses a series of rhyme schemes throughout the collection. This may be a more conventional ABAB or ABCB structure (cf. Fritsch, 2008, p. 34) or, more commonly, rhyming couplets. The utilisation of a rhyme scheme lends a musicality to Fritsch's oeuvre that is not as audible in the work of Cheramie or Waggoner; this is emphasised through the music that was composed as an accompaniment for several of these poems (Devlin, 2008). This choice may also reflect closer ties to the original folklife and oral tradition that preceded the written narrative in Pennsylvania German culture; as narratives were most commonly performed or passed down orally from one generation to the next, often using poetic forms (Louden, 2016), the use of rhyme schemes would have been commonplace as a means of ensuring maximum retention so that it could be performed again at a later stage.

Yet this section must evaluate more than the poetry and *Scherenschnitte* alone. It is also essential that any analysis of the collection incorporates the paratextual elements of *Der Haahne Greht* – namely the dedication, the *Notes from the Author* and the introduction – when interpreting this work in its entirety. Throughout the three elements, Fritsch clearly outlines his connection to the Pennsylvania German language and culture and notes the personal significance of continuing to actively use the language in his art. In the introduction to the work, for instance, Fritsch states that he ‘always felt strongly about his Pennsylvania Dutch birthright’ (Fritsch, 2008, p. vi).

As a brief aside, one should also note that Fritsch, like Moll and Madenford – and several of the research participants interviewed for this study (cf. Appendices A, C, and E) – favours the term ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ over ‘Pennsylvania German’. The use of the former term is considered common in both Brown and Bronner’s encyclopaedia (2017) and Loudon (2015), wherein ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ is considered as a term which distinguishes the community from the later waves of German immigration in the 19th century. Evidently, the omission of ‘German’ naturally creates a disconnect from German speakers based in Europe, along with any other Americans with German heritage; yet this also has the effect of creating a self-imposed ‘exile’ of the Pennsylvania German community (Agamben, 1998).³

Fritsch further hints at this notion of separation and ‘exile’ when he describes the English translations that he provides alongside each poem:

Be mindful that translations from a dialect are often deficient, lacking soul and feeling. The Pennsylvania Dutch dialect goes beyond mere words. It requires understanding and appreciation of some part of the 300 years of culture and folklore found here in the rolling hills and in the shadow of decorated barns of our one-time “Dutch” counties of Pennsylvania (Fritsch, 2008, p. vii).

³ Despite the preference for ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’, this thesis will use the term ‘Pennsylvania German’ (cf. [p. 3](#) for more information).

This brief comment is a significant indication of the self-imposed Othering of the Pennsylvania German community. Despite providing the translations himself, Fritsch is not satisfied with the tonal shift provoked by the use of English, instead declaring the translated versions as ‘lacking soul and feeling’. In stating that one could not fully understand his work – nor understand the Pennsylvania German language – without seeking to comprehend the culture and history of the community, Fritsch himself partakes in an exclusionary act: he declares it to be unintelligible to anyone who does not ‘belong’ to the community. This statement is an inversion of the biopolitical scenario that emerged in the literature review (cf. p. 28, p. 58). In this inverted dynamic, Pennsylvania German speakers are accorded the power and control over who can truly access the *habitus* they have created (cf. Bourdieu, 1993); they are the gatekeepers of the language and the culture.

One might also perceive Fritsch’s assertion of the source text’s superiority as a critique of those who have consciously chosen not to speak the language or practice the culture in public settings. Given that many of the remaining fora in which Pennsylvania German is spoken are performative in nature (Donner, 2016; Loudon, 2016), these comments from the author become a call to arms, of sorts, for Fritsch’s Pennsylvania German compatriots.

Yet it is curious that despite these assertions regarding the inferiority of his English translations, Fritsch has still included them within this collection. Their inclusion may have been deemed necessary to ensure that a wide readership could engage with the collection effectively, regardless of whether they belong to the Pennsylvania German community; this would support the issue of accessibility noted in both communities (cf. Appendices C, E, and G). In addition, while any translation would naturally be of use to readers with no understanding of the language, they would also be of benefit to those who consider themselves part of the community but have little to no knowledge of the language, thus also supporting the

concept raised in the previous section that belonging is *created*, with qualities like an understanding of the language not serving as a prerequisite for belonging to the community (cf. pp. 1-24). The former argument is similar to that of Madenford, who considered his translation of *Schtimma aus 'm Kaerrichof* as a way through which members of the Pennsylvania German community who did not speak the language might access Moll's narratives:

[T]he first thing I thought of was, 'Well, they should be translated into English, so that someone that doesn't speak Pennsylvania Dutch can have access to it.' So that was goal number one, [...] but then the other thing that I thought of, 'If somebody picks this book up that doesn't have a background in Pennsylvania Dutch and they just want to read it because of X, Y, and Z, there's a lot of things in these series of short stories that could use a little bit of explanation to someone that doesn't understand or know their history.' So that's where the idea then came of doing historical notes with certain stories (pp. 389-390).

When the two motivations are combined – utilising Madenford's thoughts on the translation of Pennsylvania German narratives into English – a new understanding is developed. The creation of a translingual and polyphonic text – translingual through the interaction between languages, and polyphonic in the tonal shifts between each language and each narrative 'voice' (pp. 26-88) – becomes a means of increasing accessibility by allowing *Der Haahne Greht* to occupy both the Pennsylvania German-speaking and English-speaking *habiti* (Bourdieu, 1993). Thus, Fritsch asserts his belonging, and the belonging of his writing, to multiple American identities, as indigenous groups have also done in recent years (cf. Baloy, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006).

Despite the multitude of possible interpretations aside from those listed here, I advocate for a middle ground in which the ambiguity of these comments can be viewed from all angles. The connotations derived from Fritsch's observations depend upon the lived experience of the reader and the extent to which the reader is able to share the author's sentiments. For instance, I view this statement through the lens of a first-language English speaker from outside of the United States, and thus cannot fully appreciate the climate against which the language and

culture would have struggled, especially in the early 20th century (cf. p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, p. 238). In my opinion, further fieldwork – or perhaps an extended ethnographical study of the community – ought to be undertaken if one is to better comprehend the culture clash at play here.

With regards to the structure of the collection itself, Fritsch groups his poetry into various themes, all of which are relatively broad. For instance, the first section is based around animals, while the others focus on characters, children, Easter, and a section of miscellaneous poems, which is described in English as a ‘little bit of anything’ (Fritsch, 2008, p. 47). These groupings align roughly with the types of folklore outlined by both Ancelet (Appendix G) and Rabalais (2021) in their exploration of Louisiana French narratives. However, as was stated in Chapter Four (pp. 103-132), I do not believe that such categorisation sufficiently addresses the variants which are specific to the communities featured in this study.

Fritsch also employs a more traditional poetic form – in contrast to the free verse favoured by Cheramie and Waggoner (ibid.) – with the majority of these poems utilising some form of rhyme scheme and being relatively short in length (i.e., less than a page in length). This may have been inspired, again, by lived experience, as Fritsch would likely have heard poetry of a similar nature in his youth (Louden, 2016).

Alternatively, this style may be reflective of the way that Fritsch intends for these poems to be read – given the performative nature of contemporary Pennsylvania German events (cf. Appendix F) – one may consider that these works were created with the aim of public performance. This is further supported by the music that was composed for this collection, with the text serving as lyrics (Devlin, 2008) – thus returning to the performative nature of the poetry Fritsch is likely to have witnessed in his youth. Therefore, I deduce that the rigid structure and rhyming scheme found throughout *Der Haahne Greht* are intended to evoke Fritsch’s youth

and previous Pennsylvania German cultural practice, while simultaneously allowing for the continuation of said cultural practice today.

Fritsch does not only seek to draw relationships between his personal lived experience and those of wider Pennsylvania German culture; he also depicts the interaction between the Pennsylvania German community with wider American society and culture, especially in terms of local festivities and cultural practices. A clear example of this is found in the poem *Die Grundsau's Geyammert* (*The Groundhog's Lament*; Fritsch, 2008, pp. 11-13). In this poem, Fritsch writes from the perspective of a groundhog who, on Groundhog Day, must predict the arrival of early spring or a prolonged winter. The poem recounts the groundhog's exasperation in being asked to rise and give a verdict to the local boys, while also lamenting the existence of the holiday and the fact that, despite the local villagers clamouring to know the results, '[n]obody really knows' whether spring will come early (Idem., p. 13).

Curiously, Fritsch deviates from the other poems – in which the cultural practices are restricted to the Pennsylvania German community itself (e.g. Idem., pp. 22, 30, 39-41) – in focusing on this event. Groundhog Day is one of the most well-known Pennsylvania German traditions, not only across the United States, but around the world. One notable example of this recognition is in the film *Groundhog Day* (1993), which features the Groundhog Day celebrations in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania as the impetus for the main characters' journey to the town. The incorporation of such a well-known event, while simultaneously reframing the event from the perspective of the groundhog – itself a common motif among the Pennsylvania German community, as seen in the *Groundhog Lodges* (Donner, 2016) – serves as a critique of the way in which the community's traditions have been co-opted at the expense of their language, cultural heritage, and beliefs. Similar critiques can be found across the authors of the core cultural works, as seen in *Counterclockwise* (p. 117) and Madenford's critique of Dwight Schrute (Appendix C).

Der Haahne Greht also places emphasis on another significant relationship: that between the unnamed narrator – who, like Cherie, is implied to be a version of the author (cf. p. 104) – and the past which is recounted in the collection. This dynamic is explored in several poems in a manner which is similar in style to *Schimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015); however, while Moll and Madenford's text features memory as one of the principal themes – as evidenced by the fact that the narrator seeks to learn the life stories of each spirit they encounter – Fritsch reflects on this in only a few poems in the entire collection (e.g. 2008, pp. 65-69). Fritsch distinguishes between the two by utilising different narrative methods. For instance, in those poems which do reflect on relationship between communities, Fritsch favours a first-person lyric; the rest of the collection, however, employs a third-person omniscient narrator.

In addition, in those instances where the former method is used, the narrator is frequently depicted as a young child of unknown gender, although they are heavily implied to be male in the accompanying *Scherenschnitte*; examples of this include *Die Betsie Barrabel* (*Betsy Barrabel*) and *Maher Matsch Zeit* (*Mowing Party Time*), wherein the narrator speaks of childhood memories of life on the farm and receiving a puppy. Consequently, I regard *Der Haahne Greht* as an example of life writing, albeit one that is more retrospective in nature and involves the speaker viewing his youth through the childlike gaze he would have previously held.

This is not to say that all of the more reflective poems utilise a childlike gaze; one of the longer poems in the collection – *Alde Gedanke* (*Old Thoughts*) – is notable for its use of nostalgia, with the narrator reflecting upon their past as a Pennsylvania German speaker. The poem opens with a brief meditation on the narrator's heritage, before engaging in one of several flashbacks found throughout the work:

*Alsemol wann ich so leenich bin,
Fliegt eppes aldes in der Sinn.*

Sometimes when I am alone
Old thoughts come to me

*Die Gremen ihre alt Geglaab,
Zu uns nadierlichli erlaabt.*

Grandmother and her old beliefs/sayings
To us (years ago) seemed truthful

(Fritsch, 2008, pp. 68-69).

The remainder of the poem continues in a similar vein, with each stanza listing a folk belief⁴ that the narrator has inherited from their grandmother. Some of these beliefs are similar to folk beliefs found in Anglophone culture, like the idea that leaving new shoes on a table is unlucky (Fritsch, 2008, pp. 68-69); however, there are also superstitions that bear little resemblance to Anglophone folk beliefs:

*Wann mer schtopt bei epper nei
Un hockt sich net hie, nemsht's Ruh weck glei.
[...]
Un will der Haahne oweds graehe,
Bis mariye middaags sehnt mer Regge.*

If you make a quick stop at someone's house
And you don't sit down
You take their rest with you when you leave
[...]
And if the rooster crows at night
By tomorrow noon we will see rain.

(ibid.).

The listing of these beliefs – combined with the framing narrative employed at the beginning – reaffirms the continued significance of folklore and folk culture (known as *Braucherei* in Pennsylvania German) within Pennsylvania German culture. Through the inclusion of the framing narrative, Fritsch demonstrates the legacy of Pennsylvania German language and culture and the way in which they have shaped the narrator's identity as an adult speaker of Pennsylvania German.

⁴ Although these beliefs may be described as 'superstitions', I will not make use of this term due to previous instances wherein it was used as a derogatory term for the beliefs of the Pennsylvania Germans (cf. Bronner and Brown, 2017, p. xii, p. 368).

Additionally, the narrator's choice to focus on sayings from his grandmother, as opposed to other folk practices (such as the foodways or cultural events) reinforces the importance of family and community within Pennsylvania German culture – a topic which appeared frequently across the interviews that I undertook as part of this study (cf. Appendices C, H, and I). The first of the beliefs listed above – that is, the belief that one takes a person's rest if you don't sit down while visiting – is further evidence of this. Although my research as part of this study did not uncover an equivalent idiom in Anglophone or wider Germanophone culture, its inclusion in *Alde Gedanke* exemplifies the closeness and belonging that is felt among members of the Pennsylvania German community and demonstrated in institutions like the *Grundsau* Lodges (Donner, 2016) and the Kutztown Folk Festival (p. 216). Through performing this act of remembering, Fritsch therefore contributes to the Pennsylvania German *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993) by transcending these previously held stereotypes while – through the use of translanguaging (cf. Cavazos, 2017) – inviting discussion on said stereotypes.

Yet it is also my opinion that the performative nature of *Alde Gedanke* may hinder attempts to depict the Pennsylvania German community as it is today. For instance, in believing that '*will der Haahne oweds graehe,/Bis mariye middaags sehnt mer Regge*' ('[I]f the rooster crows at night/By tomorrow noon we will see rain') (Fritsch, 2008, pp. 68-69), Fritsch evokes the agricultural roots in which he – and other members of the community (Appendix H) – were raised (Lauer-Williams, 2011). However, in referring to the narrator's lived experience, Fritsch inadvertently plays into the stereotype that 'if you spoke [Pennsylvania German], if you had this accent, that you were automatically assumed to be a dumb, backwoods, redneck bumpkin that wasn't educated, that didn't understand, you know, anything, that didn't know anything.' (p. 385) This therefore risks the possibility of condescension on the part of a reader with little to no understanding of the culture or language, similar to that seen at the start of *Counterclockwise* (p. 117).

Yet, as in *Counterclockwise*, I maintain that there is a dual meaning to the utilisation of lived experience and this focus, in particular, on folk practices and beliefs. In opting to incorporate practices that are close in nature to those that are stereotyped by wider American society, Fritsch replicates the alienation experienced by members of his community (e.g. Appendices C and H) and creates a sense of alienation for readers outside of the community. Simultaneously, the author celebrates these beliefs and ‘legitimises’ them in the *habitus* of the United States (Bourdieu, 1993; Culp, 2017; cf. p. 58). Consequently, *Alde Gendanke* becomes not only a tribute to previous generations of Pennsylvania German speakers, but a celebration of the culture’s survival in spite of outside ridicule and condescension (cf. Appendix C for examples of this condescension and stereotyping).

Alde Gedanke is not the only example of relationships – and, by extension, people – being examined in *Der Haahne Greht*. In fact, among those poems which focus on people, Fritsch depicts these relationships while following clearly defined gender roles. The men within these poems tend to be the ‘breadwinners’, with several male figures based in medicine, agriculture, or local crafts (Refs as examples). Conversely, the women featured in these poems are either depicted as either a spinster or as married women, with their virtues as a wife/mother frequently being extolled. A typical description of the former is found in *Aldi Schuh Verkaafe* (*Selling Old Shoes*), where the old woman selling shoes is described, rather ambiguously, as a ‘Hex’⁵. Not only does this ground the character in Pennsylvania German cultural practice – in this case, to the folk medicine practice of Powwowing or *Hexerei* (cf. Loudon, 2016; Appendix A) – but the negative connotations associated with all three potential translations may be perceived as a critique of the woman’s unmarried status and the situation in which she finds herself.

⁵ Although Fritsch translates this term as ‘old (scary) woman’, the term can also be used in Pennsylvania German to mean ‘witch’ or ‘hag’.

The use of traditional Western gender roles is also visible in the depiction of children throughout *Der Haahne Greht*, as shown in the final three stanzas of *Die Meed (The Girls)*:

*Katie Carrie Kessleraahm,
Guckt ball wie en Grischdaagsbaam.
Schpelle, Karelle, Ohrering;
Sie glitzelt wie en Engeldraam.*

Katie Carrie Kesselraahm
Almost looks like a Christmas tree
With jewelry pins, beads and earrings
She glitters like a dream of angels

*Helena Hessi Hottaschteh,
Is immers erscht ans Wesche geh.
Sie bickt sich in der Zuwwer nei,
Hangt ihre Wesch uff Leine glei.*

Helena Hessie Hottaschteh
Is always the first to do her laundry
She bends over the washtub
And quickly hangs her wash on the washlines

*Gladys Gertie Gillerei,
Ihr gleichnis kann net gfunne sei.
Sie gleicht die Kinner glee un gross,
Kann paar hewe uff ihrem
Schooss.*

Gladys Gertie Gillerei
Her likeness is not to be found
She likes all children big and small
And can hold several on her lap at one time

(Fritsch, 2008, pp. 29-30).

There are several possible interpretations for the characterisations cited above, each of which is also affected by the inclusion of the accompanying *Scherenschnitte* (ibid.). One possible interpretation – driven, to a large extent, by the *Scherenschnitte* – is that Fritsch plays on nostalgia for an earlier period of Pennsylvania German history, namely that of the early- to mid-20th century. The depiction of the characters themselves in what appears to be old-fashioned clothing⁶, with the girls dressed in bonnets, long skirts, and dresses while the men often wear wide-brimmed hats and dungarees, is also evocative of the agricultural environment in which the early Pennsylvania German community were grounded (Bronner and Brown, 2017). In aligning his descriptions of the girls with this image, Fritsch thus plays upon the themes of the American Dream and Americana (as evidenced by the *Scherenschnitte*) as a means of attracting a readership seeking nostalgia for previous eras. This would also

⁶ Given the nature of this *Scherenschnitte*, which creates a silhouetted figure, it is impossible to be certain as to the exact items worn by each character.

corroborate the notion of celebrating the former lifestyle, and thus inviting wider society to consider this poem as an example of this celebration.

Alternatively, the relatively antiquated depictions featured in *Die Meed* may be viewed as an attempt on Fritsch's part to acknowledge the sectarian communities that are also part of the Pennsylvania German community and, in the 21st century, are considered by several interview participants as crucial to ensuring the survival of the language (cf. Appendices A, C, E, and F). This interpretation is again supported by the attire featured in the *Scherenschnitte*, given that the attire worn by sectarian Pennsylvania Germans – including several branches of the Amish and Mennonites communities – favour simple and modest attire, while the gender roles in some of these groups remain similar to those depicted in *Der Haahne Greht* (Johnson-Weiner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016).

Yet it is also possible that the depiction of characters which conform to stereotypical gender roles is intended to demonstrate to the reader the changes that have occurred within the non-sectarian community. While stereotypical depictions of the community – created by those based outside of the Pennsylvania German *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993) – position Pennsylvania German women as inferior to their male counterparts, Wenger and Bronner (2017, pp. 54-55) argue that Pennsylvania German women have long stood in contrast to their English and Irish counterparts in that they engaged in manual labour alongside their male relatives. Thus, one could perceive the depiction of these traditional roles as an example of gender performance (Butler, 1990; De Beauvoir, 1949), perhaps even as a means of satirising the performance of these roles among wider American society. In following this perspective, the poem takes on an acerbic quality as the girls become no different from their male peers.

Among other themes found throughout *Der Haahne Greht*, there is also a certain amount of violence within the collection, similar to that which is found in the works of Moll, Madenford, and Waggoner. However, unlike these authors, whose depictions of violence are frequently

brutal and blunt in nature (Examples), Fritsch depicts lesser acts of violence, with many instances being related to the idea of discipline or the family. A prime example of this can be found in the poem ‘*Wie Willie Weckel*’ (‘Wee Willie Weckel’), whose behaviour is believed to be wild and uncouth:

<p><i>Was fehlt so en Rutzer? En deiwelisher Relbscht. Gut schwaarde un bletsche, Verleicht macht ihn en Helf.</i></p>	<p>What is wrong with this mischievous [sic] kid He’s a devilish rebel A good spanking and whipping Maybe that would help</p>
<p><i>“Nau genunk!” saagt sei Daadi, “Des kummt zu en End.” Nemmt halt an der Willie, Zu der Holzschopp neigerennt.</i></p>	<p>“That’s enough” says his father “This has got to stop” He takes a hold of Willie And into the woodshed they go</p>
<p><i>Nau heere mir ihn Yolle, En madderlich Grisch. Die Gatt uff seim Hinnerdeel, Des drefft ihn recht frisch!</i></p>	<p>We now hear (Willie) yelling A murderous scream The switch on his backside Is hitting it’s [sic] mark</p>
<p><i>Nau nimmt unschuldich, Beheeft sich ganz gut. Der nei Willie Weckel, En recht schmaerder yung Bu!</i></p>	<p>He is no longer naughty Behaves himself very nicely This new Willie Weckel Is a well behaved young boy</p>

(Fritsch, 2008, pp. 40-41).

However, what is significant about this poem is not only the implications of generational trauma, as violent forms of discipline are transferred from one generation to the next; rather, it is also the brief resemblance that this poem – namely its title – bears to the Scottish nursery rhyme *Wee Willie Winkie*. This resemblance – which is strengthened by the shared depiction of a young boy who is considered delinquent by their parents – suggests that *Wie Willie Weckel* is an adaptation of this earlier that has been transformed to align it more closely with Pennsylvania German culture which, as a result, makes the poem relatable to the community. This allows for members of the community who remember such attitudes to

engage – by relating to Willie Weckel’s experience – in an act of shared belonging and remembrance (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

The relationship between Willie and his father could also be interpreted as an extended metaphor for the relationship between the Pennsylvania German community and Anglophone American society around them. While it is not believed that there were any formal methods designed to oust the usage of Pennsylvania German – unlike Louisiana French, as Chermie points out in his collections (2007) – it is known that the language fell into decline among non-sectarian groups in the periods following the two World Wars.

In sum, *Der Haahne Greht* combines the ballad form – with short stanzas and simple rhyme schemes – with the unique Pennsylvania German context in which Fritsch grew up to create a *métissage culturel* (Glissant, 1989). In doing so, the author evokes a sense of nostalgia for the community’s past while contrasting this with the position of the Pennsylvania German language and culture today – in particular, in the restriction of certain practices to performative spaces like the *Grundsau* Lodges and folk festivals (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Donner, 2016). This contrast demonstrates the continued significance of the Pennsylvania German language and culture (especially in the case of the latter) as a means of asserting belonging to the community (Yuval-Davis, 2006) as Fritsch entreats his Pennsylvania German compatriots – similarly to Waggoner (p. 117) – to engage in a rediscovery and celebration of Pennsylvania German heritage. Through this – as *Der Haahne Greht* highlights – the community is thus able to ‘feel’ their culture once again (Baloy, 2011).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined in detail the written narrative methods of the Pennsylvania German community with a view to determining how these works reflect the community from

its establishment to the present day, the significance of utilising the language as part of these narratives, and the impact of the English translations provided in transmitting these narratives to the reader. This has been achieved through a close reading of both *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015) and *Der Haahne Greht* (Fritsch, 2008) accompanied with input from the interviews that I have undertaken for this thesis.

Moll, Madenford, and Fritsch all explore the issues of heritage, belonging, and identity within their narrative methods, with all three authors positioning the community at odds with other groups around them, be it Anglophone American society or other waves of Germanophone migration, to demonstrate the unique historical, linguistic, and cultural *habitus* in which the Pennsylvania German community is situated. However, Moll and Madenford provide a polyphonic depiction (Bakhtin, 1981) of Pennsylvania German life that focuses, on several occasions, on the traumatic instances interspersed through the community's early history, while Fritsch depicts the individual lived experience of his narrator through the lens of nostalgia. The contrast between these two styles creates a pragmatic image of contemporary Pennsylvania German life wherein the celebration of the language and culture is tempered with a reminder of those previous struggles listed in *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015). Thus, the authors engage simultaneously in acts of remembrance, celebration, and resistance as they move beyond the performative to 'feel' their language (Baloy, 2011).

The following chapter will explore Pennsylvania German performance through the visual arts and the folk festival to determine the interaction between these spaces of performance and the narratives evoked by the creators in question. This will include an analysis of the *Scherenschnitte* Fritsch created and included in *Der Haahne Greht*.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN NON-WRITTEN NARRATIVE FORMS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN PORTRAYING LIVED EXPERIENCE

In the previous chapter, I focused primarily on written narratives produced by members of the Pennsylvania German community in the 21st century. As that chapter indicated (p. 223), the authors' understanding of Pennsylvania German identity and its significance to the community creates a space in which the lived experiences recounted therein could be plausibly accepted as 'authentic' of the community.

As I previously stated (p. 3), however, the presence of written media remains relatively small within the cultural output of Pennsylvania German speakers. This is (partly) due to the lack of a formalised orthography, although the role of written *Hochdeutsch* among both sectarian and non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans has likely also contributed to this (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016).

Yet despite the relative lack of written media available in the Pennsylvania German language, there are several other art forms – all of which have been practised since the arrival of the early Pennsylvania Germans (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016) – that remain prevalent among the community. Among the other art forms that constitute this output, the most common forms include *Scherenschnitte*, *Fraktur*, and barn stars, among others (Minardi, 2017a). In addition, events such as folk and heritage festivals continue to play a large role in widening the Pennsylvania German cultural *habitus* beyond the community itself and allowing 'outsiders' to the community to engage with Pennsylvania German cultural identity in the 21st century in a manner similar to those attending Louisiana French cultural events (cf. Appendix A).

In this chapter, I will explore the three forms of visual art listed above alongside these cultural events with a view to establishing their significance among those who actively practice them. This will be achieved through the exploration of the work of two artists with vastly different positions within the Pennsylvania German community: the late Peter V. Fritsch, whose *Scherenschnitte* in the work *Der Haahne Greht* was briefly explored in the previous chapter; and Rachel Yoder, whose portfolio encompasses several areas of Pennsylvania German art, including barn stars, *Scherenschnitte*, and *Fraktur*, while also experimenting with the traditional forms of these utilising other media. In addition, this chapter will examine the role of *Versammlinge* and the Kutztown Folk Festival (one of the largest celebrating Pennsylvania German culture, according to Bronner and Brown, 2017) to determine the role that these cultural events have in depicting the lived experience of today's Pennsylvania Germans.

Fritsch and *Scherenschnitte*

In this first exploration of Pennsylvania German non-written narrative methods, it is essential to return to the work of Peter V. Fritsch and, more specifically, his collection *Der Haahne Greht*. As noted in Chapter Six (p. 181), this work combines a series of poems, penned in Pennsylvania German, with a range of *Scherenschnitte* appropriate to the themes of the written narrative. This section will now explore the interaction between these art forms in greater detail with the aim of understanding how these works contribute to (and complement) the written narrative, and the significance these may have had for Fritsch, who was an older member of the community at the time of creating this collection.

As noted in the previous exploration of *Der Haahne Greht*, Fritsch includes at least one unique form of *Scherenschnitte* alongside each of the poems in the collection. These pieces



Figure 4: An example of *Scherenschnitte* Fritsch displayed alongside the poem *En Daaler Uffschpaare* (2008, p. 67).

often play on the nostalgia of the intended audience – that is, those with connections to the Pennsylvania German language or culture – by presenting a relatively antiquated view of life in the community. For instance, as stated previously (ibid.), those *Scherenschnitte* depicting people often portray them in older styles of clothing not commonly found among the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans, like the bonnets worn by the girls or the wide-brimmed hats with which the men and boys are frequently depicted (cf. Fritsch, 2008, p. 5, p. 27, p. 34, p. 36).

However, there are also several instances in which the *Scherenschnitte* featured alongside a poem (or its English translation) has no apparent connection to the piece. One clear example of this is found with the poem *En Daaler Uffschpaare (Saving Up A Dollar)*, where the artwork selected depicts a flower emanating from a heart, upon which two birds are sitting (see Figure 4). While these motifs are all common within traditional Pennsylvania German culture (cf. Minardi, 2017a, pp. 228-280), they bear no immediate connection to the writing which they accompany:

*En Daaler geschder diene,
Verschpend der Daaler heit.
Yuscht bissel Wexel zaehle,
Bemacht die aarmie Leit.*

A dollar earned yesterday
Spend that dollar today
Very little change leftover to count
Makes for poor people

*En Daaler geschder gschteckelt,
En gscheider Mann dutt's weck.
No wann wir in die Not kummt,
Hoscht meh uff Hand wie Dreck!*

A dollar from yesterday hidden away
A wise man puts it away
Then when you are in need
You'll have something on hand, besides dirt

(Fritsch, 2008, p. 67).

In the first instance, one could interpret Fritsch's choice to combine this piece of *Scherenschnitte* and this poem as simply utilising the nostalgia attached to this aesthetic to

allow the Pennsylvania German reader to connect with the poetry at hand. The significance of such nostalgia is discussed in depth by Louden, who reflects on the key motivations behind the continued practice of Pennsylvania German among non-sectarians today:

[Non-sectarians have] a very benign attitude towards the English, but those that do choose to speak (Pennsylvania Dutch), I'd say nostalgia is the key word that I would use. It's not so much a kind of activist, like language maintenance, 'Let's set up classes and promote things,' it really is nostalgia [...] kind of saying, 'You know, there's nothing wrong with being from my home region, and there's nothing wrong with speaking things a little bit differently.' You know, this idea that, for example, local, regional cultures, traditional cultures, are dying or something like that – no, it's just that there's a nostalgia that's there, but the people that really have the time to indulge in that tend to be older folks (pp. 482-483).

As Louden indicates, the nostalgia experienced by portions of the community has directly contributed to the creation – and maintenance of – phenomena which celebrate the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Pennsylvania German people, be it in the form of folk festivals, *Grundsau* Lodges, or the *Scherenschnitte* favoured by Fritsch. In actively engaging in such acts of celebration and remembrance, those members of the community responsible for this cultural output – including Fritsch – partake in the glocalisation theorised by Louden (ibid.) and thus create their unique *habitus* in which they are no longer subaltern, but subjects active in their own notion of 'making live' (Bourdieu, 1993; Foucault, 1997; Spivak, 1994).

However, I believe that this interpretation, while perfectly valid, is a relatively superficial examination of the artistic choices Fritsch employs in this collection. If one also considers the paratextual (or in this case, para-artistic) elements of *Der Haahne Greht*, one will note that *En Daaler Uffschpaare* is immediately followed by *Alde Gedanke*, which not only features two similar pieces of *Scherenschnitte*, but also plays on the role of nostalgia to a far greater extent (Fritsch, 2008, pp. 68-69). In this poem, the unnamed narrator lists the maxims (which are similar to those found in *En Daaler Uffschpaare*) that they have received from their grandmother:

Wann mer schtpot bei epper nei
Un hockt sich net hie, nehmsht's Ruh weck glei.

Setz ken Schuh uff's Kichedisch,
Schunsch hosht es Unglick glei verwischt.
If you make a quick stop at someone's house

(ibid.).

And you don't sit down You [sic] take their rest
with you when you leave

Don't set shoes on the kitchen table
Or you will run into bad luck



Figure 5: *Scherenschnitte* featured alongside the English translation of *Alde Gedanke* (Fritsch, 2008, p. 69).

The *Scherenschnitte* accompanying this poem shares several key features with that found alongside *En Daaler Uffschpaare*. For instance, the *Scherenschnitte* presented alongside the English translation second piece – presented to the right of the English translation – also depicts a plant emanating from a heart (see Figure 5), while the artwork alongside the Pennsylvania German depicts a heart formed of stems and leaves, with four flowers found in the centre of the heart (see Figure 6). However, as can be seen when comparing Figures 5 and 6, the former does not feature birds, while the flowers in the latter are less detailed.

The similarities between these three pieces, despite their associations with different works, could be perceived as a means by which Fritsch creates continuity between the two poems. The moral of *En Daaler Uffschpaare* – that is, that one should favour saving money over spending it recklessly – is extremely similar to the ‘lessons’ the narrator attributes to his grandmother. One could logically deduce, therefore, that the origins of the two series of life lessons are the same and that there is aesthetic unity once more (cf. pp. 104-117).

The strong presence of the heart motif throughout Figures 4, 5, and 6 would corroborate this theory. Although the

The similarities between these three pieces, despite their associations with different works, could be perceived as a means



Figure 6: *Scherenschnitte* featured alongside the Pennsylvania German text of *Alde Gedanke* (Fritsch, 2008, p. 68).

heart motif is not uncommon in Pennsylvania German art, particularly in *Fraktur* (cf. Minardi, 2017a, pp. 264-280), its repetition and prominence across the three pieces might represent the familial ties (and love) between the narrator figure and their grandmother. If one were to accept this interpretation, then the flowers interspersed throughout become a metaphor for the progress the narrator has made in continuing to practise the culture in accordance with their grandmother's advice; thus, the language and culture continue to 'bloom' as the flowers do, in a metaphorical passing of the baton between one generation and the next. This renders the two poems – and the collection as a whole – an overt form of celebrating Fritsch's heritage and the effects that his past had in informing his future as a speaker of Pennsylvania German. He 'feels' his past through not only the works themselves, but through the production of them, as artists from other minority groups have done (Baloy, 2011).

Scherenschnitte are not the only way in which Fritsch has diverged from the written form in presenting this collection. Alongside the production of *Der Haahne Greht*, Fritsch also recorded a reading of the entire work, which has since been produced and sold in the form of cassette tapes and CDs (Masthof Press, 2022). Yet unlike many audio recordings produced by the Louisiana French community (e.g. Center for Louisiana Studies, 2022; Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012, 2017, 2019), Fritsch's recordings are only available in 'analogue' form, as these recordings are not accessible via streaming services or as an audio file that can be purchased. The release of this audio in a physical format suggests that the intended audience for the collection is of an older generation – supported by the fact that many active Pennsylvania German speakers are older (cf. Loudon, 2016; Appendices E and F) – or based more rurally, given that both formats (particularly that of the cassette tape) became increasingly obsolete in the 1990s and 2000s.¹ These reasons, coupled with the fact that the oral form of the

¹ Despite this, there has been a resurgence in cassette and CD sales in the last ten years (cf. Chapman, 2015; Moyer, 2012; Olivarez-Giles, 2017).

language remains dominant over its written counterpart (ibid.), suggests that Fritsch aims to ensure accessibility for those who would be most likely to connect with and consume such media. Thus, Fritsch creates a bridge between the written and non-written by combining the two, which also circumvents some of the issues faced by practitioners of the language like the lack of a standardised orthography (cf. Loudon, 2016; Appendix C).

It is my view, however, that by providing these recordings in a standalone, physical format (without the book as accompaniment, as it must be purchased separately), Fritsch risks alienating younger members of the community who wish to engage with their Pennsylvania German identity but are unable to access these formats. That is not to say that the physical formats must be discontinued; on the contrary – as I will shortly outline – younger members of the community have utilised them to gain experience of each poem’s tone and inflection with a view to performing them (cf. Devlin, 2008). However, by not providing a digital format by which these recordings can be accessed – be it intentional, or due to a lack of facilities to produce digital media – Fritsch and his publishers counterintuitively restrict the Pennsylvania German *habitus* to those who can utilise these formats; as a result, this determines who is ‘permitted’ to continue the linguistic and cultural legacy of the Pennsylvania Germans, much as the Anglophone community has the power to determine which linguistic minorities are left to ‘die’ (cf. Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004). It has the opposite effect, therefore, of what was intended with the original collection.

This does not mean, however, that the audio is not beneficial to those who are able to access it. Maggio’s collection, *Der Haahne Greht* (2008) – which sets seven poems from Fritsch’s collection to music – required the performers, all of whom were children from the local community, to practice using instructional CDs like that produced by Fritsch (Devlin, 2008). This suite of seven pieces, including *Alde Gedanke*, was then performed by the Berks Classical Children’s Chorus with piano accompaniment (ibid.).

One can draw parallels between this project, undertaken by Maggio, and the album *Travailler C'est Trop Dur* (2018) in that – like the latter – the composer has utilised the original audio recordings as inspiration. In addition, the use of a children's choir can be found in both works, although the entirety of Maggio's composition is performed by children, while only one track in the latter album – *Laissez-moi-t-aller jouer* – features a children's choir (cf. p. 146). This further implies that the inaccessibility of these audio recordings is not entirely intentional, as evidenced by the fact that Maggio is keen to include children from the community in the hopes of demonstrating the continued strength of the language today and encouraging reconnection with Germanophone Pennsylvania's linguistic and cultural identity, a notion which is supported by the multitude of *Scherenschnitte* which feature children in *Der Haahne Greht* (e.g. Baloy, 2011; Fritsch, 2007, p. 21, p. 30, p. 34).

However, unlike *Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, Maggio's composition is sparser in its instrumentation, utilising only a piano accompaniment alongside the choir versus Louis-Marie and Rojas' more complex arrangement (p. 145). Furthermore, unlike the choir *Les Étoiles de la Louisiane*, who are immersed in the language through their education (*Travailler C'est Trop Dur*, 2018), it is known that several of the children who participated in this performance of *Der Haahne Greht* had consulted audio recordings in order to correctly pronounce the lyrics as they had no prior understanding of Pennsylvania German (Devlin, 2008). Thus, while the aim of the performance might have been to foster stronger connections between younger generations of Pennsylvania Germans, their language, and their culture, it has also served to highlight the disconnect that exists at present among younger generations of Pennsylvania Germans.

Fritsch's *Scherenschnitte* also hints at this generational disconnect. In those sections which depict people (e.g. Fritsch, 2008, pp. 54-55) it becomes increasingly evident that, while these examples make effective use of nostalgia, said nostalgia is applicable only in those instances where the reader can connect with the culture as it was at the time of Fritsch's writing. This is especially true of those *Scherenschnitte* where Fritsch depicts older, more conservative styles of dress (See Figure 7). Consequently, younger members of the community may be able to relate to the poetry in some form (Devlin, 2008), but would not necessarily do the same with artwork that depicts an antiquated view of the Pennsylvania German community which does not 'represent' them. They are unable to 'feel' their identities as Pennsylvania German, because



Figure 7: An example of *Scherenschnitte* which depicts traditional Pennsylvania German dress (Fritsch, 2008, p. 59).

the culture that is presented to those outside of the *habitus* no longer represents the community in a contemporary context (Baloy, 2011; Bourdieu, 1993).

Yet perhaps it is not surprising that *Der Haahne Greht* is not reflective of younger Pennsylvania German speakers today, given its description as a 'poetic childhood memoir' (Devlin, 2008). While

we have discussed at length the ways in which this text and the associated *Scherenschnitte* are representative of the community at large within the context of this thesis, it is essential to remember that representation is highly subjective, and that Fritsch's lived experience as a speaker of the language and a practitioner of its culture is likely to be vastly different than members of the community born in the late 20th century or early 21st century. As a ninth-generation Pennsylvania German speaker who was raised on a farm (Devlin, 2008; *Reading Eagle*, 2016), Fritsch had a connection to many of the subjects of his poetry (and his artwork) that the contemporary reader would likely not possess and – as with the spirits of *Schtimme*

aus'm Kaerrichof (Moll and Madenford, 2015) – this would likely be relatively foreign to the contemporary reader. Said lack of connection, both to the culture depicted in the collection and to the language itself, is noted by Fritsch himself in the introduction to *Der Haahne Greht*, in which he states:

Nostalgia, reminiscences, recollections of real and imagined people, places, and events make up the bulk of pieces presented herein. Pleasant memories serve us well. [...] The Pennsylvania Dutch dialect goes beyond mere words. It requires understanding and appreciation of some part of the 300 years of culture and folklore found here in the rolling hills and in the shadow of decorated barns of our one-time “Dutch” counties of Pennsylvania (Fritsch, 2008, p. vii).

While this statement suggests that the language and culture are doomed to terminal decline, this is not necessarily the case. As Devlin (2008) points out, for instance, the children’s choir was composed of students from a range of backgrounds (including those with German and Latinx heritage) and several students commented positively on the poetry and the language (ibid.). In addition, the director of the choir was inspired to start studying the language herself as a direct result of this project (ibid.). It is thus evident that Fritsch’s narratives – both written and non-written – have the potential to play a large role in healing the generational divide that formed in the Pennsylvania German community, although perhaps not in the way that Fritsch might have expected. While the written form and the *Scherenschnitte* themselves have not necessarily been a means for those younger generations to connect with their linguistic and cultural heritage, it appears that the opportunity to hear and perform these works has proved a more effective way of connecting with Fritsch’s work.

To briefly conclude, it is evident that, in the case of *Der Haahne Greht*, Fritsch has captured the personal significance of identifying as Pennsylvania German, not only in terms of the language, but in terms of the cultural practices he has maintained. While the written narratives and *Scherenschnitte* may not be reflective of contemporary Pennsylvania German society among the non-sectarians or younger speakers of the language, its transformation

through the audio recordings and Maggio’s composition provide a means of once again ‘feeling’ the language and establishing belonging within the group (Baloy, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006). It is the active performance of the poetry that has resonated with those individuals. It is thus the act of performing culture and language that has led, for some, to a more profound and sustained process of reconnecting with their Pennsylvania German heritage.

Hybridity in the Work of Yoder

Having now examined the work of a veteran artist from the Pennsylvania German community, it is time to explore the work of contemporary artists from the region. This section will analyse the work of Rachel Yoder, who, unlike Fritsch (whose oeuvre of visual art consists almost entirely of *Scherenschnitte*), specialises in a range of art forms belonging to the Pennsylvania German community, including *Fraktur*, *Scherenschnitte*, and barn stars.

This analysis begins with the examination of a dress that Yoder created in 2016 as part of her postgraduate studies (Madenford, 2021). This piece – part of the *Aa Halde* project (ibid.)



Figure 8: A photograph of the *Aa Halde* project, using a floor-length dress (Yoder, 2022).

– consists of a white dress, upon which black text written in the traditional typescript of *Fraktur* has been overlaid (see Figure 8). The wording itself represents the voice of Yoder’s great-grandmother ‘speaking’ to her from beyond the grave (Madenford, 2021). This reference to the spiritual is extremely similar to those found in *Schtimme aus’m Kaerrichof* (Moll and Madenford, 2015; p. 166), thus suggesting again the notion of ‘calling back’ to previous generations in the search – for modern speakers of

Pennsylvania German – to reconnect and ‘feel’ their heritage (Baloy, 2011).

Unlike the work of Fritsch, which, in the case of *Der Haahne Greht*, is more traditional in form (See Figures 4, 5, and 6) in that the artwork is created from black paper and displayed on a plain white background, Yoder has created a three-dimensional form that combines both *Scherenschnitte* and *Fraktur* – another art form which is also traditionally displayed in a two-dimensional form (Minardi, 2017a). There is a strong contrast between the black text and the white dress which, in some instances, is also illuminated to heighten the contrast further (see Figure 9).

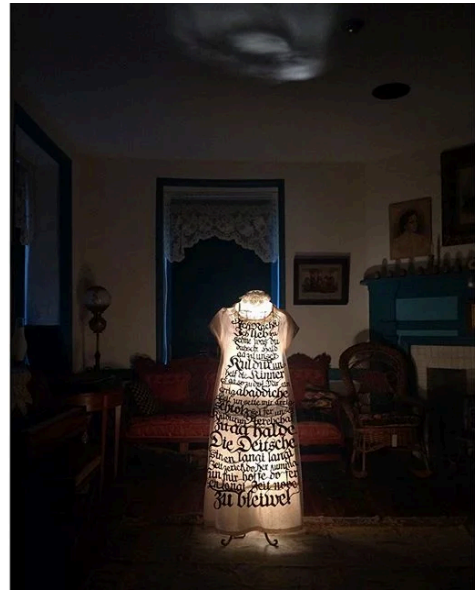


Figure 9: An image of the *Aa Halde* project illuminated (Yoder, 2022).

This presentation is unusual in several ways. First, as has already been stated, the way in which the writing is mounted is unconventional in style. *Fraktur* is traditionally mounted on paper if it is to be ‘preserved’ at all (cf. MacLeod, 2015). Displaying the *Fraktur* on a dress – something that is three-dimensional in nature, as opposed to the flat paper background traditionally employed – creates a piece that is grounded, as it were, in the environment to which it belongs.² This moves the *Fraktur* away from its historic ephemeral nature (although some of the finer specimens of this artwork from earlier periods are still available to view through archives, museums, and so on). In addition, the *Scherenschnitte* itself is not made from paper; rather, Yoder employs canvas, which was deemed to be more robust for the scale of the work (Madenford, 2021). Both the selected media and the size of the piece are relatively unusual, both for *Scherenschnitte* and for *Fraktur*, which may be due, on a practical level, to Yoder wishing to ensure that the piece is durable and is able to be displayed for many years to

² This is also evidenced by the fact that, as Yoder points out (Madenford, 2021), the canvas has naturally been reshaped over time as it curls and bends.

come. Another interpretation of these stylistic choices is that Yoder wishes to incorporate other media that would have been used in Pennsylvania German arts and crafts, thereby acknowledging the role that other artists and visual arts have had upon the cultural output (see Minardi, 2017a, pp. 264-280).

Additionally, presenting the *Scherenschnitte* in the style of *Fraktur* suggests that Yoder aims to extend the Pennsylvania German canon beyond the categories to which it often adheres, resulting in the blurring of boundaries between these art forms to create a *métissage artistique* (cf. Glissant, 1989). In doing so, the artist also positions these art forms outside of the ‘low art’ *habitus* to which it has been assigned (Bourdieu, 1993).

These contrasts can also be observed in the content of this piece. For instance, Yoder’s text is of a low register, with filler words such as ‘*Ach*’ (‘Oh’) featuring throughout (Yoder, 2016). However, in the Pennsylvania German community, the art form of *Fraktur* is most frequently associated with ceremonial documents, such as birth and wedding certificates, which would necessitate a higher register (Minardi, 2017a, pp. 264-280). There is thus another *métissage* at play (Glissant, 1989) – this time of a linguistic and paratextual nature – between the formal typescript and the informal dialogue. This could be viewed as another attempt by Yoder to ‘legitimise’ the language of the Pennsylvania German community (Culp, 2017) by choosing to use it in its most common form. Alternatively, one could consider this combination as Yoder’s reassertion of the right to speak in the fashion of her ancestors and the community around her without the prejudice of them being ‘lesser’ or ‘exiled’ for doing so (cf. Agamben, 1998). She brings the everyday language of the Pennsylvania Germans out of the shadows (Topinka, 2016) – an interpretation which is supported the emphasis on the term ‘*Die Deutsche*’ (‘The Pennsylvania Germans’), which is displayed most prominently on the dress (see Figure 10).

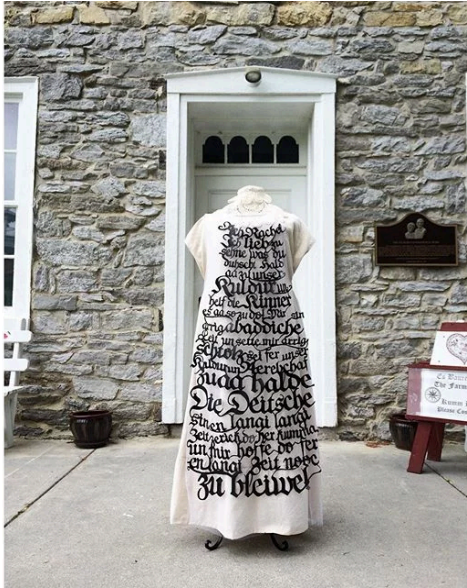


Figure 10: A photograph of the *Aa Halde* project with an ankle-length dress (Yoder, 2022).

The dress itself also brings attention to the community’s cultural heritage through its varied presentation. There are two variants upon which the *Scherenschnitte* has been mounted: the first is floor-length, with long sleeves and a rounded collar (see Figure 8), while the second is ankle-length and has a lace collar and cap sleeves (see Figures 9 and 10). Both of these styles are similar to those worn by sectarian

Pennsylvania Germans (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Louden, 2016), and are also akin to those worn by

Pennsylvania German women in the 18th and 19th centuries (*The Goschenhoppen Historians*, 2022). While these two variants could be attributed to a natural evolution of the piece, they could also be viewed as a means of displaying the heritage of Pennsylvania German women – including Yoder’s great-grandmother – through such tangible means as traditional dress (Bronner and Brown, 2017). Alternatively, the use of an off-white dress – which contrasts sharply against the black *Scherenschnitte* – may be interpreted as a strategy similar to that used in the musical *Hamilton*, where the ensemble is dressed in a ‘creamy neutral tone’ to emulate parchment paper (Robinson, 2016); thus, the dress becomes a backdrop upon which the words found in the *Scherenschnitte* can be ‘written’.

The text itself is aligned centrally, so that it lies on top of the bodice and skirt of the dress in a style Yoder describes as an ‘apron’ (Madenford, 2021); in choosing this term, Yoder likens the form of the *Scherenschnitte* to the clothing that would have been worn by generations of Pennsylvania German women before her. In following this interpretation, this thesis views the choice of an ‘apron’ of *Scherenschnitte* – which is, itself, displayed over dresses evoking the styles worn by early Pennsylvania Germans (*The Goschenhoppen Historians*, 2022) – as a

subversion, on Yoder’s part, of the roles traditionally accorded to women in Pennsylvania German society, both among the sectarian and non-sectarian communities (cf. Appendix H, wherein Schlegel refers to the traditionally male-dominated field). Thus, in creating an apron of words, Yoder gives voice to her great-grandmother and other women of her generation, who might not have previously held agency within the group to voice their thoughts on being Pennsylvania German; they are now equal Subjects alongside their male counterparts (Foucault, 1997, 2004; p. 28).

This argument is further supported when one views the apron, which reads as follows:

*Ach Rachel,
 Ich lieb zu sehne was du duscht.
 Hald aa zu unser Kuldur un helf die Kinner es
 aa so zu do!
 Mir sin arrig abaddiche Leit, un sette mir
 arrig schtolz sei fer unser Kuldur un
 Aerebchaf zu aa halde.
 Die Deitsche sin en langi langi Zeit zerick do
 herkumma, un mir hoffe do fer an langi Zeit
 [nooch] zu bleiwe!*

Oh Rachel,
 I love to see what you are doing.
 Hold on tight to our culture and have the little
 ones do the same.
 We are very special people and should be
 proud of our culture and heritage and preserve
 it.
 Pennsylvania Dutch people came here a long
 time ago, and hope to remain for longer still!
 Preserve!

(Yoder, 2016. Translated into Pennsylvania German by Madenford).

Through creating a text that literally ‘calls’ to her, Yoder bridges the gap between past Pennsylvania German lived experience and her contemporary experience as a member of the community, thus promoting pride in one’s own linguistic and cultural heritage and –crucially – giving voice to those areas of the community that are currently underrepresented in the literature and cultural output of the region (p. 3).

Yet, as stated in the introduction to this section, Yoder does not focus on the production of *Scherenschnitte* alone. Instead, Yoder stands out by virtue of her work across multiple forms of visual art, unlike Fritsch, who specialised in *Scherenschnitte* created in the traditional style (Devlin, 2008). The most common medium found in Yoder’s portfolio is that of the barn star (Yoder, 2022), an art form which is similar in style to the mandala (Donmoyer, 2013). The



Figure 12: An example of a barn star in the 'rosette' style (Yoder, 2021a).

design is traditionally composed of a pattern, repeated several times, which creates a rosette or star that forms the finished artefact (ibid.; see Figure 11 for an example of this by Yoder). Although the original intention behind this art form remains unknown (Donmoyer, 2013; Yoder, 2000), it is believed that the barn star is, at its core, a form of adornment favoured by the Pennsylvania German community (Minardi, 2017a).

However, as Yoder demonstrates, her work with barn stars is not only a representation of the traditional form. On several occasions, she moves away from the 'conventional' construction of a barn star to create a form that is more appropriate for the client in question. For example, she might recreate the image of a family pet (see Figure 12) or an animal of importance to the community (such as the groundhog), which takes centre stage in several examples of her work (see Figure 14 for an example of this). In addition, Yoder's work utilises a wider range of colours and designs in comparison to the work of other barn star artists, such as Eric Claypoole (Donmoyer, 2013; Appendices A and I). This is evidenced by the creation of several monochromatic and black and white pieces (Yoder, 2022), instead of in the vibrant primary colours that are traditional to the art form (Donmoyer, 2013). This may be due to the way in which the medium has evolved, as modern paints can be used instead of traditional



Figure 11: A piece in the style of a barn star, featuring a dog (Yoder, 2021b).

paints made from minerals (Idem., pp. 26-29); however, I also view this as an indication of the evolution of the Pennsylvania German community's means of celebrating its heritage, as



Figure 13: A piece in the style of a barn star, featuring a groundhog (Yoder, 2019)

artists from the region simultaneously combine traditional art forms with new methods – a ‘translanguaging’ of sorts – to create a hybrid of the two that evokes contemporary Pennsylvania German identity (Bradley, 2017; Glissant, 1989; cf. p. 69).

This hybridity is further evidenced in the motifs that Yoder favours across her oeuvre. Like Fritsch, she incorporates people and human-like creatures, such as the *Wassernix*, into her work alongside more common Pennsylvania German leitmotifs like flowers and birds (Minardi, 2017a), while also utilising the common motifs of *Blumme* and *Schtanne* within her barn stars – two motifs which already feature a certain amount of overlap in their forms according to the artist and region of ‘Dutch Country’ in which they are produced (Donmoyer, 2013). In Yoder’s portfolio (2022), it is these latter motifs – and variations thereof – that are most commonly employed in her barn stars. This is also true of those barn stars where the primary focus is of a creature or another symbol; for instance, Figures 11, 12, and 13 – all of which have another subject at their heart – all feature some form of the flower or star motif, or another motif that is commonly seen in traditional barn stars, such as the ‘wheel of fortune’ (Donmoyer, 2013; see Figure 11). Furthermore, in areas where it would not be practical to include the full motif (e.g. Figures 12, 13, and 14), Yoder utilises the *Blumme* as a border and instead incorporates flowers on stems, similar to those depicted in *Der Haahne Greht* (Fritsch, 2008) and which are also featured in other Pennsylvania German decorative arts (cf. Minardi, 2017a, 2017b; p. 197).

By incorporating all of these leitmotifs throughout her oeuvre and transcending the geographical patterns that have traditionally dictated which forms are most prevalent, I believe that Yoder seeks to celebrate all of the diverse forms that constitute the barn star in her work.



Figure 14: A black-and-white barn star painted on a round board (Yoder, no date).

In addition, the combination of these motifs with other common symbols found in Pennsylvania German art and culture – such as the groundhog, *Fraktur*, and the *Wassernix* – Yoder, like Fritsch, evokes a certain nostalgia for those cultural practices which would be most widely recognisable to all members of the non-sectarian Pennsylvania German community while creating a *métissage culturel* (Glissant, 1989) that celebrates all of these media at

once.

This also further reinforces my belief that contemporary Pennsylvania German art seeks to extend current understanding of the culture beyond those images and artefacts traditionally associated with the community, including the barn stars, ties to agriculture, and the common confusion between the sectarian communities (i.e. the Amish and Mennonites) and Pennsylvania German society as a whole (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016). In doing so, Yoder moves out of the *habitus* that wider American society has attributed to the Pennsylvania Germans (Bourdieu, 1993) while also creating ties between the cultural heritage of her community and that of other American cultural and folkloric heritages – that is to say, she is able, through her work, to emphasise the similarities and overlap between the cultural *habiti* of Anglophone American society and that of the Pennsylvania Germans (ibid.). Thus, she demonstrates the enduring importance of folklore in the region by actively depicting its figures, while also creating possible points of access for those that are unfamiliar with the culture and wish to engage further.

As with the dress featured earlier in this section, Yoder's barn stars are also not presented in the traditional manner (cf. Donmoyer, 2013; *Claypoole Hexsigns*, 2022), wherein

the piece is painted directly on to a barn. Instead, as Figure 15 demonstrates, Yoder paints the barn stars onto round boards, which are then sold or passed on to the intended client for display in whichever way the client chooses. This phenomenon is practised elsewhere in the Pennsylvania German community and has proved a popular means of demonstrating one's connection to the region; Brown, for instance, recounts the story of a barn star owned by his sister:

[Y]ou can buy these mass-produced [barn stars] and take them home. My sister, for example, wanted one, because she's Pennsylvania Dutch [...] and so she bought this little tiny one and put it on her shed outside and it – for me, as an academic, you know, and always being critical of things, it was interesting for me to see how a modern Pennsylvania Dutch person who isn't that invested in the culture wanted something for outside, and she went for something that's tied to our people, even though my family were dirt poor and were farm labourers, they didn't own farms, so they never would have had a barn with [barn stars] on it. But she felt she needed the [barn star] and, instead of going on a barn, it went on this shed for her lawnmower and things. It was kind of this modern (Laughs) tension that I just saw of Pennsylvania Dutch identity and what it has turned into, almost, is this commodification of Pennsylvania Dutch identity (p. 456).

Brown's description of the mass-produced barn stars – and the attraction of such signs for members of the Pennsylvania German community, like his sister – indicates that, despite the overall appreciation for the art form itself, there remains a culture clash that is personified by those Pennsylvania German speakers who are actively involved in its cultural production. In a society that is increasingly urban – especially following some of the shifts in populace found in the early 20th century (cf. Loudon, 2016; Yoder, 2000) – the community are looking for ways to keep using their symbols in new contexts. Thus, they not only acknowledge their history and their position as subaltern (Spivak, 1994) – as Moll and Madenford have done, as have Cheramie and Waggoner (pp. 103-132) – but they also create a new *habitus* for themselves in which the culture is openly celebrated and acknowledged *alongside* urban culture (Baloy, 2011 Bourdieu, 1993).

Yet not all of Yoder's work utilises these inherently Pennsylvania German media. For instance, her *Belsnickel Suite* is neither *Fraktur*, nor *Scherenschnitte*, nor barn stars; rather they are a series of six paintings, inspired by the work of Pennsylvania German artist Gladys Lutz (Minardi, 2017a), which feature a range of Pennsylvania German customs related to the Christmas season, from travelling through the countryside by sleigh to the arrival of the *Belsnickel*.

The paintings themselves are all relatively simplistic in form, with vivid colours and graphic black outlines utilised throughout, except for the figure of the *Belsnickel*, who is depicted in darker and generally more muted tones (see Figure 15); this is similar, therefore, to the designs found in many of Yoder's barn stars (see Figures 12,



Figure 15: A painting of the Belsnickel from the *Belsnickel Suite* (Yoder, no date).

13, and 14). The choice to continue with a bold colour scheme – one that could be described as ‘kitschy’ (cf. Appendix E) – and simplistic forms lends a certain youthful nature to the series, which, given the subject matter, sufficiently conveys the nostalgia and magic of the festive season from the perspective of a child. This also aligns with previous descriptions of Lutz's work, where the colour scheme was deigned ‘a vibrant [colour] palette on board in what is considered a naïve untrained or self-taught folk tradition’ (*Antiques & Auction News*, 2021).

In addition, Yoder again references previous generations of Pennsylvania German speakers by depicting members of the community in clothing reminiscent of that seen in the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries, akin to the clothing seen in *Der Haahne Greht* (Fritsch, 2008). As with the dress depicted earlier (see Figures 8, 9, and 10), this has the effect of emphasising the nostalgia that is felt for previous eras of Pennsylvania German life and culture.

However, it is also my view that in incorporating these images of older Pennsylvania German culture, Yoder seeks to provoke discussion, not only of Pennsylvania German cultural heritage as it was, but of its evolution to the present day. Thus, the *Belsnickel Suite* may be regarded as a way – through the performative acts of creating the series, and through the acts of performance featured therein – of encouraging active engagement in the history of the non-sectarian Pennsylvania German community, in the hope perhaps that continued engagement in its future will ensue.

To summarise, this section has examined the work of Rachel Yoder, with an emphasis on the *Aa Halde* project and her work on barn stars. Through analysis of her oeuvre, one can conclude that by combining these traditional forms of visual art into single pieces, Yoder creates a *métissage culturel* (Glissant, 1989) that evokes the unique position of being a non-sectarian Pennsylvania German speaker who is at once connected with one's past, while simultaneously seeking to retain the culture moving forward. Although the art itself may not always hold a narrative – with the exception of several standout pieces, including the *Aa Halde* project (Yoder, 2016) – I maintain that, for Yoder, it is the creation of the artwork itself, and the way in which she combines various media that have traditionally been discrete, that creates a narrative of contemporary Pennsylvania German cultural production.

The Kutztown Folk Festival and the Performance of Pennsylvania German Narratives

In the previous sections of this chapter, the primary focus has been on the visual art of the Pennsylvania German community. However, as with the Louisiana French community (p. 156), it is not only in Pennsylvania German cultural production that one can examine the significance of such art forms in maintaining linguistic and cultural heritage for future generations. As with the Louisiana French, the Pennsylvania German community also makes

use of festivals and other social gatherings as a means of promoting and actively practicing their language and culture. As stated previously (cf. p. 156), these gatherings also create a narrative space of their own, wherein the cultural oeuvre may be transmitted to other members of the community and to interested parties from wider American society. The final section of this chapter will therefore examine the role such festivals play in promoting these aspects in the 21st century, with a view to determining whether such events are purely based around provoking nostalgia and a yearning for the Pennsylvania German culture of the past, or whether there is the possibility of actively celebrating the language and culture in its contemporary form through these gatherings.

Before embarking on a more detailed analysis of individual events, it should be noted that, in comparison to the Louisiana French community, there is a wider variety of events that focus on the celebration and preservation of the Pennsylvania German language and culture, despite the work undertaken by organisations like CODOFIL (2020). For example, alongside the Kutztown Folk Festival, which is one of the largest events of its kind in the region (Bronner and Brown, 2017), there are also several events hosted by local interest groups, such as the Goschenhoppen Historians (2022). In addition, there are also institutions specific to the non-sectarian Pennsylvania German community like the *Grundsau* Lodges, which host annual *Versammlinge* dedicated to the active use of Pennsylvania German and practising its cultural traditions, including the cuisine, music, and poetry (Donner, 2016; Loudon, 2016).

This section, however, will focus primarily on the work of the Kutztown Folk Festival. One reason for this is due to the history and stature of this event as one of the oldest continuously running folk festivals in the United States (cf. *Kutztown Folk Festival*, 2022; Loudon, 2016), thus precluding the analysis of smaller events like the Goschenhoppen Folk Festival. However, the main reason for this is that the *Versammlinge* are closed gatherings open only to members of the Lodge in question (Bronner and Brown, 2017); in addition, all of the

Lodges, bar one (Donner, 2016), are open only to adult male members of the community. As a result, one could argue that the *Versammlinge* – perhaps ironically - reinforce the ‘exiled’ position that the Pennsylvania German community already faces in comparison to wider Anglophone American society (Foucault, 1997). Arguably, this could be viewed within the community as a form of protection against any changes to the culture as it is currently practised and understood, albeit at the expense of restricting access for interested parties who do not meet the criteria for membership in such events (e.g. not being able to speak the language). This remains the case despite the belief that ‘some of the Dutchiest people [...] are not speakers of the language’ (Appendix A, p. 304). In any case, it is evident that the accessibility of these events is greatly reduced in comparison to events – like the Kutztown Folk Festival – which are accessible for all, regardless of age, gender, or status within (or outside of) the Pennsylvania German community.

The Kutztown Folk Festival is unique in that it ‘grew to be America’s largest folk festival’ (Bronner and Brown, 2017) during the mid-20th century. The fact that it grew to such stature – and remains today, according to the festival organisers, ‘the oldest continuously operating folk festival in America’ (*Kutztown Folk Festival*, 2022) – highlights the continued interest in folk culture and heritage, both among those who ‘belong’ to the community (Yuval-Davis, 2006) and among interested parties from elsewhere, including from across the Germanophone diaspora and wider American society. Yet one of the most curious aspects of this event is not its contents, although they certainly merit further analysis later in this section; rather, it is the reaction from those who do not identify as ‘Pennsylvania German’ – including those from the region who do not speak the language, but also visitors from further afield – to the Folk Festival and to the continued practice of culture in this forum. When asked about this in an interview conducted for this study, Loudon (Appendix F) noted that there has been something of an evolution in the general regard in which this event is held:

[The reaction of visitors is] [m]uch more respectful than, say, before the 1960s. So really, in the 1960s – I mean the folk festival goes back to '49, but in the 1960s and that sort of, the Civil Rights Movement, and then kind of ethnic pride, there was a real change in American society, so like, the Smithsonian Institution, I think, had its first sort of public folk festivals on the Mall in Washington, like in the 1960s, and a lot of communities – they were aware of their roots, but they didn't necessarily celebrate them in any overt way. So like, you know, in German and Swiss and French, and all kinds of things, there was this kind of local pride. That really, I think, happens, and so there's this feeling of... Definitely, I would say, respect, not in terms of, 'Oh, I really want to be Pennsylvania Dutch,' but in the same way that people enjoy going to festivals and renaissance fairs, that kind of thing, it's like, 'Well, I don't necessarily want to get too deep into what was going on in, say, 1500s Britain or something like that, but for an afternoon, I'll have fun and put on a costume.' [...] I notice this in Yiddish all the time, where it's older folks that grew up with Yiddish, and they say, 'Oh yeah, my parents spoke Yiddish, but they never wanted us to speak it because they say it's just this old language and it's just, whatever,' and they say, 'You mean you're teaching it at the university? Yiddish? *Really?* Yiddish?' And they just associate it with kind of that old world, fuddy-duddy kind of thing that you're moving away from. It's like, 'No!' There's a whole sort of body of literature and culture and music and food and all kinds of things. It's an important part of American and European history. And then people say, 'Oh, I guess you're right!' and then they feel good about that, so I think that American culture has definitely become much more respectful of regional cultures, and the Pennsylvania Dutch – I mean, look, the commercial success of the Kutztown Festival says it right there. I mean, it's a very, very successful enterprise, and the vast majority of the people that go there are not Pennsylvania Dutch (pp. 489-490).

I do not claim that the overwhelmingly positive reaction described by Loudén is common across all linguistic minority groups in the United States, nor does it assert that this is a universal truth experienced by all members of the Pennsylvania German community. In fact, as Chapters Four and Six demonstrated, there are several instances in which languages and cultures such as those of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans have been regarded as a curiosity or phenomenon that should be suppressed, or, alternatively, as the focus of an exoticism which risks reducing said cultural practices to stereotypes (cf. p. 117, p. 181). Despite this, however, it is important to state here that more recent reactions to such events in the Pennsylvania German community appear to be – in comparison to the sentiments faced by members of the community in the early- and mid-20th century (Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudén, 2016) – far more positive. This is corroborated by the mention of Yiddish culture, which Loudén names alongside Louisiana French culture as one which has gained increased interest in recent decades (Appendix F).

Yet despite this positive outlook, it is also essential to remain cautious when regarding both the reactions of those engaging with these festivals and the way in which this heritage is presented. Louden also discusses the manner in which nostalgia has shaped the way in which culture is presented in such events and the way in which said nostalgia has persisted through multiple generations of Pennsylvania Germans:

I'd say nostalgia is the key word that I would use. It's not so much a kind of activist, like language maintenance, 'Let's set up classes and promote things,' it really is nostalgia. It's really... If you think about the institutions that promote and celebrate the culture, that they would, you know, be going to an ethnic festival, or to like a community festival or celebration, where they say, 'You know, I feel good about this.' So, like, the Kutztown Festival, which has done an amazing job of – you know, the rest of America has caught on to the fact that there is something valuable in regional folk cultures, right, and so people like folk celebrations. I feel strongly – I mean, you can see this in Europe as well – that the sort of reaction against globalism is this, what they call glocalisation, kind of saying, 'You know, there's nothing wrong with being from my home region, and there's nothing wrong with speaking things a little bit differently.' You know, this idea that, for example, local, regional cultures, traditional cultures, are dying or something like that – no, it's just that there's a nostalgia that's there, but the people that really have the time to indulge in that tend to be older folks. It's like, you know, I look at, for example, German heritage societies. Like, here in Wisconsin, there are lots and lots of clubs, heritage societies who celebrate their ancestors coming 150 years ago and stuff, and you look around and you see a lot of grey hair. And you think, 'Okay, what's going to happen to this organisation in the next generation?' Well, the people whose hair is brown now will, in 20 years, when they're retired and they have more time and they get a little bit more nostalgic... You know, when you get older, you don't have to assert much anymore, because you've kind of made your point. You've had your kids, they've gone on, and you can take a step back from things. So, I think that there's always been a nostalgic element in Pennsylvania Dutch non-sectarian culture. If you look at the literature, so much of it is like, 'Ah, the days of my youth,' or 'in the old days', or 'stories that Grandma and Grandpa told around the hearth,' and some of it's romanticised, in the sense of, 'Oh, was it better in those days than it is today? Maybe it was, maybe not.' But that sort of nostalgia that I think all people get as they get older can be transferred to a regional culture (pp. 482-483).

Louden's statement is highly significant when considering the potential risks of the folk festival as a means of transmitting narratives from one generation to the next. In this excerpt, Louden emphasises the generational divide that has been created by the fact that the language is no longer actively practiced by many non-sectarians. For those older Pennsylvania German speakers that remember its increased usage in the early 20th century, or who still frequently utilise the language today – or even those who would have been exposed to the language

through older relatives, such as Madenford and Schlegel (Appendices C and H) – it is apparent that there is a greater sense of belonging and connection that is reinforced by events promoting the culture, including the Kutztown Folk Festival, as it allows them to experience and ‘feel’ the language and culture in a more concrete fashion (Baloy, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006). However, for younger generations with little to no connection with these phenomena, there is less ability to connect with one’s ‘home’ culture and the practices that would have been commonplace to their ancestors. Therefore, these events, as the only way in which they may be able to experience the group to which they belong, risk providing a more romanticised, performative image of the culture that could lead to the audience experiencing an inauthentic depiction of contemporary Pennsylvania German life and culture; nostalgia becomes the bridge which links the two to form a Pennsylvania German *habitus* which is united in its celebration of the culture (Bourdieu, 1993).

Yet this risk is mitigated in the case of the Kutztown Folk Festival, not only through the events themselves, but in the flexibility that is afforded to those wishing to showcase their culture. As an event inspired, not by folklore, but by ‘folklife’ (cf. Yoder, 2000), one of its main goals is to demonstrate the variety of cultural practices and the way in which it is practiced in the 21st century. In an interview conducted for this thesis, Donmoyer – one of those responsible for the organisation of the festival – notes the flexibility that such an approach provides to those participating in the festival and the reasoning behind this:

I tend to let the demonstrators at our site do things how they feel that they need to do it. Some of the most successful ones we have on our site are people who show up wearing a pair of jeans and a button-down shirt, who can put something on the stove and make something delicious, talk a little bit of the language, and they are not in costume. Then there are other people who will put on full early 19th-century outfits, bring large groups of 19th-century equipment and cook 19th-century food and they don’t put on a persona, but they are living history in the sense that they are interpreting a process as though it was a historical practice, rather than a living tradition. So, these are really interesting conundrums that we have. I’m happy to have people in both areas, but I tend to not emphasise the living history as being the goal of our site, because the problem with it is, it’s not compatible with folklife. It might appear to be, but if you are going to do a living history event, you often have to be a purist, you have to say, ‘Well, you can only

wear this, this, or this,’ ‘You can only use equipment that fits within this time period,’ ‘You can only do practices that are documented from this area,’ and when you run into that, it shuts out all these different aspects of the culture that are every bit as important, and I would argue many of the living traditions are done by people who are not so preoccupied with how they look and whether or not it fits within a certain timeframe – for instance, one of the primary barn star painters right now, Eric Claypoole, I’m sure you’re gonna run across his material – he paints in jeans and a tee shirt. He wears sneakers, he wears work boots. He doesn’t try to portray something. When he’s at the Kutztown Folk Festival, he’ll put on an embroidered shirt that he has that belonged to his father, he will sometimes wear his father’s tam o’ shanter. His father’s background is partially Pennsylvania Dutch and partially Irish, so there’s this sense that he had this resonance with the British Isles as his point of family origin, even though the tam o’ shanter’s probably Scottish in that situation, but perhaps a broader experience. But you’ll see that he will do that at Kutztown Folk Festival as a way to just be who he is and perform as an artist in this sense, but then when he’s painting barns, he’s a workman, he’s a tradesman, he is a bearer of tradition, and he’s very unpretentious about it, so I think it’s really important to be able to promote and preserve and celebrate these traditions on every level on which they occur, rather than just on those that might fit with certain aesthetics, so I think it’s really important (pp. 320-321).

By allowing this flexibility in terms of presentation, I argue that the Kutztown Folk Festival encourages active connection and engagement with the language and culture, not only with its visitors, but also with its demonstrators. As can be seen from the demonstrators most frequently featured at the festival and from Donmoyer’s interview (*Kutztown Folk Festival*, 2022; Appendix A), these are most often linked to the visual arts, although there are also demonstrations of Pennsylvania German cuisine and oral tradition through sessions like the Liars’ Contest. This stands in contrast to the cultural festivals associated with Louisiana French culture, which focus predominately on music from the region (cf. p. 156); for instance, there is a quilt auction held at each edition of the Kutztown Folk Festival, whereby the quilts featured are all produced by members of the community. This is, according to Donmoyer, often one of the most popular events of the festival (see Appendices A and I). Furthermore, the artforms on display also include those produced by artists like Fritsch and Yoder – that is to say, *Scherenschnitte*, barn stars, and *Fraktur* (cf. Minardi, 2017a; Montet, 2010). The strong emphasis on the artistic output of the community, while not entirely unique in comparison to the festivals examined in Chapter 6 (p. 154), is certainly a shift which reflects the areas of the culture with which contemporary, non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans continue to identify.

As this section has therefore demonstrated, cultural events, such as festivals, must strike a balance between a performative expression of one's cultural heritage – which may lead to greater engagement from those outside of the community – and the provision of an authentic 'feeling' of one's culture that would appeal to those Pennsylvania Germans wishing to reconnect (cf. Baloy, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006). In the Kutztown Folk Festival, one observes a combination of both that is created by the choice to focus on *folklife* – an approach derived from the community itself (Yoder, 2000) – which allows demonstrators to show how the culture has shaped their lives today, rather than solely focusing on the reproduction of a more antiquated folk culture that no longer resonates with the community. The Kutztown Folk Festival contains, therefore, a narrative of its own: a narrative of today's Pennsylvania Germans and their wish, not only to express their culture and language with pride, but also to ensure its survival through the interest of others.

Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, there is a lot to be said for the significance of the visual arts in the Pennsylvania German community today. Visual media is one of the most prolific art forms in the region, both in terms of the sheer diversity of art forms (Minardi, 2017a) and in terms of the number of artists that still produce these forms. While there are artists like Fritsch and Claypoole who specialise in one particular style (*Claypoole Hexsigns*, 2022; Lauer-Williams, 2011), the fact that artists like Yoder are beginning to combine these art forms to create unique *métissages artistiques* (Glissant, 1989) is perhaps indication that Pennsylvania German art's future lies in the hybridisation and experimentation she undertakes, which creates an artistic 'translanguaging' that unites the Pennsylvania German community of yesteryear and today's Pennsylvania Germans (cf. p. 37, p. 69).

However, it is my view that there is still much that could be done to encourage lived experience to be authentically portrayed in the public realm. While events like the *Versammlinge* succeed in creating an authentic space, by virtue of the fact that the language is spoken almost exclusively there (Louden, 2016), one cannot conclude that these events are truly ‘public’ if they are not accessible to the general public.

Likewise, there is still much to be done in the realm of the folk festival. The Kutztown Folk Festival sets a strong example through events, like the Liars’ Contest, which permit speakers to openly practice the language without stigma or the fear of mockery (e.g. Appendix A). Yet by focusing exclusively on these kinds of events – which are, at their heart, performative – there remains little space for authentic use of the language day to day; in other words, it remains infrequently used among non-sectarian Pennsylvania Germans as a means of discussion and socialisation. Although the *Versammlinge* do go some way to resolving this – as stated in the previous paragraph – these are not of sufficient frequency or scope to make meaningful progress for the Pennsylvania German community at large, as they, too, focus predominately on the performance of the language and culture through the various aspects of the event (Louden, 2016).

Therefore, I believe that while these art forms and events do preserve the Pennsylvania German language and culture through non-written narratives, they preserve them in a performative *habitus* that, to a certain extent, strips them of their authenticity (Bourdieu, 1993). While other works featured in this thesis have examined the perspectives of the community when regarding tourist interest (e.g. Waggoner, 2011; p. 117), the events in particular do little to provide a similar gaze for the Pennsylvania German community. Instead, the community’s cultural expression has been reduced to being viewed purely through a touristic viewpoint, without fully appreciating its authenticity in a day-to-day context. The implications of this, and ways in which it could be combatted, will be explored in the conclusion to this thesis.

This chapter concludes the analysis of the core cultural artefacts outlined in Chapter Three (p. 92). The following chapter will outline the conclusions that can be drawn from these analyses, identify areas for further study, and examine the impact this study might have on future study of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have sought to examine the life writing of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities – both in written and non-written narrative forms – to better understand the effects that such presentations have upon the way their linguistic and cultural heritage is shared both within and outside of their respective communities. In engaging critically with various forms of cultural production, including poetry, prose, visual media, and music, I aimed to shed light on the works of today’s Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German speakers with the aim of providing answers to the following questions:

- i. Why do the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities continue to make use of their own dialects?
- ii. How does the choice to use these dialects affect the cultural output of the regions in question?
- iii. What effect does a continued use of these dialects have upon the communities that use them?
- iv. How does the use of multiple languages affect the depiction of life?
- v. To what extent is such a fluidity of language helpful, or detrimental, to the community which the author is representing?
- vi. Is life writing the best way to give an account of life?
- vii. To what extent do the Pennsylvania German- and Louisiana French-speaking communities use this concept of life writing, if at all, to represent their lived experiences?
- viii. How has the use of oral tradition been affected by the introduction of the written form?
- ix. How does a combination of written and non-written art forms affect the intended narrative?

- x. How do writers and artists from these communities combine these art forms to convey their intended narrative?
- xi. To what extent do these non-written forms help or hinder attempts to increase awareness of these languages and communities?

First and foremost, in seeking to address the first question, I sought to determine the position of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities and the motivations behind the continued use of their respective languages and cultural practices. While I began my exploration of their position with the Foucauldian concept of ‘race war’ and the idea that these languages had undergone the process of ‘letting die’ (Foucault, 1975, 1997, 2004), I am no longer convinced that these concepts – particularly the latter – are sufficient to explain why Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German creators actively practise their linguistic and cultural heritages in the 21st century. Furthermore, I believe that a reliance on the former concept suggests that the ‘war’ at the heart of this thesis is one along the lines of ethnicity alone; while ethnicity certainly does play a role in the lived experience of some members of the Louisiana French community (cf. Appendix J), there are several other factors that must also be considered as part of this conflict.

Consequently, over the course of this thesis, I have turned to Agamben’s notion of *homo sacer* (1998) as a means of better understanding the ongoing difficulties faced by speakers of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German. In doing so, I have reflected on the role of *homo sacer*, not only in its most literal sense, but also in the sense of alienation and disconnection the concept creates between these communities and their own cultures and languages (cf. pp. 26-88). Furthermore, I have broadened the notion of *homo sacer* to also incorporate the notion that speakers of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German may choose to become *homines sacri*, thereby allowing themselves freedom from the criticism of those in the *bios* (Agamben,

1998) – in this case, monolingual Anglophone Americans – and undergo a process of biopolitical subjectification (Puumeister, 2019; cf. p. 28, p. 58).

Having situated the communities within their respective 21st-century contexts, I then addressed the most pressing question listed above: is life writing the best way to give an account of life for the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities? This question, in the context of these groups, cannot be answered simply: it depends, among other things, upon the authenticity that is proposed by the narrative in question – for instance, whether the account is presented as first-hand, as in Waggoner, Cheramie, and Fritsch’s work (pp. 103-132, p. 181), or whether the information is received second-hand, as with Moll and Madenford (2015; p. 166) – and upon the intention of the audience when engaging with these artefacts. If the primary aim of the audience is to see ‘truth’ – by which I mean an objective account of events that is purely factual in nature – then life writing naturally would not be considered the best way to give an account of life, regardless of the medium that is used to produce such life writing.

However, if this question is reframed within the context of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, then it is evident that life writing is, on the whole, the best way to give an account of lived experience. The fluidity of the life writing genre – including the ability it affords the creator to move between and combine media in a *métissage artistique* (Glissant, 1989; Smith and Watson, 2010) – provides an enormous amount of customisation that permits the creator to select the lens that is most appropriate for conveying their lived experience. For example, the music of the Louisiana French community may not portray ‘true’ (according to the definition listed above) lived experience in the lyrics, but the soundscape that is created by the instrumentation selected – or, in the case of *Kalenda* (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2017), the aural *métissage* of music, nature sounds, and vintage audio recordings (Glissant, 1989) – creates an artefact that is authentically steeped in the lived experience, not only of

today's Louisiana French community, but that of their ancestors. *Kalenda* depicts, through sound, the various journeys and traumas (including the colonisation of land belonging to indigenous Americans, the forced expulsion of Acadians from modern-day Canada, and the effects of slavery) that have led the Louisiana French people to the language and culture that is practiced and celebrated today.

Therefore, I argue that – for the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German people – life ‘writing’ is the best way to account for their lived experiences, although one must acknowledge that, for these communities, life writing does not necessarily mean life depicted in the written form. In fact, the non-written form is both more prevalent and more popular, due in part to issues surrounding the language (such as the lack of formalised orthography in Pennsylvania German) and due to the increased accessibility that is afforded by non-written media (cf. Appendices C and G). Furthermore, by continuing to make use of their language as part of said life writing, the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities depict lived experience from the perspective of the creators and from ‘speakers’ that are representative of the groups’ linguistic and cultural heritages – from those who experienced the *Grand Dérangement* (Waggoner, 2011; p. 117) to those who suffered as a result of intercultural conflict (Moll and Madenford, 2015; p. 166), and those who experienced Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German culture in the 20th and 21st centuries (Cheremie, 1997, 2007; Fritsch, 2008) – while also emphasising the values and practices that remain key to these communities. In addition, by continuing to employ their own languages over (or alongside) English, creators like Waggoner, Yoder, and the Lost Bayou Ramblers simultaneously exhibit: a sense of nostalgia for the cultural practices of one’s ancestors (e.g. Yoder, 2016); celebration of their respective languages and cultures as they stand today (Lost Bayou Ramblers, 2012, 2017); and a resistance against those who have sought – both throughout history, and in the 21st century –

to impose language decline and death upon them (cf. *CNN*, 2015; Pac, 2012; *ProEnglish*, 2020; p. 3).

With regards to the use of oral tradition and the way in which it has been impacted by the written form, therefore, I also assert that contemporary life writing has had little effect, particularly in the case of the Pennsylvania German-speaking community. In fact, it is my view – supported by the unique cultural artefacts that have been examined and the interviews undertaken with creators and academics from both communities – that it is the written narrative form that supplements current oral tradition. This stands in stark contrast to contemporary life writing in the Anglo-American culture, wherein the written form is dominant over its non-written counterparts (cf. Howes, 2020; Smith and Watson, 2010). One of the reasons behind the dominance of the non-written form is the legacy of non-written media that has continued to prevail in the two regions; with their popularity among the wider community, not just academics (cf. Appendix C), these art forms remain inherently accessible for those based in the wider region. In addition, the effect of the oral tradition – and other non-written narrative methods, such as visual art and music – is considered by some (cf. Appendices B, C, and L) as more appealing to the communities in question, in that they require more active engagement, both in the process of creation and in the way in one interprets its narrative, in comparison to the more passive engagement of reading a written narrative.

Another reason for the continued dominance of non-written narratives is the social element – that is, the experience of partaking in visual art, music, and oral performance is inherently more social than the solitary act of reading silently or reading a text alone, as demonstrated by the interviews I have undertaken for this thesis (*ibid.*). Thus, by actively engaging in more social activities, like the Liars' Contest (Appendix A), there is the possibility for a more overt expression of belonging to the community, be it through humour, shared acts of translanguaging, or the ability to share one's lived experiences (cf. pp. 26-88). In short, these

expressions of belonging are crucial to the (temporary, perhaps) creation of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German *habiti* (Bourdieu, 1993) in which one is not excluded; instead, speakers of these languages – or those involved in the cultural production of these regions – are positioned as Subject (Spivak, 1994) in which they can celebrate their status as multilingual Americans and artists in a space where this is acknowledged and celebrated, even despite the potential for condescension and derision from the Anglophone community (Waggoner, 2011). As a result, the written form is relatively discrete from the non-written form and has little impact on non-written cultural production, including the continued oral tradition found at events like folk festivals and the *Grundsau* Lodges (p. 216). The sole exceptions are the work of artists like Fritsch, wherein the written and non-written form are combined and presented side by side (p. 197). Aside from this exception, I believe that the space for non-written and oral narratives have continued to grow within their respective *habiti* (Bourdieu, 1993).

However, there remains room for improvement with regards to their perception outside of the communities in question. For example, despite the prominence of folk festivals among their respective diaspora and wider American society, there is still little acknowledgement from wider American society of the significance of oral tradition – or any other form of non-written cultural production – for communities that do not utilise English as their first language. Instead, there remains an overwhelming focus on the written form, even though several minority language and ethnic groups (including indigenous Americans and the Latinx community) still actively practice these oral forms (cf. p. 3, pp. 25-85). One possible means of combatting this view is to recognise these languages, and the cultural production associated with them, more formally through the introduction of cultural prizes or grants; in doing so, this would raise the cultural capital of such works in the eyes of those based outside of the group, thus positioning said works in the *habitus* of ‘high art’ (Bourdieu, 1993). Alternatively, Schlegel (Appendix H) proposes the creation of cultural centres similar to that established by Walt Wolfram in the

Carolinas; again, this would raise the position of said cultures in the *habitus* of wider American society (Bourdieu, 1993) through the formal acknowledgement they would provide of oral narratives and their significance to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans, thereby also encouraging increased use of these languages as a consequence.

In this thesis, I have also examined the impact, not only of the contrast between written and non-written narrative forms, but also between those writers who produce monolingual media and those who move between languages, as Cheramie does (1997, 2007). When considering how such translanguaging affects the depiction of life, it is my opinion that, once again, the answer is not straightforward. One must first consider, for instance, the languages between which the creator moves; as seen in the case of Cheramie, there are instances of code-switching in the community which do not involve the English language at all (*ibid.*).

Another factor which may impact the perception of translanguaging is the way in which the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities each regard the continued use of their own language. As has already been shown (cf. Appendices B, G, J, and K), the process of moving from being predominately Louisiana French-speaking to almost exclusively Anglophone was a deeply traumatic process for previous generations of Louisiana French speakers; therefore, the notion of moving between languages, or even simply reconnecting with Louisiana French in the first place, would likely be much more profound or emotionally significant for speakers of the language – it would be an active reclamation of one’s ancestral identity. However, for the Pennsylvania German community – where the movement of non-sectarian speakers towards English was brought on by the World Wars and growing urbanisation (cf. Loudon, 2016; Appendix I), and where this movement was made (somewhat) by choice – the act of speaking the language is less an active reclamation of Pennsylvania German identity than it is a process of reconnecting with the heritage, and developing a deeper connection with one’s ancestry, that propels people to learn Pennsylvania German.

It should also be noted here that fluidity of language is a rarer phenomenon among the Pennsylvania Germans – especially in the written form – due to the issues with orthography that have been mentioned previously (cf. Appendix C). One must also consider that, in the case of the Pennsylvania German literature featured in this thesis, the source text is entirely in Pennsylvania German, with English translations provided for clarity. These media, therefore, are not multilingual like those of the Louisiana French, where translanguaging is depicted as relatively seamless; rather, these media are entirely Pennsylvania German, with the English translation considered, in some cases, to be inferior or insufficient in capturing the ‘soul’ of the narrative (Fritsch, 2008).

But how precisely does translanguaging affect the depiction of life? The utilisation of translanguaging provides a more authentic view of the lived experience of multilingual Americans like the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans, thus showing what it is to be a multilingual American – and one whose linguistic and cultural heritage within the United States dates back as far as that of the English language – in the 21st century. The Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities are not formed of first- or second-generation migrant communities, as evidenced through the interviews undertaken for this study; some participants (Appendix H) are able to trace their heritage as multilingual Americans as many as thirteen or fourteen generations, all of whom have been based in the same region. To use the languages of their ancestors in conjunction with English is, therefore, a clear demonstration of the significance of the language to their identity, as several of the core cultural works show (cf. pp. 103-132, pp. 165-193).

Consequently – despite the threat posed by the increasing influence of English in other minority languages of the United States – I have deduced that there is no great detriment to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities when translanguaging is utilised. The sole exception to this may be if an outside party were to criticise the community for the

choice to present its culture in multiple languages, as shown in the Waggoner poem *Counterclockwise* (2011) – as a result, the community is regarded with a certain amount of derision on the part of the Anglophone tourists around them. Given the growth of pro-English movements in recent years (cf. Pac, 2012; *ProEnglish*, 2020; Rivas, 2017), such criticism remains a distinct possibility; however, this is not something that I have observed first-hand in this study, neither in the interviews, nor in the examination of cultural artefacts.

Instead, I assert that the use of translanguaging – and, by extension, any movement between languages – cannot be anything other than helpful to the communities represented by Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural output. In moving from one language to the other, creators from these two communities demonstrate more authentically the experience of a multilingual American for whom these languages are a foundational part of their identity; translanguaging, therefore, does create the *habitus* that is necessary for positioning the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans as Subject, rather than Other (pp. 25-69).

Such translanguaging also benefits the communities at the heart of this thesis in that the bilingual author – be it Cherie, Waggoner, or Moll and Madenford – has the artistic control to demonstrate the difficulties faced by members of these communities with regards to their connection with their culture. If a member of the community cannot connect to their identity, either through a lack of knowledge of the language or through forced disconnection from the language – then this is evoked through the narrator’s use of translanguaging, as evidenced by such works as *O.E.D.* (Cherie, 1997). Furthermore, the brief – yet frequent – movements between languages serve as emphasis for the reader, thus ensuring that outside audiences may understand the experiences of those who belong to the two communities.

Finally, we must examine the extent to which a narrative is affected by the combination of written and non-written narrative forms, the way in which Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German artists combine these forms, and the extent to which they may help or

hinder attempts to increase awareness of the linguistic and cultural heritages of these communities. In this thesis, there are only two cases where the written and non-written are combined in one artefact: *Der Haahne Greht* (Fritsch, 2008); and the work of Rachel Yoder (see Figures 8 to 15). *Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent* (2018) could also be regarded, to a certain extent, as a third example of this phenomenon through the lyrics and historical notes that are included in the album's liner notes; however, I refute this claim on the basis that these notes are supplementary to the music itself, whereas Fritsch and Yoder's work combines the written form with the non-written and utilises the former *within* (or alongside, although in both of these instances, the two forms are of equal standing) the non-written.

In the case of Yoder's oeuvre, I consider the combination of *Fraktur* (itself inherently an art form, before the content of the writing is examined) and *Scherenschnitte* – as seen in the *Aa Halde* project (see Figure 10) – a demonstration of the significance of visual arts to the Pennsylvania German community, and, in particular, the beauty that is found in adorning everyday items, including one's house (or barn, in the case of barn stars), furniture, and documents, with such works (Minardi, 2017a, 2017b). This *métissage* (Glissant, 1989) additionally shapes the narrative by allowing the reader to gain a greater understanding of the authorial perspective and the way in which their memories – and, by extension, their lived experience – has been formed and influenced by their cultural heritage. The work of Fritsch is a prime example of this: Although his work presents a more antiquated view of Pennsylvania German culture through its depictions of 19th- and 20th-century clothing and cultural practices (*The Goschenhoppen Historians*, 2022), his use of *Scherenschnitte* to show this to the reader allows the audience to comprehend more fully the author's viewpoint. Additionally, the incorporation of visual art permits readers with little to no understanding of Pennsylvania German a snapshot of its culture today, thus inviting them into the Pennsylvania German

habitus as observer and object, rather than objectifying it from an outside perspective (Bourdieu, 1993). To a certain extent, this also answers the question of how Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German creators combine written and non-written forms to convey the intended narrative. In the case of Fritsch and Yoder, the non-written is either positioned alongside the written form or – in the case of several of Yoder’s works (2019, 2021, 2022) – supersedes it entirely. This leads to the interpretation of such hybrids (Glissant, 1989) as the celebration of traditional Pennsylvania German art forms and motifs while the creators also ensure that said art forms undergo the ‘biopolitical subjectification’ (Puumeister, 2019) necessary to ensure greater interest from those based outside of the region. Thus, the combination of written and non-written narrative forms – as seen in the works of Fritsch and Yoder – allows the community to engage in an act of nostalgia while also spreading cultural awareness and asserting their right to commemorate their respective cultures through the lens of personal lived experience; rather than ‘conforming’ to the narrative forms of the Anglophone *habitus*, they subvert expected stereotypes while engaging in a continuation of traditional cultural art forms

Despite this, there is one weakness – raised previously in the introduction to this thesis (pp. 3-10) – which must be acknowledged when attempting to analyse the effectiveness of these narrative forms: the lack of a formal orthography in Pennsylvania German (cf. Loudon, 2016). This poses a big problem, not only for comprehension of the language today, but for its accessibility in the future to those based outside of the group. While the orthographical system chosen by the Pennsylvania German artists featured in this thesis is comprehensible for those who do not have much competence in the language – thanks in part, to the fact that Madenford had a hand in translating the original source text for Yoder (Madenford, 2021) – the lack of a set orthography for Pennsylvania German increases the difficulty for outside members of the

community to engage with these artefacts, especially if learning the language entails learning multiple possible spellings for each word in the language (cf. Appendix H).

On balance, however, I aver that non-written art forms are essential in any attempt to increase awareness of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German languages, and, consequently, their communities; they are, therefore, of great help when depicting lived experience. This is evident when one takes into consideration the amount of engagement they receive from outside of the regions in question, as opposed to written narrative methods penned in Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German (Appendix K).

Yet this also raises a question regarding the significance of such hybrid forms: Is there sufficient engagement from outside of Francophone Louisiana and Germanophone Pennsylvania to for such art forms to have significant impact on the future of their respective languages?

This is answered by the explorations undertaken previously into the role of folk festivals in preserving the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German languages and cultures (p. 156, p. 216). The size of such events – combined with the high attendance they achieve – undoubtedly benefit both written and non-written cultural production in both communities, as they create spaces wherein such artefacts may be created and displayed, thus increasing awareness of these communities, their linguistic heritages, and forms of cultural production. In these spaces, the culture itself becomes Subject, and thus is not under threat of being drowned out or overshadowed by other cultures.

However, as Waggoner points out, there is a certain amount of explanation required for those visiting outside of the community if one is to avoid the condescension expressed in such works as *Counterclockwise* (Waggoner, 2011); without this, the community at the heart of the event may be reduced to stereotypes or a form of ‘amusement’ for those with little understanding of the culture and its development. Therefore, while a combination of the written

and non-written narrative forms can be of great help to the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities in expressing their linguistic and cultural heritages, there is a fine balance that must be struck if the communities in question wish to maintain the biopolitical subjectification that such combinations create (Puumeister, 2019; pp. 58-69).

As has been demonstrated, there is much that can be deduced from the findings of this thesis and the analyses therein. However, these findings are not necessarily the case for all cultural artefacts of these communities; rather, the deductions I have made within this thesis can be attributed, in part, to the constraints placed upon this research project by a range of internal and external factors. The following section will address many of the more substantial limitations of this thesis and will explore how these could be resolved for future projects.

Limitations

Despite the rigour with which I sought to undertake this study – evidenced above by the conclusions that have been drawn – there were several constraints upon this project which has resulted in changes to my approach and the way in which data was collected. In this section, I will briefly expand upon some of the main limitations of this thesis, the impact that these have had upon my research, and the various ways in which I was able to overcome these limitations.

One significant constraint that emerged prior to this study was that, as a native English speaker based in the United Kingdom, I was an outsider to both the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities and would not have the first-hand understanding of these communities or their linguistic heritages. For this reason, I was initially concerned that this thesis may not accurately reflect the views of those who speak these languages and engage with these communities on a regular basis. In addition, there was also the possibility that, as

someone who is observing the regions from outside, it might be more difficult to collect data through interviews or focus groups than anticipated, as I had not built rapport with members of the community in the way that academics from the area may have done through the shared experiences of expressing Louisiana French or Pennsylvania German identity.

The primary means of mitigating this was to conduct research with members of the community. By doing this, I worked with people who have first-hand experience of the languages and cultures and therefore understand the difficulties that they face better than I could. In particular, this project intended to engage with academics from the two communities who have written on the subject in one form or another. This is because, as I noted in the previous section (p. 96), they are in a position where they can understand the perspectives of the communities ‘on the ground’, so to speak, while also having the historical and theoretical knowledge to observe these issues with some distance.

Given the timeframe in which this thesis was written (between October 2019 and September 2022), it is also essential that I acknowledge the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the research process and, in particular, on the data collection phase of this project. Upon embarking on this research project, I had intended to conduct short-term ethnographic study in both the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. In doing so, I would have been able, not only to visit local heritage centres and archives to examine physical artefacts in person, but to conduct ethnographic study of the cultural events that were examined in Chapters Five and Seven by attending them in person. Alongside these, I intended to conduct a series of one-to-one interviews and focus groups with members of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities; these would have taken place in community spaces that were familiar to all participants.

However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent travel restrictions imposed on travel between the United Kingdom and the United States of America, it was not

possible to commence this work during the data collection phase of this research project. As a direct consequence of this, there has been no ethnographic study undertaken as part of this thesis, nor did I travel to Louisiana or Pennsylvania German to examine physical artefacts and conduct interviews in-person. This meant that much of the data that I had planned to collect was no longer accessible. For instance, the data held by some local museums and archives (such as that of the Max Kade Institute) was no longer accessible as it was not held in a digital format, or it could only be accessed onsite, and therefore could not be included in the study.

To mitigate this, the data that is presented throughout this project was only obtained either through those institutions which had already digitised their holdings (such as the Center for Louisiana Studies at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette) or was obtained myself through the interviews that were undertaken for this thesis. While this has reduced the amount of data I would have been able to examine in terms of visual art and physical artefacts, there were several archived resources that could be accessed remotely, particularly in the case of the audio recordings held by the Center for Louisiana Studies (2022). Furthermore, many of the resources that were available in a digital format tended to be more recent in their creation (e.g. Madenford, 2021), meaning that the contemporary aspects of the research project were not greatly affected by the lack of physical archive access.

The inaccessibility of these collections was not the only obstacle caused by the inability to travel. During the data collection phase, I had originally intended to travel to the United States not only to examine these archives and artefacts, but also to observe several events that celebrate the cultural output of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, such as the *Festivals Acadiens et Créoles* and the Kutztown Folk Festival – two events which are examined in depth in Chapters Five and Seven respectively. While attending these events, I had planned to conduct a short-term ethnographic study of the events themselves and, where possible, the attendees and performers present at these festivals. Yet, for the same reasons as I

stated earlier, this approach was no longer possible. This also meant that it was impossible to conduct face-to-face interviews with research participants, as had originally been planned.

To alleviate the effects of this, it was essential to contact participants in order to determine whether it would be feasible to conduct interviews with research participants remotely. As this issue arose prior to the start of the data collection phase, the research participants with whom I had planned to engage all consented to, and were experienced in, the use of videoconferencing software to conduct interviews on a one-to-one basis. While the use of videoconferencing software was somewhat effective in circumventing these limitations, this made the process of organising interviews and focus groups increasingly difficult, as this required participants to be confident in using the required technology and required additional preparation work in order to engage with potential participants. As a result of these constraints, it was not possible to host focus groups virtually, thus leaving only one-to-one interviews as a means of engaging directly with research participants.

Yet despite this – as the appendices to this thesis demonstrate – the number of one-to-one interviews was not impacted. As the intended participants in these interviews had all been based in academic or higher education previously, participants were confident in utilising videoconferencing software and were amenable to doing so for the purposes of this study. In addition, the use of videoconferencing software allowed the participants and I to converse in spaces with which we were both familiar (rather than conducting an interview in a neutral space that may have been foreign to both), which may have also allowed the participants to feel sufficiently comfortable to talk in greater detail than they may have done if the interview had taken place in person. Therefore, the overall impact on this aspect of data collection participatory phase of this research project was successfully mitigated.

In relation to this, the participatory phase of this study is constrained by the relatively low number of research participants and the demographics that they represent. Of the

interviews that have been conducted, only two participants identified as female, while only one was a person of colour. As a result, the experiences recounted in these interviews are, for the most part, reflective of the position most of these participants hold as white men. While this latter point is perhaps to be expected from the Pennsylvania German community, which is descended historically from Western European migrants (Louden, 2016), this is of greater concern in the case of the Louisiana French people, with their ancestry having originated from several groups, with West African slaves and Indigenous Americans, such as the Houma people, having contributed to the Louisiana French language and culture as much as migrants from Western Europe (cf. Rabalais, 2017; Appendix H).

Yet despite the lack of diversity with regards to the interviewees that have taken part, there has, as a result, been a concerted effort to acknowledge the diversity of Francophone Louisianans wherever possible. For instance, when examining the narratives, both written and non-written, that have been produced by the Louisiana French community, this thesis focused on those which contain cultural elements which have been created and influenced by BIPOC members of the community. One such example is the folk stories which focus on *Bouki* and *Lapin*, in which the character of *Bouki* (whose name is the Wolof word for ‘hyena’, and was imported to Louisiana French; see Rabalais, 2021) is central to each of the stories and the morals that they aim to impart to their reader. However, if I were to conduct any further study of this community, one of the central aims of that research would be to better reflect the diversity of this region, with a particular focus on seeking participants from the Black and Indigenous American communities. I would also seek a larger number of participants, as this would create a more detailed, and therefore more accurate, picture of the community from which my analyses could then be derived.

There are also more minor limitations, whose impact on the study is far smaller than those listed above; for instance, the general lack of scholarship on either of these two

communities – as noted in the introduction to this thesis (pp. 3-10) – caused some difficulties in the scoping of this study, as this increased the need for participatory research and ethnographic study in order to develop a deeper understanding of the unique contexts of these communities. However, I believe that these were overcome during the data collection phase.

Areas of Further Study

Despite the relatively broad scope of this research project, there is still much that could be researched in greater detail in future research projects. This section will briefly explore the areas of further study that remain outside of the scope of this thesis, in addition to further analysis that could be undertaken as a result of this research project.

In the case of the Louisiana French community, there is potential for the examination of visual arts and their significance as a means of portraying lived experience. I did not select this as a topic for this study due to the greater significance of music to the community (cf. Ancelet, 1999; Appendix B). However, this research could be undertaken at a later stage and compared with the visual arts of other linguistic and ethnic minority communities, like the Pennsylvania Germans.

There is also scope for a much more wide-ranging study of music from the Louisiana French community. Given the limited scope of the thesis, Chapter Five focused primarily on one artist – the Lost Bayou Ramblers – and one album created in collaboration with several Louisiana French musicians – *Travailler C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent* (pp. 134-165). However, the artists featured in the latter work all merit further examination – in particular, the works of the band Steve Mamou and the Playboys and singer Zachary Richard should be examined in greater detail, given their prominence outside of the community (Boilen, 2011; *L'invité*, 2014). There is also greater scope to examine the oeuvres

of the female musicians involved with the project, including Anna Laura Edmiston and Megan Brown, particularly as female musicians from Francophone Louisiana have not received much critical attention outside of the region. Thus, there is certainly an opportunity to understand why this is the case and the way in which their music, and their representations of the community through music, differs from that of their male counterparts.

Furthermore, the exploration into the performance of poetry and prose (cf. Chapters Four and Chapter Six) could be extended into a more general examination of oral performance and its impact in the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities. As Chapters Four and Six – combined with the interviews (cf. Appendix K) – demonstrate, there are many examples of written narrative that have been penned with the intention of performing them at a later date, be it at a closed gathering like the *Grundsau* Lodge (Appendices H and I) or in a more public forum like the local folk festivals (cf. p. 156, p. 216). Such research could also be extended into alternative spaces in which these performances take place, such as book and poetry readings; this would include events like the *Versammlinge*, although – as Donner and Schlegel point out (Appendices H and I) – the latter space is male-only and thus would require a male researcher, like Donner (2016).

Furthermore, it is my view that there is still much work to be done in exploring the phenomenon of the folk festival and its place as a site of celebrating and preserving linguistic and cultural heritage. Such work requires both short- and long-term ethnographic study, not only into the event itself, but into the planning and organisation of such an event, in order to better understand the motivations behind the organisation of such cultural events.

With regards to further research on the Pennsylvania German community, there is evidently much research to be done on the cultural output of sectarian communities – namely the Amish and Mennonite communities – including the role certain subgroups of these play in the tourist industry of ‘Dutch Country’ (Appendix E). As with the exploration of the folk

festival, this would have to be undertaken in person as part of an ethnographic study, due to the lack of technology among some sectarian communities (cf. Bronner and Brown, 2017; Loudon, 2016).

However, if such research is to be conducted, I believe that any researcher would need to take cultural and religious sensitivities into account, thus meaning that certain aspects of the community may be inaccessible for various reasons, such as gender. In addition, such as project would require medium- or long-term ethnographic study, in order to build sufficient rapport with the communities at the heart of the project and also adapt to the increased use of Pennsylvania German, which is used far more frequently among the sectarian community (Appendices C, E, and F). Therefore, it would be beneficial for any prospective researcher to gain competence in Pennsylvania German – or improving their European German, which would also be useful considering the use of *Hochdeutsch* in religious texts (cf. Bronner and Brown, 2017) – before embarking on such a project.

Finally, there is also scope outside of this research project to engage with people of colour within the Louisiana French community – including speakers of *Kouri-Vini*, which was not included in this thesis – in order to determine how the use of these languages may differ among people of colour. As stated previously in this chapter (p. 238), this thesis only undertook one interview with a person of colour – Dr Christophe Landry (Appendix J) – which, while crucial in gaining some understanding of the lived experiences of Black Louisiana French speakers, resulted in an understanding that is relatively limited in comparison to the experiences of white Louisiana French speakers. Furthermore, despite analysing songs that were performed by BIPOC Louisiana French speakers, such as *Tobie Lapierre* (cf. p. 146), none of the core cultural artefacts were created by BIPOC Louisiana French speakers. Consequently, any future study of this community should seek to bring greater attention to

these members of the community, so that the range of lived experiences examined is more reflective of the diverse cultural heritages that constitute Francophone Louisiana.

While this section has highlighted areas for future study, it is also essential that I consider the impact that this thesis may have upon Francophone and Germanophone Studies, in addition to evaluating the possible impact this research may have upon the communities at the heart of this thesis. This thesis will therefore conclude with such an examination.

Research Impact

With regards to the impact of this research project, it is my opinion that the greatest impact is the potential for major policy change at the state – and, potentially, at the federal – level in the United States. Such policy change should recognise the rich cultural and linguistic heritage of communities like the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans – alongside other minority and heritage language communities, such as indigenous American groups – and provide greater protection for such languages and their continued usage. There is precedent for such a move, as evidenced by the Louisiana French Language Services Act (*Louisiana French Language Services Act*, 2011); however, as this bill is an unfunded state mandate, the resources required to preserve and promote the language and culture are derived from the community itself, rather than from state government. If the proposed policy changes are to be enacted as a result of this research project, then it must also include the necessary federal funding to ensure sufficient preservation and promotion of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German.

In addition to this, Louisiana French may receive increased support from the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* if the region is accorded full member status of this organisation, as opposed to the observer status it currently holds (*Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, 2022). Doing so would demonstrate more clearly to those

outside of the community – not only French speakers, but other communities around the world (including, crucially, the rest of the United States) – the significance of the French language in the region. Furthermore, increased attention on Louisiana French from the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* would encourage further scholarship on the region and its linguistic and cultural heritage.

Yet how would such funding impact these communities and their respective languages? If preservation of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German were to be federally funded, as opposed to their current positions of limited funding (cf. Appendices A, H, and I), then it would be possible for these communities to grow those organisations which already undertake similar preservation work, including the Center for Louisiana Studies (2022) and the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center (Kutztown University, 2021) – both of which maintain archives of cultural artefacts in the language and, in the case of the latter, provides education in the language and culture. The Pennsylvania German community could therefore extend such education in the language to those areas of the community for whom this is currently unavailable or inaccessible – akin to the immersion programme that has been established in Francophone Louisiana (CODOFIL, 2022; cf. Appendix L) – thereby increasing the chances that the language and culture will be successfully transmitted to, and preserved for, future generations.

As the previous section noted, another effect of my research is the possibility of greater connection with the community outside of the academic and artistic niches that are most prominent in contemporary Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural production, as shown by the lack of interview participants who are not connected with these *habiti* (Bourdieu, 1993). By better incorporating those based outside of the academic and artistic realms through an increased programme of cultural events – which, with the government support proposed above, would also have increased funding – they will have greater influence

upon the future of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German, as this would allow for a greater diversity of voices to emerge and guide the collective folk narrative in the 21st century. Their lack of sufficient representation – both inside and outside of current scholarly thought – means that whole swathes of the communities in question are currently underrepresented (if they are represented at all) in the cultural narrative surrounding their communities. Thus, without increasing the amount of artwork, music, and literature produced *and publicised* by these groups – as I advocate in this thesis – the narratives that are showcased among the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities will remain narrower and more concentrated in the white male gaze, thereby perpetuating this in future through the lack of diverse voices in cultural production to guide future generations in depicting their linguistic and cultural heritage.

However, given that there is already some form of support for the Louisiana French language currently in place (CODOFIL, 2020; *Louisiana French Language Services Act*, 2011), the most glaring opportunity for lasting impact is to bring attention to the Pennsylvania German language and ensure that the current language decline among non-sectarians is at least slowed, if not stopped (or even reversed) altogether. As Schlegel notes, there currently are not enough researchers available to undertake the enormous tasks that are essential if the language and culture are to be preserved (Appendix H); however, there are students who have begun to learn the language through the Pennsylvania German minor offered at Kutztown (2022), while there are also older generations of Pennsylvania German speakers who have greater competence in the language (cf. Appendix I). I believe that the immersion model demonstrated by the Louisiana French could be utilised to great effect among the Pennsylvania Germans to encourage language acquisition in childhood and adolescence, as opposed to gaining language competence later in life. This would benefit the community two-fold: if such programmes were to be established (through a state mandate, as was done with the Louisiana French immersion

programme), then future generations of students would be exposed to the language in their childhood, thus allowing them to ‘feel’ the language of their community (Baloy, 2011); in addition, those students who have learnt Pennsylvania German in recent years (and older non-sectarians who grew up with experience of the language) could be given the opportunity to actively practice the language by teaching it to younger generations of students. It is also crucial to note here that such a programme would allow for the staggered implementation of Pennsylvania German immersion; if it were to be trialled first in an elementary school setting, then this would allow for the programme to develop organically as students aged, thus meaning that secondary education could be offered in the language at a later stage.

My research may also have some impact on the future offering of Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural production online and in digital media. Although creators like Madenford (2021) already undertake much work in this field, I believe that emphasis on producing and displaying cultural artefacts in the digital realm would allow for Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German cultural production to receive further critical attention and thus would create opportunities for further research and study by those based outside of these communities. This may be achieved, for instance, via the incorporation of the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German languages to digital language-learning resources like Duolingo – something which Madenford has proposed in the past (Appendix C). As other minority languages have previously been crowdsourced and created by users who speak these languages (Awodey and Tsai, 2021), this would allow for collaboration between the communities themselves – who would provide Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German as they are currently utilised, thus archiving them for future reference – and Duolingo, who would be able to bring these languages into their transnational *habitus* of language learners (Bourdieu, 1993). This would also benefit researchers, who would then have the opportunity to gain competence in the languages at their own pace and at a time convenient for them.

Yet there is one potential obstacle that may prevent this from taking place, particularly in the case of Pennsylvania German: the lack of a formalised orthography that is used by all speakers of the language. If the language is to be successfully archived in written form and made available through such facilities as language-learning apps, this must be resolved. Given that this would require engagement from across the community – including sectarian groups, who also use the language on a daily basis – it is crucial that such decisions are made at a space in which all may participate. For this reason, I posit that a public forum like the Kutztown Folk Festival – which sectarians have been known to attend (Appendix I) – would be an ideal space wherein this may be debated, and Pennsylvania German speakers may be consulted on the matter.

With regards to the impact of this thesis on French and German studies, I argue that this study will make great progress towards continued decolonisation of the curriculum in secondary and higher education, especially in the case of the German curriculum, which currently focuses solely on Germany and makes only brief reference to other German-speaking communities (cf. AQA, 2022; Pearson, 2022). By omitting such groups, the curriculum fails to acknowledge the colonial roles of both France and Germany on the global stage, even if the latter was a relatively minor colonial power in comparison to its European contemporaries (cf. Smith, 1978). Thus, including these subjects, both in secondary and higher education, would create opportunities for further discussion on the role of colonialism, and its impact today, while simultaneously repositioning such groups as the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania Germans as Subject, thus assisting them in the process of biopolitical subjectification (Puumeister, 2019; pp. 58-66).

Furthermore, by decolonising the curriculum through the incorporation of these communities, this would provoke further discussion on the place of other ethnic and linguistic minorities within the United States, including those of indigenous Americans. This would be a

major development within the field of American Studies, where analysis of these communities remains an emerging field (pp. 3-10). Consequently, each of these communities would be brought out of the shadows (Topinka, 2016) as their significance within the wider American literary canon is explored in greater depth.

Over the course of this thesis, my findings have been shaped by the views of those that participated in interviews and invited me to share their cultural and linguistic heritages, with a view to understanding why Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German must be preserved and celebrated in the 21st century. These findings, I believe, have the potential for great impact, not only within the Louisiana French and Pennsylvania German communities, but on an international scale through the increased focus on these communities in a postcolonial context. Through the work undertaken in this thesis, I have rejected the ‘melting pot’ in favour of examining, in depth, the ‘patchwork quilt’ proposed by Madenford in the opening to this thesis (cf. p. 1). In doing so, I have reframed the United States in manner that fully acknowledges and celebrates the role of each culture, their narratives, and their narrative methods with the American *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1993). Therefore, to conclude this thesis, I wish to look to the future of American cultural studies by referring back to the ‘patchwork quilt’ as proposed by Madenford:

I understand the term ‘melting pot’, it’s what most people will use. I prefer to use the term a ‘quilt’, for a couple of reasons. One: quilts are, [the] Pennsylvania Dutch are associated with quilts, but if you know anything about quilt making, you take a bunch of scraps of cloth and you put them together, and you make a giant quilt, but when you stand back and look, that quilt is all together and you think, ‘Oh, that’s one unified piece, that’s brilliant.’ But when you get up close, you can see the individual squares or the individual pieces of cloth, and those individual pieces of cloth have not changed, but they have become part of a bigger picture. And that’s how I view the Pennsylvania Dutch. We are one of those pieces of cloth in the quilt that is America. You stand back, we’re in it, we’re part of it, we’re tied to it, we’re stitched to it, but when you get up close, you can still see our individual little piece of cloth that is our piece, and it didn’t change [...] Melting pot’s fine, but my problem with melting pot is that that would signify that we gave up who we are to be part of this amalgamation, where in a melting pot, you can’t see the individual aspects anymore, but for me, in a quilt, when I look at a quilt, I can see that, and to me, that’s how I view America, and it doesn’t make my little piece any less

American than any of the other pieces in that giant quilt. (Madenford, 2020, in a discussion with the author of this thesis, pp. 405-406).

CORE CULTURAL ARTEFACTS

Cheremie, D. (1997) *Lait à mère*. Moncton: Éditions d'Acadie.

Cheremie, D. (2007) *Julie Choufleur: ou les Preuves d'amour*. Shreveport: Éditions Tintamarre.

Fritsch, P.V. (2008) *Der Haahne Greht*. Morgantown: Masthof Press.

Lost Bayou Ramblers (2012) *Mammoth Waltz*. Available at: Apple Music (Accessed: 18th June 2022).

Lost Bayou Ramblers (2017) *Kalenda*. Available at: Apple Music (Accessed: 22nd June 2022).

Moll, L.A. and Madenford, D.M. (2015) *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichhof*. Morgantown: Masthof Press.

Various Artists (2018) *Travailler c'est trop dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent*. Available at: Apple Music (Accessed: 17th August 2021).

Waggoner, M.R.G. (2011) *Le Chant de l'arc-en-ciel: Poésies et proses*. Shreveport: Éditions Tintamarre.

Yoder, R. (2016) *Aa Halde* [Scherenschnitte].

Yoder, R. (2019) *Untitled* [Barn star].

Yoder, R. (2021a) *Untitled* [Barn star].

Yoder, R. (2021b) *Untitled* [Barn star].

Yoder, R. (no date) *A painting from the Belsnickel Suite* [Painting].

Yoder, R. (no date) *Untitled* [Barn star].

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ‘Abdeeling:Schreiwier’ (2014) *Wikipedia*. Available at:
<https://pdc.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Abdeeling:Schreiwier&oldid=97310>
(Accessed: 6 September 2022).
- Adinolfi, F. (2008) *Mondo Exotica: Sounds, Visions, Obsessions of the Cocktail Generation*. Edited by K. Pinkus and J. Vivrette. Translated by K. Pinkus. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.
- Agamben, G. (1998) *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by D. Heller-Roazen. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Ancelet, B.J. (1994) *Cajun and Creole Folktales: The French Oral Tradition of South Louisiana*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Ancelet, B.J. (1999) *Cajun and Creole Music Makers: Musiciens cadiens et créoles*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Ancelet, B.J., Edwards, J.D. and Pitre, G. (1998) *Cajun Country*. Third Edition. Jackson and London: University Press of Mississippi.
- Anderson, V.M. (2014) ‘Outcomes of Dialect Contact and the Case of Pennsylvania Dutchified English’, *American Speech*, 98(1), pp. 7–18.
- Arceneaux, J. (2012) *Le trou dans le mur: Fabliaux cadiens*. Moncton: Les Éditions Perce-Neige.
- Arsenault, P. (2022) ‘Speakers of Languages Other than English as an Invisible Minority’, *The Vermont Connection*, 43(1).
- Atkinson, L. and Bradley, J. (2017) ‘Meaning making and collaborative ethnography in transdisciplinary arts’. *Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities (TLANG) Working*

- Paper 23. Available at: <https://tlang754703143.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/meaning-making-and-collaborative-ethnography-in-transdisciplinary-arts.pdf> (Accessed: 11th August 2020).
- Atran-Fresco, L. (2017) *Les Cadiens au présent: revendications d'une francophonie en Amérique du Nord*. Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Reprint. Edited by M. Holquist. Translated by C. Emerson and M. Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009.
- Bakhtin, M.M. and Emerson, C. (1984) *Problems of Dostoevsky's Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Baloy, N.J.K. (2011) "We Can't Feel Our Language": Making Places in the City for Aboriginal Language Revitalization', *American Indian Quarterly*, 35(4), pp. 515–548.
- Bannet, E.T. (1993) *Postcultural Theory: Critical Theory after the Marxist Paradigm*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Barba, P.A. (ed.) (1969) *'S Pennsylvawnisch Deutsch Eck: devoted to the literature, lore and history of the Pennsylvania Germans* (7 vol). Allentown: Morning Call.
- Barker, V. *et al.* (2001) 'The English-Only Movement: A Communication Analysis of Changing Perceptions of Language Vitality', *Journal of Communication*, 51(1), pp. 4–37.
- Barthes, R. (1977) *Image Music Text*. Translated by S. Heath. London: Fontana Press.
- Beard, M.R. (2017) 'Re-thinking oral history - a study of narrative performance', *Rethinking History*, 21(4), pp. 529–548.
- Beaudrie, S., Amezcua, A. and Loza, S. (2021) 'Critical language awareness in the heritage language classroom: design, implementation, and evaluation of a curricular intervention', *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 15(1), pp. 61–81.

- Begum, N. and Saini, R. (2019) 'Decolonising the Curriculum', *Political Studies Review*, 17(2), pp. 196–201. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929918808459>.
- Bernabé, J., Chamoiseau, P. and Confiant, R. (1990) 'In Praise of Creoleness', *Callaloo*. Translated by M.B. Taleb Khyar, 13(4), pp. 886–909.
- Bernard, S. and Girouard, J. (1992) "'Colinda": Mysterious Origins of a Cajun Folksong', *Journal of Folklore Research*, 29(1), pp. 37–52.
- Berny, M. (2020) 'The Hollywood Indian Stereotype: The Cinematic Othering and Assimilation of Native Americans at the Turn of the 20th Century', *Angles* [Preprint], (10). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4000/angles.331>.
- Bilotti, L. (2006) 'Making the Cut', *Country Living (New York, N.Y.)*, 29(10), p. 67.
- Blais, M.C. (1965) *Une saison dans la vie d'Emmanuel*. Facsimile of the 1st edition. Montreal: Éditions du Boréal, 2007.
- Boilen, B. (2011) 'Steve Riley And The Mamou Playboys: Tiny Desk Concert', *NPR*, 7 March. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2011/03/07/134260832/steve-riley-and-the-mamou-playboys-tiny-desk-concert> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).
- Boldrini, L. and Novak, J. (eds.) (2017) *Experiments in Life-Writing: Intersections of Auto/Biography and Fiction*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan (Palgrave Studies in Life Writing).
- Borland, K. (2021) 'Horsing around Again: Poetics and Intention in Oral Narrative Performance', *Journal of Folklore Research*, 58(1), pp. 5–46.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993) *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*. Edited by R. Johnson, L.D. Kritzman, and R. Wolin. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Bousquette, J. and Brown, J.R. (2018) 'Heritage Languages in North America: Formal Linguistic Approaches', *Journal of Language Contact*, 11(3), pp. 373–378. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1163/19552629-01103001>.

- Bradley, J. (2016) 'Liquid Methodologies: using a linguistic ethnographic approach to study multilingual phenomena'. Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities (TLANG) Working Paper 18. Available at: <https://tlang754703143.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/liquid-methodologies.pdf> (Accessed: 21st July 2020).
- Bradley, J. (2017) 'Translanguaging engagement: Dynamic multilingualism and university language engagement programmes'. Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities (TLANG) Working Paper 28. Available at: <https://tlang754703143.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/translanguaging-engagement.pdf> (Accessed: 21st July 2020).
- Bradley, J. *et al.* (2017) 'Translanguaging space and creative activity: Collaborative ethnography and arts-based learning'. Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities (TLANG) Working Paper 27. Available at: <https://tlang754703143.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/translanguaging-space-and-creative-activity.pdf> (Accessed: 11th August 2020).
- Breu, C. (2014) *Insistence of the Material: Literature in the Age of Biopolitics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bronner, S.J. and Brown, J.R. (eds.) (2017) *Pennsylvania Germans: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press (Young Center Books in Anabaptist and Pietist Studies).
- Browner, T. (ed.) (2009) *Music of the First Nations: Tradition and Innovation in Native North America*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. Music in American Life.

- Burnett, J. (2022) 'Le bon temps continue to roll on Cajun radio in Southern Louisiana', *NPR*, 10 August. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/10/1116386405/le-bon-temps-continue-to-roll-on-cajun-radio-in-southern-louisiana> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Callais, R. (2015) 'A Culture That Deserves Preserving.', *Offbeat*, 2 May, pp. 26–28.
- Campbell, T. and Sitze, A. (eds.) (2013) *Biopolitics: A Reader*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.
- Cavazos, A.G. (2017) 'Translingual oral and written practices: Rhetorical resources in multilingual writers' discourses', *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 21(4), pp. 385–401.
- Chapman, R. (2013) *What is Québécois Literature?: Reflections on the Literary History of Francophone Writing in Canada*. Liverpool University Press.
- Chapman, S. (2015) 'Cassettes are selling again, but is this a revival or a hipster "flash in the pan"?', *The Daily Emerald*, 21 October. Available at: https://www.dailyemerald.com/arts-culture/cassettes-are-selling-again-but-is-this-a-revival-or-a-hipster-flash-in-the/article_3030df69-39d5-50c9-ab18-9836c4f2f3c8.html (Accessed: 7th September 2021).
- Chatelain, J.R. (2012) *Graines de parasol*. Première édition. Shreveport: Éditions Tintamarre.
- Coghlan, D. and Brydon-Miller, M. (eds.) (2014) 'Heteroglossia', *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, pp. 406-407. Available at: <https://methods.sagepub.com/reference/encyclopedia-of-action-research/n153.xml> (Accessed: 14th October 2020).
- Condé, M. (1989) *Traversée de la Mangrove*. Reprint. Paris: Gallimard, 1992.

- Creese, A., Blackledge, A. and Robinson, M. (2017) 'Translanguaging: Heritage for the Future'. Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities (TLANG) Working Paper 21. Available at: <https://tlang754703143.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/heritage-for-the-future.pdf> (Accessed: 21st July 2020).
- Culp, B. (2017) "'Illegitimate" Bodies in Legitimate Times: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Movement', *Quest*, 69(2), pp. 143–156.
- Davis-Delano, L.R. *et al.* (2021) 'Representations of Native Americans in U.S. culture? A case of omissions and commissions', *The Social Science Journal* [Preprint].
- De Beauvoir, S. (1949) *The Second Sex*. Translated by H.M. Parshley. Reprint. London: Vintage, 1997.
- Deleuze, G., Guattari, F. and Brinkley, R. (1983) 'What is a Minor Literature?', *Mississippi Review*, 11(3), pp. 13–33.
- Deleuze, G. and Parnet, C. (1987) 'The Actual and the Virtual', in H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam (trans.) *Dialogues*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dentith, S. (1995) *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Devlin, R. (2008) 'Youngsters perform concert in Pennsylvania German', *Reading Eagle*, 7 May. Available at: <http://www2.readingeagle.com/article.aspx?id=91026> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).
- Diaz, S., Pullen, C. and Iannone, N. (2022) 'Black Lives Matter, Black Stories Matter, Black Voices Matter: Black Lives Matter Protests, COVID-19, and Streaming Services', *Psychology of popular media* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000403>.

- Díez, B. (2019) “‘English Only’: The movement to limit Spanish speaking in US’, *BBC News*, 3 December. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-50550742> (Accessed: 16 July 2020).
- Dione, S. (2004) *L’appel du Ndut ou l’initiation des garçons seereer*. Dakar: IFAN/Enda-Editions.
- Disney, D. (2018) “‘I LOOKED OUT AND NATURE WAS GONE’”: Language, Lyric, and Alterity in John Kinsella’s Graphology Poems, 1995-2015’, *Angelaki*, 23(5), pp. 48–59.
- Donmoyer, P. (2013) *Hex Signs: Myth and Meaning in Pennsylvania Dutch Barn Stars*. Morgantown: Masthof Press.
- Donner, W.W. (2016) *Serious Nonsense: Groundhog Lodges, Versammlinge, and Pennsylvania German Heritage*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Eakin, P.J. (ed.) (2004) *The Ethics of Life Writing*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press.
- Egan, S. (1991) “‘Self’-Conscious History: American Autobiography after the Civil War’, in P.J. Eakin (ed.) *American Autobiography: Retrospect and Prospect*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Estaville, L.E. (1986) ‘Mapping the Louisiana French’, *Southeastern Geographer*, 26(2), pp. 90–113.
- Fensterstock, A. (2017) ‘Lost Bayou Ramblers Reimagine A Cajun Dance Song’, *NPR*, 26 September. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2017/09/26/553556951/songs-we-love-lost-bayou-ramblers-kalenda> (Accessed: 18 January 2022).
- Feufollet (2010) *En couleurs*. Feufollet Records.
- Feufollet (2015) *Two Universes*. Feufollet Records.

- Fluck, W. and Sollors, W. (2002) *German? American? Literature? New Directions in German American Studies*. Bern: Peter Lang US.
- Foucault, M. (1975) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Reprint. Translated by A. Sheridan. London: Allen Lane, 1991.
- Foucault, M. (1997) “*Society Must Be Defended*”: *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*. Translated by D. Macey. Reprint. London: Penguin, 2004.
- Foucault, M. (2004) *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978*. Translated by G. Burchell. Reprint. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Friedman, D.A. (2012) ‘Language Socialization and Language Revitalization’, in A. Duranti, E. Ochs, and B.A. Schieffelin (eds.) *The Handbook of Language Socialization*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 631–647.
- Fuller, J.M. (1999) ‘The Role of English in Pennsylvania German Development: Best Supporting Actress?’, *American Speech*, 74(1), pp. 38–55.
- Giacoppe, M. (2014) ‘North America’s Francophone Borderlands’, in R.M. Nischik (ed.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Comparative North American Literature*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 165–181.
- Glissant, É. (1989) *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. Translated by J.M. Dash. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
- Glissant, É. (1997) *Poetics of Relation*. Translated by B. Wing. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Greenwood, M. (2017) ‘Blurring the Color Line: Racial and Sexual Thresholds in Sidonie de La Houssaye’s “Les Quarteronnes de la Nouvelle-Orléans”’, *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, 45(3/4), pp. 219–235.
- Griffiths, M.R. (2016) *Biopolitics and Memory in Postcolonial Literature and Culture*. New York: Routledge.

- Griole, P. (1986) *Cadjins et creoles en Louisiane: histoire et survivance d'une francophonie*. Paris: Payot.
- Haag, E.C. (ed.) (1988) *A Pennsylvania German Anthology*. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press.
- Haigh, S. (ed.) (1999) *An Introduction to Francophone Caribbean Writing: Guadeloupe and Martinique*. Oxford: Berg Publications.
- Hanson, G.J. (2018) *Doh Wil Ich Awer! The Radio Adventures of Asseba & Sabina*. Morgantown: Masthof Press.
- Hanson, K.E. *et al.* (2022) ‘“This Place Belongs to Us”: Historic Contexts as a Mechanism for Multivocality in the National Register’, *American Antiquity*, 87(3), pp. 439–456. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/aaq.2022.15>.
- Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2000) *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hardt, M. and Negri, A. (2004) *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. New York: Penguin.
- Hardwick, L. (2014) ‘Creolizing the Caribbean “Coolie”: A biopolitical reading of Indian indentured labourers and the ethnoclass hierarchy’, *International Journal of Francophone Studies*, 17(3), pp. 397–419. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1386/ijfs.17.3-4.397_1.
- Hersch, C. (2007) *Subversive Sounds: Race and the Birth of Jazz in New Orleans*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Hesse, B. (2007) ‘Racialized modernity: An analytics of white mythologies’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(4), pp. 643–663.
- Hirschkop, K. and Shepherd, D. (eds) (1993) *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

- Horne, J. (2017) “‘To spread the French language is to extend the patrie’: the colonial mission of the Alliance Française”, *French Historical Studies*, 40(1), pp. 95–127.
- Howard, F. (2015) ‘Eldred woman explains Scherenschnitte tradition’, *TCA Regional News*, 27 November. Available at: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1736800188/abstract/4BE050ECF21A4393PQ/1> (Accessed: 7th September 2022).
- Howes, C. (2020) ‘Life Writing’, in Howes, C., *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature*. Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190201098.013.1146>.
- Huffines, M.L. (1980) ‘English in Contact with Pennsylvania German’, *The German Quarterly*, 53(3), pp. 352–366.
- Hurst, C.E. and McConnell, D.L. (2010) *An Amish Paradox: Diversity and Change in the World’s Largest Amish Community*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Ivanov, V. (1999) ‘Heteroglossia’, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 9(1/2), pp. 100–102.
- Jacklin, M. (2008) ‘Making Paper Talk: Writing Indigenous Oral Life Narratives’, *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, 39(1-2), 2008, pp. 47-69.
- Jambon, K. (2013) *Petites communions: poèmes, chansons et jonglements*. Shreveport: Éditions Tintamarre.
- Jambon, K. (2016) *Chercher la chasse-femme*. Shreveport: Les Cahiers du Tintamarre.
- Johnson-Weiner, K.M. and Brown, J.R. (2017) ‘The Amish’, in S.J. Bronner and J.R. Brown (eds.) *Pennsylvania Germans: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 148–163.
- Jones, C.A. (2019) ‘Sidonie de la Houssaye’s Fairy Tales: An American Lesson in Cultural Literacy’, *Marvels & Tales*, 33(1), pp. 51–63.

- Jones, E.H. (2007) *Spaces of Belonging: Home, Culture, and Identity in 20th Century French Autobiography*. Amsterdam, New York: Editions Rodopi.
- Joseph, J.E., Rutten, G. and Vosters, R. (2020) ‘Dialect, language, nation: 50 years on’, *Language Policy*, 19(2), pp. 161–182.
- Kadar, M. (ed.) (1992) *Essays on Life Writing: From Genre to Critical Practice*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Kinnane-Roelofsma, D. (1996) ‘Britannia and Melita: Pseudomorphic Sisters’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 59(1), pp. 130–147. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/751401>.
- Klingler, T.A. and Neumann-Holzschuh, I. (2013) “‘Louisiana Creole’”, in S.M. Michaelis et al. (eds) *The Survey of Pidgin and Creole Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kluge, C.L. (ed.) (2007) *Other Witnesses: An Anthology of Literature of the German Americans, 1850-1914*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Köstler, M. (2014) ‘Migrating Literature: Zachary Richard’s Cajun Tales’, *European Journal of American Studies*, 9(3). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4000/ejas.10421>.
- Landry, C. (2011) *Français : Paroisses où vivent les francophones en Louisiane*. Available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Louisiane_francophone.png (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Lanzer, J. (2016) *English: Map of the counties that make up Pennsylvania Dutch Country*. Available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Deitscherei.png (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Lauer-Williams, K. (2011) ‘Spooky cuts: Cool Halloween art with scissors’, *The Morning Call*, 14 October.
- Leader, Z. (2015) *On Life-Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Lejeune, P. (1989) *On Autobiography*. Translated by K. Leary. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lemke, T. (2011) *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*. New York: NYU Press (Medicine, Technoscience, and Health in the 21st Century).
- Leonard, W.Y. (2020) 'Insights from Native American Studies for theorizing race and racism in linguistics (Response to Charity Hudley, Mallinson, and Bucholtz)', *Language*, 96(4), pp. e281–e291. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2020.0079>.
- Lewis-Beck, M.S., Bryman, A. and Futing Liao, T. (eds) (2004) 'Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM)', *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*. Available at: <https://methods.sagepub.com/reference/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-social-science-research-methods/n66.xml> (Accessed: 23 March 2021).
- Li, G. and Wen, K. (2015) 'East Asian Heritage Language Education for a Plurilingual Reality in the United States: Practices, Potholes, and Possibilities', *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 9(4), pp. 274–290. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2015.1086623>.
- Lost Bayou Ramblers (2019) *Astour*. Lost Bayou Records.
- Louden, M.L. (2016) *Pennsylvania Dutch: The Story of an American Language*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press (Young Center Books in Anabaptist and Pietist Studies).
- Louden, M.L. (2017) 'The Pennsylvania German Language', in S.J. Bronner and J.R. Brown (eds.) *Pennsylvania Germans: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Lumadi, M.W. (2021) 'Decolonising the curriculum to reinvigorate equity in higher education : a linguistic transformation', *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 35(1), pp. 37–53. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.20853/35-1-4415>.

- Lutz, H., Strzelczyk, F. and Watchman, R. (eds.) (2020) *Indianthusiasm: Indigenous Responses*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Macías, R.F. (2000) 'Language Politics and the Sociolinguistic Historiography of Spanish in the United States', in J. Peyton et al. (eds.) *Language in Action: New Studies of Language in Society - Essays in Honor of Roger W. Shuy*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, pp. 52–83.
- MacLeod, C. (2015) 'Cutting up the Salon: Adele Schopenhauer's »Zwergenhochzeit« and Goethe's Hochzeitlied', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 89(1), pp. 70–87. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03375719>.
- Marshall, B. (ed.) (2005) *France and the Americas: Culture, Politics and History: a Multidisciplinary Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.
- Meda, L. (2020) 'Decolonising the curriculum: Students' Perspectives', *Africa education review*, 17(2), pp. 88–103. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2018.1519372>.
- Mehring, F. (2006) 'Deutsch, Dutch, Double Dutch: Authentic and Artificial German-American Dialects', *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, 51(1), pp. 93–113.
- Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, F. (1841) *Lobgesang: eine Symphonie-Cantate nach Worten der heiligen Schrift; op. 52 [Musical score]*. Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel.
- Mervosh, S. (2019) 'Duke University Apologizes Over Professor's Email Asking Chinese Students to Speak English', *The New York Times*, 27 January. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/27/us/megan-neely-duke-chinese.html> (Accessed: 15th February 2021).
- Minardi, L. (2017a) 'Fraktur and Visual Culture', in S.J. Bronner and J.R. Brown (eds.) *Pennsylvania Germans: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 264–280.

- Minardi, L. (2017b) 'Furniture and Decorative Arts', in S.J. Bronner and J.R. Brown (eds.) *Pennsylvania Germans: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 228–263.
- Montet, M. (2010) 'The Kutztown Folk Festival', *World & I*, 25(9), p. 5.
- Morency, J. (2014) 'Québécois Literature and American Literature', in R.M. Nischik (ed.), J.-A. Elder (trans.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Comparative North American Literature*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 149–163.
- Moser, C. (2019) 'Handbook of Autobiography / Autofiction', in M. Wagner-Egelhaaf (ed.). De Gruyter, pp. 247–261. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110279818-030>.
- Moudileno, L. (2013) 'From pré-littérature to littérature-monde: Postures, Neologisms, Prophecies', in I. Constant, K.C. Mabana, and P. Nanton (eds.) *Antillanité, Créolité, Littérature-Monde*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Moyer, M. (2012) 'Cassette Culture', *Library Journal*, 137(12).
- Nischik, R.M. (ed.) (2014) *The Palgrave Handbook of Comparative North American Literature*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Olivarez-Giles, N. (2017) 'Why Cassette Tapes Are Making a Comeback; How Justin Bieber, The Weeknd and other artists are sending the humble cassette tape on a comeback tour. Plus: Mix tapes in the movies', *Wall Street Journal*, 9 March.
- Ovando, C.J. (2003) 'Bilingual Education in the United States: Historical Development and Current Issues', *Bilingual Research Journal*, 27(1), pp. 1–24. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2003.10162589>.
- Pac, T. (2012) 'The English-Only Movement in the US and the World in the Twenty-First Century', *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 11(1), pp. 192–210. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1163/156914912X620833>.

- Phipps, A. and Kay, R. (2014) 'Languages in migratory settings: place, politics and aesthetics', *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 14(3), pp. 273–286.
- Premdas, R.R. (1996) 'Ethnicity and Identity in the Caribbean: Decentering a Myth'. Kellogg Institute for International Studies Working Paper 234. Available at: <https://kellogg.nd.edu/documents/1529> (Accessed: 5th September 2020).
- Puumeister, O. (2019) 'Biopolitical subjectification', *Sign Systems Studies*, 47(1/2), pp. 105–125.
- Rabalais, N. (2017) 'Acadie(s) divergente(s): langue, identité et poésie en Louisiane et au Canada maritime', *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, 21(4), pp. 431–439.
- Rabalais, N. (2021) *Folklore Figures of French and Creole Louisiana*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Ramsdell, L. (2004) 'Language and Identity Politics: The Linguistic Autobiographies of Latinos in the United States', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 28(1), pp. 166–176.
- Regis, H.A. and Walton, S. (2008) 'Producing the Folk at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival', *Journal of American Folklore*, 121(482), pp. 400–440.
- Revel, J. (2009) 'Identity, Nature, Life: Three Biopolitical Deconstructions', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26(6), pp. 45–54.
- Ridanpää, J. (2018) 'Why save a minority language? Meänkieli and rationales of language revitalization', *Fennia - International Journal of Geography*, 196(2), pp. 187–203.
- Rim, Kathy H (2009) 'Latino and Asian American Mobilization in the 2006 Immigration Protests', *Social Science Quarterly*, 90(3), pp. 703–721.
- Rim, Kathy H. (2009) 'Racial Context Effects and the Political Participation of Asian Americans', *American Politics Research*, 37(4), pp. 569–592. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X08326968>.

- Rivas, J. (2017) 'Linguistic Discrimination: Speak English by force or by choice?', *The Collegian*, 11 December. Available at: <https://collegian.csufresno.edu/2017/12/linguistic-discrimination-speak-english-by-force-or-by-choice/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Rodríguez, J.M.C. (2010) 'Antillanité et Créolité: Le travail sur la nomination pour bâtir une identité', *Nouvelles Études Francophones*, 25(1), pp. 59–74.
- Romaine, S. (2008) 'Linguistic Diversity, Sustainability, and the Future of the Past', in K.A. King et al. (eds.) *Sustaining Linguistic Diversity: Endangered and Minority Languages and Language Varieties*. Georgetown University Press. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, pp. 7-22.
- Rota, S.L.M. (2009) 'The limits of postcolonial autobiography and the empowering capacity of life-writing for the postcolonial subject', *Linguae &*, 8(1), pp. 47–63.
- Safarik, B. (2020) 'When the melting pot spills over: The contemporary populist backlash of perceived immigration pressures in Brazil and the United States', *Diálogos*, 24(1), pp. 227–257.
- Sandmel, B. and Olivier, R. (1999) *Zydeco!* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Savage Brosman, C. (2013) *Louisiana Creole Literature: A Historical Study*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Schildkraut, D.J. (2003) 'American Identity and Attitudes Toward Official-English Policies', *Political Psychology*, 24(3), pp. 469–499.
- Shakespeare, W. (2012) *Romeo and Juliet*. Edited by R. Weis. London: Arden Shakespeare. The Arden Shakespeare Third Series.
- Sloterdijk, P. (2013) 'The Immunological Transformation: On the Way to Thin-Walled "Societies"', in T. Campbell and A. Sitze (eds.) *Biopolitics: A Reader*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 310-316.

- Smith, S. and Watson, J. (2010) *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*. Second Edition. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Smith, W.D. (1978) *The German Colonial Empire*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Spivak, G.C. (1994) 'Can the subaltern speak?', in P. Williams and L. Chrisman (eds.) *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 66-111.
- St-Hilaire, A. (1997) 'North American and the Francophonie: Local and Transnational Movements for the Survival of French-Speaking North America', *Language Sciences*, 19(4), pp. 369–380.
- Stout, C.J. and Daiello, V.S. (2019) 'Arts-Based Writing: The Performance of Our Lives', in P. Leavy (ed.) *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*. New York and London: Guilford Press.
- Suuronen, V. (2018) 'Resisting Biopolitics: Hannah Arendt as a Thinker of Automation, Social Rights, and Basic Income', *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 43(1), pp. 35–53.
- Tang, P. (2007) *Masters of the Sabar : Wolof Griot Percussionists of Senegal*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press (African Soundscapes).
- Taylor, D.B. and Waller, A. (2020) 'Radio Host Loses Her Show Over English-Only Rant', *The New York Times*, 14 July. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/us/dianna-ploss-new-hampshire-radio.html> (Accessed: 5th September 2022).
- 'The French Language in New England: Past, Present, and Future' (no date) *FRENCH REVIEW*, p. 14.
- Topinka, R.J. (2016) 'Wandering and settled tribes: biopolitics, citizenship, and the racialized migrant', *Citizenship Studies*, 20(3–4), pp. 444–456.

- Van Allen Caulfield, R. (1998) *French Literature of Louisiana*. Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company.
- Vautier, M. (2014) ‘Comparative Canadian/Québécois Literature Studies’, in R.M. Nischik (ed.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Comparative North American Literature*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 129–147.
- Warden, R.S. (1995) ‘“The Infamous Fitch”: The Tory Bandit, James Fitzpatrick of Chester County’, *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, 62(3), pp. 376–387.
- Waseda, M. (2020) ‘Naniwa-bushi in Hawai‘i: The Rise and Fall of a Japanese Narrative Art in Diaspora’, *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 52, pp. 93–126.
- Welch, M.A. et al. (2020) ‘Your story, our story: the transformative power of life narratives’, *Reflective Practice*, 21(6), pp. 861–876.
- Wenger, D. and Bronner, S.J. (2017) ‘Communities and Identities: Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries’, in S.J. Bronner and J.R. Brown (eds.) *Pennsylvania Germans: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 53–76.
- Yoder, D. (2015) *Discovering American Folklife: Essays on Folk Culture and the Pennsylvania Dutch*. 25th Anniversary Edition. Morgantown: Masthof Press.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006) ‘Belonging and the politics of belonging’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40(3), pp. 197–214.
- Zhang, S. (2012) ‘Linguistic Intimacy: French Texts in the Lives of Franco-Canadian Musicians’, *Canadian Folk Music*, 46(3), pp. 21–29.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

18th and 19th Century Pennsylvania German Clothing • The Goschenhoppen Historians (2022)

The Goschenhoppen Historians. Available at: <https://goschenhoppen.org/clothing/>

(Accessed: 7 September 2022).

88 Etats et gouvernements | Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (2022)

Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie. Available at:

<https://www.francophonie.org/88-etats-et-gouvernements-125> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

About CODOFIL | Louisiana DCRT (2020) CODOFIL. Available at:

<https://www.crt.state.la.us/cultural-development/codofil/about/index> (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

About the Archive (2022) Center for Louisiana Studies. Available at:

<https://cls.louisiana.edu/archives-research/about-archive> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

About the Festival (2022) Kutztown Folk Festival. Available at:

<https://www.kutztownfestival.com/about-landing> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).

Acevedo, N. (2019) *White customer at Mexican restaurant swears at Spanish-speaking*

manager, NBC News. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/white-customer-mexican-restaurant-swears-spanish-speaking-manager-n973191> (Accessed:

16 April 2021).

A-Level German: Specification at a Glance (2022) AQA. Available at:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/german-7662/specification-at-a-glance> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

American Roots Music | Genre | GRAMMY.com (no date) *Recording Academy: GRAMMY Awards*. Available at: <https://www.grammy.com/music-genre/american-roots-music> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

American Woman? Amérique, Columbia, and Lady Liberty | New-York Historical Society (2018) *New York Historical Society*. Available at: <https://www.nyhistory.org/blogs/american-woman-amerique-columbia-and-lady-liberty> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

Ask the expert: Linguistic Racism (2021) *MSUToday | Michigan State University*. Available at: <https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2021/linguistic-racism> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Awodey, M. and Tsai, K. (2021) *Ending & honoring our volunteer Contributor program, Duolingo Blog*. Available at: <https://blog.duolingo.com/ending-honoring-our-volunteer-contributor-program-2/> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

Barry Ancelet (2021) *UL Press*. Available at: <https://ulpress.org/pages/barryancelet> (Accessed: 29 March 2021).

Berks County youth choir to sing in Pennsylvania German (2008) *Reading Eagle*. Available at: <http://www2.readingeagle.com/article.aspx?id=90458> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).

Blanco, C. (2022) *'Can Duolingo make me fluent?' and other common questions from learners, Duolingo Blog*. Available at: <https://blog.duolingo.com/can-duolingo-make-me-fluent/> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

Boilen, B. (2011) *'Steve Riley and The Mamou Playboys: Tiny Desk Concert'*. NPR. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2011/03/07/134260832/steve-riley-and-the-mamou-playboys-tiny-desk-concert> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

Bowman, P., Bienvenu, S. and Owens, M. (2005) *What Is Folklife and Why Study It?, Folklife in Louisiana*. Available at:

https://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/what_is_folklife.html

(Accessed: 6 September 2022).

BRIT Awards Scraps Female And Male Categories, Introduces Public Vote Awards (2021)

Headliner Magazine. Available at: <https://headlinermagazine.net/brit-awards-scraps-female-male-categories-public-vote-awards.html> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

Burnett, J. (2022) ‘Le bon temps continue to roll on Cajun radio in Southern Louisiana’. NPR

(National). Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2022/08/10/1116386405/le-bon-temps-continue-to-roll-on-cajun-radio-in-southern-louisiana> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Catalogue • Centenary College of Louisiana — Les Éditions Tintamarre (2022) *Les Éditions*

Tintamarre. Available at: <https://www.editionstintamarre.com/catalogue> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

Census Bureau Reports at Least 350 Languages Spoken in U.S. Homes (no date) *U.S. Census*

Bureau. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/archives/2015-pr/cb15-185.html> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Chapter 2 - English and Civics Testing | USCIS (2021). Available at:

<https://www.uscis.gov/policy-manual/volume-12-part-e-chapter-2> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

‘Clay on Main Announces Exhibit of Rachel Yoder’ (2019) *BCTV*, 17 January. Available at:

<https://www.bctv.org/2019/01/17/clay-on-main-announces-exhibit-of-rachel-yoder/>
(Accessed: 19 May 2022).

Contes d’une grand-mère louisianaise (no date) *Les Éditions Tintamarre*. Available at:

<https://www.editionstintamarre.com/catalogue/grand-mere> (Accessed: 18 January 2022).

Courses (no date) *Alliance Française de Lafayette*. Available at: <https://aflafayette.org/courses>

(Accessed: 6 September 2022).

‘Dave Kline releases “Der Belsnickel Suite”’ (2021) *Reading Eagle*, 8 December. Available at: <https://www.readingeagle.com/2021/12/08/dave-kline-releases-der-belsnickel-suite> (Accessed: 19 May 2022).

Der Haahne Greht (2022) Robert Maggio. Available at: <https://www.robertmaggio.com/composition/der-haahne-greht/> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).

Der Haahne Greht Cassette Tape: Peter V. Fritsch: Masthof: Books (no date). Available at: <https://www.masthof.com/products/der-haahne-greht-cassette-tape> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).

Der Haahne Greht CD: Peter V. Fritsch: 780847315771: Masthof: Books (no date). Available at: <https://www.masthof.com/products/der-haahne-greht-cd> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).

Discover More on The Origin of Britannia on British Coins | Royal Mint (no date). Available at: <https://www.royalmint.com/discover/britannia/britannia-on-british-coins/> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

Domenighini, A. (2017) ‘The Lost Bayou Ramblers Have Found Kalenda’, *Vice*, 22 September. Available at: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/xwggdk/the-lost-bayou-ramblers-have-found-kalenda> (Accessed: 18 January 2022).

‘English Only’: *The movement to limit Spanish speaking in US - BBC News* (no date). Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-50550742> (Accessed: 21 July 2021).

Estes, J. (2013) *The Return of Fat Harry’s, New Orleans*. Available at: <https://www.myneworleans.com/the-return-of-fat-harrys/> (Accessed: 15 April 2022).

Fat Harry’s (no date) *Thrillist*. Available at: <https://www.thrillist.com/venues/drink/new-orleans/bars/fat-harrys> (Accessed: 15 April 2022).

flymsy - Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (no date) *Louis Armstrong New Orleans Airport*. Available at: <https://flymsy.com/business/newsroom/photos-videos/> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

French Immersion | CODOFIL - Louisiana DCRT (2014) *OCD-Division-pages*. Available at: <https://DCRT-MAIN/cultural-development/codofil/programs/french-immersion/index> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

French-speaking Louisiana and Canada | The Canadian Encyclopedia (no date). Available at: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/french-speaking-louisiana-and-canada> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Fuselier, H. (no date) *Festival honors a farmer and his songs*, *The Daily Advertiser*. Available at: <https://www.theadvertiser.com/story/entertainment/2018/10/08/festivals-acadiens-et-creoles-honors-caesar-vincent/1537267002/> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

German (2016) | Pearson qualifications (2022) Pearson. Available at: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/german-2016.html> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

Gladys Lutz: Folk Painter Of The Lehigh Valley | Antiques & Auction News (2021). Available at: <https://antiquesandauctionnews.net/articles/Gladys-Lutz%3A-Folk-Painter-Of-The-Lehigh-Valley/> (Accessed: 5 April 2022).

Groundhog Day (1993). Culver City: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.

Gullah/Geechee Nation (2022) *Gullah/Geechee Nation*. Available at: <https://gullahgeecheenation.com/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Hexsigns, C. (no date) *Wilkom Home, Claypoole Hexsigns*. Available at: <https://claypoolehexsigns.com/wilkom-home> (Accessed: 14 September 2021).

'History' (2022) *Festivals Acadiens et Créoles*. Available at: <https://festivalsacadiens.com/about/history/> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).

- Hiwwe wie Driwwe: The Pennsylvania German Newspaper* (2021) *Hiwwe wie Driwwe: The Pennsylvania German Newspaper*. Available at: <https://hiwwewiedriwwe.wordpress.com/> (Accessed: 20 August 2020).
- How one bar in Acadiana is keeping Cajun French music, language and culture alive* (no date) *WWNO*. Available at: <https://www.wwno.org/show/louisiana-considered/2022-08-12/how-one-bar-in-acadiana-is-keeping-cajun-french-music-language-and-culture-alive> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Jambon, K. (2014) 'Prix de l'Académie française 2014, Prix Henri de Régner', *Jambon-la-ya Poésie*. Available at: <https://kirbyjambon.wordpress.com/2014/06/27/prix-de-l-academie-francaise-2014-prix-henri-de-regner/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Johnson, M.A. (2009) *Pro-English measures being revived across U.S.*, *NBC News*. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna31176525> (Accessed: 23 July 2020).
- KALENDA* (no date). Available at: <https://lostbayouramblers.com/home> (Accessed: 18 January 2022).
- Kalenda by Lost Bayou Ramblers* (no date). Available at: <https://lostbayouramblers.com/home> (Accessed: 18 January 2022).
- Kennedy, A. (2019) *One Mai Tai, Hold the Colonialism Please*, *Eater*. Available at: <https://www.eater.com/2019/10/7/20895319/tiki-tropical-drinks-colonialism-appropriation-lost-lake-pina-colada> (Accessed: 16 August 2022).
- Kline, D. (2016) *Mountain Folklore: Reading Philharmonic Orchestra free holiday concert creates a feeling of warmth*, *Reading Eagle*. Available at: <https://www.readingeagle.com/2016/12/14/mountain-folklore-reading-philharmonic-orchestra-free-holiday-concert-creates-a-feeling-of-warmth/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Kolonialverbrechen: Herero und Nama fordern neue Verhandlungen (2022) *Tagesschau*.

Available at: <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/afrika/bundesregierung-nama-herero-101.html> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Kutztown Folk Festival: America's Oldest Folklife Celebration (2022) *Pennsylvania Heritage Magazine*.

Available at: <http://paheritage.wpengine.com/article/kutztown-folk-festival-america-oldest-folklife-celebration-2/> (Accessed: 19 May 2022).

'Language data for the United States of America' (2022) *Translators without Borders*.

Available at: <https://translatorswithoutborders.org/language-data-for-the-united-states-of-america/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Les pronoms sujets et le système verbale (2022) *LSU*. Available at:

https://www.lsu.edu/hss/french/undergraduate_program/cajun_french/pronoms_sujets.php (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Leybold-Johnson, I. (2015) *Scherenschnitte im 21. Jahrhundert – neue Dimensionen, SWI*.

Available at: https://www.swissinfo.ch/ger/kultur/mehr-als-nur-kuehe_scherenschnitte-im-21--jahrhundert---neue-dimensionen/41366422 (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

Lost Bayou Ramblers | Artist | GRAMMY.com (2022) *Recording Academy: GRAMMY Awards*.

Available at: <https://www.grammy.com/artists/lost-bayou-ramblers/17675> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

Lost Bayou Ramblers - Bio (2022) *Lost Bayou Ramblers*. Available at:

<https://www.lostbayouramblers.com/bio> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

Lost Bayou Ramblers - Bio (no date). Available at: <https://www.lostbayouramblers.com/bio>

(Accessed: 5 September 2022).

- Lost Bayou Ramblers, 'Kalenda' (Album Review)* (no date) *OffBeat Magazine*. Available at: <https://www.offbeat.com/music/lost-bayou-ramblers-kalenda-rice-pump/> (Accessed: 18 January 2022).
- Louden, M.L. (2021) 'padutch.net', *PA Dutch*. Available at: <http://padutch.net/> (Accessed: 6 November 2019).
- Louisiana Folklife Program (2022) *What Is Folklife and Why Study It?*, *Louisiana Folklife Program*. Available at: https://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/what_is_folklife.html (Accessed: 18 February 2022).
- Luterbacher, C. (2017) *'I recognise every word, but I have no idea what you're saying'*, *SWI*. Available at: https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/society/german-dialects-in-the-us_-i-recognise-every-word-but-i-have-no-idea-what-you-re-saying/43491608 (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Map_of_Deitscherei.png* (3562×2048) (no date). Available at: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5e/Map_of_Deitscherei.png (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Mark Loudon (2018) *Language Sciences*. Available at: <https://langsci.wisc.edu/staff/mark-louden/> (Accessed: 2 April 2021).
- McNamara, D. (2022) *Heart of Louisiana: Farmers Market Jam*, *WAFB*. Available at: <https://www.wafb.com/2022/09/04/heart-louisiana-farmers-market-jam/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Media* (no date) *Center for Louisiana Studies*. Available at: <https://cls.louisiana.edu/media> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).
- Menger, T. (2021) *Deutscher Kolonialismus in Ostafrika: Gewalt ohne Grund*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Available at: <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/wissen/geist->

[soziales/deutscher-kolonialismus-in-ostafrika-gewalt-ohne-grund-17591499.html](https://www.zeitungsonline.de/soziales/deutscher-kolonialismus-in-ostafrika-gewalt-ohne-grund-17591499.html)

(Accessed: 5 September 2022).

More Than Decoration: Barn Stars Sustain the Spirit of Folk Tradition (no date) *Pennsylvania Heritage Magazine*. Available at: <http://paheritage.wpengine.com/article/more-than-decoration-barn-stars-sustain-the-spirit-of-folk-tradition/> (Accessed: 19 May 2022).

Morris, R. (2012) *Fire guts Fat Harry's bar on St. Charles, but owner vows to rebuild*, *Uptown Messenger*. Available at: <https://uptownmessenger.com/2012/09/fire-guts-fat-harrys-bar-on-st-charles-but-owner-vows-to-rebuild/> (Accessed: 15 April 2022).

Mountain Folklore: Reading Philharmonic Orchestra free holiday concert creates a feeling of warmth – *Reading Eagle* (2016). Available at: <https://www.readingeagle.com/2016/12/14/mountain-folklore-reading-philharmonic-orchestra-free-holiday-concert-creates-a-feeling-of-warmth/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

New music spotlight: Lost Bayou Ramblers (2017) *WWOZ New Orleans 90.7 FM*. Available at: <https://www.wwoz.org/blog/285941> (Accessed: 26 January 2022).

On "Kalenda," The Lost Bayou Ramblers Blend Cajun Music With Dance & Psych (2017) *Bandcamp Daily*. Available at: <https://daily.bandcamp.com/features/lost-bayou-ramblers-kalenda-interview> (Accessed: 26 January 2022).

Our Mission (2022) *Festival International de Louisiane*. Available at: <https://www.festivalinternational.org/about-festival> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).

Participation, E. (no date) *Welsh Language Act 1993*. Statute Law Database. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/38/contents?lang=en> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Pennsylvania Folkways: Folk artist Peter V. Fritsch was a beloved portrayer of Pennsylvania Dutch culture – *Reading Eagle* (2016) *Reading Eagle*. Available at:

<https://www.readingeagle.com/2016/03/16/pennsylvania-folkways-folk-artist-peter-v-fritsch-was-a-beloved-portrayer-of-pennsylvania-dutch-culture/> (Accessed: 7

September 2022).

Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center (2021) *Kutztown University*. Available at:

<https://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administrative-offices/university-relations-and-athletics/departments/pennsylvania-german-cultural-heritage-center.html> (Accessed:

26 March 2021).

Pennsylvania German Studies Minor - Kutztown University (2022). Available at:

<https://www.kutztown.edu/current-students/pennsylvania-german-studies-minor.html>

(Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Portail de l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) (no date) *Organisation*

Internationale de la Francophonie. Available at: <https://www.francophonie.org>

(Accessed: 15 April 2022).

Praetzel, M. (2018) 'Rachel Yoder - Local Artist Spotlight | Historic Bethlehem', *Historic*

Bethlehem Museums & Sites. Available at: <https://historicbethlehem.org/rachel-yoder/>

(Accessed: 19 May 2022).

ProEnglish Home Page - proenglish (2021) *ProEnglish*. Available at: <https://proenglish.org/>

(Accessed: 22 July 2020).

Ramsey, J. (2011) *Cajun/Zydeco and Other Grammy Awards Eliminated*, *OffBeat Magazine*.

Available at: <https://www.offbeat.com/news/cajun-zydeco-and-other-grammy-awards-eliminated/> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).

Rech, N. (2019) *French-speaking Louisiana and Canada*, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

Available at: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/french-speaking-louisiana-and-canada#> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

- Ro, C. (2021) *The pervasive problem of 'linguistic racism'*, *BBC Worklife*. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210528-the-pervasive-problem-of-linguistic-racism> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Robinson, M. (2016) *The 'Hamilton' costume designer tells us his secrets to dressing the Founding Father*, *Business Insider*. Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/paul-tazewell-costume-designer-hamilton-2016-4> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).
- Ross, B. (2010) *Carl Huling, owner of iconic Fat Harry's bar in Uptown New Orleans, dies*, *NOLA*. Available at: https://www.nola.com/news/article_2eb14fa5-89f2-532a-99d5-ce99a94fbbb3.html (Accessed: 7 November 2021).
- RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards* (no date) *RTE Radio*. Available at: <https://www.rte.ie/radio1/rte-radio-1-folk-awards/> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).
- Sandmel, B. (2019) *Innovative New Interpretations of Centuries-Old Music*, *64 Parishes*. Available at: <https://64parishes.org/innovative-new-interpretations-of-centuries-old-music> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).
- Schwartz, O. (2020) *Hawaiian, Gaelic, Yiddish: so you want to learn an endangered language on Duolingo?*, *The Guardian*. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/feb/14/hawaiian-gaelic-yiddish-learn-endangered-language-duolingo> (Accessed: 23 July 2020).
- Scots Trad Music Awards* (no date) *Scots Trad Music Awards*. Available at: <https://projects.handsupfortrad.scot/scotstradmusicawards/> (Accessed: 6 September 2022).
- Spera, K. (2022) *2022 New Orleans Jazz Festival total attendance hit 475,000; see dates for next year*, *NOLA*. Available at:

https://www.nola.com/entertainment_life/keith_spera/article_a2f3f736-d095-11ec-b237-57d008b6717e.html (Accessed: 16 August 2022).

Télé-Louisiane (2021) *Télé-Louisiane*. Available at: <https://telelouisiane.com> (Accessed: 14 August 2020).

The Goschenhoppen Historians • *The Goschenhoppen Historians* (no date) *The Goschenhoppen Historians*. Available at: <https://goschenhoppen.org> (Accessed: 19 May 2022).

‘The Groundhog Lodges and Versammlinge of Pennsylvania – Preserving the Pennsylvania Dutch Culture and Language Since 1934’ (2022) *The Groundhog Lodges and Versammlinge of Pennsylvania*. Available at: <https://groundhoglodge.org/> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).

Top Languages Other than English Spoken in 1980 and Changes in Relative Rank, 1990-2010 (2013) U.S. Census Bureau. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/dataviz/visualizations/045/> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Trigger (2017) *Album Review – The Lost Bayou Ramblers in “Kalenda”, Saving Country Music*. Available at: <https://www.savingcountrymusic.com/album-review-the-lost-bayou-ramblers-in-kalenda/> (Accessed: 26 January 2022).

Trump: We speak English here, not Spanish (2015). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNjcAgNu1Ac> (Accessed: 23 February 2021).

U.S. Senate: *Constitution of the United States* (no date). Available at: [https://www.senate.gov/civics/constitution_item/constitution.htm#amdt_1_\(1791\)](https://www.senate.gov/civics/constitution_item/constitution.htm#amdt_1_(1791)) (Accessed: 5 September 2022).

Watson, M. (2022) *Dutch Hex Signs Style & Symbolism Guide, Owlcation*. Available at: <https://owlcation.com/humanities/Dutch-Hex-Sign-Style-Guide> (Accessed: 5 April 2022).

- Wilkom Home* (2022) *Claypoole Hexsigns*. Available at: <https://claypoolehexsigns.com/wilkom-home> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).
- Willging, D. (2018) *Travailler, C'est Trop Dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent* (*Swallow Records*), *OffBeat Magazine*. Available at: <https://www.offbeat.com/music/various-artists-travailler-cest-trop-dur-lyrical-legacy-caesar-vincent-swallow-records/> (Accessed: 28 February 2022).
- Works* (no date). Available at: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/german-7662/subject-content/works> (Accessed: 8 September 2022).
- Yoder, R. (2022a) *Folk Art, rachelyoderart*. Available at: <https://www.rachelyoderart.net> (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Yoder, R. (2022b) *folk art, rachelyoderart*. Available at: <https://www.rachelyoderart.net> (Accessed: 7 September 2022).
- Zachary RICHARD: 'Je suis un résistant francophone' (2014). TV5 Monde. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQ1X4UjuyYA&lc=UghEOWsSEcNEIngCoAE> (Accessed: 18 August 2021).

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: A map of Louisiana. Parishes where Louisiana French is spoken (as of 2011) are shown in blue (Landry, 2011).	3
Figure 2: A map of Pennsylvania. Areas where Pennsylvania German is spoken are shown in red (Lanzer, 2016).	4
Figure 3: An image of Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport showing signage in English (Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport, 2022).	106
Figure 4: An example of <i>Scherenschnitte</i> Fritsch displayed alongside the poem <i>En Daaler Uffschpaare</i> (2008, p. 67).	198
Figure 5: <i>Scherenschnitte</i> featured alongside the English translation of <i>Alde Gedanke</i> (Fritsch, 2008, p. 69).	200
Figure 6: <i>Scherenschnitte</i> featured alongside the Pennsylvania German text of <i>Alde Gedanke</i> (Fritsch, 2008, p. 68).	200
Figure 7: An example of <i>Scherenschnitte</i> which depicts traditional Pennsylvania German dress (Fritsch, 2008, p. 59).	204
Figure 8: A photograph of the <i>Aa Halde</i> project, using a floor-length dress (Yoder, 2022).	206
Figure 9: An image of the <i>Aa Halde</i> project illuminated (Yoder, 2022).	207
Figure 10: A photograph of the <i>Aa Halde</i> project with an ankle-length dress (Yoder, 2022).	209
Figure 12: A piece in the style of a barn star, featuring a dog (Yoder, 2021b).	211
Figure 11: An example of a barn star in the 'rosette' style (Yoder, 2021a).	211
Figure 13: A piece in the style of a barn star, featuring a groundhog (Yoder, 2019).	211
Figure 14: A black-and-white barn star painted on a round board (Yoder, no date).	213
Figure 15: A painting of the Belsnickel from the <i>Belsnickel Suite</i> (Yoder, no date).	215

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: A table comparing personal pronouns in English, European French, Louisiana French, and Louisiana Creole. Louisiana French and Louisiana Creole pronouns derived from LSU, 2022, and Klingler and Neumann-Holzschuh, 2013.....	8
--	---

GLOSSARY

Acadia: Also known as *Acadie* in French, this area is the name of the former French colony comprising of parts of modern-day Canada – namely Cape Breton Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island – and parts of modern-day Maine. The Acadians who came to Louisiana originated from this region.

Acadien: The French term for Acadian. Alternative terms include *cadien*, from which the English term ‘Cajun’ is derived.

Barn star or hex sign: A motif – usually circular in form – that was traditionally painted on the sides of barns in German-speaking Pennsylvania. There is some debate as to the origins of this art form and its name (cf. Donmoyer, 2013). For the sake of clarity, and to avoid the negative connotations associated with the word ‘*Hex*’ (see below), this thesis will utilise the term ‘barn star’ throughout.

Belsnickel: A bearded figure who visits children during the Christmas season who is often seen bearing a switch, designed to scare children.

Blumme: The term for ‘flower’ in Pennsylvania German. A common motif in the Pennsylvania German art of barn stars (p. 206).

Bouki et Lapin: A series of folktales from the Louisiana French and Louisiana Creole communities centred around the characters of *Bouki* (the Louisiana French word for ‘hyena’, which originates from Wolof) and *Lapin* (the Louisiana French word for ‘rabbit’). These stories sometimes have a moralistic element and often feature *Lapin* outsmarting *Bouki*. See Ancelet, 1994 for a more detailed exploration of this.

Creole: A term for the Louisiana French that precedes ‘Cajun’. This term has become increasingly controversial in the 20th and 21st centuries due to the increasing racial bifurcation between ‘Cajun’ and ‘Creole’ (Landry, 2016).

Fasnachts: A rectangular pastry similar to a doughnut, which is commonly eaten among the Pennsylvania Germans before Lent.

Festival International de Louisiane: Louisiana International Festival.

Festivals Acadiens et Créoles: Cajun and Creole Festival.

Feu follet or fifollet: A mythical being similar to the will-o'-the-wisp. In Louisiana folklore, they are perceived as souls which have remained to undertake mischief or attack others (cf. Rabalais, 2021).

Grand Dérangement: The 'Great Upheaval'. This term refers to the forced expulsion of the Acadians by the British during the mid-18th century. Those expelled from the region were initially transported to various other British colonies in the present-day United States, while later deportations transported the Acadians to Britain and France.

Grundsau Lodge: The Pennsylvania German term for a Groundhog Lodge. Regular social gatherings are held here to celebrate the Pennsylvania German language and culture. All of the *Grundsau* Lodges (bar one) are accessible to men only (cf. The Groundhog Lodges and Versammlinge of Pennsylvania, 2022).

Hex: A Pennsylvania German word that means 'witch' or 'hag'. Fritsch (2008) translates this term alternatively as 'old (scary) woman' (p. 181).

Hochdeutsch: A German term meaning 'Standard German'. This is also known in Pennsylvania German as *Hoochdeitsch*.

Kouri-Vini: The Louisiana Creole term for 'Louisiana Creole.'

Loup-garou or Rougarou: Two terms for mythical figures in the Louisiana French and Louisiana Creole communities that are linked to the figure of the werewolf (cf. Rabalais, 2021 for further information).

Powwowing: The Pennsylvania German term for folk medicine, which remains in practice to a certain extent today (cf. Appendix A).

Scherenschnitte: ‘Papercutting’. A traditional art form from German-speaking Europe that remains popular today among the Pennsylvania Germans (p. 197).

Schtanne: The Pennsylvania German term for ‘stars’. Another common motif in the Pennsylvania German art of barn stars (p. 206).

Versammlinge: Alternatively spelt as *fersommlinge*, *Versammlings*, and *Versommlinge*, these are social events in which members of the Pennsylvania German community gather to celebrate the language and culture. These events, like those at the *Grundsau* Lodges, are typically conducted solely in Pennsylvania German (Louden, 2016); however, unlike the *Grundsau* Lodges, these events are open to men, women, and children (cf. The Groundhog Lodges and Versammlinge of Pennsylvania, 2022).

Wassernix: The Pennsylvania German term for ‘mermaid’.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW WITH PATRICK DONMOYER

Date of Interview: 21st July 2020

Time of Interview: 15.00 BST, 10.00 EDT

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text in italics*

Holly: I want to hear from someone that is in the community. So, I would like to start, if I may, by asking, well, you're allowed to talk as much or as little as you want, but what does being Pennsylvania German, or Pennsylvania Dutch, whichever you prefer – or *Deitsch!* – what does it mean to you?

Patrick: Okay, so you started with the big question! Alright, so for me, I'll just tell you one thing. I prefer the term 'Pennsylvania Dutch', it was the term I grew up with, it was the term that was most familiar to me, I actually didn't know the term 'Pennsylvania German' as a formal academic term until I got to college, because it simply just wasn't used in the community where I came from in Lebanon County. Of course, this is a term that folks have embraced largely because they believe it clarifies the equation. In today's world, when you use the word 'Dutch', folks assume you're talking about someone from the Netherlands, if you are not from Pennsylvania. If you are in Pennsylvania and someone says, 'Oh, that Dutchman over there,' that you're – it's understood that you're talking about a Pennsylvania Dutch person. And I also had done a little bit of digging historically to try to understand where this term comes from, and this is part of how I relate to it, because I have been so frequently, you know, accosted by folks in my own work, 'Why do you use this term "Pennsylvania Dutch"? Why do you use this outdated, outmoded term?' And there's a sense of illegitimacy that comes along with it, and

that's a difficult thing for anyone who identifies with the term, if that term is thought to have some sense of illegitimacy, so I did a little bit of research looking at this. And really, what I found was conclusively that, as you probably already know, the term 'Dutch' of course relates to, older English use. It is, of course, a 16th- and 17th- and 18th-century term that's widely used as anybody who's part of a broader Central European family of German-speaking peoples, regardless of location within central Germany – within Central Europe – so this would include Germany, Switzerland, Alsace. My own last name is Alsatian, so I really like the idea that the term 'Pennsylvania Dutch' is actually a broader term. Arguably, the term 'German' can also be a broader term, too, in its historical usage and everything else, but, since my ancestry is from Switzerland, parts of Germany, parts of Alsace, I feel as though the term 'Dutch' is more embracing of all of that. Not to mention, I prefer to think about the cultural narratives that I heard growing up, and that I hear on the ground, talking with people, the term 'Dutch' and the term 'Pennsylvania Dutch' is the most common term, so what this means to me, essentially, has changed over the years. Many Americans like to look at a moniker for ethnicity or identity as being somehow exclusive, as though, 'I am this thing which defines perhaps more what I am not than what I may be', and I don't... (hesitates) Whether or not I agree with how folks look at that, I will say that one of the things that comes to mind to me when I think of Pennsylvania Dutch is that there is really truly an amalgamation of cultures. It is not an ethnically exclusive term, it is a cultural term, and so I know people who would consider themselves to be Pennsylvania Dutch who are – whose background is primarily English and Welsh, but they speak the language and they've been in the region for, you know, two centuries, so – you know, this is a part of who they are. I know within my own background, I have probably about as much Scottish and English background, some Welsh, some Irish, as well as German-speaking. It just happens to be that the family that I grew up in really emphasised those aspects of the regional cultures, the foodways, my grandfather spoke the language, these

are things that were important to me growing up and are part of – part of who I am. So, it's an interesting thing, this term, because it means so many different things to so many different people. As a person who studies the culture too, I recognise that my thinking about the term is also perhaps very, what shall I say... Self-conscious in some ways, and as a result of that, you'll get a different answer from me than you would if you go out into rural Berks County and say to someone, 'What does it mean to be Pennsylvania Dutch?' You're gonna get answers about people being proud of who they are, about people's rural culture, you're gonna hear about people saying all kinds of things that to me are also things I grew up with, things I heard, and I'm aware of, but for me the thing that resonates the most is really looking at the broader, diverse Pennsylvania identity – all those different identities that coalesced here in Pennsylvania and produced a unique culture, which is why our culture is not just a transplanting of German culture, or just a transplanting of English culture or anything like that, it really is a New World identity that formed in Pennsylvania.

Holly: That's brilliant! It's the true melting pot, so –

Patrick: Yeah, exactly, exactly. And that term has gotten a bad rap over the years, because folks think about when you melt things down, somehow or other, you *lose* something, and – the reality is change is uncomfortable for people, I look at ethnicity and language and culture as being in a constant state of change, we gain things over time, we lose things, we rediscover things. It is not just a process of melting down and losing. It's a process of melting down, mixing, continuing to add new ingredients, it's like the notion of, this is popular in certain parts of Europe – I know in France, they have what they call a 'living cask' of brandy that Napoleon drank out of, that they add more to, and it – somewhere in there is a particle that had something to do with the original brandy that Napoleon drank. And I think about our culture in very similar ways, that there's this, this, constant add mixture of ideas and so there's no reason to even consider ideas about cultural purity as some people will use the term, I think those terms are

hard to handle for me. I don't like those terms because they imply again this idea of exclusivity, and it doesn't take into account the realities of culture, which are that we're always in a state of change and flux and mixture.

Holly: That's a really – I think that's a really interesting concept because we've... I mean, when, when I've studied Cultural Studies previously, it is very much a, 'Here's a label and we're going to have a label for it,' and it's just, I actually find it quite refreshing to hear a, 'Actually, the label is not what makes, what defines, necessarily,' 'You don't necessarily have to be 'Dutch', or from that area of the world, to be Pennsylvania Dutch.'

Patrick: Mm-hmm.

Holly: So, what evokes Pennsylvania Dutch-ness for you? What, are there symbols, is there – I mean you mentioned the foodways? I can imagine the foodways probably evoke that sense of Pennsylvania Dutch-ness?

Patrick: Big one. So, it's a lot of things. There's a sound that I think doesn't get a lot of attention and it's the accent that is used in English in this area. I am not using that accent right now because I've gotten rid of it, I can put it on, but I won't do it for this interview. But the interesting thing is, the accent that goes along with my mother's English, my grandmother's English, it's one of those things that reminds me of home and so that is part of what evokes the sense of being Pennsylvania Dutch. You don't even have to be a speaker of the language necessarily, some of the Dutchiest people I know are not speakers of the language. Yet at the same time for me also, the language is such an important part of it, at various stages. As a non-native speaker of the language, I appreciate the language in ways I think that some folks who grew up with the language aren't really – wouldn't resonate with, and it's because of, you know, if it's an acquired language versus a language of the home. I will also say that, you know, having my grandfather scold me in Pennsylvania Dutch when I was a child also gives me a feeling for the language as being a part of the home experience and that sort of a thing, and the

Pennsylvania Dutch words that crop in the local English as well – I grew up with words like ‘*Spritzing*’, ‘*Brutzing*’, ‘*Grexing*’, ‘*Rutsching*’, all as being words that were perfectly acceptable to use in the English language that we know today are really echoes of the use of the dialect in the home, and this is such an important thing. So, for me, there’s many things – I think about the foodways because they’re something that were kind of ever-present. The potato filling on the table, potato filling in Pennsylvania, it was called ‘*Fillsel*’ in the dialect, but it doesn’t really go into anything, except in very specific recipes, it’s usually baked in a casserole dish, it’s potatoes, usually potatoes, celery, carrots, onions, some eggs, a little bit of milk, it’s all whipped together, it’s baked, it gets crispy on the top, it doesn’t get stuffed into anything, it’s not stuffing. People get really uptight about what this word is because they say, ‘You mean stuffing,’ and I’m like, ‘No, actually, it’s not the same thing’, but these things are part of that experience. I didn’t grow up with a family that eats pigs’ stomach in the home, but it’s one of my favourite things to make, I don’t have anybody right now who ever, in my life, wants to eat it except for a handful of friends that I used to cook for up in Berks County, I live in Montgomery County right now, with my wife and her family and they’re not really into the pigs’ stomach idea, but that’s something I also really appreciate. When I lived in York County for a little while, which is very southernmost and central part of Pennsylvania, they had hog maw, and the interesting thing is that a lot of folks will say, ‘Oh, well that’s just a Pennsylvania Dutch thing,’ and it’s like, ‘Hmm...’ I think about this and realise that the word ‘hog maw’ is definitely English, likely Scotch-Irish, it shows an overlapping of traditions there, and when I see these types of things happening, it again echoes this idea that we coalesced as a culture here in Pennsylvania. So even the foodways, you might think it’s one thing, but it might also be shared in common by many groups. I’ll also say I grew up in the Church, my Father’s a Lutheran minister, so having a church background is something that also resonates with the culture, the old hymns are something that really are moving to me. I’m not a practising

Lutheran anymore, I consider myself culturally Lutheran, cause that's my background. The hymns are something that really resonate with me. Very few of the hymns in the Church that I grew up in were ever sung in German, a handful of them were occasionally done for special occasions and things like that, but really the, just the religious experience is part of that. I'll also say a couple of other things... For me, my first experience of barn stars, hex signs, things like that, were in my grandfather's home. He had kind of the cheap, Lancaster County silk screen commercial ones in the house, and I always kind of thought they were gaudy and terrible when I was a kid, but they were interesting, they caught my interest, I paid attention to them, I respected the fact that he had them in the house, I wasn't gonna be a jerk about it, even though I thought they were really gaudy, and it was really when I moved up to Berks County, and I lived in Berks County for twelve years, that I formed this really strong appreciation for a tradition that had also, at one point in time, been in my home county of Lebanon County but had started to vanish, especially as a lot of the old farms were being modernised, many of the farms were being purchased by Amish or Mennonite owners who were, many times, covering over any original decorations that might have been there, so going to Berks was like seeing the intact culture in many ways that reminded me of where I grew up, but that where I had grown up, it had very much changed and dispersed, but in Berks, especially in northern Berks, in the rural areas, I was able to just really experience aspects of that, and part of that was then leading to a research project I did where I studied the barns, documented around 500 barns in Berks County, and the reason I said around is because I keep adding to that number, and right now I'm not keeping track anymore, so once you break that 500 mark, you're like 'Eh', it's okay to just say 'Around 500', but then I've also done dozens and dozens outside of the county and in other areas in adjacent counties, and I'll also say that that whole process was undergirded by the idea of speaking to local people about their experiences with their barns and also learning to do the painting myself. I worked with a local painter, helped him on a number of jobs,

actually this weekend, I'm gonna go out and paint a barn which is gonna be a lot of fun, so there's a lot, a lot that I would say evokes this idea of Pennsylvania Dutchness, but I think for me, the immersion in the culture during the period of research that I was doing was really instrumental to me to rediscovering all those aspects of the things that I had in the home, that I'd maybe forgotten about or maybe didn't consider to be overly important, and this is the – as you would know, studying culture – the thing you find out when you do oral histories with people, you talk to a person who's in your community who's 90, and you say, 'I really wanna talk to you about your experiences,' – 'Oh, I wouldn't know anything that would be important,' and you have to say, 'Oh no, absolutely, you have many things that are important, that I would like to learn about,' – 'Well why would you wanna know about those things?' We don't tend to value the experiences we have until we see them in a different context, and I think that's part of the beauty of studying, having kind of a foot in the academic realm, the research realm, then also having a foot on the ground in the rural community and being able to be part of that.

Holly: It gives you that ethnographic approach, in a way, [this living]-

Patrick: [Mm-hmm.]

Holly: I mean, the barn stars project is sort of living anthology of barn stars, and it actually led on to a question that I had in mind before we started that I wrote down just before we began, which was, I've been reading Don Yoder's book on discovering American folklife and he does mention in that book – his focus, for one great section of it, is central Pennsylvania, as you know, cause I know you wrote the foreword for the anniversary edition, which I have here, and he was talking about the variations between all different areas of Pennsylvania and I was going to ask do you see those variations, but it sounds like definitely you do, just between – just from county to county, you can get a very different Pennsylvania Dutch experience wherever you go.

Patrick: It's really funny because Pennsylvania's a big state, and Western Pennsylvania is very, very different than eastern Pennsylvania, it is almost like a different country, and there are parts of – you talk about, people talk about 'central Pennsylvania', and usually what they're actually talking about is if you draw a line right down the middle of PA, they're talking about an area that oftentimes is like, not really truly central at all, it's actually part of the south-eastern area, and so, like – I lived in Lebanon (County), but I would hear on the radio of all kinds of things about central PA and the idea of central PA being so quintessentially Lebanon County, and Lebanon County's south-eastern PA. I mean, it's just plain and simple – you can, you know, put the state into quadrants, and it's very clear what counties fall where, but a whole range of counties surrounding the capital, Harrisburg, which is not in the centre of the state, but is offset more to the east, folks consider that to be central PA, even though when you kind of, you go a little bit further to the middle of the county, people consider that to be western PA. Like, Franklin County is almost dead in the very centre of the state in the very southernmost portion, but people consider that to be western Pennsylvania, it's just so bizarre to me. So there's this idea that when you get to the Allegheny Mountains, the state somehow stops, (Laughs) and it's not true, because there's a whole other culture on the other side of the Alleghenies, and again, influenced by Pennsylvania Dutch for sure, but with a huge influence with the Appalachian cultures, especially a lot in common with northern Maryland, with West Virginia and Ohio, there's just a real strong connection between all of those areas there, making the culture a little bit different there. But I lived in Berks County, I lived in, for twelve years, I was born in Lebanon County and lived in Lebanon Co for eight years, I lived in southern York County for around seven years, and it's going on three that I've been in Montgomery County, so (a) bunch of different areas, all with their own different textures. It's just like when you go to Europe, you go to Germany and every town has a very different identity at times, the regions are very specific, and Pennsylvania's the same. I'm sure it's the same way in the UK.

Holly: Absolutely. I'm from Blackpool, which no one has ever heard of, no one knows Blackpool, but it's on the coast, as you can possibly hear from the gulls outside, [and] -

Patrick: [I can.]

Holly: – it's very different from where I go to university, so the university is about 20 miles away, and that's (a) very, very urban community, a very diverse community, it's a built-up city, but here it's quieter, definitely. And it's amazing how even, like, half an hour's distance, half an hour's driving, and you can go from one very specific environment to a very different one. So, it's exactly as you say, it's - driving from one place to another, it's very, very different. I actually wanted to ask you, if it's okay, if you feel comfortable talking [about it] -

Patrick: [Sure.]

Holly: - about your experiences learning PA Dutch? Because I know that you, as you mentioned earlier, you didn't come to this as a native speaker necessarily – you heard it in the home, but then you learnt it during college, is that right?

Patrick: Yes, mm-hmm. So, just a couple of things. Sorry, I didn't mean [to] -
(Indistinguishable)

Holly: [Oh no, go ahead, go ahead!]

Patrick: – So, yeah, as a kid, my grandfather used to speak it. He spoke it pretty fluently from my understanding. He grew up with it as a kid, his mother spoke it, I knew him and his mother, my great grandmother, very well, but usually it was used not so much conversationally in the home because he was the sole speaker, so he would be the one to pretty much – I mean he would chew me out if he thought I was being a snot-nosed kid and say things like, '*Schick dich*,' and you know, 'Behave yourself!', things like that – '*Geb Acht!*', '*Nemm dei Finger davon!*', you know, 'Get your hands off that!' – so these are the types of things that you would hear that give you an understanding of how the language sounds, because you can't very easily come to

this language from very, very far out and get the sound of the language, and I think part of the thing is that the English language as it's spoken in this area, especially, I know, in my family and in many other different families, for those who were even three generations or more removed from hearing the dialect in the home, their English still has the vowels. And those are the vowels that you can't – they're hard for people to learn. Like, our short 'u' is very difficult to explain to someone if you didn't hear that sound growing up, and it's funny, because I will, when I'm tired, my vowels become very Pennsylvania Dutch and my three-year-old daughter will correct me on how I should be pronouncing words. She's been doing this recently, and it just makes me laugh, it makes me want to do it even more, because it's just so funny that she senses a difference in the way that I'm talking, and many times it's unconscious, I'm not putting on an accent for her. But learning the language was something that I started in 2006 in earnest. Now, I had an interest in learning the language for quite some time; when I lived in southern York County for a little while, I tried to find someone in the community there who would teach me, and I couldn't find anybody who had spoken it enough recently to be able to give me any advice. I knew people who heard it growing up, I knew people who spoke it fluently when they were in their twenties, who were like, 'I haven't spoken this language for, like, sixty years!', and, you know, they're just basically saying, 'I'm sorry, I don't think I would be the one to help you,' and then there was a guy who was more outspoken with the language, who actually, everything he told me was wrong, so (laughs), because he wasn't a native speaker, he picked up bits and pieces, and recombined them, from his wife, so that was an interesting thing. And that was in the late 1990s, early 2000s, that I spoke with him, but didn't really get much help. I will say that in 2006, I was going to Kutztown for an art degree, my mother actually was the one who told me that they were teaching Pennsylvania Dutch classes there, and I hadn't known it at the time, and she joked with me, 'That's the reason that you're going to school, to Kutztown,' and this was in 2004 that she realised they were teaching these classes, and she's

like, ‘You’re just going to Kutztown to learn Pennsylvania Dutch’, and I said, ‘Oh, I didn’t even know they had it!’ So I took the class, it was actually the first time they ever fully offered it, because it hadn’t had full enrolment up until that point in time, I established a connection with the teacher, named Ed Quinter, who you should also interview if you get a chance, he would be a great one, because he’s lived in Switzerland, he speaks a variety of different German dialects and he’s an excellent teacher, because he spoke Standard German well, he knew the difference between Standard German and the dialect, there’s a lot of people who really struggle with that, and they really don’t quite understand the nuances of that, and Ed was an excellent teacher. He also translates 18th-century German and, under some advice from him, I developed the skill to do that as well, and that’s one of the things that I’m doing all the time these days, is translating 18th-century German, which has a lot in common with our dialect, with our language. And the interesting thing for me was, in 2006, I started learning the language, started using it conversationally with a group of friends who were also learning it, I had one really good friend, who passed away in 2012, but he spoke it really well, because he had a knack for picking up languages no matter what, and he had been studying a variety of languages, picked up Pennsylvania Dutch, and he was a person who always kind of pushed me a little bit, and he was (the) same age as me, so I had a close friend that we always spoke the language. In fact, we would even go out places, or whatever, and basically just say, ‘English is *verbodde*,’ we would just talk in Pennsylvania Dutch and no English. And the interesting thing was, at the same time, was that I had started going to some of these large Pennsylvania Dutch language events, like the Berks County *Versammlung*, Groundhog Lodges and things like that, and initially I went to them kind of out of amusement, just to be an overhearer, a fly on the wall, to be able to hear what these people are talking about, and to try to pick up as much language as I could. Eventually, these groups knew my role at the Heritage Center and wanted me to get involved, I’m a board member on several groups now, the Berks County *Versammlung*, I help

them put together their programme every year, I'm the Secretary for Groundhog Lodge Number 1, so these are all things that were really helpful to me, because I had many, many mentors with the language who helped me to understand when I was wrong, who helped, who tolerated me when I was learning, and as a result of that, now I have a sound with my language that sounds like the northern *Allemangel* area, which is the kind of coalescing of Berks and Lehigh, in the northern tier just below the Blue Mountains. The people that I have really sought to emulate are from that area, and that's the sound that I have when I speak. There's some things I say that are a little more Lehigh, and some things I say that are a little bit more Berks. The one thing that was really difficult with the language is learning that there's no one right way to say something, but that there are lots of wrong ways to say something. So, we often, you know, when we learn a language, we are still programmed to think in our own native language and it took me a little while to start dreaming in Pennsylvania Dutch, to start having the ability to enter into a conversation without having to think in English about what I'm trying to say, and that's one of those thresholds that you cross when you start to become more proficient in the language, as you may already know, and so that was a really helpful transition for me. I write in the language, I speak publicly in the language extemporaneously, which is fun, I go into the Liar's Contest every year at the Kutztown Folk Festival, and the Festival is a place where there's a lot of language events. Arguably these are performative, cultural events, these are things where you're seeing people stand up and read poems, tell stories in the dialect, participate in the Liar's Contest, they're very self-conscious kinds of activities, they're meant to be performative for people to hear about and learn about, so they're not the same kinds of used language as what you would hear in the home or on the farm, but being able to get up and tell a lie, a tall tale, so to speak, stretch the truth and get people laughing, to tell a story like that in a language is really important to me too, because it's like a litmus test. If you can get up in front of a group of people and not have something written out, and simply speak and be

understood and to make people laugh, to tell a story, that folks are getting the nuances of what you're saying, and to be able to have nuances to say, that makes all the difference. But I would say again, I really credit any of that, not to my language proficiency or anything, but just having a wide variety of different mentors, who are often – the average age of them is probably 80 and many of these people are, you know, leaders in the community in a variety of different ways, even though they don't think of themselves as leaders. Folk culture, to me, is really an important part of our region in the sense that we have so many people who are bearers of tradition who don't think about themselves as being important, and yet what they do is so crucial to the maintenance of the culture in the area and some of these people, when they pass away, it's like losing the Library of Alexandria, because you lose so much information that you don't even think to ask until they're gone, so... (Trails off)

Holly: This is one of the reasons I wanted to write this thesis, is to try and help, somewhat. I know that the Cultural Heritage Center does amazing work, I knew that already, but to try and help capture some of these [stories –]

Patrick: [Mm-hmm.]

Holly: – and some of these aspects of folk culture that may go with a person when they pass on.

Patrick: May I mention one other thing too? And this maybe relates to your question, but maybe also relates to some of the initial ideas you put forth in the email. I know you mentioned using some texts, like Peter Fritsch and Lloyd Moll, and the interesting thing about those is, I love those texts, and I knew Peter Fritsch, I wouldn't say I knew him really well, but I started having a lot of regular interactions with him right before he passed away. We would go out to lunch and talk in the dialect, and he would tell me a lot of different stories about what he did, and if you look at this poetry, and you look at his art, there's this strong nostalgia in his work, really, really strong nostalgia, and you sense that with Lloyd Moll too. Lloyd Moll was often writing

in the '30s, the late '30s, but then well up until basically the time that he passed away, I believe it was, I wanna say it was like '51, or something like that? Don't quote me on that number, but I know [he wrote the first few scripts for –]

Holly: [I have the worst head for dates, so...]

Patrick: Yeah, well, he wrote the first few scripts for the radio show *Asseba un Sabina*, which you should definitely include in your survey, I don't know if you knew that we published 24 scripts from the radio show *Asseba un Sabina*? It features a farm couple that are always squabbling, and their neighbours, who are a farm couple who are always squabbling, and they work together to have a produce stand and it's just, it's good humour, and really crabby humour, too, and it's available in dialect and also in English, and we have that at the Heritage Center, if you're interested. I will also say too, with getting back to this idea of Peter Fritsch and nostalgia, the reason I brought this up is so much of the literature that you're gonna look at, if you survey the literature, is that this is so focused on this term, I mean you can say nostalgia, but that doesn't really capture it. Nostalgia is real, but there's this concept called *Heemweh*, that you'll see in the works of Henry Harbaugh. So, Henry Harbaugh wrote a poem called *Heemweh* and it's all about him yearning for this idea of home and even going back to the place, and he has several poems that are like this, *The Schoolhouse on the Creek*, that he wrote, *Das Al Schulhaus an de Krick*, is another one. So, he has a number of these poems that involve a sense of place and this yearning for a sense of place, and even going to that place and being stirred by the memories that he has but realising that that place is not what it once was, and so this is a theme that you see throughout Lloyd Moll's work. Lloyd Moll is a humourist, so he tackles it in a different way, but his stories, the texture of his stories are 75 to 50 years in the past, so his stories are all throwbacks. When you look at the person who succeeded him in writing the plays for *Asseba un Sabina*, who wrote the scripts, his name was Paul Wieand, another person who is kind of an anachronism. Peter Fritsch, another person who was very much, if I may just share

a couple of details about Peter. Peter was a person who was very, how do I want to put it? – extremely creative and very sensitive. He didn't like to travel, he liked to be in his own home. He was also a little depressed as part of his person, and you see this throughout the literature, this idea of this longing for this sense of home, and I would even argue that for some people, those people were yearning for memories that they themselves did not possess, but yearning for the memories of the people who most impacted them possessed. So, yearning for the sense of home that was described by a grandmother who had memories of a place that no longer exists, and you can see what I'm getting at here with this. This is a strong current throughout the culture, and even the writings that you see mid 19th-century and late 19th-century are all yearning for the good old days. Now, what were the good old days for a writer who was probably in their seventies or eighties, writing in the mid 19th century? You're talking about the turn of the 18th century, you're talking about the early Republic, so there's this sense, this continuity, that no matter who is writing in the language, there's especially, I would say, those who are writing in the language are usually Lutheran or Reformed in their background, there's some exceptions to that, but overall you're finding that this language is very much related to this sense of place, this sense of home, and this sense of past. It's not always a forward-thinking language, and the way that I've experienced this too is that if I become overly forward-thinking in how I think about the future of the language, there's always someone there to tell me, 'Oh, no, no, no, the language is dying,' and I have to remind them: people have been saying that this language was dying since around 1800. (Laughs) That's 200 years ago! We haven't lost it, and yet we still have this perception that things are disappearing, and so one of the things that I wanted to mention in the midst of looking at some of the writings that are so pertinent to the research that you're doing, in addition to some of the more nostalgic dialect writing, I would also suggest that in terms of the heart and the soul of the culture, some of the most forward thinking and optimistic and yet really resonant with the past writings are Don Yoder. He is a

person who captures aspects of the soul, the culture, in ways that I think other simply did not. Shoemaker's another good one. William Woys Weaver is another good one, even though he can be controversial at times. His work is something that really captures the essence of the foodways over a broad swathe of counties. People tend to disagree with his work because they say, 'Well I never heard of that,' or, 'Oh, he's just making that up,' but he can pull out his interviews and say, 'I interviewed a person in Columbia County, and this was where I got this information.' But then some folks will say, 'Well, they're not really Dutch up there,' so you're gonna run into all kinds of contentions when you start looking at some of the academic literature that's out there. The reality is that I would argue that some of those academics that kind of crossed that threshold of being (not) merely researchers, but really being bearers of tradition themselves, would be really helpful to this survey that you're doing as well, comparing and contrasting with works like Don especially, Don Yoder, who was a dear friend of mine.

Holly: Definitely. Well, what do you think – I mean, I've seen Don Yoder's writing, he says it as well, and you say it in your book about people claiming the language is dying, and having claimed it for 200 years, but the language isn't gone yet.

Patrick: No.

Holly: So, what do you think the future might be for the language, if we're looking at it from perhaps a more optimistic angle? Or from a more pessimistic angle, whichever you prefer!

Patrick: Well, I mean, I will just – (Laughs) I will feign to be a realist for a moment, although, rather than optimist or pessimist, even though obviously reality's consensus, so that depends on whether or not someone agrees with me, whether or not it truly is reality, but for me, my take on this whole thing is that things are always changing and yet some things never really change and when you take a look at the use of the language among non-sectarians, I hate that

word, non-sectarians, because we are the bulk of the culture and yet we're defined by a negative statement. When we talk about speakers of the language, you can't say Lutheran and Reformed, because although they would have been about 95% of the original immigrants, that does not really capture the culture today, although in places like Berks County, that still works, but throughout the United States, there are descendants of the Pennsylvania Dutch who do not fall into those baskets. So, I will say, to clarify again, the broader scope of the Pennsylvania Dutch who are not sectarians, who are not Amish or Mennonite or (Indistinguishable) or anything like that, you're going to find that the language has been in twilight, in this kind of liminal state, for about 200 years. I don't really know that I see it changing any time soon. It's always been a performative language, since the late 19th century and early 20th century, people were writing in a very self-conscious kind of way. You can compare and contrast this with the dialect that occasionally crops up in letters and 18th-century documents, where people, they write how they thought and there was nothing self-conscious about it, they don't sentimentalise their language because they used it. After (the) mid-19th century, the language starts to become something that is sentimentalised, something that is being consciously preserved. Folks are using the language in ways where they are using old words intentionally, because they want to cling to those memories of how the language may have sounded once or how they think it may have sounded, or how they imagine it to be? Now, note I'm straying from reality there too, because how we imagine a language to be and how we use it are really intimately connected, yet that doesn't necessarily state that the written record would agree with how a person imagines it to be, so there's a lot of creativity with this language. I would argue that the way the language is continuing in terms of the writers' festival we have at the Kutztown Festival every year, the dialect newspaper *Hiwwe wie Driwwe*, have you seen this?

Holly: [I have.]

Patrick: [These are ways that] it's continuing in a very performative way. The *Versammlinge* and the Groundhog Lodges are continuing as well, so you're seeing this happening. But we will be seeing, within the next 20 to 30 years, the loss of what I would consider to be maybe one of the last generations of people who grew up with the language in the home and spoke it as a native speaker. There may be people for the next 40 to 50 years who grew up hearing the language in the home, especially for extended families, but within the next 20 to 30 years we're gonna see a major shift in terms of who remembers the language in its rural context and urban context, cause I would say too there were urban Pennsylvania Dutch speakers, but it happens to be that in the rural populations, it seems to have held on longer, because those areas have not seen as much change as the urban areas have, where it's a memory that Pennsylvania Dutch was spoken on the streets of Reading – it is not a reality anymore – but the fact that Pennsylvania Dutch is still spoken in the streets of Kutztown is not a memory, it's a reality, so, there's a lot to say. I would also opine that the language certainly isn't going away because of the Amish and the Mennonites, especially the Amish, who are the bulk of the speakers. The very fact that we have what is considered to be nearly 500,000 people in the United States speaking the language, that's a big number. There's an estimate that there might be 40,000 of us who are non-sectarians, the broader Pennsylvania Dutch experience, who are using the language, and people who are not Pennsylvania Dutch by background or culture, but who are still using the language, and this is fascinating to me too. So, the reality is that number right now has statistically been proven to double every 25 years. We're seeing the opposite of the extinction of the language, we are actually seeing the most rapid rate of change of any language in the United States. There is no other language that experiences this rate of change in the present. Even when you look at some predominant minority languages, like Spanish, we have large influxes of Spanish speaking people into the United States – I should say we *did* up until fairly recently, but I won't get into that – and this was a robust process happening annually, so

we were having large groups of people who were speaking Spanish immigrating to the United States all the time. What we found, though, is that usually within just two to three generations, the descendants of those immigrants were no longer reading the language, perhaps, maybe not even speaking it as folks were essentially going into English only or, at the very least, predominantly English education with maybe ESL or English as a Second Language to start, for some of those students, but then eventually embracing a full English curriculum. You're gonna find that, within just a few generations, folks were oftentimes transitioning to English only in the homes and we have classes at Kutztown – here's a good example of this. We have classes at Kutztown for students who speak Spanish as their native language in the home, but whose educational language has always been English, and these classes that are optional, non-credit courses, that are being taught to native speakers of Spanish so that they can learn to read and write the language that is their native language, because they weren't learning to read and write it in the home, they were learning to read and write English, because that was the predominant educational and official language, so this is a really fascinating thing, and there's parallels all over with Pennsylvania Dutch with this as well, because what you'll find too is that, during the periods where Pennsylvania Dutch was used in the home and English was the primary language of instruction, you see similar dynamics at work, and also I would argue that it's the educational structures that largely contributed to the decline of the use of the language in the home. Pressure, social pressure on parents to limit their use of the language in front of their kids, in order to make sure that they would succeed in schools that were English only. And this is the case for pretty much every language group in the United States that I know of. The big difference that we see with Pennsylvania Dutch is that, for some reason, this language has just persisted and held on among those descendants of the broader culture, but the doubling of the numbers every 25 years, that is largely due to a – especially the success, and the retention of membership within the Amish communities and the Old Order Mennonite communities,

high rates of retention of their community members. Their kids don't grow up and just decide, 'Hey, I'm only gonna speak English and I'm gonna leave the community.' Generally speaking, they retain a significant number, a high rate, of the members of their community, and those numbers are increasing because they have large families. They have large families because it's part of their rural and business economy, they have large families which support those family businesses, it's part of who they are, the language is essential to who they are, and their religious and ethnic identity, and so when you look at this, this is the reason that language is doubling at this rate. You can't credit the people in Berks County Pennsylvania for why the language is sticking around. You can credit them for being part of that 40,000 group of people who have been hanging on for a while, but the broader 500,000 is mostly the Amish and the Mennonites. So, am I an optimist? I don't know, because I would argue that the language that is spoken by the Amish and the Mennonites is not really the language that I speak. I look at the way it's written when they do write it and it's very different, and I can tell that that shapes how words are spoken and the fact that they have dropped the dative case from their language altogether, except in only certain instances, I struggle with that. I will also argue that the dative case is used inconsistently within my own language group, and endings and articles are often very variable depending upon a person's native – you know, whether they are a native speaker or whether they are a non-native speaker, so I would say the language is healthy, the language is sticking around, but it may go into directions that some of us might not relate to in the same way in the future, and that's okay. It will be there, and for those of us who want to use the language, we will find a way to use it, even if we continue to be anachronisms as we have been for quite some time now, and I would argue that, even as of, say the 1950s and '60s, there were some anachronistic aspects of the use of the language. The Groundhog Lodges, great example – they used to have these little buckets in the middle of the table at their annual banquets where you were supposed to throw money in every time you used an English word. Now, come on

people, there are words in our language that we use because there were no German words for those concepts, and we use those words, not because they're English words, we use those words because they are the common word for that concept within our community and whether you're speaking English or you're speaking Pennsylvania Dutch, you use the same word. So, you can call it an English loan word, that's fine, but the idea that one should be fined for using a word like that, like the word for a car. We don't use the German word for a car, why would we do that? The car was, as far as I'm concerned, the cars that we were interacting with has nothing to do with the German language, they'd everything to do with the American experience, and so these are some interesting things, and we will use the word, for instance, '*Maschien*', to refer to a car, you'll see the word, '*Maschien*', you'll also see the word '*Kaer*', and both of those words are used pretty interchangeably in some areas, northern Lebanon County, Schuylkill County, you'll hear '*Kaer*', in other areas you're gonna hear '*Maschien*', but '*Maschien*' is also a tractor too, so it just depends on how you refer to these things. That's not really an English word when you call something a '*Maschien*' (Laughs), do you know what I mean? But the reason I'm bringing this up is because the Groundhog Lodges fined people for speaking English words, which led to the invention of words that were not really used to begin with and this sense that, if you're really gonna speak the language, it should somehow be pure and devoid of English, and that's not Pennsylvania Dutch. When people do that, they actually limit the number of Pennsylvania Dutch speakers who can understand them, and to me, I would say that the best speakers of the language are ones who are universally understood, and those are the people who can drop in English loan words in ways that are funny, that have a different meaning than what the meaning of the word would be if it was just spoken in Pennsylvania Dutch, storytellers, people who tell jokes do this all the time. It's a source of great amusement, it's part of the colour of the language, part of the way we emphasise the way that the language is a colourful language. I think that we see these two conflicting trends: Those people who say,

‘Well, if you’re really gonna emphasise the language, you have to revert the language back to some previous state of purity,’ and I think purity’s a bad word when you’re talking about culture and you’re talking about language, it really has no place in the conversation, except when we’re commenting on the attitudes of others who would like to see language be something other than what it is; on the other hand, you have those folks too who are gonna say that, ‘Hey, things are always changing, let’s do what we can,’ and I’m one of those people. I like the old words, I even use the old words, but I don’t think, I’m not prescriptive about that. I don’t feel as though I would rather use a word that only 15% of Pennsylvania Dutch speakers are going to understand purely because it’s somehow older or better. I would use an English word or another, newer word if I knew that it was going to be understood by the 85% as opposed to the 15%, if you know what I mean.

Holly: Yeah, so there’s like a harmony, a coexistence, [more between –]

Patrick: [Yes.]

Holly: – PA Dutch and English, rather than it being two very discrete areas and two very discrete languages. It’s more like a happy coexistence, for most!

Patrick: Yeah, yeah, very much so, and you know, there are words that we use in Pennsylvania Dutch that are English words, but we use them differently when we speak Dutch, so it’s not truly an English word anymore. It might be technically, by all definitions, an English loan word, but the connotation changes, the whole feeling of the word changes, and that’s a really important thing, because as long as we recognise that, we don’t have to then talk about how the language is being watered down, as some people will say, because that’s just – it’s just nonsense.

Holly: It’s, yeah, I’ve heard the same debate in *Hochdeutsch* with people say(ing), ‘All these English words!’ There was a big controversy not that long ago (with) the German rail company, the national rail issuing a book of English loan words with German

alternatives, so that you didn't have to use the loan word because people were in uproar about it, so that's a debate that seems to kind of happen everywhere among the German/Dutch-speaking diaspora.

Patrick: Yeah.

Holly: And Dutch itself, as well, in the Netherlands, [I mean –]

Patrick: [Very much so.]

Holly: – most people I've met there speak English extraordinarily well. Do you think technology might be a place – I know that PA Dutch is, the culture and the heritage of PA Dutch is very linked to the land, very linked to the community, when I look at the barn stars, I think of nature an awful lot.

Patrick: Mm-hmm, sure. And the cosmos!

Holly: But could technology, where do you think that might come in? Do you think that might help to spread awareness of PA Dutch to a wider audience?

Patrick: Okay, so I have – (Laughs) I have an unpopular opinion about this. On the one hand, yes. I think it's great because on Facebook, there are several different Pennsylvania Dutch groups. There is the group '*Kannscht du Deitsch schwetze*', if you are on Facebook, you should just join just to be a fly on the wall and watch what people talk about. There's groups too, 'I'm not Amish but I speak Pennsylvania Dutch' is another one, that's a good one, but I will say that the interesting thing is that with, and this is gonna be one of the major crises, ideologically, academically, of the 21st century, is that with the use of technology, the democratisation of information, which has been a beautiful thing, open access, the ability for anybody to contribute equally to a situation, I can contribute on Facebook just like anybody who might be an authority on something, and I might think that my opinion is equally as valid, you can see where I'm going with this – Part of the challenge with it is that there's so much misinformation and I find, recently especially, that some of my interactions with some of these types of online groups

which benefit from having folks like Doug Madenford (as) part of them, who can give good content and give good commentary and help guide people when they have questions, and I do that kind of thing too, and I would say that the challenge with this is that you wanna be very careful to balance how you address the spread of misinformation or the – just the spread of information that was put together by someone who has only part of the story and it's challenging, because, again, with the democratisation of information, which is a very good thing, there's this perception that all ideas have equal weight and are all equally valid, and this is really problematic because so much misinformation gets spread about the culture right now from folks who have virtually no background or no knowledge of it. People who are claiming to be writing in Pennsylvania Dutch, they have a knowledge of the mechanics of the grammar, they have a knowledge of the words, but what they are speaking is not Pennsylvania Dutch, it is some sort of weird – it's almost as though one would take a computerised amalgamation of a language, stripped it of all idiomatic expressions, all words and phrases that are commonly used, and reconstruct it based on whatever word order happened to be used by the individual, or creating new idioms that actually are not used. So, there's this problem that is happening, and that, I would also argue, is part of the translation software issues. There was a guy recently who was posting something about trying to make some form of a platform for Duolingo or a platform for Rosetta Stone in order to be able to get Pennsylvania Dutch out there, and he offered some samples, and everything he offered was wrong. And like I said, there's no one right way to speak Pennsylvania Dutch, but there are a lot of wrong ways, and it is a real challenge right now, so we have this double-edged sword with technology. On (the) one hand, there's this greater, increased connection between people, if we can strengthen that aspect of things and not exhaust each other with all of the maintenance of those connections, I think there'll be really positive aspects for the culture and the language, but we really have to get a handle on ourselves and – This is the thing, I know this quite a bit, is folks speaking with

authority about topics that they know nothing about and spreading misinformation is a real issue, and it happens on so many levels, with so many different things, in social media and it's one of the plagues of our culture right now, is that people turn to social media for information, for identity verification, so that they can feel a sense of resonance with others, and that's great, I can resonate with those things, but when the information that we are obtaining and consuming is not consistent with the culture and the realities of that culture...

Holly: It's the risk, almost, of taking it out of context.

Patrick: A real risk, and it's just – Yeah, it's challenging, it's challenging. And I find sometimes I can find the most rewarding situations with social media, and then I can find some of the most unrewarding situations, so I think it's a double-edged sword, and I think again this is gonna be one of the big challenges of the 21st century, is folks learning how to be open to ideas again and knowing when they don't know something, and being able to admit when they don't know something, and being able to find credible sources in order to learn that information and being able to push those sources and challenge those sources, but being able to recognise that not all sources are created equal, that there are sources out there that are not based on fact, and this is a challenging thing. And I think it's especially rampant in the United States right now, I don't know how it is anywhere else, but it is *really* rampant here.

Holly: It's a developing issue in the United Kingdom definitely, as we've gotten – I mean, politics plays a big part certainly.

Patrick: Mm-hmm.

Holly: But what do you think, then, might be used to combat that? We talked about education earlier and how that, in some ways, led to the decline because people were being compelled to speak and read and write English. Do you think that maybe incorporating PA Dutch heritage or dialect, or language, into the education system in Pennsylvania might be a way to combat (Indistinguishable – most likely 'misinformation') now?

Patrick: I don't think so, and I think it's a noble concept. I've known people to have done this in preschools and things like that, and that has worked. I worry that there is such an anti-education sentiment in many sectors of society in the United States that any efforts to try to institutionalise a language, even those people who like the language might find something wrong with that, because somehow or other the government has gotten in the way, the government has overstepped its bounds, or whatever, and perhaps that would be the case, so I'm not gonna argue one political idea or another, but I'm just saying – I would foresee that there would be folks who would have a real issue with it, so putting the language into schools would be very controversial. Even foreign languages being taught in American schools right now are under fire, because people see less relevance in learning the classical languages or European languages, they see less relevance. Folks say, 'Why would you wanna learn German?' – Well, I can give you lots of reasons why you would want to learn German in this world: for access to scholarly material, considering they're one of the world's largest economies, even though they're a relatively small country; that Germany essentially, I should say *German*, was somewhat of a universal academic language throughout continental Europe for a long time. These are all reasons to learn German, but folks don't necessarily see the value in that anymore, because the perception is that everything should be in English worldwide, so I would think that putting it in schools, maybe not so much. For me, the thing that I have been working on is, rather than get caught up in frustrating scenarios about misinformation, certainly I'm outspoken when I feel the need to be, but more than anything else, I don't want to fall into the trap of being a curmudgeon who has to correct people, because there is truth in the fact that people may not remember what you say, they may not remember the specifics of the facts you are presenting, they may not even care about those things, but they *will* remember how you make them feel, and that's part of the challenges we're going to be having with social media, with the democratisation of information, with open digital access. We're going to be finding that,

with the spread of misinformation during that, we have to be very careful and you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make anyone drink, but I will say, for me, what I have been doing is trying to be proactive about publishing books, making sure those books are widely accessible – the publication series through the Heritage Center – trying very hard right now also too put as much on social media as I can, the Heritage Center's Facebook page has *really* done well during the pandemic, we've had times where we've had 30,000 interactions with our posts, which, I mean, for being a relatively small group that has about 500 members, having 30,000 people interact with us, that's pretty good, and I think that the reality is too, some colleagues of mine have noticed how our content has been thriving online, and folks have asked, 'What are you doing that you're able to get that many likes, that many click throughs, that many people who expand your articles too read them?', cause these metrics are all visible through social media and we monitor them, because it tells us whether or not we're doing well, and tells us what people are interested in, and a colleague of mine, at a local museum that I collaborate with quite a bit, recently said to me that the secret is content, that – you don't have to follow the rules, the rules are, 'Your posts should be only this long', 'Your posts should have a picture', 'Your posts should have this', 'Your posts should have that' – the rules are flexible. It is, 'Are you delivering content that people are seeing as something desirable?' Not even whether it's good content, but whether it's desirable content. I would like to think that what we're giving is desirable and good content, if I may venture into that realm, but the fact is when folks are hungry for resources that are thought to fall into all these problematic categories of 'authentic', or ideas that are resonant with people's identity, or something that's going to stimulate more interest or be visually appealing, if it has all of those things, folks are going to really jump on it. I collaborated with another museum for two exhibitions recently, two Pennsylvania Dutch-themed exhibitions at Glencairn Museum, and I was recently told that the traffic on their website, they get more traffic for those two temporary exhibitions that we

did than for other portions of the site that are more critical to their mission, and it's really interesting to me, because the staff just said, 'This is really a test of how we can remain relevant as a museum', to be finding challenging ways of incorporating content that folks are going to find desirable and find both relevant to their mission, but maybe not primary to their identity at times, cause at Glencairn Museum, they're associated with the Swedenborgian community, they're not Pennsylvania Dutch, but they've done two Pennsylvania Dutch exhibitions and those two exhibitions have really thrived, so it's really interesting to look at these types of metrics, to see what the effectiveness is. I would argue that, more than anything else, providing free content that can be easily accessed, that is visual, that is academically sound, that is vetted and reviewed even, in many situations, and promoted through social media will give people the opportunity to have resources out there that will help to combat the misinformation. That to me is the big push that we have as an organisation right now, rather than institutionalising those efforts, it's making the material available and then sharing it, promoting it. I found with myself, with some of the language social media situations, I mean, people bring up every other day why the word 'Pennsylvania Dutch' is a corruption of *Deutsch*, which is not true, and it's helpful to have resources that you can post to stimulate further discussion rather than just be negative and swoop in and say, 'No, that's not right.' So, it's a challenge, but it's the equation we're living in, it's the equation we're working with and arguably, the democratisation of information is a positive thing, because it's putting resources that would be educational in the hands of everyone. How can that be a bad thing? Although the ramifications of it are still things we have to think through, we have to grapple with, we have to engage in discussion and dialogue about.

Holly: It's walking – we would call it a tightrope in the UK, I think a highwire act is the US term?

Patrick: Tightrope is, we'd say that too.

Holly: Wow! Okay, I've spoken with several colleagues who always use highwire, so...

Patrick: Interesting. I would think of highwire as being the archaic one out of the two.

Holly: Really?

Patrick: Yeah, tightrope is used in – and who knows, we preserve a lot of older terms in Pennsylvania too that might be not used in other parts. But yeah, I would understand either.

Holly: Wow! I've seen it across, like, with things like soda versus pop versus...

Patrick: I was actually gonna bring that one up, exactly. In Western PA it's pop, in our area it's soda.

Holly: It's pop here, too. Traditionally, in Northern England, it's pop.

Patrick: Interesting!

Holly: But we just call them fizzy drinks normally.

Patrick: (Laughs)

Holly: I was going to move on actually to the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center, which is not the name you would prefer, seeing as Pennsylvania German is the academic –

Patrick: It's an academic institution, so, yeah.

Holly: So, pre-pandemic...

Patrick: (Laughs)

Holly: Pre- all the joys of COVID-19, when you were engaging in outreach activities, were there any in particular that you found really appealed to people because of that authenticity or because of the visual of it? I know that you have done a lot of events there where you have people working – a real potter working, someone working in the kitchen, and it's very tactile and visual. Do you find that any events like that tend to bring more visitors or more engagement from the wider community and from the, well, even from people outside of Pennsylvania that are not really that involved with Pennsylvania Dutch?

Patrick: Yeah, so just a couple things. Our mission at the Heritage Center is to preserve, promote, and celebrate the culture, so when we look at the preservation aspect, that's our archive, our museum, the preservation of the material culture, but then also preservation of the language and traditions. Celebration of those traditions is one of the primary things that we do, because, and this has been one of the things that I have been really pushing since I have become the director of the Center is this idea that if we don't celebrate it, if we don't get people to participate in it, if we don't get people to appreciate it by experiencing it, we will forever be in a situation where we're mothballing the culture, to use an American idiom, where you're putting something away, you're packing it away just so it's preserved, but you're not actually allowing it to be a living, thriving thing, and to me, the celebration portion of our mission is one of the most important aspects of what we do and our events, as you've described, are events that are aimed to resonate with the folklife model. We were inspired as an organisation by the work of Dr Don Yoder and Alfred Shoemaker and J William Fry at Kutztown Folk Festival, when their aim was to put the culture on display, not just to pay attention to what people say and how they perform and what they do onstage and what can be written down, but also those things that you can only really capture through experience, through visual culture, through tactile experiences, and this will be everything from foodways to the arts. We especially emphasise those things, but then there's of course a wide range of other things that people are doing as well. At our events, we aim to have a blended model. We can't be too rigid, because really, the number of people who are demonstrating these days is decreasing. It is decreasing dramatically. There used to be a time where we could find any number of people who would just – if we couldn't find one *Fraktur* artist, we would find another, if we couldn't find someone doing traditional redware, we would find another, and the reality is right now for many of the people who have really invested in making these demonstrations part of their lives, they depend on those demonstrations for livelihood, and we don't sell a lot at the Center. People come, they

want to experience things – our events are free – so we generally have between 1,000 and 1,500 people come out for our one-day events that are only six hours long. The people who come with the hope that they are somehow going to be making a lot of money at these events to support themselves as artists, and I think that's so important, to support the arts community, they may find our events at times to be less than ideal. There's some difficulties and challenges with this. I really appreciate those people who can come out for a day and cook on the wood stove or cook on the open hearth and give out samples, the people who can show people how to do egg scratching, because you can do this as a professional, but you can also do this just as a person who loves to do it in the home, and these are the kinds of traditions that we can really pass on, because you can then say to a person, 'Hey, all you need to do is boil your hard-boiled eggs and onion skins and they get this beautiful orange-red, you can take them home and take a pocket knife or a needle or a pin and scratch the egg, and you can do this in the home with your kids', and people are like, 'Wow! That's exceptional!' and so, to me, the main thing for our events is how to try to provide and equip the community to experience these types of aspects of our culture, to internalise them, to remember those things that they may have also experienced in the home, and then continue those things in the home because otherwise, if we only have people who are performers, we're going to find that people think, 'Oh, that man is doing something. What is that man doing? Oh, that's very interesting, I could never do that,' and you get that even from people who are *trying* to be hands-on about things and so I've tried to really create a model where we increase as much accessibility as possible for what it is that we offer. I find that some of the most important things that we do are twofold as a site. Our events are really, really important. They support the individuals who are providing the music and the arts and the food and the things that are so near and dear to everybody's heart, and the language. They enliven the community of people providing those things, as much as they provide a venue for the community to experience those things, so there's really a dual role.

This isn't just about giving to the community in a public sense, it's also about nurturing the community of the people who are the bearers of tradition, giving them that sense of recognition. The trick with all of this, too, is many people today mistake folklife for living history, and this is a big difference, I don't know if you're familiar with these models in the United States. Folklife really was pioneered by Don Yoder; if you're reading *Discovering American Folklife*, you'll know about what his intentions were with really essentially launching folklife as an academic study, but then also as a form of public outreach, the idea of the works of people's hands and the things that you do being of equal weight to the things that people say, so not just folklore, but folklife, the contents of daily life. I would argue that this is very different than the performative aspects of living history, where a person puts on a costume, they may or may not adopt a different identity, they may or may not speak about things in first-person as though they personally experienced those things in another time. They may, at times, they may be really skilled performers who can put on a show and through the dynamism of their personalities, be very entertaining, and then they may also be really awkward folks who are really knowledgeable, but who have a hard time with this role-playing aspect, and there's so many problems inherent with living history. Some people do it really well, some people do it really poorly. Some of the most knowledgeable do it poorly. I tend to let the demonstrators at our site do things how they feel that they need to do it. Some of the most successful ones we have on our site are people who show up wearing a pair of jeans and a button-down shirt, who can put something on the stove and make something delicious, talk a little bit of the language, and they are not in costume. Then there are other people who will put on full early 19th-century outfits, bring large groups of 19th-century equipment and cook 19th-century food and they don't put on a persona, but they are living history in the sense that they are interpreting a process as though it was a historical practice, rather than a living tradition. So, these are really interesting conundrums that we have. I'm happy to have people in both areas, but I tend to not emphasise

the living history as being the goal of our site, because the problem with it is, it's not compatible with folklife. It might appear to be, but if you are going to do a living history event, you often have to be a purist, you have to say, 'Well, you can only wear this, this, or this,', 'You can only use equipment that fits within this time period,', 'You can only do practices that are documented from this area,', and when you run into that, it shuts out all these different aspects of the culture that are every bit as important, and I would argue many of the living traditions are done by people who are not so preoccupied with how they look and whether or not it fits within a certain timeframe – for instance, one of the primary barn star painters right now, Eric Claypoole, I'm sure you gonna run across his material – he paints in jeans and a tee shirt. He wears sneakers, he wears work boots. He doesn't try to portray something. When he's at the Kutztown Folk Festival, he'll put on an embroidered shirt that he has that belonged to his father, he will sometimes wear his father's tam o' shanter. His father's background is partially Pennsylvania Dutch and partially Irish, so there's this sense that he had this resonance with the British Isles as his point of family origin, even though the tam o' shanter's probably Scottish in that situation, but perhaps a broader experience. But you'll see that he will do that at Kutztown Folk Festival as a way to just be who he is and perform as an artist in this sense, but then when he's painting barns, he's a workman, he's a tradesman, he is a bearer of tradition, and he's very unpretentious about it, so I think it's really important to be able to promote and preserve and celebrate these traditions on every level on which they occur, rather than just on those that might fit with certain aesthetics, so I think it's really important. At the Heritage Center as well, we do a lot of work behind the scenes that people don't see. We provide a lot of support to groups like the Berks County *Versammlung*, a lot of ideas for how to adapt and change amidst a changing world. We've helped them with everything from how to redesign programmes, how to research some of the language material that goes in to those programmes, how to be able to create materials in the language to update those programmes and make sure

that things are current, how to put things on the tables at the celebrations that people are going to be interested in, that are going to encourage people to look at language preservation resources – they really look to us for a lot of information, and I’m very active with them. So, this is one of the things that happens kind of behind the scenes. The other things that happen too are publication series and our speaking series. These are really important to us, because they give us the opportunity to do public outreach in terms of educational programmes that are usually visually interesting – I’m doing one this evening, for instance, at seven o’clock on the tradition of house blessings and date stones among the Pennsylvania Dutch. These are especially blessings of establishment that are often recorded in material culture in a wide variety of different ways – in stone, in plaster, in wood, in painted objects, and especially those objects related to physical parts of the building, permanent parts of the building, or semi-permanent parts of the building – and how they relate to the use of the language, so I’m going to be doing a presentation on that this evening and to me, it’s so important to do presentations on colourful, interesting aspects of the tradition, to get people thinking, get people excited, and then, at the end of every one of my presentations is also a sales pitch that, to support cultural programming at Kutztown University, please take a look at our publication series, all proceeds go to supporting cultural programming at Kutztown University, because the unspoken part of this is that in order to hold our events, in order to do our cultural programming that is largely free to the public, that costs us money. We don’t make money at that stuff. It is not a booming business to hold events. It is actually – we operate at a loss for those events, and so, in order to supplement our budget, being able to sell books that help to get good information into the hands of local people, interesting topics, we’ve published two books by Don Yoder, it’s really important to get that stuff out there and let people know that this kind of material is available and it gives folks the opportunity then to support programming in a variety of different ways, so I sell a lot of books for the Heritage Center when I do my presentations, and this is such an

important thing, because it shows me that when you talk to a group of people and you get them excited about something, they're hungry for more information, as long as you don't burn them out, so it's a thing you gotta balance. These are some of the other aspects of our programming we do, but the list goes on and on because we serve as kind of like a hub of the culture, in the sense that we provide lots of resources to other groups to help them operate and to consolidate the calendar, the central calendar of Pennsylvania Dutch language events, so things like that, so there's lots that we do, and I feel it's really important. Just one other thought, too – you mentioned at the very beginning of your question about the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center – I don't see a conflict with the word Pennsylvania German. I prefer the word Pennsylvania Dutch; whenever I give a tour, I let people know right up in the beginning, 'Hey, we're called the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center, and we are studying and promoting and celebrating the cultural traditions of this region's culture, and this region's culture was influenced by German-speaking immigrants who came in the 18th century, who were called the Pennsylvania Dutch or the Pennsylvania Germans, and I will use these terms interchangeably throughout the tour,' and I make sure everybody knows that and I will explain, if people are interested, where that word Dutch comes from, and where the academic word Pennsylvania German comes from, so it's part of who we are, and it's part of how our story gets told as well.

Holly: It's, again, slightly harmonious, this harmonious state of flux that we've talked about quite a lot, between one another and one person's opinion and another.

Patrick: Mm-hmm.

Holly: Do you find – so, in your events, you have a lot of tactile – I promise, there are not that many questions left! (Laughs)

Patrick: No, it's fine, it's fine!

Holly: But in your events, you mentioned you have Eric Claypoole come and do barn star painting, you have people cooking, you have people playing music, perhaps – do you find that the, I mean, you’ve mentioned that the visual arts seem to entice people in a lot more...

Patrick: Mm-hmm.

Holly: What kind of stories do the visual arts tell versus the written, the more traditional written narratives of poetry or prose? Do you think the narratives they want to tell are similar, or...? Whatever you want to say on that!

Patrick: This is really interesting on many levels, so your question about do the visual portions of the culture, the visual arts, do they tell the same stories as some of the written aspects? And I would say that the two, ideally, are interwoven with one another, and I use written sources extensively with the work I do, as well as fieldwork. I find that people get more excited about the fieldwork because there’s this sense of discovery. When you say, ‘I discovered this in a book!’, people are kinda like, ‘Oh,’, unless it’s an image, because then if you find an image, people are really excited, cause – so there’s this appeal. We’ve become increasingly focused on images as a culture and this is, without getting too far afield, this is for better, for worse. Part of the reason this is tricky is because images are powerful, they’re powerful things. People identify with them. Images, oftentimes, can be interpreted in many, many different ways, and so when someone looks at this star that’s right here, they might call it a wide variety of different things. They might call it a hex sign and they might tell a story about why they’re there for protection. Someone might call it a barn star and say that this is part of longstanding tradition within the region of decorating agricultural household objects, things like that, so the danger of these types of visual appeal is that we’re finding that they require an explanation, they require a conversation, they require a dialogue, and that dialogue requires constant maintenance in order to be able to help to clarify the cultural context, cause otherwise, the cultural context can get totally lost, and I noticed that this especially happens with powwowing. I don’t know

if you were going to ask a question about this or not, but this is one of the primary things that I've been studying, and also it is part of the reason that I learned Pennsylvania Dutch, because in order to explore some of those family narratives of my own, and in order to be able to get a better understanding of the healing traditions which I was interested in before I got involved with research, I became increasingly interested in the language as a tool to help understand those aspects of my own family story, and also to put some of those types of traditions into practice. The danger in these traditions again, and I don't want to sound like I'm afraid or that there's a danger in everything, but I will say, with powwowing, a lot of things can get taken out of context very easily because there is no visual culture to go along with it except in extraordinary circumstances, so when you look at, for instance, the most recent book that I put together on powwowing, *Powwowing in Pennsylvania*, I don't know if you have it or not –

Holly: Our library is ordering it in.

Patrick: Okay, and there's also a link I may have shared with you too for an exhibition booklet that has a lot of similar content you'll see a lot of it is manuscripts, a lot of it is printed sources. I tried to spice it up with as many visual images as possible, cause I understand the power of those images, but so much of the tradition is oral, so I would argue that – again, here is an example of an oral tradition that has some accompanying images, but it's not like there's an iconography of it, so to speak, that is interwoven with every aspect. You kind of have to look for it, you have to find a way to integrate it, you have to actively seek to do that, so I would argue that we find that there is sometimes a disconnect between the way that visual culture is commodified and sold and consumed, and then how the cultural context may or may not resonate with, or may or may not be actually part of, how that information is being consumed, absorbed, used, integrated, and this is also where some of the misinformation comes in, because there is so much misinformation about our culture. It is just a huge aspect of how our culture is presented online and elsewhere, and whenever a person from the press or a writer wants to

cover something from the culture, it is really challenging to learn to give a good, concise interview so that what people produce doesn't then take everything out of context and chart it all under misinformation again. So, it's a challenge. I would say that the stories that go along with the visual arts often rely on oral interpretation rather than written interpretation. Written interpretation is important, it's there, it is present, it is always there, but people don't always want to read. People want to read a few paragraphs, they may not want to read a book. I don't know how many people I've talked to who have said, 'Oh I loved your book on hex signs,' and they start talking to me, and I realise that, wow, they have a very different orientation than the orientation that is espoused within the book and I'm glad that they found it useful and helpful and interesting. I'm always open to different opinions, I don't want to make it sound like I'm not, but the interesting thing to me is I have to sometimes wonder, did this person just look at the pictures? (Laughs) Because it seems as though there is disconnect and this is so simple when this happens with visual culture and visual material can be taken in many different directions, it can become a symbol of identity, it can be politicised, it can be taken out of context and put somewhere that – because these images are so powerful, so there's challenges with this. I would also say when you look at some of the written word within the culture – take for instance the mid and late 19th-century dialect writings – the themes that are presented in those things are things that are presented pictorially as well in some engravings and prints accompanying that material, but (are) largely absent then from other aspects of the visual arts today. It seems as though among the Pennsylvania Dutch, folks are reaching to follow a tradition by replicating the past. Now with the barns, it's been a living tradition that's out there so when we replicate the signs like the ones that are right here behind me, we didn't have to look up images of redware from the Philadelphia Museum and then reproduce them in order to put these on the barns, this is an act of living tradition. Many times, for folks who are producing redware, for instance, or tinware, or any number of things, they're often looking to past

examples that are held in institutional collections that have been interpreted by collectors and institutional professionals and things like that, and that fundamentally changes the culture, because the narratives that are told, even in museums, are not the narrative that we find in the home. They're not the narratives that we find in day-to-day life. So, it is a challenging thing, it is a really challenging thing, this interplay and intersectionality between what we find in the actual visual material culture that can be experienced, that transcends words, the oral aspects which are complicated and they build realities of their own, they gain momentum and oral tradition is unreliable as a source of concrete operational, factual information, except with exceptional individuals, who don't fabricate memories, because we all imagine things when we recount a memory. We are all relying on memory, which is fallible, and when we are asked to recall a memory multiple times, that memory changes, so the oral aspect of the culture is so important, but we have to look at it as being a certain type of information. The written information as well has its own issues. The written information tends to be exclusively focused on written information. For instance, when you find books on powwowing, up until fairly recently, so many of those were focusing exclusively on other written sources, which many times, were written by folks who did not understand the language, had no language connection, so how do you look at a culture's tradition that has been around for four centuries and be able to interpret that if you can't understand the language, when you're only looking at secondary English sources? So, there's problems with all of these different things, and I would argue that all of these are parallel and sometimes divergent narratives. I think, though, that what can be really helpful, and I mentioned this before, is people may not remember what you say, but they remember how they feel about something. If you can create an experience that is resonant with people, it will create lasting impressions, and that's part of why we do the work that we do. Books can do this too, even if people are maybe not necessarily completely reading them, or they might read them and might not remember all of what they're reading, there is a sense to

which, if you can create experiences that are resonant with people, and I hesitate to use the word 'authentic', because authentic is – it's problematic. There is no one definition of what authentic is, and we're always determining what that means, and very different ideas of what authenticity are can exist simultaneously and be contradictory, and still be correct at the same time, so there's problems with this, but I think from my experiences working with the Heritage Center and with the museum work is creating meaningful experiences, *meaningful* experiences, is one of the main ways we can help to take these traditions and give them life and continue them, not for the sake of preserving something from the past, but for the sake of doing something in the present and keeping those living traditions alive.

Holly: The emotion, the passion, I can hear the passion that you have for your work, and for the work of the Cultural Heritage Center. I really wanted to come out and see it before...

Patrick: Yeah. (Sighs)

Holly: ... I am quite disappointed that the pandemic has gotten in the way.

Patrick: Well, hopefully this fall, we will be completing some virtual tours online with 360 views of the spaces, so – I know that's not a true substitute for actually physically being there and being able to experience and to touch and smell and... yeah, it's gonna be a very different thing. We're still not sure if we're gonna be having events this fall, I have a tendency to assume that we're not, I'm hesitant to even plan events for this winter. With the way things are going, the numbers right now are really frightening, and our – the types of experiences that we thrive on, as you've mentioned, pre-COVID-19, were these types of in-person things. Post COVID-19, I think the most meaningful things that we have been doing have been the narrative and pictorial posts that we've been doing on social media. People have really, *really* resonated with those. We've gotten a lot of very positive feedback, and if you – I don't know if you follow us on Facebook or take a look at what we do. There's some good examples in there of some things.

We've actually been a little bit slow recently because the Kutztown Folk Festival took a lot out of us, doing virtual videos. I created like, five different videos and... (Exhales) Doing video content is time consuming and...

Holly: I completely understand.

Patrick: ... So yes, that took a lot, but producing content that people can resonate with is possible with the pandemic and arguably, there's no better way to get into people's home than to *be* in someone's home with them with the culture and one way one can do this is by providing at-home experiences and so these types of, whether it's a video, or a post, or music, or something to read, or something to look at with the culture, the digital experiences have a newfound meaning right now, while what would be perceived as the normal cultural bonds of face-to-face interaction have broken down, the other types of face-to-face interaction are really becoming very, very important and critical to the culture, and arguably, a part of the culture. I would say that there are those people who have frequently thought that, you know, what's going on on Facebook or what's going on online or what's going on virtually is just somehow secondary, not a critical or essential part of the culture, and I would argue that from this point forward, we will not be able to underestimate the role of digital culture in the Pennsylvania Dutch culture. It is part of who we are now, and a really, really important part of who we are.

Holly: Wow! It certainly sounds it from what you've been saying. This is my final question, really, is are you finding that using these digital cultures and developing, you know, using social media, are you finding that that is generally dispelling a lot of the myths that people hold about PA Dutch culture, and are there any stereotypes or myths that you have heard, either in person or online, that you wish you – is there anything that you wish was known more widely about the PA Dutch culture, apart from what we've discussed already?

Patrick: Oh, well, I mean, I could just name long lists of things. (Sighs) So, the main thing that I haven't discussed yet, and it's – I'm gonna be very, very careful about how I say this, because

I don't want to render this interview political, although we are living in such polarised times that it is, it's really challenging [not to –]

Holly: [It's impossible!]

Patrick: – it is really challenging. As a museum professional, I will be the first to admit that many of our most important constituents may fall on completely different ends of the political spectrum as I would, when it comes to voting, so I will say this is a really important thing for me, because it gives a sense of humanity and identification and unity to the culture when we may find ourselves at odds in other ways, and this is so important, so being able to talk to each other, being able to hold conversations, so – This is my preface for saying that one of the problems I've been running into is that there is a lot of abuse of ethnographic information by those who are not trained or by those who are not used to using such information, and it can contribute to racist narratives, and it is a very alarming scenario. The way in which Pennsylvania Dutch culture can be co-opted by individuals with agendas, who would like to think that, somehow or other, preservation of the language and the culture can be weaponised to keep Pennsylvania and the broader United States from changing and from growing in a diverse way, and I'm trying to be very careful about how I say this, because what I don't want to do is name any particular things that would lead to [an individual –]

Holly: [I understand.]

Patrick: – or anybody else out there – those people in particular, those that I might have to cross paths with or even occasionally work with, so it is very challenging for me, because... I'll use an example. Right now, many people are interested in DNA testing for ancestry. Ancestry.com and 23andMe, and this is interesting to me. I've thought about doing these genetic tests, because I've wondered, 'What can they tell me?', 'What kind of data?', because I do approach the humanities scientifically, even though I study things that are oftentimes not thought to be in the realm of science. Powwowing crosses over in to supernatural things, I still collect those

stories scientifically, I still hold on to those stories as data, I still consider that to be important data, and data that can't just be made into whatever one might want, so I look at these things as being important, but I will say – the ancestry issues that are happening right now is that there is this illusion, and again, this is partially due to the fact that people aren't reading the fine print, they don't understand what a genetic test is. A genetic test links to known samples of genetic material that is found in particular regions among present-day and historical populations. So, when people say, they get their test back and they say, 'Well, I'm 50% German, I'm 25% English or British Isles, and I'm 15% Ashkenazi, I am another 10% Mediterranean,' what the heck does that even mean? So, what we can say is that percentages of their own genetics are shared with other individuals who have taken those tests and other genetic samples that are available from historical, or fairly recent historical populations, of people, from the time that genetics have been able to have been studied, which is a fairly short period of time, so what does that mean to be German, then? And this is a problem as it relates to Pennsylvania German, because folks will say things like, 'I am 100% German in my background,' and I'm gonna say, 'The way you're using the word 'German' indicates you don't know what that word means', because that use of the word has nothing to do with the culture, has nothing to do with the country, has nothing to do with the language – all the things that to me are some of the most important aspects of what it means to be German, and this is even when I look at my German friends and colleagues, who I think of as being very different from me as a Pennsylvania German or a Pennsylvania Dutch person – those aspects can't be traced in DNA. You can't see language in DNA. You can't see culture in DNA. You can only see immediate hereditary traits, and this crosses a line for me, these discussions. It is really popular, and yet it is extremely fraught, because the last time that we had people who were studying hereditary traits about what it means to be German was during World War II, and that was so that they could weaponise ethnicity and conceal ethnicity and persecute particular groups of people for not

belonging to certain groups, and I think all of this is very dangerous, because even for those people who are not racist, per se, and I shudder to say ‘people who are not racist,’ because every human being on this planet has some form of bias, no matter whether it’s conscious or unconscious, so racism is a complex thing, and I don’t mean to create a black and white situation where I can say, ‘Some people are racist and some people aren’t,’ it’s really a broad spectrum, and people who don’t think of themselves as being racist can espouse racist ideas without knowing it, and part of the problem we run into with the DNA testing is that it tends to provide this illusion of data for what it means to have some form of ethnic purity, and this is so dangerous, even for people who wouldn’t really espouse racist ideologies, who would think of them as being repulsive, the very notion of those ideas would be repulsive, will still say, ‘I am such and such percent something,’ and to me, there’s a problem we will need to address, because it links too these issues we have with the culture and how people identify, and I’ve wanted to do the ancestry test simply to just play the Devil’s advocate, because I would guarantee that the DNA that I would share in common with other people in other parts of the world and parts of the United States would probably be pretty distributed between the British Isles and parts of central Europe. I would believe that very strongly. I also know that my great-grandmother’s grandmother shows up in her marriage record as being black. I also know that the local story is that she’s not African American at all, but that she’s Shawnee, whatever the story is, and we know that the history of America is the history of people portraying particular ethnicities when it’s convenient to do so, claiming to be one thing when they are not, concealing their ethnicities when they know that that ethnicity might marginalise them, so who knows what my great-grandmother’s grandmother was? There are lots of stories that lead me to believe probably Native American, but I don’t know, although I would never call myself a Native American, because, to me, being Native American has something to do with language and culture and traditions, not a number on a little sheet that I’ve been supplied by Ancestry,

and this is a conversation that I think is going to become increasingly problematic, especially for those who are enthusiastic about the culture and enthusiastic about genealogy, because your genealogy doesn't have to necessarily inform what you do as a person who participates in, and is part of, a culture. You can be adopted, you can be living in an area for two generations and absorb by osmosis so many different traditions. So, for me, the challenge we have right now is learning to redefine these conversations and bring them into the 20th century (Sic), and not use 20th-century scientific tools to fall back into the early 20th-century dark ages of tainted science that isn't really science at all. This is really going to be problematic for cultural institutions moving forward, especially for American populations of people of privilege who want to investigate who they are and where they come from, and then have assumptions about what that means. It's funny, because I was in a conversation with two Germans who happened to be part of a diplomatic operation in the United States, and there was a discussion from another person in the group about, 'Oh, well, ancestry, and I've done this, and I'm this percent this, and I'm this percent that,' and it was very interesting to see their response. Germans don't think about this the way Americans do, and they didn't say anything about the Third Reich, they didn't even allude to it, I don't think they had to, but the one person in particular said, 'This idea of what you mean to be German is very interesting,' and this one person in particular said that she had background that goes to the Middle East, because some of her family was recent immigrants, but she is German, and so, for her, this idea of what it means to be German is not an ethnically exclusive thing. It's a country, it is a place, it is a culture, it is a language, and so we have a lot to learn in the United States, we really, really do, and you're probably, in interviewing folks, going to be hearing a lot of things that might have you scratching your head about what people mean when they say something relating to this idea of Pennsylvania Dutch or being Pennsylvania German, and how it relates to these concepts I've put forward, so I feel like there's a lot of work we have to do, but it is so controversial and so hot button that is it

difficult for us to address these directly in our work at the Heritage Center without running into problems where we would also be shutting doors on individuals who might hold controversial beliefs. We would prefer to provide positive information and hope that we can gradually work to expand people's horizons. If they resonate with what we're doing, they may find that they learn something they didn't know before, that they may find is at odds with beliefs they may have held. I like to believe that people can, over time, perhaps change their views, grow their views – ideally grow, not just change – but grow their views, expand their views and do so in a manner that will lead to personal and communal growth. I don't think being argumentative is going to help, and so I try to be very, very careful about how I do this stuff, and very diplomatic, so I'm being candid with this interview because I want you to get a real understanding of the types of things that are actually concerns for me as a museum professional, and, at the same time, recognising that I have a role within the community that forces me to think about that professionalism very, very consciously in everything that I do, even if those are not concepts that I'm overtly saying, because I wanna be very careful, and I wanna make sure, again, that our message is something that can be heard and understood and appreciated by people in a wide variety of different groups, wide variety of different political persuasions and culture isn't political, although it can be politicised. I don't know if that answered your question, but there's probably more to that question...

Holly: No, I think it definitely did. It is that tightrope to walk, as a museum professional, definitely, between getting information across and making it as universal as possible, and at the same time, I guess, dealing with all these conflicting opinions that might come in and might shape it.

Patrick: Mm-hmm.

Holly: It's a lot to take in, but just to think about – I mean, you've spent years doing this work, so for you, it's probably – just for me, coming in as an outsider, I'm just thinking,

‘Wow!’ Because it’s similar in the UK, the situation is similar, but it’s not... I want to say it’s not quite as politically charged right now? I mean, it probably is in some regards, but it’s not in others, because everything just got kind of taken over by COVID-19, and that was that. Maybe with the election coming...

Patrick: I haven’t heard anything about Brexit recently, so... (Laughs)

Holly: Well, nor have we! I guess a pandemic really does change things, and maybe if we’d had an election coming, like you guys do, maybe the situation would be very, very different.

Patrick: We’ll see what happens. I’m keeping my fingers crossed, but I think the interesting thing is, if I may borrow a historical example, pandemics have really put things into perspective historically. This is not the first example of a pandemic we’ve had, although it’s funny how easily we forget that there have been pandemics. I mean, it’s funny – immediately people wanna say, ‘Oh well, this is just like the bubonic plague or something like that,’ or what we refer to as the Spanish flu, or what we experienced with any number of the respiratory illnesses and other viruses that we’ve had in the past few decades in the United States that have affected thousands of people. Pandemics are (a) pretty normal aspect of human endeavours. They’re part of what we have to deal with on a regular basis, at least on a decade-by-decade basis, so I wish I could have asked my great-grandmother, who would have been ten – two of my great-grandmothers would have been two and ten when the Spanish Flu outbreak affected Pennsylvania, and especially south-eastern Pennsylvania. Over 100,000 people got the illness because of a parade in Philadelphia, and it spread everywhere, to every corner, and it’s funny, because some people just don’t even remember that that was here, and I’ve read a lot of newspaper accounts and things about how people handled it, about how people banded together, and I like to think that these types of moments can be learning opportunities for us to band together, hang on to our commonalities, emphasise our humanity, and help each other out, but

it takes a special kind of leadership to be able to also encourage some of those types of learning experiences and to take the high road and to put forth our higher selves in favour of the sides of ourselves that would just like to get angry and throw our hat down. I hope that this situation right now gives us a chance to put some things into perspective and I'm not yet sure what the ramifications are going to be culturally, but I don't think we're done figuring that out yet and it's hard to look back on something that's still happening. I think there's a lot of people in the US right now who are looking back as though this is over, and it's definitely not, so we're gonna see, we're gonna see. This is beginning to be one of the single largest losses of life that we will have anywhere, and we'll see what happens, so...

Holly: We definitely will.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW WITH CHASE CORMIER

Date of Interview: Tuesday 8th December 2020

Time of Interview: 16.00 BST, 10.00 CST

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text in italics*

Holly: I wanted to actually start by asking you, if that's okay, what does being a Louisiana French speaker, or being Louisiana French, what does it mean to you?

Chase: Okay, that's always something that I sort of took for granted up until very recently, because I grew up learning French from my grandfather until I was about five, and then when I started school, obviously, I wasn't learning French and I was just learning English, and so the French that I had learned from him through songs, and just hearing him speak with his friends, sort of went dormant in my head, so I never considered myself a Louisiana French speaker for most of my life. So, I moved around and lived (in) a few different places, and I moved back here when I was twenty-one years old, and I was just studying French in school, because, I mean, I always, kind of, was able to understand it, so I had to get some foreign language requirements for my bachelors' degree, so I went with French because it was pretty easy for me, and I left to do a semester in Nova Scotia. I did, at the *Université Sainte-Anne*, an immersion programme for six weeks and there is where I met a lot of French-speaking people from Louisiana and just was exposed to that connection between here and Nova Scotia and I saw my last name a lot of different places, and I realised that there's something unique about the Francophone culture here that I was always aware of and, especially in the food – I've always been really into it and it wasn't till leaving Louisiana and sort of looking at Louisiana

through that Francophone eye, as I was doing in that immersion programme, that I stopped taking it for granted, and so, whenever I came back here, I rode that wave and I'm still riding that wave, I guess, in just my obsession with the French language and Louisiana French specifically, cause everyone was kind of amazed at my accent when I was there and they were shocked to hear the Louisiana French accent coming out, cause I was sort of having to relearn French all over again. I mean, I could understand it well, but as far as putting grammar together, it was tough for me, especially just having learned orally and as a child, so that was fun to watch grow and then, from there, like I said, I kind of rode that wave to try to master French, Louisiana French specifically, as best that I could, and... So for me, I think it's – personally, it's kind of a story of rediscovering who I am and just, I mean, when we're going through life, we're trying to discover, especially as artists, trying to discover our voice and find our little niche and our place in the world, and how we can use our creative expression and our creations to say something, you know, criticise something and say something about ourselves, and so, for me, it's – Louisiana French has been that vessel and that path toward expressing myself, I guess.

Holly: That's a wonderful way of describing it, this path of rediscovery. So, you mentioned the foodways. Is that the thing that kind of evokes Louisiana Frenchness for you the most, or is there anything else that comes to mind when you think 'Louisiana French'?

Chase: I guess that they go hand in hand and it's a lot more accessible to people, food; not everyone needs French but everyone needs food and so I think of food as a language, as a way of communicating, as a way of communicating with the past and rediscovering the past and as a way of just even on a very micro level, of communicating with people. If someone, if you come to my house, I'll offer you a cup of coffee or a cup of tea and something to eat and that's my way of telling you that you're welcome to my home, so – and, you know, there's a lot of

ways that food can be seen as language and we see it in literature and especially in comic books and in a lot of different ways of expression that food is used as metaphor in literature to talk about heavier things, and so for me, I think food is just a very accessible way to talk about other things that might not be so easy to talk about in the Louisiana culture, meaning the diversity of influences in Louisiana French culture. You know, kind of like going back to my presentation that you saw, whenever we talk about Louisiana food, we have to talk about the history, and the history is not always pretty, but it's very complex, it's very colourful, and so in saying, 'Here's what goes into the making of this dish,' and I can say that there's been Native American influence in this, and West African influence in this way, and Caribbean influence in this way, and the Germans helped, and so, you know, whenever you explain what goes into this pot, then people can start to be able to get their minds around what cultural influences might have impacted them in other ways, that being their genetic build-up, or the way that they play music, or the way that they practice religion, all kinds of different things.

Holly: You mentioned religion at the end, there. Would you say that there is a tie between religion and Louisiana French culture, and if so, is there any particular religion that is tied, or spiritual beliefs?

Chase: Mm-hmm. Yeah, I mean, I just think about the entire Carnival season and the practice of *Mardi Gras*, and people don't really associate it with Catholicism for the most part. People do when they recognise that it's there, but there's the whole purging that goes on on *Mardi Gras* and there's not much that's being done after done after that to justify that weekend of extreme partying, so – and just the idea of what is Carnavalesque in general and how that began, in the Middle Ages, and talking about oral histories, I mean, there are so many stories that have been preserved in Louisiana and just the practice of using storytelling and using *oraliture* and *littérature* to undermine authorities and turn these powers on their head and use jokes to make fun of priests and... So, the religious influence is definitely there, whether people see it or not,

whether people are aware if it or not, but in storytelling, it has a strong impact – Catholicism, anyway, that kind of religion. But then, if you look at – I mean, of the Native American tribes that the French colonisers encountered here, I think the Houma tribe, even though they're not recognised federally, they probably impacted the French culture early on more than the others. I would say the Houma and Choctaw, which are very similar tribes, but just that connection with the earth and with the waterways and their religion and their connection with nature, that has played a huge role in the French adaptability and there are a lot of Native American, especially Choctaw, words in Louisiana French, and so linguistically, there's a big influence there, but also just from their way of seeing the world, we see that in Louisiana literature as well.

Holly: That's wonderful. It reminds me of the Caribbean, where the influence is very similar, there's very much a groundedness and this connection to nature. You said that Louisiana French is very diverse, you said that just then, but then you said it in your presentation as well – you know, all the different links in the foodways, the German, the Native American, the West African, and so on. Do you think that the Louisiana French-speaking community nowadays, is the diversity reflected in that, or is it less so?

Chase: I would say it is, but in sort of a second wave of these influences, and so it's not so diverse because of the long-term history, but I think with the establishment of CODOFIL, and CODOFIL bringing teachers for French immersion and high school French programmes from Belgium and from *Québec* and from West Africa, those being the three most prominent regions represented here by the teachers, I think that that's a new sort of diversity that has impacted the French-speaking community. Just talking about diversity, accents and the diversity of perceptions of the *Francophonie* and, so, it kind of is still very diverse and equally diverse, but just for different political and economical reasons.

Holly: It is definitely a beautiful community to hear about. When you were giving your presentation about the *boucheries*, it sounded so beautiful, it sounded just like the kinds of events that I would have experienced, you know, when I was in France, in *la Métropole*. When you think about events like that, and you think about the language being used still to this day, do you think it's – this is one question that I have a lot when I'm looking at Louisiana French – do you think it's a means of resisting increasing Anglophone, the increasing spread of English, or do you think it's more a means of celebration, a celebration of the past and continuation of that? Or is it just kind of a bit of both?

Chase: It's definitely a bit of both. I like to think in my first kind of perception of those kind of events, whenever I first started going to them, I was definitely going and looking at them with a linguistic eye and thinking about it like a sociolinguistic way, and so early on, I definitely saw it as a way of celebrating, and, you know, this is before I was heavily exposed to Louisiana literature of the '80s, whenever the oil field was really strong, and so you have a lot of people – I mean, it was strong, you know, in other times before that, but this was a time whenever the literature was very strong and the oil field – so you have a lot of Anglophone people coming in and so that literature was sort of coming out of an act of desperation to capture as much Louisiana French as possible, and there was a strong sense of urgency there and so, once I was exposed to that, then I started to realise that maybe, you know, a lot of these French-speaking people who are at these events and who are just speaking French out of the performance of it – you know, if there's someone who's cooking a certain plate or they're cutting up meat, they're in front of dozens of people and they're speaking to each other in French for multiple reasons. They're speaking to each other in French because that's their first language, talking about the butchers or the cooks that are there – you know, that would be their first language – but they have the option of speaking in English so that everyone around them can understand, but they choose to do it in French knowing that all or most of those spectators don't understand,

and so that's a conscious choice, and I think that the choice comes out of celebrating and making it a spectacle and performing, and that's great. I don't think there's anything wrong with that, and I think that there's also a little bit of that sense of urgency and kind of – it's just kind of lingering from the past, whenever English did seem like it was coming to attack our French, I think that they still kind of have that woven into their way of thinking and decision making, and so it is a bit of both, but I would say mostly the just celebratory, 'Hey, look at us! We are special, we speak a language you don't, and we're all from right here!' I think that it has a little bit to do with performance and showing off a little bit.

Holly: That's so wonderful, and what you said about England (English), it is that historical thing, it's that, you know, we've historically, England and France never did quite get along.

Chase: Right.

Holly: So, like you said, maybe it is that influence in the background a little bit. You called Louisiana French a language. Do you – now I've read different opinions on this. Some people consider it a dialect, some people consider it a language. Which do you identify with?

Chase: I mean I would consider it a dialect for sure. I just say 'language' because, you know, French being language and Louisiana being the dialect, so it is very similar to the neighbouring Frenches spoken – so, like other North American and Central American Frenches, you know, French dialects – it's very similar, so I would say there's no such thing as a non-dialectical language. I mean, in school, you know, we try to teach something as close to standardised, we call it a pedagogical norm, and that's like taking bits and pieces from all of the French-speaking world and trying to create this language that's essentially spoken nowhere, and that's about as close as you can get to a standardised language, but I just am a firm believer that all forms of spoken language are dialects and it changes from person to person, it changes from little region

to little region, and if you speak to Louisiana French speakers, you know, some of them might tell you, especially native speakers, that they learned, they were fluent in French before even encountering English. They'll tell you that there might be someone from a neighbouring parish who they don't understand speak(ing) French, and I think that's a little embellished, but it does reflect, you know, just the diversity of dialects spoken even in this little pocket of the Francophone world and so I think that that is just kind of magnified here but it's sort of representative of how French changes and how languages change as the context and geography changes. So yeah, I would say it's definitely a dialect, Louisiana French.

Holly: What's the reaction? You mentioned that you teach, right? I guess you teach probably at the University?

Chase: Yeah.

Holly: What's the reaction when you introduce Louisiana French language and culture to students that have not been exposed to it before?

Chase: They start paying more attention.

Holly: [Really?]

Chase: [People are] very interested in it, yeah. I think because, you know, whenever I'm just teaching this pedagogical norm, like I'm saying, I'm kind of bringing in cultural references from all over, there's going to be – you know, I might talk about a day in Quebec City, or I might talk about someone like these people living in Dakar and going to University in Dakar, and so it's like a lot of different cultural influences, but whenever I start about Louisiana or talking about a poem written by Jean Arceneaux, or if I'm just – cause randomly, if I have a little space of, like, three minutes in the lesson where I can have a little bit of freedom to get away from whatever the lesson is for that day, then I'll just give a long list of Louisiana French words like, 'This is how you say 'swamp', and this is how you say 'boat',', and just all of these different kind(s) of different Louisiana-flavoured words, then I see people's eyes get a little bit

bigger and they're taking notes and writing and, you know, a lot of people are really absorbed by that, and that being people that are from here and people who aren't exposed to it, they just – you know, people who live here, they see the value in that when they're in the French classroom, so that makes me happy.

Holly: Do you get the opportunity at Lafayette to introduce Louisiana French literature and poetry, like Jean Arceneaux? Are there regular opportunities to do that? I know you have *Feux Follets*, which I'm probably saying wrong, and I apologise for that – aside from that, do you have events or sessions in your teaching programme where you get to introduce those kinds of artists, and if so, who are the people you normally jump to, like which artists would you normally introduce?

Chase: So, for the levels that I teach, I teach more lower-level French, so it's kind of like the beginner and intermediate (levels), more grammar-based, but Jean Arceneaux is worked into the programme and we have also some musicians, like the *Lost Bayou Ramblers*, who we teach, like some of their songs, and so that's really all we have as far as what's part of our curriculum and our lesson plan. But for me, I mean, I always mention *Feux Follets*, even though I don't – it's not really in a way that's like, 'Here's something that you should check out,' I just say, 'For people who are continuing French beyond the level that I teach,' I just kind of put it in their ears because creative writing is part of the programme as well and so people write poetry as part of these classes, and so I just remind them that if you want to share this work that's coming out of the class, then here's a way that you could possibly get it published, and I mean we've had people submit poetry, not only to *Feux Follets*, but also Julianne Mahoney, who was in, she had a couple of poems published in *Ô Malheureuse* by Ashlee Michot...

Holly: Oh, yes.

Chase: I mean she writes music, but she was in, not in my class, but in one of my colleagues' classes who teaches the same level as me, and some of that poetry came from what she wrote

in the curriculum, so I think it's more of the exposure, it's less about what's there, and it's more about inviting them to be contributors, as kind of newly created Louisiana Francophone people.

We try to steer them toward that – you know, do something with it, now that you're competent.

Holly: That's wonderful, and I did look through *Feux Follets*, I looked through, I've been reading the last issue that you published, and it's so interesting to me, the combination of visual art, poetry, short stories... I did see some very familiar names – obviously, I saw yours, I saw David Cherie, I saw Kirby Jambon, there are names that crop up – I saw Nathan Rabalais – so that was quite reassuring to see. So, is there quite a diverse range of people that have submitted to *Feux Follets* so far? Cause it looks like it's quite established authors and poets, along with people who are relatively new to it, or maybe people, like you said, that have been at the University and have learnt the dialect that way?

Chase: Yeah, there's huge diversity of contributors. I was very surprised. I had no expectation – I'll tell you the story of whenever I restarted it, because it went from 1991, there were two issues in '91, and then it went pretty much every year until 1998, I think, I'd have to look, but it took a few little gap years, but kind of kept going almost annually until 2009, and then when I started grad school – you know, I'm a writer, and so I wanted a way to have my stuff published and I was thinking about the English department, just downstairs from our department in the same building, and they have an in-house print literary journal that they were doing, that they'd been doing for a long time, and I had some stuff published in there in English and so I was just saying, 'We need to start something like that here,' and so my colleague, and she's also on the committee, Rachel Doherty, she said, 'You know that there *is* something like that already, it's just not being published right now,' and so she introduced me to *Feux Follets*, and so I looked a lot of the old ones and was collecting and, you know, I had to go to the Library for some, and this professor's office for some, and then there's some like hidden under just piles of books

collecting dust in some random closet, so they're kind of scattered all over, and I was able to find all of them, scan all of them, and put them online for people to see and so I said, 'Okay, let's do it.' And so it was really just me, Rachel Doherty, Sarah Smith – those two are still on the committee – and then Luc Bonhomme, who finished his PhD and he's now working, and we kind of kept it secret, which is sort of a paradox, right? Like you're trying to get publications and get people submitting to your journal, but not trying to tell too many people. And the reason I was keeping it secret was really just a way to avoid any kind of big let-down in case it didn't work out, and so we weren't really telling people in the department, and I said, 'Let's just reach out to all of the writers we know and just use social media as a way to spread the word, and see what happens,' and we got, like, 70-something submissions, and, you know, I didn't even tell really my team that these submissions were coming in, they were just, 'Hey, are you getting stuff?', like, 'Yeah, a few things.' And as they were coming in, then I realised, 'This is going to be great,' and so I kind of pushed the deadline back another couple of weeks, and we ended up getting about 75 submissions and so that's whenever I brought it to the department head and said, 'Here's what we have, and we're going to read through this, and we're going to come up with something great,' and so we were able to get the funding, and... what was your question again? (Laughs)

Holly: (Laughs) I think the question was – well actually, I was going to ask you about the revival of *Feux Follets*, but you beat me to it! I think the question was what were the contributions like? Was it (a) very diverse set of contributions?

Chase: Right, that's it, so that's what I was getting to. So, in this process of reaching out to people, sort of secretly, I knew who the big names were and I had read already the old *Feux Follets*, so I saw who was submitting to that, and so I see Kirby Jambon, and I see obviously, you know, I sat down and had lunch with David Cheramie before our first meeting. Whenever I just decided that I was doing this, I reached out to him and he was excited that we were

bringing it back and so we had lunch, and he sort of gave me a complete history of the journal, when him and Jean Arceneaux started it, and how it worked, and how they were funding it, and all these things, and so that was great, that was very illuminating, and then, obviously, I reached out to Jean Arceneaux and... So, I reached out to these big players in the game, and then I also reached out to people who I knew personally who I was in school with who were writing. I reached out to people who I knew were writers in English, but who also had some French kind of in their back pocket, and who knew a little bit of French. I helped people with the translations of some of their poetry that they had written in English, that they were like, 'Look, I have this poem, I'd love to translate it and submit it,' and so they would translate it, send it to me, and then I'd help them revise it, so in the early stages of bringing it back, that was a lot of work. I was kind of having to pull the string and just get people interested in it, it was still a very new thing. Even though it had been around for a long time, it had been gone for long enough where no one really knew about it, and we ended up getting a lot of people from a lot of different background and a lot of different – you know, there's people from French immersion that grew up learning French that never really did anything with it, they submitted some things, people from the French Club who just wanted to try their hand at writing their work on their bachelors', a lot of them submitted things, and then you also have people who were well-established writers like Melissa Bonin, who's – she's a very well-read poet who travels and does poetry readings all over the world, so I was very happy to see her submit some poetry. So it really took off and surpassed – I mean, I had no expectations, like I said, I didn't even tell very many people, because I didn't even want to hype the whole thing up, and I guess when you have no expectations, it's easy to surpass them, but it was a delight just to see how many people submitted and how many people were interested in supporting the project, and then 2020, it kind of was the same thing plus more, I think after we had this nice, pretty, little book to show and say, 'Here's what we're doing with people's work.' Then we got more visual art in the

most recent one and I think that helped with the exposure too, is the visual art, because you don't have to speak French to submit that, so I reach out to artists, friends, even ones who are not fluent in French but are still interested in the French culture and are interested in *Mardi Gras* and interested in Louisiana art in general, and so that's really helped the journal, I think, look very nice and appeal to a lot of different people.

Holly: It does, but it does look really good, and I commend you for it, because it's hard work! I've watched colleagues put journals together and it's not easy. What was the reaction like when that was published – on an academic level, was there much reaction? On a community level, what was the reaction like? I can imagine, for yourself, you were probably elated once that was published and out there.

Chase: Yeah, well last year, whenever *Relever* came out, that was – we did it during Festival International, which is just a huge international music festival here, and that was wonderful. I mean that's, you know, it's really nice to know someone like Jean Arceneaux, Barry Ancelet, because he's very highly involved in Festival International and involved just in festival and in music around here, so he just called me one day and said, 'Hey, look, I'm trying to organise a poetry reading for *Feux Follets* whenever it comes out during Festival International, so does this time and date and place work for you?' And I was like, 'Yeah, of course!' I mean, I had no plans for any kind of release party or, you know, I said that we should do a poetry reading for the release of it, but that was about as far as I'd thought about the idea. And so he comes to me with this perfect, beautiful plan to publish it and celebrate it, so I said, 'Yeah, let's do it,' and he was actually at the meeting where they were organising the programme for the festival that year whenever he called me, and so that worked out great, they pencilled it in, and it worked out, we got the venue, and the amount of people that showed up – I mean, we filled up the theatre where it was, and we had the band *Feufollet* playing at the event, so it was like, I called it on the Facebook event '*Feux Follets x Feufollet*' (Actual name: *Feux Follets et*

Feufollet), and it was just like... We would have the band play a song, and then we would read, you know, four or five poems, the band would play a song, we'd read four or five poems, so it sort of alternated and we had well over fifty people in that theatre and I mean, it was full, I don't know what the capacity is, but it was wonderful seeing that, and I was excited, you know, it was very metaphorical just having me and Jean Arceneaux kind of co-host the event with the, kind of, two different generations of this, not really renaissance, but kind of a lifting up of Louisiana French literature, you know, sort of representative of the different waves that we're going through, and that was really fun, that was really fun. And I was surprised by that as well, just like I was surprised by the amount of submissions and the quality of the submissions, I was also just very surprised by the public interest that came with that and so many people, which is unfortunate we were unable to do it this year, because I know that so many people that were at Festival last year were saying like, 'I wish I knew about that! That's something I would have gone to!', a lot of people that come every year for the Festival from New Brunswick or from Nova Scotia, from Quebec, that come for the music, they find out that that's something that's happening, and it sort of went under the radar a little bit, so I'm anxious to see what the reception and what the attendance is going to be like, whenever we can do that again.

Holly: I think it will probably be very high post-COVID.

Chase: Some think so.

Holly: I hope so. Hopefully, I'll be there next time.

Chase: [Yeah, that'd be wonderful.]

Holly: [Whenever I can] get out to do fieldwork again. So, you mentioned the music, it was like a full multimedia presentation almost, you had your music, you had the poetry. What's music like in – what would you describe as the stereotypical – not the stereotypical, the typical – Louisiana French music? You mentioned the accordion in your presentation on the *boucheries*, which I found really interesting as a Germanic influence.

Chase: Yeah, so the diatonic accordion, the German diatonic accordion that was developed in the late 19th century, was brought here with German immigrants and, you know, before that, music was already very strong in Louisiana. The violin was huge and then as instruments were introduced, the music evolved and it was happening very quickly, especially with, you know, finding oil in Louisiana in 1902, then you have, like, the steel guitar that showed up, so... You know, the music sort of developed as people immigrated to the state, which is normal, but the accordion is sort of like the flagship of Louisiana instruments now alongside the fiddle, I'd say, and the music, you know, like the food, just really reflects the diversity of the population and the diversity of influences, but now, just like most forms of folk music, Cajun music and zydeco, Creole music, is very that, it's very Creolised and it's very, it has a strong impact of the world around it, and I think American music has finally kind of infiltrated, for the good, I think, has infiltrated Louisiana's folk music and so – *The Lost Bayou Ramblers* are a great example of that – and just the rock, like American sort of rock influence on it, has taken it to another level and that's great. And so now what you see in the music scene is just a huge diversity of different kinds of music that are really tough to define and really tough to pin down, because even musicians like Renée Reed, who's a great up-and-coming musician, you listen to her music and it sounds like old world, you know, it sounds like the past is coming through the speakers, but in a refreshing way, if that makes sense. So, it's not like tired old music, it's like... it really is like a window into maybe – it's like nostalgia, I guess, and so the accordion kind of does that. I mean, just the way that the instrument sounds whenever it's played by itself, it's just like the very aliveness of it and how it breathes, you know, it's – to me, it sounds very nostalgic and... I don't know. Like, food metaphors are kind of coming into my mind right now. Like whenever you eat something that has certain kinds of ingredients that just remind you of the past for some reason, like gumbo does that to me, it just makes me kind of think of old-world emotions, and sensations, and so the sounds of the accordion does that.

Holly: Yeah, it's kind of like that scene in, if you've ever seen *Ratatouille*, where he tries the ratatouille and it takes him right back to his – literally transports him back to his childhood, that's that kind of feeling, I guess.

Chase: Right, and you know, that comes back in a lot of different food cultures. I mean, obviously a lot of people think of *la madeleine de Proust*, and I think that's was kind of what they were thinking whenever they made that in *Ratatouille*, but it's something that persists, it still happens and music can do that too, and for me personally, growing up, and I think this is the case for a lot of different people, whenever you hear the Cajun accordion, different people have different kind of emotions that they attach to instruments. So, a lot of French people that live here, when they hear the accordion, they're like, 'Oh,' you think of just very stereotypical, touristy, cliché kind of French things like maybe in Paris and Montmartre, like someone's sitting in the *quart* playing the accordion, they don't like that, because of what it represents for them, but for a lot of Cajuns or Louisiana people, when we hear the accordion, we think of our childhood and maybe sitting at a restaurant and there being a band playing the accordion or on a Saturday morning, when our parents or grandparents, they have friends over and people are just playing a jam session with the accordion and different instruments, so obviously, your memory has a strong impact on how you perceive sounds and flavours and so for Louisiana people, I would say what it means is that going back to celebrating the past and celebrating the culture, celebrating the diversity, whether or not we're aware of the diversity, it is there and it's being celebrated whether we like it or not, and for me, it's the same.

Holly: It's another way of kind of differentiating it again from *la Métropole*, this huge diversity and influence. Is there anything that – is there any band that when you think Cajun music, Louisiana French music, is there any particular band or artist that comes to mind? Or with food, is there any one dish that kind of sticks out in your mind as, 'Yes, this one is Louisiana French to me'?

Chase: Well, I know I mentioned them a lot and they've gotten a lot of recognition for good cause, but when I just think about the discography of *The Lost Bayou Ramblers* and how they started out and even *Les Frères Michot* that, like, they're parents and they're uncles and family, the way that their music has developed and progressed from (a) two-man band, fiddle and accordion, someone playing the *'tit fer*, the triangle in the back, and just the simplicity, but still richness in lyrics and what they're talking about, I think that when you look at how a band like that has progressed in taking the minimal – what makes Cajun music Cajun – and then just growing from there and taking on a steel guitar player, and drummer, and they kind of build on that, and then they take on American influences, and Native American influences, Caribbean influences, when they start to build from what their idea of Cajun is, and now, their music sounds like a completely different – well, I say now, their most recent albums – sound like a completely different band than how their initial albums were. And so just looking at that progression, I think that it reflects the adaptability and agility of Cajun culture in general, and as for the food... You know, gumbo is a metaphor that's used, and it's used a lot, and it's great, but I would say... I would say some kind of stew, like what we call *la fricassée*, like a pork stew or beef stew or chicken stew, and that's the thing, is like you can have *fricassée*, which is like a brown gravy thickened with roux, very similar to a gumbo, but it's going to be thicker and the meat is going to change, but that's about it. The protein, you know, you can easily remove meat and you can put tofu or some kind of plant-based meat and it's still going to be, at the heart of it, it's still going to be what it's kind of always been here, and that being the roux, just like how a gumbo starts, that's like *la France*, you know what I mean? And it's very – just, the oil and flour, there's a foundation, and then you add these vegetables from different places, and even in Creole cooking, there being tomatoes – a lot of Cajuns, especially, like, prairie Cajuns, people in this area, are so opposed to that, and they're like, 'That's New Orleans,' the presence of tomatoes, but I say why not? Because I mean, that's just another added flavour,

and it shows the connection with Spain and with South America and Central America, and it's fun and vibrant, and it looks pretty in the pot. But I mean, if you have the bell peppers and onions and garlic and celery, those all tell their own story, like, when celery was imported from Europe, that shows kind of an economical growth in the food industry that has come to make people's plates more interesting, whenever the world didn't have – much of the world didn't have access to celery up until fifty or so years ago, but... The onions, the indigenous ingredient, and then the peppers coming from Africa and the garlic, indigenous ingredient, I'm pretty sure, and then just like the idea of adding these spices, you know, cayenne pepper, and just different chilli peppers coming from Africa, and so all of that is cooked, you add your protein, and the protein, it has its own kind of story, like how was that preserved from whenever the animal was killed? Did you kill the animal this morning? Maybe, but probably not. And so, the way that that food is preserved, it might be a German smoking preservation, it might be a Native American salting, pickling kind of solution that has preserved it, and so when you start asking questions about how that meat got there, and how it got from the live creature that gave it to you to the bowl or to the pot, that's going to change. And so, all of that is then cooked for a long time, so time is an ingredient, and then it's placed over rice, and rice being sort of the quintessential ingredient in Cajun cooking still. I mean, I still talk to – and I say Cajun just because it's like automatic, but Louisiana Francophone or Louisiana French is kind of what I'm evoking when I say that, because Cajun is sort of like a subgroup of Creole, really – and so when you talk to these Louisianans who have left Louisiana, they're always very surprised and disappointed and even upset at the lack of rice culture in the rest of the continent, or in the rest at least as you go north from up here, the rest in the US and Canada, they're just like, 'How can these people not eat rice?', and I guess they're excited whenever they encounter Asian communities, because then there's like, 'Ah,' you know, a refreshing attachment to rice, someone we can identify with, because for us, I mean, rice is crucial. It's in everything, and

that is 100% from West African influence. Africans brought rice here whenever slaves were being brought to Louisiana, and not only did they bring the rice, but they brought the knowledge in how to grow rice, and how to create rice fields, and Louisiana, the *terroir* and the climate, is perfect for rice and the lowness and wet, marshiness of our – and even the prairies, you know – it's just perfect for rice, and as you go across the South toward the Carolinas, they have also some low country that's great for rice, and Georgia as well, and so where those two things kind of met, the African agricultural knowledge meets climate and *terroir*, there's a perfect rice community now that's fairly new in the United States and Louisiana's part of that, and we sort of take it to that new extreme by putting it in all of the dishes and I think it's very important to recognise that stuff, and so... that's why I would say, a gumbo, yes of course, it represents the cuisine and the culture very well, but just *fricassée* in general, because gumbo can be tricky. Like, a lot of people are strongly attached to the kind of gumbo that they grew up eating, so it's like, 'The way that *my* grandmother makes gumbo is the *right* way, and the way that everyone else makes gumbo, I don't know what that is,' you know, a lot of people think that way about it, and it's because it's become so significant and so representative of culture, people are, they're scared to see it altered in any kind of way, whereas something like a *fricassée*, *fricassée* just refers to the method, and so as long as those things stay the same, meaning roux, vegetables fried in it, water added to it to expand it, protein, on rice, you know that still leaves a lot of space for things to change that people are okay with. And I worked in a meat market for years, and so I talked to a lot of different people on how they cooked certain things, and people are always excited to hear about how you do your rice and gravy and how it's different. 'Oh, that's interesting,' 'Oh, I might try that,' so people are a little less resistant to change when it comes to that kind of meal, and so that's why I would say that's more representative of the culture.

Holly: I love hearing the debates that go on, even debates like, ‘Do you add tomatoes?’ because...

Chase: It’s huge, yeah, there’s so many memes about it too.

Holly: We, you know, we have very similar debates in the UK on – our debate is not really with tomatoes, our debate is with scones. There are two counties that neighbour each other that, we traditionally have our scones with clotted cream, which is very thick whipped cream...

Chase: Okay.

Holly:... and strawberry jam. And the question is, when you cut a scone in half to put the cream and jam on, which one do you do first and which one do you do second? And they literally have huge arguments, some people, over which way is the right way. It always makes me giggle to kind of, we have the Cornwall scone and the Devonshire, the Devon scone, and it’s like, ‘Well, either way it gets eaten,’ you can...

Chase: [(Laughs) Right!]

Holly: [... if you don’t] like the way it’s prepared, you just flip it upside down, and it’s the right way and...

Chase: Yeah, do it your way. Preference is always an option.

Holly: Yeah, it’s just amazing to hear even thousands of miles away, a similar debate is being had, but about something slightly different.

Chase: Yeah.

Holly: So, actually, when you mentioned food, when you said food was a metaphor earlier, it kind of kept bringing me back to the literature in my head, and I wondered if you could go into more detail, or from your perspective, of how Louisiana French literature, be it poetry or prose, how is it different, do you think, from standard French literature, like European French literature?

Chase: Okay... Well, because Louisiana, the language developed for so many years without literature, meaning, you know, during the 19th century – I mean, the literature creation in the 19th century, specifically in New Orleans and the Creole community, in the white and black Creole community, it developed really right alongside French literature, and the way that it was developing, meaning how people, how groups were organised, like literary groups, how they would come together, how they would publish in newspapers like, you know, *la nouvelle* that was being developed in French and English literature in the 19th century, that was being developed here too and published in newspapers for the same reason. There were theatre groups who were getting together, and it really looked like a micro version of French literature but happening here. And there was a lot of interchange, you know, Alfred Mercier would visit France a lot and studied there, spent a lot of time there and here writing, so I think that, up until the attack on the French language that started happening post-Civil War, everything kind of looked very similar to the way that French was developing, or French literature was developing, in Europe, and then post-Civil War, English communities were really on the rise and then with the development of the train system here, highways, and then oil being discovered in 1902, and then the strong nationalist movement that was happening all over the world during the two Great Wars, it was kind of like the perfect recipe for the erasure of French, or at least an attack on it, and then Louisiana rewrote the Constitution in 1921 saying that English was the only official language of the state, and so that disallowed French being used in school and so that's just another kind of punch to the French language, and, you know, a lot of people left Louisiana and were leaving and realising that French is really only being spoken here and in order to have any kind of chance of social upward mobility or economical upward mobility, you need to know English. So, with all of that happening, people weren't writing in French anymore, and so the last Louisiana newspaper, *L'Abeille*, they stopped publishing in (the) 1920s, I think it was '25 or '26 when their last issue came out, something like that, and so no one was writing

in Louisiana French. But all of the literary expression was still – or not literary, but all of the expression of stories and narratives – was still happening, and so I think that that’s where Louisiana kind of took a turn, like a little detour, and what really has led to it becoming unique in how it sounds and how it looks today, because it took that break from literacy and from literary expression, and you have what Barry Ancelet calls *oraliture*, and the oral expression, and that was still being captured by some great folklorists during that window of time who were going out and reporting people tell stories, tell jokes, and Barry Ancelet is one of them and when people capture that, then you can transcribe it, and it becomes literature again. So, with all of that being captured, people who are arriving in the ‘60s, ‘70s, ‘80s, and still today, have access to that and as writers, we read obsessively and (we’re) looking for ways to season our writing, and to add more richness and to use intertextuality and take interesting metaphors and wordplay and you kind of read to add more things to your toolbag and so, as Louisiana French writers, we do the same thing by listening to people speak the language and listening, especially with poetry, you listen to the music and you listen to how these musicians, whether it be contemporary musicians or people who are recorded singing in the ‘30s, we have access to all of that oral literature and that really has a strong influence still today in what kind of literature is coming out. So, Nathan Rabalais’ *Le Hantage*, a lot of that you have to read out loud to really appreciate what he’s doing there, and even *Feux Follets* still today, and especially in the early stages, because you still have a lot of people writing who are thinking with that same sense of urgency like I was talking about before, and so with that sense of urgency comes an even stronger connection to the past and that kind of tone of trying to preserve, and so they’re looking to the past even more to come up with ways to play with their writings. Just the form of poetry in general – obviously it has a very old-world rhythm and connotation to it, and then with the idea of songs and musicality, the rhythm that comes with poetry, that’s strongly influenced by the oral tradition here, and then once you get into the prose and theatre,

all of these things are still a strong, strong oral influence in the sound, in the wordplay, in just the musicality, but also just in the themes, because when you're telling stories, you might be attached to certain objects and from those objects, you sort of build a narrative. So, I'm thinking of the short story by Earlene Broussard, I think it's called *Les Vents du Nord*, and it's in one of the early *Feux Follets* editions, but it's called *Les Petits Vents du Nord*, I think, *The Little Northern Winds*, and she talks about gumbo in that story, and she talks about whenever the north wind starts to arrive in the fall and early winter here, from that idea, from just that little object of a northern wind, she builds little narratives in paragraphs, like, 'Oh, it reminds me of whenever we would have that first gumbo of the fall and my family would come over, and blah, blah, blah,' so it's just the way our memory works, right? You know, there's a little flash of an image that you might recall or a smell that you smell, or a sound that you hear, and then something clicks and that's sort of a kernel from which a story can grow, and I think that the literature does the same thing as our memory, and so that's another way that orality influences the literature.

Holly: It's almost Proust-like, by the sounds of it, this idea of these small things leading in to big, long memories, it's beautiful. I'm going to have to read that one, that's on my reading list now!

Chase: (Laughs)

Holly: Would you say then that *oraliture* is the most popular way of the community telling their stories, or would you say that there is some other art form that is the most popular, most prevalent way of doing that?

Chase: I don't know. I think about... in my own experience, the way that I've been exposed to stories of the past from older people and... I don't know if I – I mean, as a writer, I kind of think of everything as a piece of literature, a narrative, so keep that filter in mind, but it kind of all, for me, and this is one of the main reasons that I'm in food studies and just so obsessed

with foodways, is it always kind of revolves around the meal. The culture is so centred around food that it's like, 'Come to my house, I'm cooking this weekend or tonight or tomorrow night,' and that's like the fountain in the middle of the parkway. Everyone comes and we gather around that meal, around that idea of, 'We're cooking, come over,' and so that'd be family and friends, and it's always welcome, like, 'Bring your friends, bring this person – Oh, I heard you talk about this new friend that you have, bring him.' And so it's very inviting, very welcoming to different people, and then that's where these stories are born and... I know that that's a very basic, primitive idea, just people coming around the fire or around the cooking of food and telling stories, but I see that still very strong today, and that's how I learned so much about the past, that's how I've been able to connect with family members and friends, is just through older people in my family cooking something and we're all going to their house and just listening, being open to not being the one talking and listening to what they have to say. So, I think that if we can consider that *oraliture*, or oral literature, I would say yes, then that's sort of the recipe that goes into the creation of this stuff and the sharing of this stuff, it's often centred around food. I don't think of times whenever I'm sitting and listening to my grandfather or one of his friends or someone else telling me a story and it not being in the context of gathering to eat. I can't think of any circumstance...

Holly: The gathering to eat is kind of like the roux that then leads to the story, right?

Chase: Right, exactly, it's like it must be there in order for anything else to begin.

Holly: That's beautiful, that's really beautiful, I wish we did that in the UK. I only have two more questions for you.

Chase: Okay.

Holly: And the first one is as a Louisiana French speaker, is there anything that you wish was more widely known about the Louisiana French people?

Chase: Like, my people here or just by the world?

Holly: By the world, by – however you want to interpret that! By people who don't speak French, by other people in the US that are not from that community, by the world, whatever you want to go with.

Chase: Okay. Hmm... I think that just like people who are minority groups, minorities meaning linguistic minorities, or in other ways, I think that a blend of patience, empathy, and just the willingness to listen are really crucial to the valuing of what the people have to offer. So, what that looks like is if someone's a Louisiana French speaker, the willingness of other groups, meaning other groups from outside of Louisiana and other groups within Louisiana, to listen to what those people have to say, I think that from there, you can understand the value of the language linguistically, and just the richness of what these people have to offer as far as storytelling contributions, that might be their knowledge of how to cook something or how to build cabinets... I mean, there's so many different things that Louisiana people have to offer in so many ways outside of the literature, but I think just because language is the way that we communicate our knowledge, not just hearing the accent and saying, 'Oh, that person is dumb,' and, whether it be the English accent or the French accent, I think that just whenever you can get past the difference, the small differences in Louisiana French, and you see it, I mean – I don't know about now, because people in general have gotten a lot better at inclusivity in the past twenty or thirty years, we're still not anywhere near where we need to be, but it's gotten better – in the past, there's been some aversion to Louisiana French as a written language. Just the lack of the verb *être* being used in the *passé composé*, and just these little – which are, you know, they're big differences, but they're also just small, little structural differences that, once you get past those structural differences, you can see that Louisiana French is a lot like other dialects of French that have little differences from other dialects of French, and so I guess that would be my main thing that I would like for people to take away, is just to have a little bit of

patience, get past the differences, whether it be listening to someone talk or reading someone's writing, and wait, because there is something rich and something valuable coming behind that.

Holly: You actually just raised another for me. I know I said two more questions, I'm really sorry!

Chase: No problem!

Holly: The question you just raised for me actually, is as a researcher, as someone who is also an outsider to the community who sadly can't be there to experience it because of a global pandemic – who knew? – is there anything you think, as a researcher, I should know that I might not know, or is there anything that you think that maybe I haven't asked you about that maybe I should know about, or look into more?

Chase: Maybe this is something that you've read, most likely this is something that you've read and been exposed to, but I think it's very important to understand the gravity of when speaking still today to people who learned Louisiana French as their first language, so this being older people who then started learning English, just the gravity of the effect that their upbringing had on their perception of French and of the fact that they speak French and the... I mean, with a lot of people, just the level of shame and guilt that comes with that, and, you know, a lot of people really struggle to talk about it, they struggle to explain what French means to them and how it's impacted their lives, because a lot of people really suffered as a kid. You know, we think about kids who are being punished in school and maybe as an adult, we struggle to really comprehend the gravity of that, but from a kid's perspective, these things are really life-altering whenever... I mean, I think back to this interview that I did with Miss (X) from (Town Y), Louisiana, and she started crying during the interview and telling me a story about whenever she was locked in a closet for hours as a little kid, just punishing her for speaking French, and then she continued speaking French and she would continue to be locked in that closet during the school day, and that's not uncommon. That kind of story is something very

well-known, well-documented, and it's a shame, but what comes from that is different kinds of perspectives and perceptions of the French language, so a lot of people, most of these people from that generation chose to not teach it to anyone and not speak it because they didn't want their loved ones going through the same thing, and even now, whenever you talk to some of these people, they still truly believe that the French that they know, that they speak, that they can still speak and they're happy to speak it for the most part, but they still believe that it's not good, and that it reflects something lesser and that it's seen as inferior, and so you're often going to hear people say, '*Mon français, c'est pas le bon français,*' or they'll say, 'Oh, you don't want to hear me speak French, I don't know why you'd want to hear me speak French, the French you speak is way better.' They tell me that, and I sound like I'm from here when I speak French! Just because I'm young, they think that my French is going to be better because they know I didn't learn it from them, or at least they assume I didn't, and so they think I learned it from some professor from France and so that is something that I don't think is ever going to be undone. So, I think as researchers, it's important for us to step lightly when talking to native speakers, and I'm sure this is something that you've comprehended in reading about that trauma, but I think it's just very important to constantly validate and say, 'This is something very interesting, this is something very valuable, there's a reason why there are all of these efforts to preserve it,' like organisations like *Télé-Louisiane*, and university programmes and French immersion programmes, CODOFIL, all of these things have come from the fact that there is value, there's social, economical, historical, ecological value in keeping these languages alive, including the French in Louisiana, the Creole in Louisiana, Spanish in Louisiana, all of these languages, it's crucial to keeping other things that are important alive. So, just the understanding of the trauma and constantly valuing it, that is very important I think whenever discussing these things.

Holly: The sad thing is that unfortunately, this is not the first community that I've come across with similar sentiments among older speakers, and it's... thank you for making me aware of that, and it's sad that that is what happened, but we do see some similar things going – well, not to that extent, obviously, but we do see some people now, still, who kind of bristle at the sound of anything that isn't English, which is quite sad to think about.

Chase: Yeah, yeah it is. You know, there's also a deep regret and deep guilt – I mean, guilt, if you read Bourdieu and *habitus*, guilt is a huge motivating factor for a lot of things, and it's no different with language learning and language transmission, because I've talked to even my grandfather, who's – you know, throughout his life, he's sort of been like a juggernaut in promoting French language and speaking it in public spaces and if he knows you speak French, he will not speak English to you, unless he doesn't know a word in French, then he'll say it in English, but for the most part, he's French first, you know. And for him, if you ask him something like, I mean I've asked him why, and I already knew the answer kind of, but just to see like, 'Why didn't you teach it to your kids?' And, you know, a question like that is dangerous because these people have a deep regret, I think, for not teaching it and they realised that they were so infected by the Anglocentric idea that English is the superior language and so they get older and they realise that's not true, and so they, I think, have a lot of regret for not validating their own bilingualism. So that's another thing too, is (that) even if they're proud of it and they were one of those kids who were like, 'I'm going to keep speaking French no matter what you do,' to the teachers, there's still some trauma there, so it's tough and it's complicated and it's sad, but it's good that so many researchers and folklorists are valuing it, it's wonderful.

Holly: Definitely, definitely. And that leads me to the very last question, actually, which is what do you think the future might be for Louisiana French? Where do you think it's going?

Chase: For Louisiana French, I think that it's going to keep doing what it's been doing since it got here, and that's changing. You know, the French that people were speaking in the early 1900s is very different than the French that people were speaking in the early 1700s, and, in the late 18th century, whenever Acadians were arriving, they spoke a brand of French that changed a lot whenever they got here. It also changed the French that was being spoken here, and so it's very fluid. It's something that's constantly changing, but it changes just slow enough where people don't really notice it, because they speak one kind of French for their entire lifetime, and the French that they hear people, you know, their parents and grandparents speaking, it's similar, they're going to add a few things, and so it just changes so slow that you don't quite notice it happening, but it's changed and I think it's going to continue to change. I don't think it's going to go anywhere. I think that the spaces that it's spoken in are changing and for many decades, it was isolated and that's what helped it survive that attack. I think that because so many people were self-sustainable and (there were) so many little villages where people were able to live their entire lives in French for generations, despite that political and economical attack on the language, that was that moment where French was at its lowest and where it was almost being counted out, the bell almost rang, but then in the '60s, along with the civil rights movement, you had a lot of these other ethnic revival movements, and Cajun and Creole were part of that, so since then, it's been on this upwards swing, and maybe it'll have more downward swings, or maybe we'll just keep going up. And I don't see the state ever returning to a fully bilingual state, and I say that just because money kind of determines everything, and I just don't see enough monetary value, or at least I don't see the state seeing enough monetary value, in French to make it right alongside English. But we're going in the right direction right now, and I think that as French has always been, it will continue to be a language of artistic expression here, a language of performance and – I mean, that's why it's so hard to learn, right? Because a lot of the rules, a lot of the grammar rules were created for it

to be something poetic and something romantic and something for people to be able to play with, and so I think that that idea of play, of linguistic play, is always going to be there, and it's going to change forms and change right along with the language, and that's what's fun about it, so I guess the future of it, there will be a future of it, and what that's going to look like, I don't know, but I think it's always going to be kind of used in that playful, romantic, creative context.

Holly: Mm-hmm. That's beautiful, it's a beautiful note to end on.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW WITH DOUGLAS MADENFORD

Date of Interview: Tuesday 8th December 2020

Time of Interview: 16.00 BST, 10.00 CST

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text in italics*

Holly: The first question I have for you is a question inspired by Patrick Donmoyer, when I was talking to him, and it is – Before we begin anything else, which term do you prefer: Pennsylvania Dutch, Pennsylvania German or *Deitsch*?

Douglas: I prefer Pennsylvania Dutch. When I'm talking about our language, our culture, our history, then I use the term Pennsylvania Dutch. If I'm speaking the dialect, then I would use *Pennsylfaanisch Deitsch*, but... Yeah, I personally prefer Pennsylvania Dutch over Pennsylvania German. I will use Pennsylvania German from time to time, depending on the situation, but growing up, no one in my family ever called it Pennsylvania German, they only ever called it Pennsylvania Dutch, or just Dutch. That was what my family, and all of our neighbours and other people that we knew, that's what I grew up hearing, so...

Holly: That's similar to what Patrick said. He said German, he only really uses in academic scenarios.

Douglas: Exactly right.

Holly: But the other question that kind of arose from that was do you consider Pennsylvania Dutch a dialect or do you consider it a language?

Douglas: I... I mean, I use the word dialect a lot, and I guess I do that because of literature that I've read, where it was always referred to as a dialect, but in my heart it is a language, and I

think Mark Loudon makes that very clear in his book that it is a language and it's unique, it isn't a dialect. So, I will flip between both – in a lot of my YouTube videos, I will say dialect instead of language, sometimes I'll say language – so I guess I use both interchangeably, and I know for linguists that's not necessarily the right answer maybe, but I do use both interchangeably.

Holly: It's whatever you feel in your heart, Doug!

Douglas: (Laughs)

Holly: It's that pride, the pride of being Pennsylvania Dutch.

Douglas: Well for me, then, it's a language. If I'm talking purely from the bottom of my heart, then it's a language, yeah.

Holly: That does not surprise me. (...) One other question, actually, that arose from your YouTube videos was you said something that really chimed with me, because it was something that Patrick had said, and I had just interviewed him, and I saw your YouTube video and I thought. 'Oh! Okay, this is a common thing, or a more common thing than I thought.' You mentioned that you don't necessarily feel comfortable using your native accent when you're speaking English. Could you maybe talk a little more about why you don't feel comfortable using it? Or if you want to use it in this interview, that's fine.

Douglas: Well, it probably will come out from time to time, because I'm at home. I didn't really become aware of my accent like most people, their story is usually the same – they don't become aware of an accent that they have until they move away from where they're from, and when they're not around that accent all the time, and that was the case for me when I went away to college, cause the college that I went to was not in Pennsylvania Dutch country, so that was really my first experience of coming into contact with a lot of people that did not come from that region of Pennsylvania where I grew up. And it was made very clear very early to me that I had this accent and as a college student, undergraduate level, you're trying to figure

out your way, and you're trying to of course fit in, just like anybody else, and there – I never got pressure not to use my accent or to not talk like that. I made a personal choice, professionally, I guess, or academically, to suppress that accent. And then staying, living in this area where I do now, which is also in the area where I went to school, went to college, again, there's not a lot of people that speak with that accent here where I live, so again, I came to this decision that here in the professional setting, as a teacher, I will use a more clean English, I guess, is one way of putting it. However, when I'm at home, when I'm among people from my family, when I'm among friends where I'm not in that professional setting, then I speak – I speak, I don't even know how to say this, but I speak the way that I speak, I guess, you know what I mean?

Holly: Yeah, [it relaxes.]

Douglas: [I am honestly] very cognisant of it when I'm in my classroom, when I'm doing any kind of professional presentation, and it's only something within the last couple of years that I've really started to think about, and I've heard a couple of different podcasts and other things that I've read where there's a lot more people are starting to reembrace accents, regional accents, and it was one of those things where I thought to myself, 'I really should just speak the way that I speak,' it makes me different, it brings awareness as well, but it's a hard – since I've been doing it for so long, it's kind of hard to in a professional setting, when I'm in my classroom, to just throw that wall down that I've put up academically, professionally, and let the real Doug talk, and every now and then when I do, either by accident, like a word slips out, or the way that I say something slips out that's not "normal", what I've found is a lot of my students will then have very positive reactions and comments towards it. It makes them curious; they also think it's cool, 'Oh, you speak that way? That's kinda neat!' So I think, as I'm getting older, I'm finding that I'm doing it more often and more willingly, maybe not out of a sense of pride, there might be some of that at play, of course, but I think more... I want my children to

grow up with this accent, too, and that's another thing that's really pushed me a lot here recently at home, having young children. I want them to hear it, because that's what I heard growing up, so that is that sense of passing it on as well. I don't – there are some people that really play the Pennsylvania Dutch accent up and overplay it, there's been a lot of comedians in our history that's done that, and yes, it brings light to the accent, and the other thing that's really pushing me I think more and more is that the accent is dying in Southeastern Pennsylvania. As we become a more globalised society and (we have) Internet and access to so many different things, the accent that I grew up hearing from my grandparents' generation... you can still find, but it's not like it was, and the number of speakers that grow up and the number of people growing up with that accent are definitely – I mean the percentage, the bottom has dropped out, and if we had a chart of percentage of people with these accents, I mean, the last fifteen, twenty years that has been just a nosedive down, so I think there's a lot of that too, that I don't want to see it completely die out, I guess, and there's a lot of people that'll tell me when they hear it, like if I do it in my YouTube videos or so forth, the comments that I get the most are: 'I watch your YouTube videos because it reminds me of my childhood,'; 'I can hear my grandfather in your voice,'; 'I can hear my uncle in your voice.' And those are things that I don't set out to do, that's just something that happens and when I read those comments, that gives me more fuel for the fire that I should be speaking the way that I speak in regards to my accent, and when you think about how easy is it for me to give such joy to people and such fond memories of their past, and (it) also helps them reconnect with a part of their culture and their history that they've been denied because of previous generations saying, 'Well, this is different, this is something I don't want to pass on,' or they were forced not to pass it on, 'Well we don't talk that language anymore, you're American, speak English,' and that mentality was strong for two or three generations, and understandably so given our history with the two World Wars and this push post-World War II to – you know, this amalgamation of America, the idea of the

immigrant story not having as much of a strong part in our history, even though it still does and still should, you know, this push in the '70s, '80s, and '90s to really embrace the idea we're all Americans, we're all, you know... But there's regional differences all over the United States. I always laugh at those arguments and think to myself, 'But, you know, that's not true! That's not a part of our story!' Our story has never been one of amalgamation, it's always been a story of individuality in this country. So...

Holly: The melting pot.

Douglas: Yeah, right, I mean, exactly. So I don't know if that answered your question at all (Laughs).

Holly: No, it did, it did. What you said about comedians, the first thing that came to my head was, and I don't know if this is – I'm pretty certain it's not an accurate depiction of Pennsylvania Dutch in any way, shape or form – but the first thing that came to my head was Dwight Schrute from *The Office*.

Douglas: Oh, yeah. And, so yeah, that's a great example. So, the last two weeks, I've been really promoting our story of the Belsnickel on my YouTube channel and Patrick, you know, if you haven't, Patrick's performance of him at last week's virtual 'Christmas on the Farm' was so well done. So what we're battling right now, and Patrick would echo this right away, is that the vast majority of Americans, if they know anything about the Belsnickel, it's because of Dwight Schrute on *The Office*, and yeah, there are some things that Dwight did and said that are true, but the vast majority of the things he did and said were overblown characterisations, and some things downright were wrong. Sadly, that's become this hot button issue right now in America, because a children's Christmas movie just came out on streaming called *Christmas Chronicles 2*, I think – there's a couple of big-name actors in it, and it's a really popular, current holiday movie. Well the villain in the film is the Belsnickel, and someone – whoever who wrote that script either heard this story or found (this) name and if you watch it – my kids watched it

this weekend, and I didn't sit and watch it all, but my wife did, and she was kind of telling me about it – and the depiction of the Belsnickel in that movie is – they just use the name, and they took this idea of a character that's evil, you know, the villain to Santa Claus is the Belsnickel in this movie, so now there I'm thinking to myself, 'So any kid that watches this film, and there's, I don't know, a million American kids might have watched this movie this year, and that's their – now, whenever they're going to run into this idea of the Belsnickel again, that's going to be the image that they have in their mind, this evil guy in this movie.' So, things like that bother me, but at the same time, I get it. Hollywood's making money, they're going to do what they want to do, and Dwight Schrute is the same way. I mean, *The Office* latched on to something and used it, and it was popular, it became a popular character now, there's tons of memes online with it using it, and you can buy tee shirts with him dressed up as the Belsnickel and all this stuff that you can find online, so that's been something that – (Laughs) That's always the first thing I get. If I say something about the Belsnickel to somebody that is uninformed, their automatic knee-jerk response is, 'Oh, you mean Dwight Schrute on *The Office*.' And it's tough.

Holly: I mean that you said it doesn't bother you. Does it ever frustrate you in some ways that when people think of that region – I mean, we've talked in the past about how, when people think of Pennsylvania Dutch, they tend to think of the Amish and the Mennonites...

Douglas: That's what I was just going to say, yeah.

Holly: Is it that same kind of frustration, that you want to go, 'But there's actually a massive non-sectarian community here, and we're not Dwight Schrute!'

Douglas: Yeah, absolutely. I don't know if I'd say to the point where I'm like pounding the table in frustration, but it is frustrating, sure. It's frustrating whenever I run into anybody and they have these preconceived notions of my culture and my language and my history that a lot of times are wrong, and then, when you try to inform them or educate them a little bit, there's

always pushback. I don't know if you were talking to Patrick about this, but one myth that Patrick and I fight a lot, and maybe Mark and Josh will talk about this when you talk (to) them, is where the term Pennsylvania Dutch even comes from...

Holly: [Yeah, we've discussed this one.]

Douglas: [Where does this, you know, this idea] that there was the word *Deutsch*, and people misconstrued it to Dutch, and that's how we got our name, and that's nowhere near the truth, and that's one that we fight all the time, and I fight that with people that *are* Pennsylvania Dutch that grew up hearing this myth and they believe it as gospel. And when you tell them the truth, they think you're full of shit – I'm sorry, I shouldn't swear – but they think you're lying, they think you're lying, and you're like, 'No, let me tell you the real story!', because the real story is *way* more interesting than this idea of corrupting the word *Deutsch*, so those types of things frustrate me, but as an educator, whenever you (meet) people that don't want to learn or aren't willing to at least listen, that's frustrating no matter what we're talking about, right? But I guess it's a little more frustrating for me when it's this topic, something that I'm very passionate about, but yeah you're right, it is, it's frustrating, sure.

Holly: It's the *Deutsch* pride coming out!

Douglas: Yeah, a little bit, a little bit (Laughs).

(...)

Holly: So, when we talk about being Pennsylvania Dutch, then, what does that mean to you?

Douglas: Well, first and foremost, it's who I am. It's what my roots are, it's where my story starts. You know, I don't know if you can see, but behind me here are – and I didn't plan this this way – are a lot of old family photos of my Dad's side of the family, my Mom's side of the family, and they're all old Pennsylvania Dutch people, that's – There's nobody in any of these pictures that's not Pennsylvania Dutch, that's just how my family tree is. And now this is where

I sit and do all my YouTube work and my other Pennsylvania Dutch stuff, and I feel them over me. I feel them looking down... ah, it makes me a little emotional...

Holly: It's okay, if you want to take a moment, [that's absolutely fine.]

Douglas: [No, no, I'm fine, I'm okay.] But I feel this behind me looking down on what I'm doing, and hopefully they're saying, you know, 'Keep it up, keep doing what you're doing, you're not just telling your story, you're telling our story, you're telling the story of the other 300-plus years of immigrants that came to this country in our culture and in our language,' and it is all encompassing when it comes to me personally. It's my story, and then I say it's my food, it's my traditions, it's my beliefs, it's who I am. And I know that not every American necessarily can say that about their cultural background, because a lot of Americans have so many different ethnic backgrounds in them, it just happens that my family tree tends to be pretty linear in that sense, that there isn't too much influence outside of the Rhine valley, outside of Switzerland, outside of this area where a lot of the Pennsylvania Dutch immigrants come from, so for me, it is – I cannot be who I am without acknowledging the DNA of the Pennsylvania Dutch in me. I can't say it anymore, I guess, clearer than that.

Holly: It's you.

Douglas: It shapes everything, well – not everything – but it shapes a lot of what I do, who I am, and what I hope to pass on to my children.

Holly: That's beautiful, and this idea of passing on the line – we need to make a Pennsylvania Dutch equivalent of *Hamilton*, I think, and pass the story down!

Douglas: Oh, my goodness! (Laughs) Well, I'll tell you what, Ben Rader, I don't know if you've come across his stuff, I've promoted his stuff before. He's someone that's around, I think he's two years younger than me, so late thirties, and he's doing modern style music right now in Pennsylvania Dutch. It has kind of like an R&B feel to it, it's not quite rap and it's not quite full R&B, but it's modern, it's a modern-sounding music, all in Pennsylvania Dutch, and

I'm hoping that there's going to be some younger people that latch on to this music and realise that, 'Hey, this isn't a dead language, this isn't a dead culture, it's still alive, we can create using it,' so...

Holly: I need to listen to this music now, if this is the *Hamilton* equivalent in Pennsylvania Dutch, I am sold, you've sold me!

Douglas: (Laughs)

(...)

Holly: So, we've talked about what evokes Pennsylvania Dutchness for you, what it means to you on a personal level, what would you say is the symbol of Pennsylvania Dutch? When you think of it – you mentioned food, for example – when you think of it, what comes to mind first? Is it the family, is it food, is it beliefs, is it language?

Douglas: I don't know if I can say just one thing. I think it's a healthy combination of all of those things for me. Family, of course, but I don't even think I could rank these things in order of what comes to mind first. It truly, for me, it's truly a combination of all of those things. You know, when you talk to people that necessarily didn't grow up with the language, but still consider themselves, that still are Pennsylvania Dutch, a lot of people are in that boat, because they didn't learn the language, it wasn't passed on to them. When they think of – if you ask them this question, for a lot of them it would probably be food, because food is the strongest connection for them, because I think it's the easiest thing to connect to. They think of the traditional food that was on the table at their grandmother's house, or some specific recipe, because a lot of the – the language wasn't passed on, a lot of our traditions, like old traditions, have died out as well, they weren't passed on post-World War II, so I think for the average Pennsylvania Dutch person, they're going to connect with family and food first and foremost. Where I'm a little different is that I was – luckily, the language was passed on to me, that is a part of my connection to what is Pennsylvania Dutch, but I also think for me also (it) is our

visual art. Nothing screams Pennsylvania Dutch more to me than a barn with hex signs on it, or a certain type – you know, that style of Pennsylvania Dutch art that you find in quilts or in birth certificates, *Fraktur*, these types of things, that's a visual representation of our culture, and I connect with that, I do.

Holly: How would you characterise that visual art? Because I've seen a lot of it, I've seen – unfortunately not in person – but I've seen the photos in Patrick Donmoyer's book, I've been reading about it in Don Yoder's book – well, he wrote a lot of books, but his one on American folklife – and barn stars, or hex signs, and *Fraktur* come up a lot. How would you characterise that art, because it feels like it's very unique.

Douglas: I've never been asked that question before.

Holly: Sorry!

Douglas: How would I characterise it? Well, I think it is a visual representation of the things that are important to us historically, so in our art, there is a lot of birds and nature and flowers in our traditional *Fraktur*, and being an agrarian society, community, those were things that were important to us, it showed our connection to the earth, to the land, and I think with a lot of our folk art, it's also (a) very bright and vibrant colour choice. Now, why that is – I can't go into too much in the history of that, although there are people I know that could. I think some of it has to do with we are a very humble people. However, when it comes to our art, we're not, and I find that funny in a certain way, but I also appreciate it. The average Pennsylvania Dutchman is not going to walk down the street bragging about X, Y, or Z, bragging about their prize bull or bragging about how many bushels of corn they grew this year or how great their kid is, we're not that – that's just not who we are. But that same Dutchman will gladly turn around and put a giant piece of art on his barn that everybody can see and be super proud of it, or have that chest, that cedar chest, at the foot of their bed that is ornately painted with all these symbols of our culture whether it's tulips or distelfinks, which are the bird that you often find

in our art, or stars, hex signs, those barn star-type motifs – it's such an outward expression that we are proud of, but yet we would never go around and outwardly express our pride in anything else, like, vocally or verbally. I find that funny, and I've never thought much about this or talked to anybody much about this, but now that you've asked that question, it makes me think that's something that I'd love a sociologist to dig into that with a bunch of Pennsylvania Dutch people, 'Why are you perfectly okay...?' – my father's a great example. My father is a humble guy, he does not go around bragging about anything, but when you go to his property and you see our barn and you see the massive hex sign and you walk into our house and you see all of the folk art throughout it, I mean there is Pennsylvania Dutch, like, 'We're throwing it up, here it is, blah,', all this Pennsylvania Dutch imagery and motifs and he would never hide that. If you put a blanket over that chest to cover the art, he'd pull the blanket off, you know, and that is, I think that's – I don't know if that's something that's unique to our culture that we're like that, you know. Verbally we're not outwardly expressive and braggard, but when it comes to our art, then we are kind of over-the-top, we really go all out. I mean, when you look at the illuminated manuscripts of the Pennsylvania Dutch, they were from the 1700s and 1800s, the *Fraktur* that you've been looking at, that is not simple plain art, it's full of colour, it's full of images, and then the script that's usually used is over-the-top, it's not simple lettering, it's usually embellished a little bit, so... I don't even know what the original question was there, but I hope you got something out of that!

Holly: I did, and to be honest, I think I've also forgotten the original question, because I was so swept up in it! It's fascinating to me that it's like – it's quiet pride, let's say.

Douglas: Yes, absolutely! No, that is it, that is...

Holly: Let the work do the talking.

Douglas: That – I'm telling you. So, another thing that you'll often find in commonality among the Pennsylvania Dutch that are not Amish and Mennonite, but this also fits into them too, is

that when you see a farm that's owned by a Pennsylvania Dutchman, it's usually meticulously clean, and the grass is always cut, and there are no weeds in the garden, and there are no weeds in the flowerbed. They take – we take great pride in that. And I think that's part of our German DNA, too, because if you've ever travelled to the Palatinate region...

Holly: Yes, I lived there!

Douglas: It is, it's – the Germans are very... clean freaks? They're clean freaks, and everything has its place and its order, and if there would be a weed in that flowerbed, that German old lady's going to pull that thing out so fast, you can't even see her do it, so I think that's something that was in our DNA that we brought over to the United States with us. It is a stereotype that is true about us.

Holly: And it's that tie to nature, [as well...]

Douglas: [Yes, yes.]

Holly: It's that staying tied to nature, just as you might have been generations ago, so it's travelled through. There was a place where I lived in the Palatinate that was – it was like a Lego town, [everything was so perfectly planned out] and every house was identical.

Douglas: [(Laughs)] It's crazy, isn't it? That's one thing that I love about Germany too though. When I go to that region of Germany, I always feel at home. You can make the argument, 'Well, your roots are originally there,' but come on, that's 300 years separated, but yet I feel at home there in that region. It looks like home, I mean – yeah, okay, the buildings are a lot older and (a) different style of architecture, but the geography, the landscape looks the same, and the people have these same mannerisms that we tend to have. It's really kind of crazy, really kind of crazy.

Holly: Is that something that is kind of common among Pennsylvania Dutch people that have been to the Palatinate? Is that a common sentiment, this feeling of it being home for them?

Douglas: Well, I think the vast majority of people that I've talked to, that have travelled to Germany, that are Pennsylvania Dutch, will often say it reminded them of home, reminded them of Pennsylvania. The people that – you know, they felt a sense of warmth among the people that were there, I don't know how many of them would ever have said they feel at home.

Holly: But it's like home, it's...?

Douglas: I think a lot of people that I've talked to did feel a sense of connection.

Holly: That's really interesting, that's really interesting, because I – I mean, we've talked in the past about this, and in the other community I'm looking at, there is also this kind of, 'Is there a connection? Do they feel this connection to Europe or not?' And the views so far are varied, but I think that's been relatively common in what I've come across so far on the Dutch side, is that there is this feeling of connection to the *Pfalz*, in many ways.

Douglas: Right. I think to a certain extent there is. The problem is that so few Pennsylvania Dutch people will have or are travelling to this part of Germany. One thing that Patrick and I would really like to work on in the future is creating these back-and-forth trips, where we take a busload of Pennsylvania Dutch people for ten days and we're going to go to the Palatinate, and we're going to show them a couple different places – you know, do some touristy stuff, but also allow them to connect with the people that are there. Heck, it might twelve generation-removed cousins or something like that, you know? You never know! A lot of Americans know where their immigrant ancestor, what town they came from, and they're very proud of telling you that. 'Oh, my fifth great-grandfather came from the town of Haßloch, Germany. Someday I'd love to go there,' and a lot of Americans will do that, they will make that pilgrimage back to the 'old country' and go to the town where their great-great-grandfather emigrated from, or something like that. So that's one thing that Patrick and I would really like to do. And we'd like to do it so that we have a true exchange in that we're taking a busload of Americans one summer, and the next summer, a busload of Germans from the Palatinate comes to

Pennsylvania and sees our culture and sees what we've done with their old culture here in the United States. So, you know, right now, with everything going on, of course that's impossible, but it is something that Patrick and I have talked about, and I know there's a lot of interest. People have just put the feelers out, and there have been a lot of people that have been like, 'That'd be really awesome', so I'm hoping in the next couple of years to make that become a reality. I think that'd be really neat.

Holly: That would be amazing. I think that would be an amazing thing to do! It might be worth starting out with the Universities, like Kutztown and... I don't know, like, Trier, maybe, and do an exchange that way, cause I'm sure – I know Trier's a bit more touristy maybe, but the Moselle region is a good mix of both.

Douglas: Yeah, it's beautiful too.

Holly: It is beautiful! I was in Trier, that's where I lived, so I can say with relative safety: the Moselle was a very nice place to live, we were very fortunate. So, we've talked about the connections to Germany, and you said last time we spoke that it's interesting in that, when you were filming *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* – I've said that incorrectly again, I'm so sorry!

Douglas: No, that was good! That was pretty good!

Holly: We're working on it, we're working on the *Deutsch*! You would meet people in the *Pfalz* that actually you could communicate with them in *Deutsch* and it was relatively problem-free, because it was a dialect they were still very comfortable using. What was it like going to the *Pfalz* and exploring that a bit more?

Douglas: Well, kind of some of the things I already talked about. I mean, that ability to be able to speak in one of your first languages with other people thousands of miles away in a totally different country, of course, that makes a connection right off the bat, and of course, it makes you feel at ease, too, that you can be yourself, so to speak. You don't have to worry about, 'I'm the tourist and I've got to be careful about what I'm saying, what I'm doing, how I look, blah

blah blah, not trying to step on anybody's toes or break any social faux pas or anything like that, so that threw a lot of walls down right off the bat of course, and then when you would go into restaurants and you would see things on their menus that you grew up eating, you know, across the ocean, like stuffed pigs' stomach or the prevalence of *Sauerkraut* or the prevalence of *Maultaschen*, *Buwe Schenkel*, what we would call *Buwe Schenkel*, these are all things that, for the average Pennsylvania Dutchman, they think is, 'Well, this is our food,' you know, and then you go across the ocean and you sit down in a restaurant 4,000 miles away and you see the same thing on a menu, and those people are saying, 'This is our food,' and you're like, 'No, it's *our* food,' and so I think you run (into) that a little bit, and that also then helps you feel more of a connection too. You're like, 'Oh, well we eat that too!,' or then you can enter in(to) the conversation, 'Well, we eat that, but ours, we do it a little bit differently,' then that'll always bring about great discussions or great – same way with the language. There's certain words that we use that have died out hundreds of years ago in the *Palz* and have been replaced by a standard German word, or who knows what, you know, and I'll use a word and they'll find that so fascinating that they'll say, 'Oh, I remember my grandmother using that word 80 years ago!,' or whatever, blah blah blah, so that's fun too, and that helps. I mean, what I – I have been to the *Palz* many times, but when we filmed the movie, that was by far the most intense trip that I'd ever been (on) there, because I wasn't there as a tourist just bumming it around, going to this site, to this site, and I got a lot of serious interaction with the locals, with natives, who normally wouldn't come in to much contact with tourists, and that alone, if you think of it in a normal situation – if you live in a small town and here comes this guy from another country that's essentially a tourist and wants to really engage with you, a lot of people are defensive about that. I know a lot of Americans would be, anyway. But because of the connections that we shared, I did not find that with one single person that I interacted, that they were standoffish or defensive. Nine times out of ten, they couldn't do enough for me, they

wanted to – ‘Well, let me go buy you a drink,’, ‘Let’s go have dinner somewhere,’, ‘Let’s go do this,’, ‘Let’s go do that,’, and why? It wasn’t because we had a bunch of cameras and microphones – maybe that was part of it, okay – but I think the majority of it was because they felt a connection. I felt a connection. Here’s this guy that’s speaking a language that I understand, here’s this guy that we share common traditions, common food items, we have this language that’s so similar, I think that automatically, it makes sense. It’s human nature to connect to somebody like that that you share things with, right? So... for me, the Pfalz – and it’s regional, too, like I’ve been in the Moselle valley multiple times, and the dialect that they speak there, like *Moselfränkish*, it’s a little different. I can speak Pennsylvania Dutch there and most people will understand and when they speak local dialect there, I can follow, you know, the majority of the conversation, but the *Palz* is – I think people always forget how the *Palz* is small, but yet it’s kind of big, language wise. You have all these various regional dialects that, what’s spoken in the *Hinterpalz*, what’s spoken in the Moselle, what’s spoken up near Koblenz, what’s spoken down on the *Weinstrasse*, it is regionally different, but I’ve found that Pennsylvania Dutch has allowed me to interact with all of those regional dialects and still be able to communicate. There’s some regions where it’s a lot closer – the area around Landau and Speyer, that region there along the Rhein – I have the dialect that they speak in that region, as far as my Pennsylvania Dutch goes, and there’s regional differences among Pennsylvania Dutch speakers too here in the United States, but for me, when I’m in that region of the Pfalz, that is the closest that I have found to what I speak, and when I look on a map where most of my ancestors came from, it’s from, you know, a circle, about a fifty-mile radius circle or so, in that general bullseye area of there, where Baden-Württemberg and the Palz come together and the Rhein river flows through, and Hessen comes down and touches there, so it makes sense, I guess, but I do feel a connection personally, when I go over there. My brother has never been, and he really wants to go, but just because of schedule and his work, he has a very busy job

and he's just never had the chance to go. He wants to! I'm really curious to see the first time – I hope I get to take him the first time he gets to go and to see how he responds and how he interacts, it would be fun. My dad's the same way – My Dad's never been either, and he has expressed interest in going, but just has never pulled the trigger on it, and I'd love to see his reaction as he meets these people, cause my Dad's never really travelled much, and my brother hasn't either. They don't have this international background that I have, so I'm really curious to see how they would react and interact with people as well in that region of Germany, and I think it'd be a lot of fun more than anything else.

Holly: Maybe a family pilgrimage post-COVID?

Douglas: (Laughs) Yeah, right! (A) post-COVID family pilgrimage sounds good to me!

(...)

Holly: So, one thing I did want to ask is Pennsylvania Dutch is still used in lots of non-sectarian communities, just as much as it's used in the Amish and Mennonite communities, and Mark makes that really clear in his book as well that people tend to assume it's just an Amish and Mennonite thing, and that's not the case. So, do you think that when non-sectarian communities are still using *Deitsch*, do you think it's more of a resistance thing, kind of a, you know, 'Well, we're going to resist against English here,' or is it more a celebration of their heritage and their culture, or is it more a mix of both?

Douglas: I think it depends on which generation you're talking with. I think among my grandparents' generation and my parents' generation, it was a little bit of a pushback against English, but not to the point where they thought English was dumb or that it was not who they were, because they were all English speakers too. But I think it was also the case that it was my grandparents' generation which was the last real generation of all native speakers, where they learned English as their second language or they grew up with both languages in their house, so for them I think, you know, I think of my four grandparents speaking Pennsylvania

Dutch was just what they did because that was their language, that was their first language. When I look at my parents' generation, it was weird because my parents are both born in the '50s, so they grew up in an area post-World War II baby boom, they grew up in the generation that was the first generation that really was told, 'This isn't something we do anymore, this isn't something that's cool, this is what your parents did, this is what your grandparents did, this isn't who we are.' I mean, think about it, it was the '60s. The counterculture revolution, all that that's going on the United States – well, in England too. And I think for them, my parents' generation, it was a little bit more of... Well, I know for a fact. My Mother was, I don't – there were times where I think my Mother was embarrassed that she could speak Pennsylvania Dutch and understood it. My Dad, maybe not as much as my Mom, even though my Mom's Dutch was way better than my Dad's (Laughs) That's a whole other story, but my Mom was hesitant to speak it ever in public, even though she could, and a lot of people in her generation and my Dad's generation were in that aspect. If they could speak it, they didn't, because of cultural pressure, I guess, fitting in. You didn't go to school in the 1960s and '70s and speak Pennsylvania Dutch, because that made you look like a dumb farmer, or you looked like a dumb Dutchman, you know? 'Oh, come on, guys, you out in the back there without electricity and no running water in your house, and you still speak this old, stupid language?' And that was truly the case in the 1960s and '70s in Pennsylvania. And I'm going to be honest with you, Holly, these are questions that, you know, you're – Mark Loudon, I mean, Mark Loudon is Mark Loudon, when it comes to academics, in regards to the language, he is the gold standard – but Mark's not a Pennsylvanian, he didn't grow up Pennsylvania Dutch, he looks at the language and the culture through a very specific lens, and I'm not taking anything away from his lens. I look at the language and the culture through a very different lens than Mark does, so it'll be really curious for you, I think, to hear his take on this stuff as opposed to my take on this stuff, and like Patrick – Patrick and I both grew up with it as people in Pennsylvania, with

grandparents that spoke it, with parents that had knowledge of it. We grew up with the traditions, we grew up with the language. And Josh Brown, to a certain extent, too, it was through his, I think his Mom's side of the family, oral Pennsylvania Dutch, but he had a lot of other influences, and now he didn't grow up going to *Versammlings*, like Patrick and I did, and some of these things that we've got(ten) to experience as kids in the '80s before they all died out that Mark Loudon never did, so it'll be curious, I think for you. I think Mark also looks at things through more of the sectarian lens than the non-sectarian lens. A lot of his Pennsylvania Dutch he learned through his connection in the Mennonite Church, and he's a Midwesterner, too, and that's – there's differences there, so... And I'm not trying to say anything bad about Mark at all, that's not what I'm saying, but I think the one thing that I would ask you to kind of pay attention too is that the experiences that someone like Patrick and I had growing up, where we did, when we did, is very different from the experiences that Mark has had, and his connection to our language and our dialect and our culture, so to speak. So, I think that's – when I look at Pennsylvania Dutch, and I've read all of his stuff religiously, and the people that have come before him that were also great scholars of the language and the culture, that wrote some of the stuff that is, what'll be the core of your research, a lot of them weren't Pennsylvania Dutch, and yet they were writing about the Pennsylvania Dutch as if they were, and that's something that I've often had a small issue with from the academic side of things, and – look, I mean, I have a Masters' degree in German, I get academia 100%, I understand the value of research and the value of this study of linguistics and all of that, but at the same time, I often – I'm on a soapbox, now, I've got to be careful –

Holly: [No, no, it's fine, you go for it.]

Douglas: [I think that the things] that Patrick is doing, I think that groups here in Southeastern Pennsylvania to maintain and preserve and promote our language, our culture, our history, and our story, that academia never does, and I get it. That's not academia's job, right? I get that.

Their job is to research, their job is to study, their job is to analyse, their job is to preserve in written form, maybe, you know, ‘Well, I’ve studied this language, here’s what I came to the conclusion of, et cetera, et cetera,’ recording native speakers and having archives and all of that, and I don’t want to take away from that value. The value of that is beyond price. There’s no price (you) can put on the value of what academia does. I often think that academia doesn’t... not all of academia, some academia does not value the work that non-academics are doing. I don’t know if I can put that any nicer [without – (Indistinguishable)]

Holly: [No, no, I get what you mean.] There’s like a schism there, let’s say, and this kind of separation between ‘high’ and ‘low’, if you’ve ever read Bourdieu, kind of like this ‘high culture’, ‘low culture’ thing.

Douglas: Well, it can’t be any more relevant to us in the difference of your very first question today. Do I prefer Pennsylvania German or Pennsylvania Dutch?

Holly: Exactly.

Douglas: To – If I go home to my grandfather, who’s 95 years old, and say to him, ‘Are you Pennsylvania Dutch or are you Pennsylvania German?’, he would look at me with the biggest puzzle on his face, like, ‘Why are you even asking me that question? I don’t even know what...’ To him, he might even say, ‘What do you mean, Pennsylvania German? We’re Pennsylvania Dutch, damn it! That’s who we are,’ you know what I mean? And I often think, going back to this whole discussion about accent and the language, for a generation, we were told that if you spoke this language, if you had this accent, that you were automatically assumed to be a dumb, backwoods, redneck bumpkin that wasn’t educated, that didn’t understand, you know, anything, that didn’t know anything. That really hurts, and it frustrates me, that we had two generations of people that grew up thinking that their culture was less, or had less value, than mainstream American culture, and that’s a battle that Patrick and I fight all the time, and it’s one thing that we’re hoping that the work that we do younger generations, and the generation that got hurt,

my parents' generation, can come to the realisation that this is something that we can celebrate and be proud of, not to the point of, like, nationalism or ethnocentrism or anything like that, but just the fact that there is nothing wrong with celebrating our culture, our language, our history, our heritage. We have a history and a story to tell that, for all too long, nobody wanted to tell, and we are finding – at least what I'm finding, I think Patrick can echo this too – is that we are getting more and more interest from younger Americans who feel they're missing, there's something missing from them. They know that they, 'Oh, my grandmother was Pennsylvania Dutch, but I don't really know what that means, but if my grandmother was, that means I am too, right? Well, what does that mean?' And I think we're at a point now, because of things like the Internet, and because of things like social media, it's becoming cool, and I can't stress the value – you know this as a younger person. The value of something being accepted and not only accepted, but also being cool, and we're finding that, more and more, through comments that I get on my YouTube videos, through comments that I get through emails from people that are trying to learn Pennsylvania Dutch. I mean, that alone – I constantly get emails not every day, but darn near every day, about people that think it's so cool that they can now learn this language that their grandparents spoke or that their great-grandparents spoke, they thank me for the work that I'm doing, and I'm not out there to get the thanks, but it makes me feel really good that people all of a sudden think this is something that is worth their time, and worth an investment of their time. And you can't put a value on that! In my mind, you can't. I mean, time is one of the most valuable assets that we as humans have, and how we use our time is a direct correlation of who we are. If we decide to, you know, sit in the gambling parlour every Friday night and gamble, or sit in the pub on a Thursday night with friends, that's a – we're making a conscious decision to how we want to spend our time, and we have people that are coming to all of these events, that are attending all these virtual online events that we're doing, that are watching videos, that are buying books that are, you know, doing X, Y, and Z,

and to me that's saying they find value in this story, in this culture, in this language, enough the fact that A, in some instances, they're spending money, and B, they're spending their time, so... you know, I don't even know what we were talking about here, but that's [what we're interested in, right?]

Holly: [We were talking about] resistance versus celebration, but it's becoming more, you were saying it's kind of becoming more a celebratory thing, now that younger Americans [are starting to get acquainted with it.]

Douglas: [Oh, absolutely. No, absolutely, and I think that one way] that you definitely can see this is you look at someone like Rachel Yoder, who does contemporary Pennsylvania Dutch art. She can't make the stuff fast enough for the orders that she gets. People are interested in buying this stuff, displaying it in their homes, people are so interested in buying hex signs, so that they can hang them on their garage or on their tractor shed or on the side of their house or something – it really is, it's becoming cool, and it's not just becoming cool among one generation. We're finding it – twenty-year-olds that are reaching out to me, kids that are reaching out, parents, grandparents that are finally realising, kind of (what) we talked about earlier that they lost this connection, they feel they're missing something, here's something that reminds them of a part of who they are and not only that, but they're willing to invest in it in some form or another.

Holly: That is just – it's so cool, it's so cool. All we need are the memes, all we need are some true Pennsylvania Dutch memes that are not Dwight Schrute.

Douglas: That is a great idea. We need to – I agree with you on that. That'd be cool, that'd be really cool. Now you got my brain going –

Holly: Maybe *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* can get on that one!

Douglas: I'll talk to Patrick about that. That'll be fun. We could easily put something together (Indistinguishable), and with some help of some other people, too, so...

Holly: Oh, there will be Pennsylvania Dutch memes, a flow – a flow over the holidays! Some *Belsnickel* memes that are actually the *Belsnickel*.

Douglas: Right, right!

Holly: (To) put the story straight! So actually, I wanted to talk about some of your work, and I wanted to talk about your translation of *Schtimme aus'm Kaerrichof*, because I originally thought this was something that you had, until I realised that Lloyd Moll was an author quite a long time ago, I did originally think this was something you had done together...

Douglas: Oh! (Laughs)

Holly: I know, I know, my brain is a little slow when it comes to things like that!

Douglas: No, no, it's fine!

Holly: But then I saw your introduction, you recommended his writing and his writing in the *Eck*, and I kind of wondered why this series in particular of his? Cause he wrote a lot of things for the *Eck*, so what in particular drew you to this series?

Douglas: Well, first and foremost, so Dick Beam, C. Richard Beam, who I'm sure you've read about, he was the one that suggested to me to do something with it. Lloyd Moll's other most famous series was *Am Schwarze Baer*, which is a series of short stories about these guys at a local bar hotel in Pennsylvania Dutch country, and it's brilliant. That had been written about, that had been translated years and years and years ago, probably back in the '60s or '50s, after Moll's death in the '40s, but no one had ever really done anything that we were aware of, that I was aware of, with the *Schtimme* series. It was the last series he wrote, he died writing it, we don't know how many other short stories for this series he had in his mind before he died, but he died writing this series, and Dick Beam was someone that – I mean, he was like a god to me, for Pete's sakes – he was an academic mentor, he was a friend, and when he tells you to do something, you do it! (Laughs) So, and I honestly wasn't familiar – I was familiar with

Lloyd Moll, I was familiar with his poetry, I had read *Am Schwarze Baer*, but I had never read this series of stories and Dick said to me, ‘Look, there’s this series called *Schtimme aus ’m Kaerrichof*,’, he gave me a little background, ‘It’s all about this guy that gets the ability to talk to ghosts, essentially,’ and that right away interested me, a lover of history – this idea of being able to talk to dead people is always something that’s fascinating with me, like what could you learn from it? What could you experience? Et cetera, et cetera. So right off the bat, I was interested, and Dick said, you know, ‘Why don’t you take a look at them and do something with them?’ That’s all he said, he didn’t tell me what to do with them. He said, ‘Do something with them.’ So I went to the Millersville University archives and they had all of the Pennsylvania Dutch *Eck*, the *Deitsch Eck*, in the actual newspaper forms, in their archives, and I went and photocopied all of – cause it was the only place that they had ever been printed, they’d never bene printed anywhere else, too – so I went and photocopied all of these stories from all of these newspapers from 1938 to ’44, or whatever, and then I had them and then I had to think to myself, ‘What am I going to do with these?’ And of course, the first thing I thought of was, ‘Well, they should be translated into English, so that someone that doesn’t speak Pennsylvania Dutch can have access to it.’ So that was goal number one, but then as I was reading these stories, I just fell head over heels in love with them. I fell in love with his storytelling ability – Moll is an absolutely beautiful storyteller, and his ability to talk about life in a Pennsylvania Dutch community in the 1700s, in the 1800s, as if he had actually lived it, it was unbelievable! How he gained this knowledge, whether he was – you know, he had interviewed people, or just stories he remembers from a kid growing up in the late 1800s – but he was able to depict life in this imaginary town and these imaginary stories that he comes up with that is a true window into our past. So, as a history lover, I just fell in love with these stories. As a person that enjoys a really good story, I fell in love with them. And so that became natural, ‘Okay, we’re going to translate them,’ but then the other thing that I thought of, ‘If

somebody picks this book up that doesn't have a background in Pennsylvania Dutch and they just want to read it because of X, Y, and Z, there's a lot of things in these series of short stories that could use a little bit of explanation to someone that doesn't understand or know their history.' So that's where the idea then came of doing historical notes with certain stories. Like, the story that revolves around the character, the guy that acts the part of the *Belsnickel* – well I did a historical note on, 'What is the *Belsnickel*? Where does that come from in our culture?' – or one of the stories deals with Fries' Rebellion, a very famous rebellion in American history that most Americans don't know anything about, so I gave historical notes on that, or on the production of the Conestoga Wagon and why that's important in history. So, that was something that I then decided to do as well, as a, 'Well, I think we should add these historical notes, just to give people a little bit more of a background in maybe why this story *is* really cool. Why is it neat that we get this story about this guy that's a wagon driver? Well, he's not just a wagon driver – when we put him in the bigger picture of American history, that Conestoga wagon that went from Dutch country to Philadelphia helped us win the Revolutionary War.' I mean, we hid the Liberty Bell *in* one of these wagons to get it out of Philadelphia so the British troops wouldn't get it. So, you know, you have these stories that needed a little bit more context for someone that doesn't know their American history, or doesn't know anything about the Pennsylvania Dutch culture, too, so that's what I then decided, 'This is what I'm going to do,' and I went about doing the work then that resulted in the book that exists now. And it was a labour of love. I never saw it as – I mean, I spent a lot of time, cause I had to type out all the articles to get them into a digital format. This was, how many years ago, I don't even know what it was... Now, there's probably an app that I could scan, like, take a picture with my iPhone and automatically shoots it into Word or something, but you had to type them all out, and the other thing I did, and I asked Dick about this, I don't know if it was just because of the era or what, but Moll would use different spellings for words, for the

same word four different ways, or three different ways, and I decided to make everything uniform, so, ‘We’re going to use this spelling for the word *eppes*, and we’re going to use it through the whole series,’ things like that, and I know I asked Dick about that, and he agreed, he goes, ‘That’s probably best, let’s make it uniform,’ so if somebody that’s learning a language or wants to improve their language skills wants to use this reader as a reader to improve their language, you don’t want them seeing the same word spelt four different ways and then saying, ‘Well, what *is* the right way to spell this word?’ And I’m not saying that the way that I chose is the ‘correct’ spelling, because as you know, we don’t have a ‘correct’ spelling of Pennsylvania Dutch, but it was the spelling choices that I went with based off of Beam’s dictionary, so...

Holly: It is a varied orthography, I remember you saying that, that there’s some that favour English-style, or closer to English, some favour closer to German. I remember reading in this book that Moll kind of favoured the (Buffington)-Barba system, but then didn’t fully adhere to it by the sounds – because he used different styles...

Douglas: He was friends with Buffington and Barba, he knew them both personally from the Lehigh Valley, so it makes sense to me that he did. But Moll was Moll. There were certain things that Moll did that Buffington and Barba probably didn’t agree with. I don’t think Lloyd Moll cared. He was a pretty stubborn guy from what I’ve read about him, so...

Holly: Did you have a favourite story from among those that you translated? Is there any that kind of sticks out?

Douglas: The sentimental person in me absolutely, my favourite story of them all is the one with the guy that dresses up as the *Belsnickel*, not because he’s the *Belsnickel*, but the story there is so heart wrenching, and how he sneaks into the house just to give his own children these gifts and then dies doing it... Oh, that story, when I read that the first time, I thought I’d read it wrong, it’s like, there’s no way, this is too Shakespearean, you know – the main

character who you fell in love with dies tragically doing what he's trying to do, you know what I mean, to fulfil this wish of his cause his wife left him with their kids, and that story just ripped my heart out and it's one that I always go back to in that series. That is a really, really good story. The very first one is really good too, setting the whole stage for this series, too, and the idea of hiding a property marker is an old, old, old tradition that dates back to Germany and Europe, and that's another thing that Moll was so good at being able to do, bringing out these old traditions that were still – that, you know, things that we brought over – and making light of them as well. That's a really good story, the very first one, but yeah, if I had to choose one, it would be the *Belsnickel* one by far. That's such a good story.

Holly: It is a good story. I think the one that always comes to my mind is the girl who is with her fiancé and they get attacked by the Native Americans. That one really got me, because I wasn't really aware of the conflict historically that had happened between the Pennsylvania Dutch and some of the Native Americans, cause I know it wasn't all of them...

Douglas: No, right.

Holly: But it's so brutal (to read).

Douglas: (Oh, absolutely, yeah.) And Moll tells it brutally, too. He doesn't mince words. He tells it like it happened. That is a really good story, too. And again, that was another one of those stories where, in American history, most people, when they think of 'Indian attacks', most Americans' mind(s) will go to post-Civil War America, when we're pushing West, and we're in the Lakota Territory and the Sioux and the Cheyenne. A lot of Americans don't realise that the original group and wave of pioneers that came, settlers that settled Pennsylvania, that settled the Carolinas, I mean, they were in contact with these Native Americans too, and most times, for the most part in Pennsylvania, at least, it was a very peaceful coexistence because of William Penn's ideas of being a Quaker and this idea of pacifism. But there were some small

instances where people were attacked, and it did happen. The Pennsylvania Dutch were on the frontier line, and you get one tribe that's really angry about something that happened maybe someplace else, they're going to take it out on whoever's closest to them that they can affiliate with the enemy, and there are stories of Pennsylvania Dutch that were attacked. There was an Amish massacre in the mid-1700s in Berks County, an Amish family – it was multiple families actually, two or three families – that were massacred by Native Americans because of what English settlers had done to these Native Americans previously and to the Native Americans, a white man's a white man, 'I don't make a delineation between English, French, German, whatever,' and they're going to attack whoever's there, and... Yeah, the Northkill Massacre, 1750s, 1740 or something like that.

Holly: I think Moll actually adapts that story for one of the stories, because it talks about the story of how Benjamin Franklin comes in and they go to build Fort Allen as a result, which, again, I had not connected Fort Allen and then Allentown with the name. I had just kind of thought, 'Oh, interesting name, Allentown, I wonder where that came from?' and then reading it and thinking, 'Oh, okay, okay, I should have noticed that one quicker.' But it all – I mean, the town that it's all set in is imaginary, but we can presume, I guess, that most of the action takes place in the Lehigh Valley, [given some of the geographical markers?]

Douglas: [Yeah, cause that's where Moll was from], yes. But I mean, but the town that he creates, which he did say at some point somewhere that he had based it loosely off of Macungie, the town where he was from, what originally was called Millerstown. But I mean, you could literally take that community and you could pick it up and move it twenty miles to the West, and you would be in modern-day Kutztown or Hamburg and it would be, you would be encountering the same people, the same kinds of things, the same kinds of jobs, the same kinds of interactions, and that's what I think is also the beauty of those stories is that, yes, they are

kind of based in the Lehigh Valley, but that's any town in Pennsylvania Dutch country, USA, in my mind, when I read those.

Holly: There's a timeless quality, but there's also a placeless quality, I guess.

Douglas: Right, yeah, I agree, I agree.

Holly: I mean, I read it and I love it and I could see the ties to nature again, the ties to, obviously things like the *Fraktur*, hex signs, but one thing I did really notice was, obviously, with it being (set) in a cemetery, is the ties to religion, which surprised me to some extent because it was non-sectarian, but then on reflection, didn't surprise me at all. Is this quite a common thing, would you say, among non-sectarian members of the Pennsylvania Dutch community, that there's still kind of this tie with religion, or spirituality in some way?

Douglas: Absolutely. I would say, in the last ten years, that's started to change as the taste for religion is changing in the United States and the idea of belonging to a church and so forth is changing, but what we have to remember is among the sectarians, faith is their central point. But even among the non-sectarians, your life revolved around your church and revolved around your Sunday service in your church, whether you were Lutheran or you were Reformed or some of the other Protestant groups that were there, like the Moravians and there's other groups too. But faith, your faith and your participation in your faith was central to the non-sectarians as well. Even to my parents' generation, and, to a certain extent, my generation, faith was important, absolutely. A lot of our traditions are founded around faith practices of, you know, Lutheranism, of Calvinist Reformism. There was even, to a certain extent, there was this idea and this pressure that you married within your faith, too. If you were raised Lutheran, then you married Lutheran. It would be okay to marry a Reformed girl, but you definitely never married a Catholic girl. I mean, these were concepts that were still extremely strong even up until World War II. My grandfather, for example – it was made very clear to him that, 'Don't

marry Catholic. You're a Lutheran.' And we're thinking, like, the Thirty Years' War was fought four hundred years ago, people, come on now, let's move beyond that, but it was still part of the culture there into the '40s and '50s and it really only was within the last – maybe not twenty years – that church attendance, of course, is at all-time lows in the United States, particularly among mainline Protestants. Now, Evangelicals, that's a whole other story, but among the Pennsylvania Dutch non-sectarians, churchgoing among my generation, among the generation directly above me, is becoming fewer and fewer, but yet we hold on to a lot of these old faith practices too, though. Even people that aren't religious, when we think of eating *Fasnachts* on Fat Tuesday, on the day before Ash Wednesday, that's a religious – we do that out of our faith, and there are people that will never miss a *Fasnacht* that don't go to church and don't practice any kind of religion and have no idea that this is why we're going this. They do it because, 'Well, this is what you do,' and they're delicious, right? But for me, it is part of my faith practice. Faith was still extremely important for me and my family and it still is for me, and it's something that I'm passing on to my children, too. When they become adults, if it's something they want to continue – I mean, my wife and I don't... Well, we kind of *do* force them, I guess, 'Come on, kids, get in the car, we're going to church,' but my faith is and does play a pretty big part in who I am. And it's part of my Pennsylvania Dutch story, too.

(...)

Holly: So, actually, one thing I wanted to talk about with Pennsylvania Dutch is the influences outside of the Germanic influences. I've been looking at – the other community, I think I've mentioned before, that I look at is the Louisiana French community, and what's really interesting is they've been talking about Germanic influences in that community, particularly with the music. Would you say that there is anything that is, aside from maybe the English side of things, that has influenced *Deitsch* culture in any way, or is it still relatively *Deitsch*?

Douglas: One thing that comes to my mind right off the bat is our music and our dance. So, I don't know what it was like when that first wave of immigrants came over in the 1600s and the 1700s, but when you think of typical Pennsylvania Dutch folk music today, and the stuff like what my band and what I play, it is not Germanic in sound, it's not Germanic in musicality, it's... To me, it's highly influenced by Scotch-Irish fiddle music. You will often find, in a lot of our folk music – not all of it, but some of it for sure – and what it considered typical, traditional Pennsylvania Dutch dancing, which most people in English would call square dancing, or hoedowning, or clogging, that's not traditionally German. That again is – to me, when I think about people that clog, people that do square dancing, those are traditional Scotch-Irish style dances that somehow we picked up and became part of our music culture. Now, there are folk songs in the Pennsylvania Dutch music book that are Germanic, 100%. I can think of a bunch right off the top of my head. But then I could turn around and think of a bunch of songs that are much more influenced by that Scotch-Irish sound, English sound, but with Pennsylvania Dutch words.

Holly: It's like a – Don Yoder mentions this. He said there'd be families, Irish or Scottish families, living nearby families from the *Pfalz*, but they would all be Pennsylvania Dutch, regardless of their background, they'd all be one. So you've got that Celtic influence, I guess, that Celtic influence creeping in.

Douglas: Yeah, I don't know if you see it – To me, I don't know if I see it anywhere else other than in our music and dance, cause I don't see it in our language, I don't see it in our art, I don't see it in our food, and I don't see it in our faith practices either, but I do see that influence in our music and in our dance.

Holly: That's really interesting, and that may be something for me to look at more is that Celtic influence, because – I'm not really surprised, they have very strong musical traditions, so I'm not too surprised that that's stayed on, I guess.

Douglas: I mean, no one would ever think of Germany and then say, ‘I love German fiddle music,’ no one would ever say that, because there is no German fiddle music, right? But if you go to a Pennsylvania Dutch hoedown, or a square dance, a barn dance, what we would call a barn dance, you would hear fiddle tune after fiddle tune after fiddle tune and they’re all upbeat. They sound like Scotch-Irish music, and people will be out there dancing. It’s not oompah bands with people *Schunkeln* at the tables. Do we have songs like that? We do, we have some. But if you’re going to a barn dance on a Saturday night, or a square dance on a Saturday night, you’re going to hear that type of music. You’re going to hear those fiddle tunes, you’re going to hear music that you can dance to, that people will then be able to dance to, and the traditional kind of square dancing, what we call square dancing here in the United States, where you have a partner and you’re doing these figures on the floor with four other partners, four other groups, so to me, that screams Scotch-Irish, you know? So, where that influence and how that really came about, I can’t speak to. Patrick might know more about that than I do. But yeah, there were Scotch-Irish that lived in and among the Pennsylvania Dutch, depending where you were, so that *had* to be it, that cross-connection at some point happened and the music took off, I guess.

Holly: It’s wonderful. It’s just making me think of a square dance in Pennsylvania Dutch country now. I’m visualising it.

Douglas: It’s a lot of fun, it’s a lot of fun.

(...)

Holly: In the absence, then, of – if religion is a bit on the decline among younger generations of Pennsylvania Dutch people, what, then, do you think ties them to it? Do you think things like the *Versammlinge* and the *Grundsau* Lodges, do things like that, do you think, resonate more with younger Pennsylvania Dutch people?

Douglas: Yeah, I guess. I think more and more, I mean, for a lot of younger Pennsylvania Dutch people, it's not the language anymore that's resonating for any of them, or for very few of them. I really think what resonates the most, it's the cliché answer, but I really think it's the food culture, first and foremost for younger Pennsylvania Dutch, and then I think it's some of our more bombastic traditions, like the *Belsnickel* – something that is really unique to us. I think that that resonates as well. That's just one example I can think of off the top of my head. But I really think food is first and foremost among younger Pennsylvania Dutch, because for a lot of them, that *is* their only connection to the language, or their only connection to the culture, you know. Oh, their grandmother used to make this, and that's what they connect to their grandmother, and their grandmother was Pennsylvania Dutch, so that's what they connect to Pennsylvania Dutch.

Holly: So for you personally, is there any one dish or one particular thing in the food culture that to you – I know, I know, I'm asking you to narrow it down, because there's a lot – but is there that one thing that makes you go, 'This is *Deitsch* food, this is *Deitsch* food culture'?

Douglas: I think... Yeah, if I had to pick just a few. I don't think there's anything that's more Pennsylvania Dutch than either scrapple or stuffed pigs' stomach. Those are two dishes that show a lot of things about us as a people. They're both dishes that were prepared by using the things that were left over, this idea of waste not culture, this idea that everything has a value and can be used, which is very Pennsylvania Dutch, not just foodwise. Everything has a value, and everything's value is important and can be utilised for the betterment of X, Y, Z. So when I think of those two foods, I mean, they're both foods that A, on the surface, most people turn their nose up at, 'Ew, that looks disgusting,' so there's that aspect to it, but at the same time, when you hear the story of where those dishes come from – so, you know, stuffed pigs' stomach, you're stuffing that pig's stomach with stuff from your garden, so you've raised your potatoes,

you've raised your cabbage, and then you're stuffing it with a meat product coming from that same pig, and when you're done butchering what's left, well, there's this stomach here, there's got to be a way for us to use it, we can use it as a vessel, we can fill it with stuff and then use it, and this isn't unique to us. I mean, the stuffed pigs' stomach is in the *Pfalz*, it's been around for hundreds of years, so that dish alone, those two dishes, cause they are unique to us as a culture in the United States. But then there are others... oh, jeez... Shoofly pie is something that is purely unique to the Pennsylvania Dutch, and that's a recipe that we developed here in America. I have never found anything similar to it in Germany. That's a recipe that we developed here in the United States. I could be wrong, there might be some original recipe over in the *Pfalz* somewhere that I don't know about, but I have personally never had anything close to it, so to me, there is nothing more Pennsylvania Dutch than if I sit down at a table and stuffed pigs' stomach is there, and we set our table with the balance of sweets and sour, we have so many sweets to so many sour on the table, this idea of fermented foods like *sauerkraut*, like making our own pickles, this idea of sourness – and sour's an important taste in the Pennsylvania Dutch palate – but then juxtaposed with sweet, because we also like our sweets, too. But there's got to be this harmony, there's got to be this balance on the table. You would never set your table with three sour and only one sweet, that's bad luck, and it also puts things out of balance, right? This idea of harmony in life... So I think that those dishes, right off the top of my head, those would be the ones I guess I'd have to say first and foremost, yeah.

Holly: Scrapple always looks delicious to me; I don't know how people can object to it.

Douglas: It is absolutely delicious. If you don't tell somebody what it is and you just serve it to them, I have never met anybody that didn't like it who didn't know what it was. And really, when you start to think about what it is, there's nothing in there that is grotesque, it's not like you're putting eyeballs in or anything like that, it's all meat products, it's all, you know, from the jowls and from the cheekbones and it's what's left, but it's not like you're putting the anus

of the pig in there or anything like that, it's not ridiculous. And then you add to it all these herbs and spices and cornmeal and when it's done, it is – it's so good. I hope sometime, Holly, you get the chance to come here, and I hope I get to meet you for sure and I will make you some scrapple!

Holly: When COVID is done (...), I will be there!

(...)

Holly: Is there anything that you wish was known more widely about the Pennsylvania Dutch people, be it within the community itself or outside?

Douglas: I think... I mean, it goes back to something we talked about before. I want people to know that there is this aspect of our culture and our story that's not the Amish and the Mennonite(s), that we do have this – that the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Dutch exist and have existed. I'd really like – I wish everybody knew that. I would also like to see in, at least in Pennsylvania, in public schools, to have at least one unit or one lesson at some point in elementary school, or even at the secondary level at high school, where they touch on our culture, well, some aspect – our culture, our history, our art, our food. I would like to see something like that worked into our state curriculum, either Social Studies or Family Consumer Science or Art or Music. I truly think – as you know, the value of education and public education, I mean, that's... you're reaching your widest audience there ever, so I would really like to see something like that happen if I could wave a magic wand, that would be really neat. I'd also really like to see more bilingual signs. I know that that's something that is something that is beyond our control, to a certain extent, because of government regulations and laws and all that kind of stuff, but I'd love to see more of an embrace of the language, even if it's – the thing right now that I'm really happy about is that there's microbreweries and beer brewing is really popular again in Pennsylvania. It was something that was always part of our tradition, and then 'Big Beverages' took the reins and we're taking that back in Pennsylvania. And there

are a lot of breweries in Pennsylvania Dutch country that are using Pennsylvania Dutch names and words for their beers, and I think that's awesome, and any time I go to a brewery that does that, I always make it a point to talk to somebody that works there and let them know that I appreciate that, and that there's a value in what they're doing. So I'd love to see more businesses kind of embrace it too, and I'm not saying go full on, but sprinkling a word here or there, or having a sign in their restaurant where it says 'Men' and 'Ladies' but then also have the Pennsylvania Dutch words underneath or something. I think that would be really neat to see, to see that too, and there are places that do that, but it's kind of few and far between, so I'd like to see more places do that, too.

Holly: You just raised a couple – I said there are only two more questions, you just raised a couple more for me, as is always the way, I think. One question that just suddenly came to mind was, we talked last time about Duolingo and how you had been trying to get a Duolingo course set up for *Deutsch*, but there were a lot of obstacles in that. Do you think that a course like that, be it on Duolingo or Memrise or some other platform, do you think that would still be a worthwhile thing to have?

Douglas: Absolutely, I would never say no to any of that stuff. Yeah, I wish Duolingo would just respond to my email request and about the hundred other people I've talked to that have emailed them requesting it, but I don't know, we have had no response (Laughs). Yeah, but I think any time you can take it and make it into a game, where people are having fun and don't realise they're learning something, but they're learning it, is truly beneficial. And it would be *awesome*! That would be really awesome.

Holly: If they can put Scots Gaelic on there, which they've just put on...

Douglas: That's right! There are languages that Duolingo does that I think to myself, 'Who is learning this?' Klingon! Okay, great, I get it, there's a lot of Star Trek people out there, but you're willing to invest time and money to create Klingon – great! There are a lot of really cool

ethnic minority languages *in* the United States that you don't have programmes for yet, that you should be embracing, like Native American languages, like us, like Pennsylvania Dutch, like Yiddish, that's still spoken in some parts of the United States. And maybe they do have a Yiddish, I don't know, but I mean, just throwing that idea out, things like that, you know?

Holly: Well, I know that they've now got Hawaiian, and they've now got... I think it might be Cherokee? It's one Native American, it is one of the Native American languages, and I now can't remember which it is. I think it's Cherokee, I'm probably wrong (NB: The correct language cited is Navajo).

Douglas: Could be.

Holly: But I've heard rumours of Yiddish making an appearance at some point – whether it's in testing, I don't know, but there are more minority languages coming on there and it does seem like kind of a perfect place for it.

Douglas: Maybe it's just a matter of time. Maybe they'll eventually come to their senses and reach out and say, 'Yeah, let's do this,' so I don't know.

Holly: Maybe they need a petition from across the pond?

Douglas: Maybe, there you go! (Laughs)

Holly: Why not, why not? If we can get Scots on there, and Welsh on there...

Douglas: Yeah, right.

Holly: The other question that it raised for me was, as a researcher – I know you've already kind of addressed this with the gap between academia and non-academic groups – as a researcher, is there anything that you think I should know about Pennsylvania Dutch that I don't know? I know there's a lot I don't know, but is there anything that you think I really should know, that you think I haven't got or, in terms of approaches, anything that I'm missing?

Douglas: At this point, Holly, between the two conversations that I've had with you and the multiple emails, I think you're way ahead of the game as opposed to most people that are not in the culture that have, you know, coming from a background like you, that's coming from a country that's not the United States, that has zero physical contact with the Pennsylvania Dutch people, et cetera, I think you know a lot – way more than most people do. You know a lot more than some Pennsylvania Dutch do, so honestly, at this point, I think what you're doing is you're good, you're good to go, so to speak, honestly. I wouldn't know what to say.

Holly: Thank you very much. I'm very, very nervous about it, because it is something that – I'll mention it at the end of the interview (...) The last question I had, then, was one that I asked you last time, but it's been a year and a half roughly, things have changed for the world. What do you think the future might be for Pennsylvania Dutch?

Douglas: Well, I think as far as the culture goes, and I probably said the same thing a year and a half ago, we're not going anywhere. If anything, I think what we're going to see in the future is more and more people be more accepting of embracing this culture, of spotlighting it, of giving it attention. I think you're going to see that more and more, specifically through things like social media, through the Internet, et cetera. Sadly, I think, and I'm going to stick with, probably what I said a year and a half ago, I think within the next twenty years, twenty-five years, I'm sure Mark Loudon will definitely echo this, he'll probably cut the years down, among the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Dutch, the language will die out. You'll have fewer and fewer and fewer speakers; that is not the case for the sectarians, of course, but among us non-sectarians I really think my children's generation will be the last generation to grow up having any connection at all to native speakers among the non-sectarians – that's a safe statement, I think. But I really have – a lot of people paint a very dark picture when you go to these *Versammlings*, and you go to the Groundhog Lodge meetings, and all these old guys are like, 'It's dead. It's all dying. Ah!' And I say to them, 'There's a lot of stuff going on that you guys

don't know about, because you're not on the Internet, or because you're not on Facebook, or because you're not on, you know, X, Y, or Z.' We're not going anywhere. I think the culture has a very bright future, I don't see the food going anywhere, I don't see some of our other traditions dying out any time soon. Yes, the language will, I don't think it'll ever completely go away, because of the Amish and the Mennonite, it never will, for sure, and I think because of work of people like Michael Werner in Germany and groups like the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center at Kutztown, which Patrick is the director of, and groups like the *Goschenhoppers*, and there's all these groups in south eastern Pennsylvania that do a lot of, local historical societies, et cetera, et cetera. We will survive, it's going to continually look different generation after generation, for sure, but I sleep at night with the hope that when I'm, if God wills it, I'm eighty years old someday and I'm interacting with my grandchildren or my great-grandchildren, that I can use Pennsylvania Dutch words and they'll at least know what some of them are, and I think if that happens, then we've survived way longer than any other immigrant culture in American history, as far as holding onto language. Nobody's done it, nobody. I mean, the Cajun French are the closest to us, in that sense – if you take the Native American population out, there is no immigrant culture in the United States that has been able to maintain their linguistic roots as long as the Pennsylvania Dutch. Nobody. Three hundred years, three hundred plus years. It's really – and that, I'm damn proud of, I really am, that we've been able to do that. Sometimes, stubbornness can be a good thing [in certain aspects!]

Holly: [It's that German-Dutch] tenacity!

Douglas: (Laughs) I guess that's what it is. But I'm damn proud of that, I really am, cause I talk to a lot of friends of mine that are Italian-American or Irish-American or Greek-American, and a lot of them, their grandparents were the ones that immigrated, so, I mean, we're talking about people that, only two generations removed, that came to America, and have *no, no* language ability in Greek or in Italian, and then I think to myself, 'My relatives came in 1695

and we still speak it,’ you know, and I have that connection, or 1710, and I can speak what my eighth great-grandfather spoke when he got off the boat, and that’s something I’m proud of. I’m proud of that, I’m proud of that. I’m proud that my grandparents were stubborn, that my great-grandparents were stubborn, (that they) were like, ‘This is who we are, this is who we are, and we’re no less American for speaking this other language, we’re no less American for having these different foodways or these different holidays, it’s who we are, and we’re good enough, we fit here, we’re part of the story, and we’re going to be who we are. We’re also going to be American at the same time.’ And that’s something I’m really proud of, and I wish more people knew that it’s okay for that, and that’s something we’re fighting these days in America, particularly because of a certain President that we’ve had the last four years, this idea of, ‘It is okay, and you should be proud of where you’ve come from, that doesn’t make you any less American.’ It’s something that I fight with a lot of people over, and it’s something that – we don’t have to go into that old conversation, that’s a couple beers right there, but – that’s where I’m at, that’s where I’m at. I try and push that narrative as much as I can. You mentioned melting pot, I’ll leave you with this, and I don’t know if I said this in our last interview or not: I understand the term ‘melting pot’, it’s what most people will use. I prefer to use the term a ‘quilt’, for a couple of reasons. One: quilts are, Pennsylvania Dutch are associated with quilts, but if you know anything about quilt making, you take a bunch of scraps of cloth and you put them together, and you make a giant quilt, but when you stand back and look, that quilt is all together and you think, ‘Oh, that’s one unified piece, that’s brilliant.’ But when you get up close, you can see the individual squares or the individual pieces of cloth, and those individual pieces of cloth have not changed, but they have become part of a bigger picture. And that’s how I view the Pennsylvania Dutch. We are one of those pieces of cloth in the quilt that is America. You stand back, we’re in it, we’re part of it, we’re tied to it, we’re stitched to it, but when you get up close, you can still see our individual little piece of cloth that is our piece, and

it didn't change. All that happened was we got stitched in with other people, but together, when you stand back and look at it, you have one image, but when you get up close, you can still see the individual pieces, and for me, all of those pieces are the different immigrant cultures that came to this world, came to this country. You have the Irish piece, you have the Scotch piece, you have the English piece, you have the French piece, you have the Cajun piece, you have the African American piece... to me, that's how I view America. Melting pot's fine, but my problem with melting pot is that that would signify that we gave up who we are to be part of this amalgamation, where in a melting pot, you can't see the individual aspects anymore, but for me, in a quilt, when I look at a quilt, I can see that, and to me, that's how I view America, and it doesn't make my little piece any less American than any of the other pieces in that giant quilt.

Holly: That's a great thing to end this (interview) on.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW WITH NATHAN RABALAIS

Date of Interview: Monday 14th December 2020

Time of Interview: 16.00 BST, 10.00 CST

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text in italics*

Holly: I wondered if you could start by telling me about your experiences as a Louisiana French speaker?

Nathan: Okay, yeah. (...) Louisiana French speaker. Well, I grew up in, I was born in Eunice, Louisiana, (it's in) St. Landry Parish, and French was spoken in my family on both sides, although I didn't really know my Dad's side very much, but French was the first language that my maternal grandmother had, that was my first contact with the language was her and her friends and aunts and uncles at her house, and then just in town, you know, you go to the butcher or whatever, you'd hear it, and then, yeah, once she passed away, I didn't really hear it much at all, and then – I mean, I wasn't really interested in it, to be honest (Laughs) at all. I didn't speak it fluently, although I understood a lot, because it was mostly what she would speak, so yeah, so it didn't really have a big part in my life until after undergraduate at university, because I studied music, I studied German, and then when I tried to study composition in Vienna, actually, I didn't get this one scholarship that I had applied for, but I got this other one for France, cause it was for France, and so I went to Strasbourg, which is in Alsace, and then that's kind of how I got more interested in Louisiana French, which was seeing the minority language dynamic from a different perspective, where French was the dominant language and Alsatian was the minority language, and when I came back to Louisiana, I was

really interested in Louisiana French. I started my masters' in French, and then became kind of a specialist in Louisiana French, so that was in 2008, when I started, so it's been a little while that I've been working on that. So, it's kind of two steps: one kind of vague childhood; and then one's really intentional as a researcher, and so...

(...)

Okay, so, did I answer your first question okay?

Holly: You did, you did, it was wonderful, thank you. My other question really, in relation to Louisiana French – well, a couple of questions in relation – were: do you consider Louisiana French to be a dialect or a language? Cause this is a debate I've come across quite a lot.

Nathan: I like to use the term 'variant', but dialect is fine. I don't consider it to be a different language. I don't consider it to be a language apart from French.

Holly: What was – so if it's a variant – I like that term, 'variant', it's kind of that nice halfway house between dialect and language – when you were in France, if anyone ever asked you about your Louisiana heritage, what were people's reactions when you mentioned that they spoke French there, if anyone had any reaction?

Nathan: I would say, in Strasbourg, it was not as remarkable as I thought it would have been. They either didn't really know Louisiana or had never really heard of it, or thought it was something else, thought it was like Martinique, you know, like that part of the... Or just kind of didn't really believe it, you know? Just thought I was trying to make it sound more interesting, cause they had been to New Orleans and didn't hear French or, you know, things like that, kind of a mix, but... That was in Strasbourg. In Poitiers, the second time I lived in France, for about a year, that was when I was writing my dissertation, 2014, 2015, so more recently, that was different, because there are a lot of, not just historical links with Louisiana and Canada, especially *Acadie*, but there are a lot of exchanges, you know, visits, like on a

more government or official level, a lot of people, because they're – not many people take advantage of it, but there are official agreements between the universities where I teach at Lafayette and *Université de Poitiers*, and *Université de Moncton* in New Brunswick, so there, you know, there are exchange students, so there's more of, I guess, an awareness, of Louisiana in and around Poitiers, so it was, yeah, it was two very different reactions, you know. I guess Poitiers was kind of an exception, maybe.

Holly: I lived in Poitiers and I never knew – I studied at the *Université* as well, when I was on my exchange, in my (undergraduate studies), and I didn't know that they had such links with Louisiana – well, in fairness, they didn't go publicising them to the British exchange students!

Nathan: (Laughs) Yeah. No, it wouldn't have been like that, but I guess being from Louisiana and living there, I met quite a few compatriots while I was there that were there for, not very public things, but to give a talk maybe at the – I don't know if you remember the *Espace Mendès France*, stuff like that, you know? And the guy that ran that knew very well Louisiana, his name was Didier Moreau, so yeah. Actually, one of the things that my wife did when we were there was translate this exhibit into English. It was an exhibit on climate change, and so it was going to be reproduced and released and so, yeah, but there are things like that, not really public, I guess, but... I feel like in that part of France, too, La Rochelle, Poitiers, even Bordeaux, people kind of have more of a... maybe just an experience interacting with people from French-speaking North America. You know, there are a lot of people from *Québec* that will come and do genealogical research or things like that, so they're a little more used to thinking about it or hearing accents (from) North America.

**Holly: It's a nice place to be around there, as well – I mean, Bordeaux, La Rochelle (...)
So, what does being a Louisiana French speaker mean to you?**

Nathan: Well, I guess it's just sort of having a, beyond just being a little bit different, I think it's kind of the idea of having a foot in the past and also sort of (a) connection to, on the one hand, having a connection to heritage and tradition and, you know, speaking a language that my grandparents and everyone before them spoke, but also, on the other hand, being very connected to the other places that I wouldn't be otherwise, travelling to a lot of places that I wouldn't have otherwise. We've been living in different places, in Canada or in France, and keeping up those contacts and friendships and things, so, yeah, it's kind of half and half, half very local and rooted in the past, and half very contemporary and opening up to the French-speaking world.

Holly: That's wonderful. It's like that mixture, isn't it, of globalised world and very... like you said, very local.

Nathan: Mm-hmm. I think that's what it is, yeah.

Holly: So what evokes – when you think Louisiana French, what comes to mind for you? Is it the language, is it music, is it art, what would it be?

Nathan: When you say 'Louisiana French', it's the language, just cause that's what we call it, but... I guess I should say what is French Louisiana, maybe, or what does that mean? It wouldn't be, I don't think it would be art, yeah. Probably the place, a certain area of Louisiana, probably more rural, the language, a certain kind of music. You know, there's an odd thing that you would see, I think, if you – have you come here before, or not yet?

Holly: No, I wanted to this semester, but a certain global pandemic kind of [curtailed that.]

Nathan: [Right.] That's true. I think you might have mentioned that, or I might be confusing... but yeah, there's a weird, it's not quite a dichotomy, it's a little more nuanced than that, but I think if you came here, you would see that you kind of have a mix of older crowd, that's very conservative and, not just traditionalist, but also politically very conservative, and then you

have... A lot of the really active people, the younger people, are very – just something I’ve observed, I haven’t done a paper on this, just cause they’re people that I know, and it’s just a general trend – they’re very progressive, not just... Well, in general I think people involved in education, involved in minority groups, international agreements, you know, all these kind(s) of things don’t align at all with the Republican Party here. It’s like the opposite of everything that they want, so that creates an odd mix of perspectives you have when it comes to Louisiana French, because you have – yeah, so, a lot of the native speakers that would be the tradition-bearers, you know, they don’t see things the same way as the people that are actually trying to write the curriculum or push the grant through or really do the things (they) are trying to realise, so it’s kind of funny, but – I don’t (think) it creates a whole lot of problems, it’s just, when you say, ‘What does it mean?’, ‘What comes to mind?’, I do think a lot of the traditional values come to mind right away, but that doesn’t mean that that’s what – you know, I think the reason why you’ve heard of it, and you’re working on it, probably has a lot to do with the things that other people have been working on, publicising, researching, so it’s kind of a weird ecosystem of ideas, views...

Holly: It’s a *métissage*, as Glissant might say.

Nathan: I guess so.

Holly: It’s a *métissage* of ideas, maybe.

Nathan: Mm-hmm.

Holly: I like that! Well, actually, I was reading one of your papers earlier on in the year on *l’Acadie (...) divergente*, and I really loved that paper.

Nathan: Thanks.

Holly: I saw the references to Zachary Richard and David Cheramie, who I’m looking at, Kirby Jambon, who I’m looking at, so it was very exciting to see all those references, and you mentioned the diversity of *Acadie*, and it’s not just what people might stereotype as

being one group of French people that came to Louisiana. I think you used a diagram from – I think it might be Zachary Richard’s diagram, that has eighteen different groups?

Nathan: Yeah, that’s from Joseph Dunn, and then he was basing that off of Carl Brasseaux’s book, *French, Cajun, Creole, Houma*, but yeah, you’re right.

Holly: So how do you think the diversity of that kind of plays into what we might call Louisiana French culture? Cause when I’ve done some digging into the foodways, for example, I can see German... I mean, I’ve spoken to Chase Cormier about this, and he’s talked about the German references, the Native American ties in, and things like that. So, do you see these things applying in other areas of the culture?

Nathan: Oh, yeah. Yeah, for sure, because... Food is a good example. I mean, Chase is a student of mine, and so I know a bit about his research on *la boucherie* and stuff, but it’s something that is very... I mean, I have sort of a bias, I think, you know, because I write about this a lot, so I don’t want to just harp on those same arguments, but, I mean, there’s a... I would say a *bricolage*, but... It’s kind of a conflict or a gap between the observable reality and the kind of origin myth that is still prevalent in popular media and tourism and other places, which kind of gives the idea that there were... Acadians came here, and then that’s how the culture – they mixed with other people, and that’s how the culture happened, and just thinking about the geography and just the sheer mathematics of it, it doesn’t make – and history, timeline, chronology, anyway you want to look at it – it doesn’t make sense. It doesn’t explain much of anything that we have here. So, I think it is a process of creolisation that happened long enough ago that it’s hard to really tell, you know, what comes from what, and then the idea of creolisation, which, I don’t know if you’ve read of Gwendolyn Midlo Hall’s work, but when she talks about creolisation, it really is a new culture. It’s things from different places that fuse and really do create something new, not just a mix, so that’s – and I agree with that, that’s true. There are some things that we can point to that are more obvious – jambalaya looks sort of like

paella, certain dances, certain words like, you've probably read about the folklore character Bouki, which is a Wolof word for 'hyena', and that's kind of easily identifiable (to a) certain region in West Africa. So, there's tons of examples, and a few, we can kind of place or trace back to a certain place, but I think for the most part, it's just, it's probably mostly... I guess if there's one element that's slightly stronger than others, I would say probably West African, or Caribbean, especially in the food, the rice, which really came from West Africa, (or) at least that knowledge of how to cook the rice. The demographics, I mean – throughout a lot of the French colonial period, I mean, enslaved black people made up about half the population, so... Yeah, and then after that... I might be forgetting the exact question, but you're asking about the diversity and how... Yeah, there's a lot of diversity, and I think there's a bit of a clash between the diversity and then – because it's so complicated, and it's so much to understand, it gets simplified and it gets simplified in a way that highlights a very specific group of people, the Acadians, that really weren't that numerous, but it also has the purpose of whitening the history as well.

Holly: As a researcher that works in that area, how does that make you feel sometimes, cause in that article, you do speak out against the *mythe fondateur*. How does it make you feel as a researcher sometimes when you see that diversity kind of being wiped out, or being ignored?

Nathan: I mean, as a researcher, I just try to look at specific examples and try to pinpoint, like, 'What are the negative impacts of that?', because I think there's an element of disenfranchisement that's been probably pushed back a lot over a few decades now, and that's kind of bubbling up now, the past few years, and creating some conflict. When I, mostly – I forgot that I mentioned that in that article, I wrote that a few years ago – but where I really examine that question is in the documentary that I made and that just came out. Actually, I think – you're in the UK, so you can watch it on Amazon – so you could kind of see what I

think about all that in there, cause it's, I don't want to skew your research, but I just think it's... I understand why that's happened, because I also am very interested in narrative and memory and trauma studies, and in my research on folklore, I work a lot on collective trauma impacting narrative and stories, even though the stories are not about history, they're about characters and magic and things, but just the idea that collective trauma can maybe turn the bad guy into a good guy if he's smart enough, or things like that, so I understand why that foundational myth is so powerful, and I understand why it makes Louisiana a more attractive tourism destination. As a researcher, I'm not confused about why that happened, because there are several different ways of reinforcing that part of history as a foundational myth but going back to the – people associate that with CODOFIL and stuff, but it really started back in the early 1900s, so yeah, I just think it's a – but that's a researcher. As a 'not-a-researcher', I think it's just a shame that Louisiana French hasn't been a more inclusive endeavour, that's kind of one of the main theses of my film, is that the Cajun movement, you know, in the '70s, '80s, and '90s, it was a *Cajun* movement, it wasn't a French movement, so it was a Cajun movement. I actually look at how people were naming things, everything was Acadian, or Cajun, so *Festival des Acadiens*, it was the *Centre Acadien*, or it was the *Monument Acadien*, or it was... you go on and on, *Théâtre Acadien*. Nothing was 'French' or, you know, a more inclusive idea of Creole being everyone, so I think that was a mistake, but at the same time, I know what it was like in the South in the 1960s and I don't think there was probably any other way that that was going to play out, you know. It wasn't that they didn't think about, 'Hey, why not be inclusive?'

Holly: It kind of wasn't going to happen in the American South, not in the 1960s.

Nathan: No, so...

Holly: Which term do you prefer? Do you prefer Cajun, Creole, French? It sounds like you prefer *Cadien* or Cajun, maybe?

Nathan: It doesn't really matter. I mean, they mean different things. I don't think, when someone says, 'Cajun' or '*Cadien*', I don't think anything other than a white person comes to mind, you know. That's mostly how... I had to kind of separate what I know as a researcher and as someone that lives here, I know when people say 'Cajun' and 'Creole', I know what they mean by that, they mean 'white people' and 'not white people', but of a French-speaking heritage, and nothing that I or anyone else is going to write is going to change that now, you know, that's just the way things have evolved. But on the other hand, I know that most people that call themselves Cajuns don't speak French, so there are different layers of what that means to different people. To some people, it's just sort of a regional identity, you know, like you would say... South Louisiana Cajun, same thing. And other people are much more limited in their view of what that means, but I don't have a preferred term. I would say, without trying to go into this big old debate, I would say I'm a Cajun, just because I have a French last name and I'm white, but I know that I don't really have much Acadian ancestry at all. I know some people would say, 'Oh, well then, you're not Cajun.' There's lots of people that like to be, you know, exclusive and difficult in different ways.

Holly: That's one good question that it throws up is what makes Louisiana French, what makes you Cajun or what makes you Creole. That's a good question, and a debate, perhaps, for me to look at over my paper at some point in the future...

Nathan: Yeah, there's no real answer. I mean, it's like anything, like... What makes you English? You wouldn't be able to answer that either, I'm sure. (Laughs)

Holly: That is accurate! (Laughs)

Nathan: I think, historically, it was probably easier, someone that was from this area (who) probably spoke French or Creole, they were almost certainly Catholic, they lived in a certain area, they probably were in one of three or four different professions, so as time goes on, those start to peel off, 'Oh, well, I don't really speak that anymore,' 'Well, I moved to New Orleans

for this job cause I went to nursing school and then lived in Tennessee, now I'm back and now I'm Baptist,' you know, so it's like, 'But I'm still Cajun.' Okay, well how, and why, and what does that mean at a certain point? I think that's why people are trying to renegotiate what those mean, because so many of the prior criteria have just gone away or been eroded.

Holly: I think it's a debate that's going to be around long after this paper is done, I'll be completely honest.

Nathan: Yeah, for sure.

Holly: So, actually, I wanted to talk about your book that's coming out on folklore, which I'm really excited about, because folklore is one big component of my own research, and I wanted to ask was there anything that surprised you when you were... I know that one of your areas of specialisation is folklore, but was there anything that surprised you about it still when you were putting it together?

Nathan: Yeah... yeah. I'm trying to think of a good example... Yeah, a few things. I was trying to pick some not-so-complicated ones. One was the *feux follets*, which is the will o' the wisp. I was surprised by how different those... Cause that's a little different than some of the other stories. These are, like, eyewitness accounts, so they're purportedly something that the informant saw, not something they remember their grandmother telling them a long time ago. But yeah, just how it varies from this little blue candle over the water to this big red ball of fire. Like, in the Houma community, which is a Native American French-speaking community in the southeast of the state, all of those examples that I found were – there was a big ball of red fire that would even try to follow you or try to get in your boat. So, that was interesting, and I was trying to figure out, you know, did that come from something else in the oral tradition or was that just a difference in the ecology of the different kinds of gases that are coming out of the water there? It was really consistent with different geographical areas. Yeah, that's one example. I could... I could find others, but we might be here a long time!

Holly: I understand that. Once you get into a topic, that's... hit the right topic and that's it, (you) can be gone for hours. (...) What about – so you talked about the *feux follets*, and you actually, you did some writing recently in the journal *Feux Follets*, and I wondered if you could talk about that briefly? Cause that writing, the writing in *Feux Follets* is – or everyone's writing in *Feux Follets* – is so diverse in themes, and it's grouped by elements as well, which Chase mentioned, which I thought was wonderful. It's kind of grouped by air, water, earth, and fire.

Nathan: Mm-hmm. Yeah, they were – I sent in a couple of poems this past time and the one before that, I was... So you wanted me to talk about the journal, or my poems?

Holly: Your poems, if that's okay? Or whatever you want to talk about – if you want to talk about the journal, feel free!

Nathan: I was just wondering which ones you might have read, but I could talk about both. I was in Virginia for a while, that was my first job out of grad school, so that was five years there, and then right when I was turning in my tenure dossier, I moved back here, so that was to replace somewhat of a mentor of mine, Barry Ancelet, who retired, so I took his place and so I really wanted to come here to do that, but before that – that's why I was setting it up this way, is – so when I submitted those things to *Feux Follets*, I was not here, I was in Virginia, so I didn't really know Chase at all, but I knew the journal *Feux Follets* because it had been around since, I think, 1991 or so, I'll have to check that. Early '90s, David Chermie started it when he was a student back in the day, and so I thought it was great that he was doing that. I didn't know who he was, but I thought that was great that he was doing that, and I wanted to send something in to, you know, so they would have stuff (Laughs) and to encourage that. And it's doing well right now, he's done a really good job with it, he's working on the new one right now, but I didn't send any poems in this time. I think I would be more the faculty helper, you know, help as I can with the editing and stuff, but not so much as a poet. But those poems were

really different from – so I have a book of poetry that does not deal with any of those themes of, you know, identity and language and stuff...

Holly: Is that *Le Hantage*?

Nathan: *Le Hantage*, right. That's much more of a personal project about dealing with memory and trauma and things, it doesn't deal with... it is in Louisiana French, but it doesn't deal with that question at all. And I had kind of gotten, I don't want to say tired, I just felt like that theme of identity had been kind of done in Louisiana French poetry, I didn't want to make another book about that. But I still had some poems that dealt with some of those things, and so the journals – *Feux Follets* and a couple of others – are where I might publish poems that deal with language and identity and things, cause I see them more as individual poems and not something that I'm going to make a whole book about. That's more, like – the documentary is a good medium for me to put together a big, coherent idea about those topics, and I think you might notice, in those recent ones, it's not really a topic that comes out a lot. I did a little scan of it for an article – it might not be out yet, it's with Laval in *Québec*, the Laval University – and it's about, I forget the exact title, but the subtitle is '*Une troisième ère*', a third era of Louisiana French literature where identity is not a main discourse, or you have a diversity of voices, like more women, more people of colour, more things in Creole, even things in Creole by white people, like you have in *Feux Follets* – Jonathan Mayers and Nathan (N.A.) Wendte – so it seems ironic or counterintuitive that you'd have more diversity in the kinds of people expressing themselves, but less of a discourse on identity, but as sort of my general observation about what's coming out the past few years, I think *Feux Follets* does show that that's not the only thing to look that, there are other books – Ashlee Michot's book, *Ô Malheureuse*, some blogs, like different people have blogs, like Kirby Jambon has one, David Chermie has one, there's different online newspapers, like *Le Bourdon de la Louisiane*, and different groups as well on Facebook, language groups in varying degrees of seriousness – some that are really all

about the language, certain types of language, so... Yeah, the *Feux Follets* is an interesting sample, I guess, of really contemporary poetry and probably is pretty representative of what's happening in general, you know, not just in *Feux Follets*, but just in general right now.

Holly: I'm going to have to go back and read some of these older issues, I think. I read last year's, the newest one, and now I've got to go back and sift through the others.

Nathan: Yeah. Do you have them?

Holly: I do. Chase made them all available online on the website, which is excellent for a researcher several thousand miles away, makes it extra easy!

Nathan: Yeah, yeah, that's great. I forgot he did that.

Holly: Actually, you mentioned your documentary, *Finding Cajun*, and you mentioned just then about kind of a change in theme of sorts, a shift away from what you said, you know, identity in *Le Hantage*, for example, and moving towards the diversity of identity, I guess, in the community. How was that experience for you of making that documentary? What inspired that for you?

Nathan: I mean, it was just a desire to clear things up, to dispel different myths that I thought were harmful and very persistent. You know, I guess I started thinking about that at the same time as I was writing that article that you mentioned, so I guess – and I forgot that I put it in there, so I must have been thinking about it, and then soon thereafter is when we started, I guess what you'd call preproduction, the research part of it. Yeah, and these were things that I was aware of, I guess, and writing and I realised around 2016 that no one that I really wanted to hear these things were going to be reading the articles, so I needed some other way to reach them, and the documentary was good for that, and it put me in contact with a lot of people whose work I had been reading, like Carl Brasseaux and Shane Bernard, but had never met. It was probably not the best idea, like, for our research agendas, this book on folklore probably could have been done sooner, but it wound up working out anyway with the fellowship that I

had later, but it was still very... It was too tight, it should have been out, like, before I came up for tenure, and not to just have the contract. So, it was (a) very stressful project and one that I questioned a lot as I was going, just cause it was so much work, way more work than the book.

Holly: It's very ambitious, it's a very ambitious project.

Nathan: Yeah, it was just me and my brother, we did everything. The subtitles, I did all the music, he did all the videography, did all the sound design, so it was just the two of us, but it took so long and we had no money. But it was still really rewarding, because people really liked it on a deep level, I think, the people that did like it. I never thought I'd be getting so many emails and Facebook messages to the page, these long thoughts about what they never knew, or what they thought was true, but no one believed them and, 'Now I see it's real,' you did the research and you found the proof. So, that was very validating, and that's never happened with any article that I've ever written, so... (Laughs)

Holly: It doesn't quite connect, does it? It's usually hidden behind an academic paywall.

Nathan: Yeah, yeah. And it just, you know, it's an hour of your time, and there's visual(s), it's not that many people that are really going to sit down and read an article. So that was very gratifying. I thought it was going to be more controversial than it was, although now I'm starting to see it, not personally, but sort of behind the back. I got a letter from someone, that someone else that I've known for a long time wrote, and instead of sending it to me, (they) sent it to CODOFIL and all these different people, but I think that seems to be a pretty isolated incident. But yeah, for the most part, even though it busts a lot of myths that people really enjoy, I think, I think people like the myths – Evangeline being real, and the little things like that – people have really not complained about it, and I think that's probably because they don't see me saying it, they see Barry Ancelet saying things and nobody questions Barry Ancelet or Carl Brasseaux. I mean, those people are just kind of beyond reproach in the community, so that probably had a lot to do with letting those things pass more easily.

Holly: It's using your voice, I guess, using your voice as a researcher to amplify the voices of people who are very well-known in some parts of the world, or in some communities, but not necessarily known on a wider scale.

Nathan: Right, yeah. That was what I wended up doing. We filmed a lot of stuff that we didn't keep, just because I wasn't sure about what approach to take. Originally, my idea was to combat (a) really strong sense of anti-intellectualism, especially here and especially with regard to issues of identity in Cajun culture. Those things do not mix, you know? I mean, you could say, 'I did this whole research project and, oh, I'm a university professor,' – already, no one wants to hear what you have to say because here, 'University professor,' you know? 'Screw you!' There's that kind of barrier, but...

Holly: It's like that, 'How dare you talk to us about what we should and shouldn't know!'

Nathan: (Laughs) Yeah. So, and I was very aware of that and so to combat that, my original idea was to have just some researchers, some historians, and then just kind of 'normal people', and so we interviewed quite a few normal people – I say it that way, I think you know what I mean – and it didn't go well, it didn't go well because... I should have known this going in, but I definitely realised that after a few, is that you can get anyone to say anything, you know? If I want people to say Creoles are only black people with Indian (heritage), or a Black-Indian mixture, cause people will say that – I'll find people to say that, it'd be easy. I might have to do ten interviews to find five people to say that, but I mean... Because none of it's based on anything, you know what I mean? It's all just sort of stuff they've heard here and there, anecdotal memories, and so (it's) just disingenuous to keep doing that, cause at that point, I would just be picking the ones that I agreed with because I had read the documentary record and... But what's funny is that even though you have researchers that always disagree with stuff, there's so little, relatively so little, that all these researchers disagree on, because we've all read everything, you know what I mean? You read that much, and you spend your life

researching these really specific questions and parts of history – you know enough to agree on what happened, what was said, what was printed, what we have proof for or what we don't have proof for. But when everything is just like, 'Oh, well my Pawpaw said that the Creole...', well, everyone's going to have a different Pawpaw that said a different thing, and none of it's really based on much, so as a filmmaker, it would be kind of dishonest, I think, to do that and then to use that as some kind of validation of saying, 'See, regular people agree with...' Some of them did, which was more of a coincidence, I guess, more than anything, that some would agree, and some would not. I didn't do that, and so it came out being a very academic film, but that was kind of the idea from the beginning anyway, that it was supposed to be informative, so I don't know.

Holly: It sounds like it was the myth that kind of perpetuated itself over and over in different people, like... Like you said, someone's parent or grandparent will tell them something, and it just feeds down.

Nathan: Yeah, yeah.

Holly: But hey, like you said, if you've got Barry Ancelet agreeing with you, you can't really go wrong with that, right?

Nathan: Right, yeah. Yeah, and at the end I feel comfortable with the film. I think if anyone quote-unquote 'disagrees' with it, I mean, they have to find something to disprove what we can all see, you know what I mean? You can't not agree with it because it goes against what you thought, when what you thought was just what you'd always heard growing up, you know what I mean? So there's been a little bit of that, but not as much as I thought, and some of it's just crazy. Like, there was one comment I could probably try to find in one of these forms that I found, where a guy's like, 'I don't know about this. They think that the Evangeline Parish was named after Woodsworth, when it was already a parish,' and I was like, 'What sort of...?' You know, he's talking about Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, which came out in 1847,

and Evangeline Parish was founded in 1910. Anyone knows this, you could Wikipedia it if you want, or Google it, like... But it's a good example of the kind of criticism that you get. It's just from people that don't know anything about anything, and (are) just like, 'Let me go online and set the record straight!'

Holly: It's the pain of misinformation, isn't it?

Nathan: Yeah.

Holly: Trying to... It's like fighting a fire that will never quite go out, when you're fighting misinformation.

Nathan: Yeah, and it's hard because you don't want to come off as, again, the snooty professor, 'Actually, no, it was...' when it's true, but, I mean, it's, yeah, the documentary has been kind of odd, because it kind of puts you in between the safe space of university, where no one reads your stuff (Laughs) (Indistinguishable), and then the wider audience that really doesn't care about your research, or whether or not it's proven, or... But like I said, most people have really liked it, and so that's been really nice to see. I think the most rewarding thing about that was just the people that have really felt left out of that foundational myth, even a lot of white people – I think, like, St Landry (Parish), Evangeline Parish, Avoyelles Parish – that feel like they're part of that culture, cause they are. There's no real difference in the way they speak or what they do, but there just weren't really any Acadians that went up that far, so every time there's any kind of documentary or any kind of thing on TV about French, it always starts with the deportation. There's just a lot of people that that's not part of their history, so that was... I think it was validating for a lot of people just to have a broader view of French in Louisiana.

Holly: So you did the music for the documentary?

Nathan: Mm-hmm.

Holly: Was it based on traditional music from that region?

Nathan: Nope, no, not at all. There was one song by Bruce Daigrepoint, who's a friend of ours, a Cajun musician from Avoyelles Parish but from New Orleans, he grew up in New Orleans, and so one of his songs was included in it, but you know, it's supposed to be just some music that I wrote, so... And I kind of started with that, actually. I actually have... We're starting a new one (Looking through papers) Yeah, no, this is it. Sometimes, I'll start with the music, and I think this is actually... that's part of a page that I didn't use, I think – But we have a documentary that we haven't really started filming yet, but it's on coastal erosion and displacement in the Native American community and southeast Louisiana, and yeah, so, I don't know why, but I started, for both films, I started with the music. Just kind of weird.

Holly: (It's) not weird at all! If music's your thing, and it's what you enjoy.

Nathan: Yeah (Laughs).

Holly: Which instrument(s) do you play?

Nathan: Mostly guitar. I studied guitar and composition, and then just composition in France. I didn't study guitar in France for graduate school, but yeah, mostly guitar.

Holly: What's the music like in Louisiana? Chase mentioned the music at the *boucheries*, for example, with the accordion and things like that. What's the traditional music like there? Is that used to a great deal to talk about narratives, to kind of convey old narratives, or...?

Nathan: Nowadays, yeah, in a way. It's very popular. I think it's surprising for people not from here to see how popular traditional music is, and how present it is, not just in festivals, but just in bars, it's really... As a musician, if I were to really do that full-time again, that's pretty much what I would have to do, just play traditional music. So, it's very popular, even among young people. For narrative – you know, a lot of people don't understand the French. There's even, there's a song that you might be interested in for your research, I could see it working well. It's called *Danser sans comprendre*, and it's by Steve Riley, and it's about that. It's about how – I

think it's a song that's a mix of English and French, but it's about how it's fine to dance, it's good that you like the music, but it's not going to – like, there's a limit to how long this can last, if you don't understand. So, in that sense, it hasn't remained. A lot of people credit music for keeping French around, and keeping it popular, and keeping it relevant, but it's just not something that people really understand the lyrics to a lot. But on the other hand, a small group of people... I think of like, the band *Feufollet* – I'm on my third *Feux Follets* or fourth! – the band *Feufollet*, Megan Brown, who has a radio show and who's in a group called *T'Monde*, and... what other one? I forget the name of the other one (...) and others have really gone into the archives and listened to the old Lomax or his dad, I think his dad's name was Harry Lomax? I should know that... But... (Looking through music)

Holly: Are those the ones down at the Center for Louisiana Studies?

Nathan: Yeah, and different places, but they do have them there. *Rediscovering Lomax*, yeah. And there are multiple CDs like that. This one's called *'I Wanna Sing Right': Rediscovering Lomax in The Evangeline Country* – Evangeline Country, I love that. How far we've come... not so much! (Laughs) Oh, Woodsworth! (Laughs)

Holly: It's amazing how one idea can just stick around for forever, right?

Nathan: I know. It's a good story. But anyway, yeah, so this is Joel Savoy, I guess you've heard of the Savoy family, and yeah, so all of these are old recordings that they found and redid, and that's been going along for a while. When I first started hearing about newer Cajun bands like *Feufollet*, that was already part of the... I want to say schtick, but in a good way. That was already part of what they were doing, it was going to the archives and redoing stuff, so... And of course, they all speak French. People like that all speak French. So, they've... There's obviously a continuity there in song-like narrative, but it's just not really something for the mass public.

Holly: So, in terms of narrative, then, if we're talking narrative and we're talking the public, what do you think the best way of keeping the narratives going has been? Is it an oral folklore thing? Is it poetry and prose? Is it – we've said it's not art, not visual art, that doesn't really fit in necessarily to that cultural output.

Nathan: I guess it depends what you mean by narrative. By narrative, do you mean like a repertory of stories, or do you mean like a sort of discourse identity, or collective history?

Holly: A bit of everything, but I would say it's probably more narrative in the realms of collective history and identity, and keeping that bit going.

Nathan: Yeah... It's hard to say, because I think they're just different spheres, you know. There's... obviously in literature, that's very present. I mean, I just finished teaching a doctoral seminar on Louisiana literature, we cited a lot about that discourse you find in the poetry and, especially starting in the '90s, but even in the early '80s, with *Cris sur le Bayou* – I mean, that's almost all they would talk about. But on the other hand, who read that? And I always try to have students understand that, cause since that's so long ago now, it's like thirty years ago, it seems to make sense that, 'Oh, it was discouraged, and here came this new group of poets, and they wrote all this stuff.' Well, if you were around, you probably wouldn't have heard about any of this happening, it's not something that... 'Oh, Zachary Richard has a new book of poetry? Let's go get it and read it at home!' Which is hard to believe, but some of these people that are probably more well-known in Canada are not so much appreciated here, so that's what I meant by different spheres, is that that was important in a lot of ways, that literature, and really, I think today, we see just how important it was, that we still have it and it legitimises more *Feux Follets*, and that's why *Feux Follets* is still going, why it came back, and why there's Tintamarre, why I was able to publish my book of poetry in Louisiana and not in New Brunswick, like everyone in the '90s had to. So, it's not, I'm not saying it's unimportant at all, I'm just saying it's not something that really got out of a certain milieu of the university culture,

the arts community, you know. There are... There's public art. Robert Dafford is this artist that comes to mind, does a lot of murals throughout the area that depict different parts of history or ideas, but most of the towns here, like, the downtown, will have some kind of big mural like that. That's something that's not to be discounted. And for the music, I guess... Not so much the lyrics, but just a certain sound. Folktales have kind of petered out, except for sort of general – like the epilogue of my book is about the state of folktales today, and there are certain figures that people still know, like the *feu follet*, the *Rougarou*, in certain places, (*La*) *Christine*, which is like a Santa Claus, but beyond knowing the name and what they do... I wouldn't call that a narrative. I'd call it more of a figure. As far as collected history, I would say that that is where you'd find more of the selective history, of the myth. I don't mean myth in a historically inaccurate way, but I mean...

Holly: Like mythology.

Nathan: Mm-hmm, yeah. And that's something that's translated in(to) English and really had been solidified in English, and perpetuated in English, so...

Holly: It's wonderful, it's like a mix of everything. Just a couple more questions, I promise. One question I wanted to ask was: in that article on *Acadie divergente*, you cite a poem by David Cheramie, and you talk very briefly about the Catholic faith playing a large role in Louisiana, in *Acadie*. Would you say that religion plays much of a big role in Louisiana French culture, and if so, is it predominately Catholic, or are there other religious/spiritual beliefs that play a role?

Nathan: I would say it's very prominent. Yeah, it's crazy. I would say that, and other people, like Jacques Henry, who's just a little bit in the documentary, but he's someone that you might want to look in to as well. He made a book called *Blue Collar Bayou*, that I really like a lot.

Holly: Oh, I know this book!

Nathan: Yeah, oh, you do?

Holly: I do.

(...)

Nathan: Yeah, but even he would say, I don't know if he said that in the book, but I've talked to him about that before, and he thinks – he's from France, but he's been here for a long time, he was actually a director of CODOFIL at one time – in his mind, religion is the most lasting, the most prevalent, part of Cajun identity, and I would agree with that.

Holly: That's really interesting.

Nathan: Yeah, and I don't know exactly why that is, I don't know. I think it's like everything, it's becoming less and less the case, but it's still incredibly prevalent. I mean, just at Lafayette, I think there are over 40 Catholic churches, just in Lafayette. That's, you know, that's a city with – and I mean Lafayette proper, I'm not counting Youngsville and Broussard and all that – (there are) 120,000 people in Lafayette proper, over 40 just Catholic churches. And there's – From what I can observe, I haven't looked at any statistics on this, but it seems like in the Black community, it's less, so... But I mean, I live, well, it's just a huge field behind me, but if it wasn't for my shed, you could see a house across the field and that's a Black Catholic church, and so you have – and there's another one in Opelousas – but it's still very segregated. But I would say that those are fewer. When I go to Catholic church, rarely of my own volition – I was raised a Catholic, of course – but I mean, almost everyone is white in there. It's very segregated, I think it's like that everywhere. It's like James Baldwin said, high noon on Sunday is the most segregated time during the week in America, and it's kind of the same here. There's an interesting – I have a chapter in my book on anti-clerical humour in folktales, well, in jokes, but mostly they're more like stories – and that's still true, too. There's a weird mix of... What's the word? Not piety, but belief, *croynance*, but also anti-clerical sentiment, like, not trusting priests or making fun of them or putting them into jokes. It's, like, a whole set of jokes just

around priests. So, there's that element too, I guess, kind of like the anti-intellectualism, there's a mistrust of anyone with any kind of authority, you know. It's part of the culture, as well.

Holly: That rebellion, it's the streak of Francophone-ness, maybe.

Nathan: Maybe so, yeah. Yeah, I don't know if it's that, or just... I don't know. Sometimes I feel like there's always a mistrust of anyone that's going to get up and do something, you know, make noise or tell someone what to do, you know. I think it's that... It's just sort of a natural resistance against that, and you see that in the language, too. I think it's Shane Bernard that says something about this in the documentary about how people in Canada, like French speakers in Canada, are often surprised that people just aren't more... Have an activist approach, I think that's what he said, about French in Louisiana, and it's true. To get up and make noise and protest, that's just not really part of that culture, you know. Like I was saying before, just sort of a more conservative, just in general, just more conservative culture.

Holly: Actually, you led me on to my next question perfectly then, when you mentioned resistance. I was going to ask – when you think of, when people do use Louisiana French, do you think it's done out of a relatively active, conscious form of resistance, or pushback, against English, or do you think it's a means of celebration, or do you think it's maybe somewhere in the middle?

Nathan: I don't really see it as resistance anymore. I mean, it might have been at one time, but I think it's probably the result of a couple of things that have happened. One is that French just poses less of a threat to English than it once did, or that we didn't have a large French majority that probably could have went one way instead of the other in demanding certain things. The other thing is that, I think, people's attitudes, and maybe it's not unrelated to that, is that people's attitudes towards French have changed over time as well, where it's, I guess, CODOFIL and different projects, and exchanges and festivals and all that stuff, have been around long enough to where people associate French with culture, with other places in the

world, and so it's not really... And it's never really been a political thing, so I'm just thinking about, like, when we have events here, or we have poetry readings, which, before COVID, there were actually more than I can ever remember happening in different place(s). And not even in festivals, I mean just Saturday, this place, we're going to do a reading. I never remember any kind of sentiment that's like, 'There's this thing,' it was just sort of like, 'Someone has a book out, we're going to get people together.'

Holly: It was that celebratory aspect of, 'So and so's got a new book out, [let's go and hear some of that.]'

Nathan: [Yeah.] And not necessarily, it could just be, like, just something to do, just sort of (a) social thing. Yeah. And Louisiana French, I use that kind of loosely, because not everyone speaks Louisiana French, but I guess most people would, that would do that kind of thing. I think what you see in – it's just a small group of people, like *Le Bourdon* and *Télé-Louisiane* – you'll find people that don't really speak Louisiana French, but kind of use certain... I call them markers, because I have a – I never published it, I think because I couldn't do the IRB thing, and this is a long time ago, when I was at Tulane doing my PhD, but I did a set of interviews with young adult Louisiana French speakers, and I found that – and all of them also spoke more of a standard French, they had all studied French (before) – and so I did, like, asking them questions in standard French, and then in Louisiana French afterwards, and what I found was that a lot of the more difficult to master aspects of the Louisiana French, like certain morphological specificit(ies), I guess you'd say – pronunciation, different uses of tenses, like there's a *futur antérieur* that people use sometimes that's kind of a conditional, stuff like that, it's like, you either grew up using it that way, or you're probably not really going to get the hang of it, especially when most people don't use it that way, and that stuff, you would really not find with the younger people – but things that were 'easy' to use, or what I called in the paper 'markers', like *asteur*, *vous-autres*, *nous-autres*, certain words that people just know,

like *chaoui* instead of *le raton laveur* for raccoon, and, you know, I think I highlighted eight or so, and that's kind of what I see, and it's not, like, criticism, it's just an observation, like in the *Télé-Louisiane Post*, or you see the *ne* for negation, which you never will hear in Louisiana, like '*N'oubliez pas, vous-autres!*' Like, '*N'oubliez pas, vous-autres!*' doesn't really, I don't want to say it doesn't exist, cause obviously it exists now, people are saying it, but, I mean, that's just such a weird clash of the formal and then just kind of adding the *vous-autres* to give it the Louisiana French, or... Yeah, using inversion to ask a question, and then with *asteur*. I laugh when I hear that, like, it's just such an odd mix of the formal, classroom French that they learned and then later they learned some Louisiana French words, but does that really make it Louisiana French? Not really, but I think it's good – as I said, it's not a criticism at all. It's good, and it's probably approaching what would have happened had French been offered in school, not as immersion, not as CODOFIL, but just as the normal language, like you see in Canada. That's probably how people would be talking now anyway – like, more conventional forms found elsewhere, but still keeping some of the vocabulary. That's probably what would have happened. So, I don't see a problem with that at all, but it was just to explain what I meant by Louisiana French. When people say Louisiana French now, especially younger people, that's kind of what they're referring to.

Holly: That leads me again, very nicely, into my very last question, which is what do you think the future is for Louisiana French?

Nathan: I think it will be part of Louisiana for a long time, in a certain way. I think there's a growing interest in it, and I think what's different – cause a lot of things have changed over the past, say, five years, I think – so it's kind of hard to tell, but I mean, some of the things that have changed, which, to me, point to a certain direction, is – One is the different media. Little podcasts, the *Télé-Louisiane* stuff, *LACréole Show*, and those are all online. That's all new, that's very new, that's all in the past three to four years. And then it's more diverse, and it's

not only more diverse, I think it's diverse in terms of people's experiences with French, people that are involved in French now, quite a few of them are not from here, and then some have spent time abroad, a lot of them have. *Le Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques* in Québec has been around since 2010, that's really amazing when you look at individual people, how many have done something with them, either an internship or a university programme during the summer, or... It's really remarkable how they have an impact in so many different ways. Even just me personally, I did an internship with them in 2010 in New Brunswick, and many things since then, they've been really supportive of my research, so there's that, there's like a Canadian-Louisiana aspect, which I think is stronger than it ever has been, and a few other developments, like in immersion. Immersion is growing, we have a new masters' programme at the university for immersion teaching, so I don't think it's going away at all, I think it's the opposite, but I think it's a matter of finding its place. It's not the same place in people's lives as it was in the '90s, where it was the festivals and the music and the Cajun heritage, you know, ancestry – all that was part of the same thing. Today, it's more... I guess it's more international, it's more diverse, it's more media, and not just music and literature, but it's definitely not all about genealogy either, like it used to be. So, I don't know – we'll have to see. All those things I mentioned are really recent changes, so...

Holly: The future looks bright!

Nathan: Yeah, in a way. I mean, it's not going to take over everything (Laughs), but yeah, it's definitely growing. Interest in it is growing, and there are more avenues to do things in French. I think what we need to do more of is create content in French that's not about French. We're not always talking about, you know, 'Why are we speaking French?', but just write things that are about other things, but in French. I think that's kind of what's always been missing, is we spend so much time talking about it, about the language and why it's important, that those that don't already speak it are like, 'Well, why is it so important? I don't speak it and I'm fine! You

speaking it and all you talk about it speaking it. You just talk about talking it!' So, it's like, what's the point? And there is a point, it's just a question of creating more on different themes, I think. Cause that's how you draw people in, I think, is by creating things that are excellent that people want to be able to access through the language, and that's something that getting better, but we still have a long way to go.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW WITH JOSHUA R. BROWN

Date of Interview: Friday 18th December 2020

Time of Interview: 16.00 BST, 10.00 CST

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text in italics*

Holly: I actually wanted to start, if I may, by asking you first of all, which term do you prefer? Is it Pennsylvania German, Pennsylvania Dutch, *Deutsch*?

Joshua: Any of them is fine by me. I usually use Pennsylvania Dutch as the term, but I don't have a problem, I don't any sort of dogmatic (Laughs) stance on any of them that some people do, so... yeah.

Holly: So, what does being Pennsylvania Dutch to you? Or, you know, a speaker of German in Wisconsin, because I know Wisconsin has some German speakers too.

Joshua: Right. So, it's a little, I guess it's different in some ways. I grew up in Pennsylvania in a household that was kind of, that was mixed, so my mother's family is Pennsylvania Dutch, my father's family's not, but I was surrounded by relatives that were Pennsylvania Dutch, but by that point, I mean, no one – my older uncles spoke Pennsylvania Dutch, and a few aunts, but by that point, no one was using it at all, even for any sort of communication. I mean, it was just something that they just didn't use. So, for me growing up, probably the things that resonated mostly with Pennsylvania Dutch were food, traditions... The language, we knew that there was a different language, and my grandmother would speak it with her sisters when they would visit, but that was, you know, so we knew there was a language associated with it, but it wasn't as prevalent, I think, in my family as much as food traditions, and there really wasn't

literature or anything like that in my family that I knew of. There weren't books and things like that in Pennsylvania Dutch at home, and things like that. So, yeah, I think probably the foodways are probably the most... have been raised, that was the thing that meant Pennsylvania Dutch to me mostly, growing up, yeah.

Holly: Is there anything in the foodways that you would say is, you know – if that one thing came to mind in your head, you'd think, 'That's Pennsylvania Dutch right there'?

Joshua: Probably pot pie. And I was in my twenties until I realised that pot pie meant something different for everybody else, except for me. So, a pot pie for everybody is, you know, an actual pie, with meat in it, but for the Pennsylvania Dutch, it's a stew with... So it's like a chicken noodle soup, I guess you'd say, but the noodles are like square pie dough that are inside it, and that's what we call 'pot pie', and the Pennsylvania Dutch word for it is '*Bott Boi*', but we always just said 'pot pie' growing up, and so that is probably the thing that, you know, that separates the Pennsylvania Dutch out, that we have this kind of stew idea with – we didn't have, like, a chicken pot pie was not a pie with, like, chicken meat and vegetables in it, it was a stew kind of thing with these noodles, yeah.

Holly: That sounds really good. That's a new one for me!

Joshua: (Laughs)

Holly: I've heard scrapple, I've heard hog maw, I've heard *Fillsel*...

Joshua: We had... Scrapple, it was just in the fringes in my family. I mean, my grandmother liked it, my dad liked it, but we hated it, so we wouldn't eat it, and then... So it never really entered my sense of anything, but pig stomach would be had a lot. Now, we didn't call it 'hog maw', we didn't call it a Pennsylvania Dutch term, we called it 'pig stomach', and so I was older until I learned that it was called hog maw, but pig stomach, yeah, definitely, we had that quite a bit growing up too, yeah.

Holly: It always reminds me of haggis when everyone describes that to me.

Joshua: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Although I think with haggis, do you eat – you don't eat the stomach itself with haggis, right?

Holly: I think we do, I think you can. Not being Scottish, unfortunately, I don't have that much experience with haggis!

Joshua: It probably is like pig stomach, then, because pig stomach, I mean, some people eat the stomach, and some people don't!

Holly: Yeah, it's probably that choice.

Joshua: Right, yeah.

Holly: So, can you tell me then about your experiences learning Pennsylvania Dutch, cause you said you had older relatives that knew it, but you didn't necessarily hear it in the house. How did you come to learn the dialect?

Joshua: So, when I was younger, my grandmother would talk with her sisters, my (great) aunt, quite often at the table, and I was always just, I was fascinated by the language itself, like I was just – 'My grandmother can speak this kind of secret language', I guess, and so I would sit at the table with them and kind of listen along, and I had asked my grandmother, you know, if she could teach me some words in Pennsylvania Dutch, and she only had a cookbook really, it was one of these touristy cookbook things of Pennsylvania Dutch cooking, and on one of the pages in the corners, or around the outside, it had the Pennsylvania Dutch words for certain things, and so she sat with me and kind of went through the words, those cooking words that were on the edges of the pages, and that was it until I got to my undergrad, and then I was... I had studied German, and then in my undergrad I worked for the Center for Pennsylvania German Studies in southcentral Pennsylvania, and our task was to put together a dictionary for Pennsylvania Dutch, and so I was tasked with kind of taking word lists and getting sentences from Pennsylvania Dutch speakers, and so I kind of learned it that way, I guess? So, I had the German knowledge, but then I had to, for the dictionary, I had to type in the sentence that the

people were giving me, and then translate that sentence into English, and then arrange the dictionary, so that's mostly how I learned it was through the dictionary. But I'm not as proficient, probably, as I would like to be in Pennsylvania Dutch. I don't actively use it (Laughs) at all, just because, you know, there's nobody around to speak it, it's just kind of one of those things that just falls by the wayside, but with German knowledge, it's still very prevalent. I mean, it's still easy to kind of understand, at least, what's going on and kind of fumble your way through coming up with a sentence, at least, yeah.

Holly: You kind of learnt it by osmosis, then, later on down the line through the dictionary, right?

Joshua: Right, yeah, yeah.

Holly: The dictionary's very helpful, by the way, [for German speakers.]

Joshua: [Oh, great!] (Laughs)

Holly: Cause I pick up, like you, I can pick up bits and pieces, but then it does get to a point where you just look and think, 'Okay, that's not *Hochdeutsch*, I can't see the link to *Hochdeutsch*, but it's there somewhere!'

Joshua: Yeah, yeah. (Laughs)

Holly: So, do you actually consider – this is a question I've asked everyone that I've spoken to so far, and everyone has a slightly... Well, similar and yet different view on this. Do you consider Pennsylvania Dutch a language or a dialect?

Joshua: I mean, linguistically, there's no, there's no definition, right? There's no definition of a language or a dialect really in linguistics, and I think that probably a reason that people get worked up, I think, about, you know, whether you want to form a hard line between something being a language or a dialect is a question of legitimacy. They want the language that they're speaking or using to have some kind of greater authenticity in the world, right? Particularly for outsiders, but also for insiders, to feel that they're not wasting their time by speaking a language.

And so, along with that comes a number of things, like the literature and orthography, and story traditions, and all sorts of things that come along with being a language, grammar books and everything else. And I think that's why a lot of people call it a dialect, because they want to highlight that illegitimacy of the language, they want to highlight the humility and the kind of rural, folksy aspects to it, and then there are others who say that it's a language, because they want to highlight maybe the legitimacy of it. For me, I would describe it as a language. It's the result of the levelling of several dialects and it's kind of taken on a life of its own, so for me, I would say it's a language, but I find it rather endearing, I guess, when I hear people call it a dialect, right? Because it's almost like they're actively working against everything that we're told about, you know, whether a language is authentic and legitimate, they're kind of actively fighting against that by denigrating, almost, their own language. But I would personally call it a language, but I don't, you know – just like with the Pennsylvania Dutch versus Pennsylvania German, I don't wince when anyone uses a term that I don't use.

Holly: That's a really interesting answer, actually, and it reminds me of – I did read one of your articles on heritage languages from... oh, the journal name escapes me now, because you know what it's like with articles, there's so many – and it's brought up something from previous interviews that I've had with other people that work with Pennsylvania Dutch on – what you said then about authenticity... There was a debate in a previous discussion as to what makes someone an authentic Pennsylvania Dutch speaker, whether it was that they were native and they have been brought up using it from, you know, from birth, or whether they had the heritage, but had come to the language later. Where do you stand on that? I know that's quite a big question to ask, but where would you say the authentic Pennsylvania Dutch speaker is?

Joshua: I get very nervous, I guess, when people start throwing around things like 'authentic speaker', or, you know, start identifying themselves as an 'authentic speaker' or when they...

Holly: Like ‘native speakers’ and things like that.

Joshua: Right, but when they start to – Because, I mean, I always ask, like, what’s the purpose of it? What’s the purpose of these definitions? And it’s mostly, I think, a way of kind of separating people, like you’re either an authentic speaker or you’re an inauthentic speaker, right? And by doing that, I think that it really, it just creates too much of a separation within the same community, but even among people who maybe want to be seen as authentic speakers, but who would be deemed as inauthentic speakers, and then it kind of erases their experience that they have with the language, and it might be limited, but it’s no less special to them, so to call them then inauthentic speakers is kind of a... I think it’s a really, a nasty move, I guess you could say. But, so for me, and this is something that we grapple with, it’s not just something about Pennsylvania Dutch and kind of the hurdles to learning Pennsylvania Dutch, you know, a language that is mostly oral and all of these things that come with it. But this is something that we struggle with in German teaching as well. When we used to say, you know, in our classrooms we had the ‘native speaker ideal’ and we wanted students to be listening to standard High German and to achieve native speaker proficiency and all these things, but over time, and luckily now, we’re starting to realise that there is no native speaker ideal, there is no native speaker of German out there, this idea ‘native speaker’ (that) we have. And really, it creates kind of a false sense in our classrooms, we’re setting our students up for failure, because they’re not going to achieve, nor would anyone ever want to achieve, that ideal native speakerness, because they’d walk around talking and people would be kind of like, ‘What? They’re speaking in full sentences and conjugating their verbs, and they’re not swallowing any of their endings like normal people doo, and they’re not using any kind of slang or colloquial expressions, they’re strange.’ And so they would be isolated in a communicative sense. And so luckily, in German teaching, we’ve moved away – most of us, not all of us – have moved away from that native speaker ideal, and we’ve moved away from the idea of one German existing. There are

so many types of German, and we can't necessarily say that, you know, maybe a refugee's German is not authentically German enough for the classroom, and luckily textbooks have kind of caught up with this, too, where the listening sections will be from a variety of people with different proficiencies in German, because communicatively, you're going to be dealing with people who are at different proficiencies. And so that, for Pennsylvania Dutch, for me, it makes me nervous to say they're an authentic speaker, or even a native speaker. I mean, native speaker... You know, other than the Amish and Old Order Mennonites, I mean, you'd be hard pressed to find somebody who is a native speaker, but I'm sure that there are some people who, some of these older Pennsylvania Dutch people, who kind of pride themselves on being raised from birth speaking Pennsylvania Dutch. Well, that, you know, that's something that doesn't exist anymore and won't exist anymore, and so if we fail in the Pennsylvania Dutch community, if we fail to embrace the varied proficiencies of people, they're really going to close out the community and identify it only through language and not through other things. So, I think it gets rather divisive, I think, with having authentic speakers versus inauthentic speakers, and, you know, people can attach authenticity to a language, but as soon as that kind of trickles down to the speakers themselves, I get nervous with that, I guess. (Laughs)

Holly: I can understand that, I can understand that.

Joshua: Yeah, yeah. I guess, I just kind of want room, and there *is* room, there's plenty of room, for people of varied proficiencies in Pennsylvania Dutch, and the reality is that there aren't going to be native, 'native', speakers of Pennsylvania Dutch in the coming generations, and there really should be room for people who have all sorts of proficiencies, whether they're overhearers and, you know, maybe they just know a few curse words or a few cooking terms, or something, in Pennsylvania Dutch, to people who are fully proficient and have learned the language. They can achieve common ground in the same community, even though they have differing language proficiencies, and I think that's perfectly fine. I mean, we have, you know,

our German majors and minors on campus have very varying language proficiencies, but they still create a community of people who are interested in learning the language and learning about the culture, and things like that, yeah.

Holly: That's a beautiful goal to have.

Joshua: Right? (Laughs)

Holly: A beautiful vision for Pennsylvania Dutch in a nutshell!

Joshua: Yeah, so... Yeah. I hope that... I mean, I know that there are some people who do pride themselves on being native speakers and kind of look down on other people and I've heard some things about classes that some of these older people teach, where they kind of tell them, 'Well, that's not the word for it,' they kind of shut down any of these overhearers' ideas of what language is to them. Who wrote on these overhearers, who was that? ... Jen Schlegel, I think, wrote her dissertation (on them). I don't know if you've talked to Jen yet or not. (...) But she wrote her dissertation on these overhearers in classrooms, and kind of how they positioned themselves in terms of identity, and I'm pretty sure she has one of the famed instructors of Pennsylvania Dutch that she was working with, who would often, you know, shut down, if someone was using a term that he didn't really think was the best term or whatever... But you get those kinds of people in all language communities, don't you?

Holly: I think so. I definitely think so! So, when people then use Pennsylvania Dutch nowadays, in whatever form they like to use it, what do you think the motivation is behind that? Do you think it's interest, or resistance, I guess, against the English language, or celebration of the language and culture, or something else entirely?

Joshua: I think the motivation is probably tradition-based. I think that some people probably realised that their ancestors spoke Pennsylvania Dutch, and they kind of want to see what it's like. I think there's probably more interest among people who are overhearers, so people that have actually heard their relatives speaking Pennsylvania Dutch. They have a greater

motivation to learn it. But in a few generations, of course, you're not going to have those overhearers anymore, and so whether there will be motivation for people just because of the fact they live in south-eastern, south-central Pennsylvania, they come from Pennsylvania Dutch stock, but they've never heard the language before, whether they'd be motivated then to learn it because their ancestors spoke it, I don't know if that will necessarily be there. Definitely not as strongly as people who are overhearers and have heard it, at least. And, I mean, you could make the same kind of things with modern languages in schools today. A number of our students are German heritage, and that's why they wanted to learn German, but there's a fair number as well that have German heritage, but chose to learn Spanish and French as well, so I think the motivation will exist for certain people, but not for others later on. I don't see a motivation for people to learn Pennsylvania Dutch out of, maybe, for communicative reasons, There are a few people that maybe want to learn Pennsylvania Dutch because they work with the Amish and Mennonites, but the Amish and Mennonites speak English, too, so there's really not a necessity to speak Pennsylvania Dutch and that's kind of been a driving reason for some of these courses, I think, that are offered. Maybe at Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, where they, you know, focus that people are learning the language so that they can communicate with the Amish and Mennonite people. That, for me, doesn't hold any water, and I don't think it will necessarily in the future, either, but it kind of puts a false communicative spin on the language. I mean, you know, people aren't going to necessarily go out and try their Pennsylvania Dutch with a native speaker. There are a number of barriers between the Amish, the Mennonites, and 'outsiders', in addition to language, that I think are very real problems to that communicative angle that they seek to achieve. So, I guess, in a limited sense, it would be the tradition-minded, I think...

Holly: That kind of celebration of the tradition?

Joshua: Yeah, I think that would be it. But, you know, and again, in future generations, I think now it works, because now you have people who are overhearers and they remember, you know, Grandma speaking Pennsylvania Dutch at home, or they're from Pennsylvania Dutch stock and they still have a bunch of traditions that are Pennsylvania Dutch, but eventually, people are going to be descended from a variety of ethnicities, and Pennsylvania Dutch will be one of several that they may identify as, and, you know, if they... Whether they choose to follow Pennsylvania Dutch or not will solely be on their own kind of tradition interests for that particular group and that particular tradition. That'll be the motivation for them to learn the language or get interested in the culture. It won't be in anything... I don't think it would be anything beyond that.

Holly: I'm sure there'll always be an interested party somewhere.

Joshua: Right, yeah, I mean, there's always somebody out there that's going to be interested in something. I mean, just looking at my siblings, for example. I mean, they're all overhearers of Pennsylvania Dutch – my grandmother spoke it at home with her sister and it was a large part of growing up – and the food traditions and things like that. But I'm the only one that's interested in Pennsylvania Dutch (Laughs), in the language and learning the language, in learning more about the culture. My siblings are very satisfied with their memories of growing up with it, and that's it. They're not looking to make pigs' stomach at home, they're not looking to make pot pie – they'll eat it, of course, for nostalgia's sake, but they're not going to run out and do those things for themselves. I think that it does take certain individuals to be interested in things. But they're interested in a lot of things that I'm not interested in, so it's not like I'm kind of weighing them against each other and, you know, saying that, 'Oh, they're not interested in Pennsylvania Dutch, so they're less interested in tradition than I am,' but (we're) just different people, you know, and different people will be interested in different things, which is a good thing.

Holly: It's a wonderful thing. The variety, right?

Joshua: Right.

Holly: So, you said earlier that Pennsylvania Dutch is a very oral language, and a lot of what I've been finding so far is exactly as you said, it's a very oral language, so how do the Pennsylvania Dutch people like to tell their stories or tell stories of lived experience? If it's an oral language, I presume it would probably be things like music, or would I be wrong?

Joshua: So this is difficult for me, because an oral language for me... For me, growing up, and I don't know if my experience is similar to other people's or different. When I read certain things, or when I talked to certain people who are Pennsylvania Dutch, they were very much, like, engrained with it, they were very much in the trenches, almost, with Pennsylvania Dutch, that they used kind of, you know, terms for things in Pennsylvania Dutch, or that they called the foods the Pennsylvania Dutch food names for them, and they were acquainted with a number of these folk traditions and superstitions and all of these things. But for me growing up, I mean, we didn't have that, and I've often thought, well, was my family less Pennsylvania Dutch than the other – were we kind of watered down at some point? Because we didn't have... I don't think our Pennsylvania Dutch identity was necessarily as strong as it was in other communities. I don't remember, for example, my grandmother having certain superstitions that are said to be, like, the 'thing' of the Pennsylvania Dutch, that they would do certain things, like, whenever you walked by someone who's sleeping, you're supposed to pinch their toe or something strange like that. I never heard of that, until I started studying Pennsylvania Dutch, and it's like, 'Well, that's odd, I don't think that my family would ever do that,' and so for me growing up, the stories were... mundane (Laughs), everyday things. When I heard Pennsylvania Dutch being spoken with my great-aunt and my grandmother, they were gossiping about family. It wasn't that they were telling kind of these old narratives or folktales, or something like that,

and passing it down. That never happened. In my family, it never happened. So, for me, Pennsylvania Dutch was always just an everyday, just a language that you heard. I mean, it was everyday in the sense that what they were talking about was just family gossip, but it was special that, you know, it was this language that they only spoke together. But there wasn't a sense of oral tradition being passed on in Pennsylvania Dutch. My grandmother was very... She wasn't a storyteller, even in English, so she wouldn't have told some Pennsylvania Dutch story in English, and she never talked about growing up, she never talked about traditions that she had at home. She just wasn't a talker in that sense. I mean, she would talk a lot about current family members and things like that, she would do that all the time, but she wasn't the type of person to sit there and reminisce about days gone by, I guess. So, I wouldn't say that she was a storyteller that I could rely on, really, as kind of a quintessential Pennsylvania Dutch storyteller. But, from what I've gathered, I guess, since I've been immersed in it, from a research perspective more than anything these past few decades, the language – not even the language, just even telling them in English, too, the way that stories are communicated are through a narrative, often humorous, very humorous, earthy, folksy humour, right? I mean, the more rural that these stories get, the better. It's always about, you know, the punchline for the stories is always about manure or something else, you know, like it's always about something bawdy or earthy, and I think it is that kind of tie to the earth and kind of bringing (the) Pennsylvania Dutch story back to farming, and back to that. And if there is any kind of mention of an outsider, then they're always portrayed as a non-farmer or something like that. But, I mean, you mentioned songs. There are a bunch of songs in Pennsylvania Dutch, but we never... I never heard my grandmother sing anything, so she didn't sing any songs, and so that tradition just never existed in my family, kind of singing the songs, and even like the children's rhymes, and things like that, those didn't exist in my family, either. I never heard them. And I think that's probably just a function of my grandparents, who they were as people (Laughs) rather

than the traditional Pennsylvania Dutch experience. I think that other people probably have more of an exposure to story or, like, folk ritual attached to the culture than I do. But my sense is that, you know, the oral narratives are mostly... If they have a moral to them, it's always communicated in some kind of earthy, bawdy way, usually.

Holly: That's wonderful, it's connected to the heritage where it fits into the... a location just as much as the language itself.

Joshua: Yeah, yeah. And, I mean, you can have these stories, they do these stories in English, too, at the folk festivals and things like that, and they do have a very particular way of delivery. I mean, if they're not in Pennsylvania Dutch, then they'll be delivered by someone who has a heavy Pennsylvania Dutch accent. And, yeah, they're always kind of earthy, and increasingly, I would say now, about a tension between kind of modernity and rural, folksy Pennsylvania life. Increasingly, there's that kind of tension in stories.

Holly: Do the communities tend to – I mean, I guess, when I've spoken to people in the past, they said that previously, they wouldn't have written these stories down, they would have been passed down through generations. Do people, nowadays, write things down more than in...? I mean, I know the orthography causes some issues.

Joshua: I don't know. So, there's a lot of literature in Pennsylvania Dutch. You know, when I worked with Dick Beam on the dictionary, when people would say things like, 'Pennsylvania Dutch is an oral language,' he would say, 'There's a *huge* literature, you just have to know where to look,' and it's true. There is a huge literature that exists in Pennsylvania Dutch. But it's written by usually these people who were professors of German who grew up in Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking households and who wanted to try and write plays and stories or do translations and things. And then sometimes they were published, sometimes they weren't published, so there is a rich literature that exists – I mean, well, 'rich', I wouldn't necessarily say 'rich literature' – but there is a literature that exists, and there is a lot of it. Maybe not

compared to English, but there's a lot more than people think. But the people that were writing it were not necessarily the people who... (They) do not represent the variety of Pennsylvania Dutch speakers, even at a time when there were a lot of Pennsylvania Dutch speakers. Today, I think it's the same. I think it's the same kinds of people that will be writing Pennsylvania Dutch, they'll mostly be people who are educated, probably who have a German background, who would be writing Pennsylvania Dutch. It's a little different among the plain people, because there are Pennsylvania Dutch children's stories and things like that, but typically, those are written by schoolteachers, and then vetted through a book committee that exists, so it's kind of filtered through several people. I wouldn't say that there are people who are writing in Pennsylvania Dutch and, like, storing their manuscripts in a cupboard, or something like that, that we'll find at some point. I don't think that that exists. And I know, just from my own family – my grandmother didn't write anything other than, maybe, a grocery list. She didn't write letters, she, you know. And her whole family, they didn't write letters. We don't have, really, correspondence or anything like that, and I think it's just because they were too busy doing other things, you know – raising ten kids and farming and all of that. To sit down and write something in Pennsylvania Dutch, even if they would have done it phonetically – they didn't have an orthography for it – it just, it wasn't something that I think would have ever crossed their minds to do. So, I think that the literature that exists currently in Pennsylvania Dutch is limited to... There's a lot more out there than people would think, but it still is limited to a certain type of Pennsylvania Dutch speaker, and I think that in the future, it'll be the same way. I think that it's the same... the people who are writing Pennsylvania Dutch today are the motivated, language-centric to culture, kind of people, and not people who are just kind of – who may be interested more in the culture and are using the language as a vehicle to explain that culture, rather than the other way around, which changes. It changes the literature, right? If you're trying to explain the culture, and just using the language because that's the language

that you have, you have very different literature than people who are language-centric, who are using the language because they want to use the language, because they feel that the language is the most important part of the culture, or they want to preserve the language, or they want to be more proficient in the language, right? The literature, then, is very different, I think, because you get words and constructions that aren't necessarily used by everybody, that don't have currency elsewhere in a communicative aspect. So, it's different. I think that our literature is different. When you read Pennsylvania Dutch, it's not Pennsylvania Dutch that you would hear spoken, it's very different, I think, yeah.

Holly: It's very unique, it's a very unique language.

Joshua: Right, yeah, yeah.

Holly: So I actually wanted to quickly ask you, on the work that you did on that interpretive dictionary, and with Dick Beam, and I wanted to ask how the community engaged with it when you were putting that together? Because like you said, you had to go out and speak to people to get sentences for the dictionary. What were people's reactions to that? Were they intrigued?

Joshua: So, luckily, he had a number of informants, so it wasn't that – it would have been better, I think, had we kind of gone to people's houses and just, you know, said, 'Do you speak Pennsylvania Dutch? Okay, would you use this word in a sentence?' Because I think we would have gotten a broader stroke of usage. But he had informants that he had gained over years of working on the language and being interested in the language, and he had found certain people in the community, and among the Amish and Mennonites especially, who were interested in language as much as he was, and they would be completely willing to sit for, you know, three hours and get a word and they could use the word in a sentence that really illustrated how it was used. So I understand why he used these informants over and over and over again, because everyday people might not, you know, come up with anything creative or something that he

may have wanted for the sentence, whereas he would get really good usages of the words in context from these people who were like-minded as him in being interested in language, or having an ability in Pennsylvania Dutch that they knew what the words meant. Not only what the words meant, but they also knew related words, or they said, ‘Oh, you know, people use that word, but I use this word,’, and so that was how we had done it, so we didn’t necessarily go and surprise people. They knew we were coming; they knew what we were doing, and it was kind of this... He would take a word list, he would come up with a bunch of words that he wanted sentences for, and then we would just head out and go to their homes, and they were completely like, ‘Oh okay, yeah, the dictionary thing, so you want some words?’ And so it was just kind of routine, I guess you could say, for all of the informants that he had. But they weren’t necessarily – I think they had a vague idea that he was putting together a dictionary, but I think that a lot of them just would enjoy the play of it? Like, coming up with sentences in Pennsylvania Dutch, like hearing a word – he would always pick words that weren’t, you know, everyday words. They were sometimes obscure words, or words that were used only in certain contexts, and so I think they found enjoyment in that, that they could be creative with the language. I think that they found that fun, almost like a word puzzle, maybe. But otherwise, I mean, I don’t think... I mean, having a dictionary at home or anything like that, for most Pennsylvania Dutch speakers – I mean, most Pennsylvania Dutch speakers won’t have the entirety. I don’t know how many volumes it ended up being, but most of them would not have that at home. I think it’s a reference work for people like us to use, and I’m not sure – I don’t know if my students would have kind of a smaller reference dictionary today than that – ones without the words in context, or just, you know, bare definition-type things. So the people that we interviewed were excited to participate, probably not that it was a dictionary project, but just for the fact that it was kind of a word play, puzzle activity for them to do. Yeah.

Holly: And it was kind of a recording of the languages they use, to some extent.

Joshua: Yeah. I think that we had some – I mean, with the Amish and the Mennonites, it was mostly the word play and fun. They were almost – no, they were all elderly people, so I think that they enjoyed kind of the visit aspect of it, too, and I think that there were some who were – because they were so language-interested, they were interested in preserving the language, and those would be the non-Amish and Mennonite people that we had as informants, who were interested in using, maybe, these archaic terms that no one used anymore, or these terms that people had, you know, just used the English words for now, and they kind of saw it as a preservation, word play, kind of fun thing that they would do. But they were all very language-centric. They were all very much interested in language, that’s kind of the group that he picked. And so, I wonder if you had talked to somebody who wasn’t as great with language, I don’t know why you would (Laughs) ask someone who wasn’t as great with language to use a word in a sentence, or something like that... But they were all for, probably, the reasons of preservation, or word play. They were interested in participating just because they were language people, yeah.

Holly: Was the experience similar when you put together the *Interpretive Encyclopedia*? Cause having read through that, that seems more like it’s a non-sectarian thing, rather than necessarily going to visit lots of people in the Amish and Mennonite communities. And it’s a lot more culture-centric than, obviously, a dictionary would be, where the whole point of it is you’re cataloguing the language.

Joshua: Right. So, the *Interpretive Encyclopedia*, I would say, was more of a conversation with academics, although some of the writers for it were not ‘traditional’ academics. They were people who worked at museums, for example, so they would have been learned professionals, I guess you would say. But some of them were people that worked at museums, in addition to those who were at universities, and so they had the kind of basis knowledge, or the foundational knowledge, I guess you would say, of Pennsylvania Dutch culture, in that they had experience

working in a museum or evaluating an architectural site or, you know, cataloguing pewter dishes, or whatever it turned out to be. So, they had kind of a connection to artefact, and then they had that added aspect of knowing the literature surrounding it about pewter in the United States, or about architecture in the colonial period, and so it was different, because they weren't necessarily *all* language-centric people – I would probably say most of them were not language-centric – but who would be Pennsylvania Dutch, but were interested more in the cultural aspects of it, and where the language just kind of surfaces to describe a cultural term, or an architectural style, or a type of basket, or a type of fabric, or something like that. And so it was different, because the kind of language that we got was very specialised, and the information about the culture was also, to an extent, specialised, because, I mean, you're talking about languages used in homes, right? I mean, you know, it's used communicatively in homes, but not all Pennsylvania Dutch houses have redware pottery. (Laughs) Not all Pennsylvania Dutch houses are – Not all houses where Pennsylvania Dutch people live today are, you know, 18th-century stone, fieldstone, colonial homes, right? So it was specialised in that it was taking the artefacts of the Pennsylvania Dutch, broadly interpreted, but not necessarily talking about the lived experiences of Pennsylvania Dutch people *today*, necessarily. It kind of got into that in the tourism and the heritage chapters towards the end, to talk about Pennsylvania Dutch people today, but it was kind of more broadly interpreted than looking at the everyday language, I guess you could say, of the dictionary project.

Holly: So how do you think outsiders to the Pennsylvania Dutch community see Pennsylvania Dutch, or Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking people, today?

Joshua: I think it's very different than it was. I think there was a time in the history of the culture, and this would be in the local colour narrative, or regionalism, of the 1910s, 1920s, so the early 20th century, when people were kind of interested in the folkways of the variety of people that were living in the United States, so I think that started the interest in the

Pennsylvania Dutch, right? Because before that, I mean, people wouldn't have had contact with them at all, really. And then kind of culminating in the '50s and the '60s, there are the Broadway plays that are happening on the Pennsylvania Dutch, there are bus lines that connect New York City with Lancaster, so there's more interaction from the outside that happens, and people are really interested in it. And then it wanes, I would say, and the interest today from outsiders on the Pennsylvania Dutch is fairly limited. I think people who live in those parts of Pennsylvania are aware that there's a Pennsylvania Dutch element there, so they can see the hex signs on barns and see a variety of foods, and things like that, at supermarkets. But the direct contact to the culture is not necessarily there. I think far more, probably, the interest is in the Amish in Lancaster, where, you know, people go on these kind of bus rides to see the Amish and meet the Amish and go buy things in these tourist traps in south-central Pennsylvania, and so that's their interest in experiencing the culture today, is predominately through the Amish. But that also is fairly limited to, I think, the East Coast. I teach a course now in Wisconsin on the Amish, and I try to tell my students about the tourist trap that is Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and they don't have that same sense. When I taught the course in Pennsylvania, everybody knew that, you know, their grandparents were going down to Lancaster for the weekend to go on some Amish tour or something, or they would go and buy, like, jam and jelly, or something, from one of these touristy stores. But for my students here in Wisconsin, they probably have never heard of it, they're aware that, 'Oh yeah, the Amish are in Pennsylvania,' – they're also in Wisconsin – but they don't have that same connection that people on the East Coast do, where it's kind of a destination to go to Dutch Country, so it's limited, to a certain extent, today, I think. Yeah, I think that the connection that outsiders have is almost always through the sectarians, so through Amish people, to the Pennsylvania Dutch. But it doesn't have greater currency outside of the East Coast, maybe not even outside of the Mid-Atlantic, I would say.

Holly: That's fascinating. I kind of expected what you were about to say with the interest in the sectarians, but I didn't really realise how limited the interest was in Pennsylvania Dutch on the non-sectarian side of things.

Joshua: Yeah, definitely. I mean, I don't think, outside of south-eastern Pennsylvania, I don't think people would be interested in going (Laughs) going to eastern Pennsylvania to, I don't know, to see – I don't even know how they would *see* the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Dutch. I mean, they could go to the museums and things that exist for the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Dutch, (but they) are not as touristy, they're not as glamorous, I guess you could say, as the ones for the Amish. If you go to Lancaster, to Dutch Country, the tourist traps there have much more finesse to them than if you were to go to Berks County and see the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Dutch experience. I mean, where do you go in Berks County? You could go to the Berks County Experience thing, which is a museum, but it's not only Pennsylvania Dutch there, you could go to Kutztown, to the Society there, and see the barn and the schoolhouse, but it still, it doesn't have that flair, I guess you could say, that is typically American, to draw people to certain places. That's more a critique on American, general American culture, that it kind of lacks that flair that people like to see, that they get in Lancaster with Amish-centred tourist things. But I don't see people from Wisconsin, for example, going to Pennsylvania for the Amish experience, because there are Amish in Wisconsin. I think that it's really a Mid-Atlantic thing, you know, people from New York, New Jersey, they love going to Amish country, they love doing that, but I don't think that you have people from all over the United States being interested in going to Amish country. There's probably more interest from the outside, from tourists from abroad, for example, going – like from Germany – and going to Amish country in south-central Pennsylvania.

Holly: I'm making notes as well, in my head, of 'avoid Lancaster County' ever so slightly!
(Laughs)

Joshua: (Laughs) It's beautiful, it's – I mean, I spend a lot of time there, and it's different, it's very, very, different. It's great for an academic to view it from an anthropological stance (Laughs), to see why people are engaged in this culture and what aspects of the culture they're consuming, that's fascinating. There are pockets of Lancaster County where you can completely avoid the tourist area and really just get a rural experience, and it is a very beautiful part of Pennsylvania, too – I mean, still it's very farming-centric – but, for me, I typically avoid it just because of traffic, and... or I go not during the summer, when...

Holly: Wise, that's a wise move!

Joshua: When it's not backed up, and things like that.

Holly: It'd be good to conduct an ethnographic study there, that would be kind of interesting!

Joshua: Yeah, and just seeing why people are even interested in coming here and learning – and I'm sure you would get all sorts of answers of why people, from different cultures too, you know... If you have a busload of people from Europe and a busload of people from Asia, for example – different parts of course, you know, different parts of those continents – but just asking them, 'What's your interest?', like, 'Why are you here?'. I think that there would be a lot of different answers. I think that a lot of people romanticise the Amish as like a 'back to the land' kind of people, stuck in direct opposition to modern times, and that's kind of a romantic idea that brings a lot of people there. And then I think they get upset when they see certain things that the Amish engage with that are completely modern, but it would be interesting. I mean, I'm sure there are people who buy bonnets and Amish hats and all sorts of things like that, but it would be interesting to see, you know, as part of an ethnography, just see why people are interested in consuming the Amish way of life, I guess.

Holly: Maybe post-COVID?

Joshua: Right? (Laughs) It would be a good project to do, just head there and, I mean, you would not have a lack of data!

Holly: That is true, (a) very big sample size! (...) So you mentioned barn stars and I have looked a lot at barn stars through things like Patrick Donmoyer's book and things like that, and you talked about artefacts as well, in some of the museums. What kind of role do they play in the Pennsylvania Dutch narrative, as it were?

Joshua: I think that they're important as visual cues of the culture existing in a place and (are) associated with a particular aspect of life, so... If you go, you won't see hex signs, barn stars, you won't see them elsewhere in the country. They're only there. And the type of barn, you'll only see there. And so, when you see that as an outsider, I could imagine that you'd be very, like, 'That's something new,', 'That's something different,', 'Look at the designs,', and then make the association very quickly that they're on barns, that these are barns, right? And so you get that kind of farming aspect of the history that was so important, right? And so that's part of the narrative today, I think it still is the narrative of the Pennsylvania Dutch, and whether that's hurtful to the community for advancing beyond that is probably another matter. I think that's something that you really can't erase, the farming past of the Pennsylvania Dutch, even though most Pennsylvania Dutch are not farmers today, but the barn stars, the artefacts, the architecture, those types of things, they tie the ethnicity, the identity of the Pennsylvania Dutch to a place, because you won't see them anywhere else, and to a particular aspect of those people, so they're going to be tied to the farm. You're not going to find – barn stars, obviously, you're not going to find a barn star on the side of, you know, a high-rise building in downtown Philadelphia, right? So it perpetuates the narrative of rural, farming, folksy, the designs are fairly folksy, almost kitschy – I mean, you can buy them now in little tourist traps, you can buy little hex signs and take them home, and put them on the side of your shed outside, or something

like that. So that's the important part that those play in the narrative, that it ties to the place and to the most meaningful parts of the history of the community, I would say.

Holly: I bet you can buy them in Lancaster County!

Joshua: Of course (Laughs)

Holly: Even though I'm sure I read that the Amish don't really do barn stars?

Joshua: They don't, but it's become one of those things that people associate with the Dutch country, it's kind of this weird amalgamation of both communities as Pennsylvania Dutch, and what comes out the other end is kind of a mixture of everything. But yeah, you can buy these mass-produced hex signs and take them home. My sister, for example, wanted one, because she's Pennsylvania Dutch. She wanted one, and so she bought this little tiny one and put it on her shed outside and it – for me, as an academic, you know, and always being critical of things, it was interesting for me to see how a modern Pennsylvania Dutch person who isn't that invested in the culture wanted something for outside, and she went for something that's tied to our people, even though my family were dirt poor and were farm labourers, they didn't own farms, so they never would have had a barn with hex signs on it. But she felt she needed the hex sign and, instead of going on a barn, it went on this shed for her lawnmower and things. It was kind of this modern (Laughs) tension that I just saw of Pennsylvania Dutch identity and what it has turned into, almost, is this commodification of Pennsylvania Dutch identity.

Holly: You could write a paper on that, as well!

Joshua: (Laughs) Yeah, right? Just kind of how it's changed from being something that is – how it's used in the folk traditions, to something today that is consumed by outsiders, as well as by insiders, yeah.

Holly: So, before the final question, is there anything that you wish was known more widely about the Pennsylvania Dutch people that we haven't already covered? Or is there

anything you think that I personally should know or keep in mind while I'm doing my research?

Joshua: I don't think so... So you're interested in the literature, or the...?

Holly: I'm looking at the music as well, and some of the visual art like the barn stars, but literature is the primary focus.

Joshua: Uh-huh, yeah. So there are a bunch of things. So, I don't know if you've heard of Muhlenberg College – Muhlenberg is in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and there was a professor there, several professors there, who were German professors who were also Pennsylvania Dutch and who had collections on the language, and so the collection there at Muhlenberg is called the Hess Collection, and this might be completely – stop me if you've heard of all this before -

Holly: No, it's okay, this is new information to me, and I've found a few archives, but this is a new one!

Joshua: Okay, so the Hess Collection has a number of original documents, unpublished literature, in Pennsylvania Dutch, and... Now, this would be – now, I was there once or twice, maybe, and I wasn't really interested in the literature-type things, I was looking more at the other parts of the Hess archives that they have – but I heard from people who had been there in the '90s, and who had said that the collections were just kind of in boxes and not really catalogued well, and it was just typescript after typescript of a play in Pennsylvania Dutch or all sorts of things that these professors had written, right? So again, it's not going to be the Pennsylvania Dutch of showing a broad scope of everybody, it's going to be a very specific type of writing. But it might be good, because they're unpublished, as far as I know, and represent a really important aspect of Pennsylvania Dutch literature, that you might want to look at those. I don't know if you're planning on a visit to Pennsylvania?

Holly: I was originally, but a certain global pandemic may have caused a few issues.

(Laughs)

Joshua: Right, so you'll be finishing soon?

Holly: Possibly – I'm about halfway through my second year right now, so we could be looking at finishing before the pandemic gets to a stage where travel to the US is safe or possible again.

(...)

Joshua: But, I mean, that was in the '90s that I heard about that and so maybe since then, they have catalogued them or even scanned or digitised or – who knows what else? So you might want to contact them at Muhlenberg, because they would have a number of literary sources in Pennsylvania Dutch that might be interesting to look at. But otherwise, I don't think there's anything else.

Holly: I've got Max (Kade), the Max (Kade) Institute, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Joshua: Oh yeah, that's where Mark Loudon works as the director there, who you probably – have you spoken to Mark already?

Holly: I'm actually interviewing him tomorrow, so that is an excellent moment! That's good timing!

Joshua: Mark will give you amazing information. Mark is an outsider who learned Pennsylvania Dutch, and is more fluent than (Laughs) most Pennsylvania Dutch speakers today, and who has kind of devoted himself to the language, and he is a fount of information, so he will definitely be able to give you all the information you will ever need to know and even more. Yeah, he's a really, a wonderful scholar. But yeah, so he's the director there of this, the Max Kade...

Holly: And then, I need to speak to Patrick Donmoyer again about the Kutztown archives, in case that happens to have anything digitised? But that's always the way, isn't it? You've got to hope that things are digitised, because COVID...

Joshua: Yeah, and a lot of these places, there are a bunch of museums and archives in the Dutch country, but they wouldn't have any of their information really digitised or online or even... there was a – I had run into this problem, I'm interested in correspondence, diaries, things like that, and I had contacted a historical society in Pennsylvania and was interested if they had letters or diaries that were written in Pennsylvania Dutch, or even a mixture of Pennsylvania Dutch and English or whatever, just to transcribe them, translate them, and make them freely available for everyone, and a number of them said no, because they relied on the income for people to visit the place in person to pay to use the archives, they relied on that money to actually stay afloat, and I thought, 'Oh my goodness!', so it's, you know, it's one of those, again, another unfortunate thing of local archives and museums lacking the flair that brings in tourists, American tourists, and not having, you know, investment in those types of institutions from above.

Holly: Except for maybe Kutztown, Kutztown might be the one exception, because it's part of the University.

Joshua: Yeah, it's kind of taken on as its own kind of animal, and under great leadership. I mean, Patrick is absolutely amazing, and just a workhorse at what he does, yeah.

Holly: I've come across that with everyone in the dialect so far. Everyone I've spoken to from the dialect is extremely hardworking – when it comes to the dialect in particular, though, like, 'No, we will work at this!'

Joshua: Yeah (Laughs).

Holly: It makes you wonder, though, what the benefit of the Internet would be for the dialect, if...

Joshua: Right?

Holly: I mean, *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* is online, and Doug Madenford puts a lot of content online, and it does make you wonder, ‘What would happen if...?’

Joshua: Yeah. Who knows?

Holly: It’s a question I’m going to try and answer in this thesis somehow, in you know, in 60,000 words’ time, we’ll have an answer maybe!

Joshua: (Laughs)

Holly: So my final question is, and we’ve already kind of briefly talked about this earlier on, but what do you think the future might be for Pennsylvania Dutch?

Joshua: I think the future is probably – for the language... I won’t be as negative, maybe, as some people from a previous generation. I think that people in a previous generation probably said, ‘It’s doomed, it’s going to die out, no one’s going to speak it,’ and there is a current generation that thinks, ‘You know, it’s going on, and we’re teaching children, and we have all these things.’ I’m going to be a little bit more realistic, I think, and find a middle ground between the two. I don’t think the language will completely disappear. Obviously, the Amish and the Mennonites will speak it, and are going to continue to speak it, I have no doubt of that. But among the non-sectarians, I think the language will stick around for people who are interested in the language. I don’t see, as some of the generation of contributors to *Hiwwe wie Driwwe*, for example, that, you know, who show examples of, ‘Oh, all of these children are enrolled in this Learning Pennsylvania Dutch course!’ Well, they’ll be in it for a few weeks, and then they’re going to forget everything, and they’re never going to return to it again. It’s not, there’s no sustainability, I don’t think, for the language, for a number of reasons. It’s a cultural reason, it’s a minority language in the United States, it is not going to survive to have any sort of currency outside of the community. You know, you can’t get a college degree by only speaking Pennsylvania Dutch, you can’t be employed by only speaking Pennsylvania

Dutch – there are a number of cultural things that, as a minority language within a language that is an international language, that hinder that. So, I'm more pessimistic than some of the current generation who are applauding these efforts of revitalisation. I don't think it's revitalisation, it's just kind of keeping the language there, it's not revitalising anything, it's not churning out a number of proficient speakers at a consistent rate that we would typically talk about if we were talking about revitalising a language. It's maintaining the presence of the language on the cultural landscape, which is great – I mean, that's an admirable goal – but realistically speaking, that's all it's doing, right? And so I think that'll continue. I think that the language won't ever disappear, I think that it'll always exist as some aspect, whether that is as food terminology or architectural terminology used by academics, or as curse words that are used by overhearers, or whatever. I think the language will continue to exist for a few generations that way, and beyond that, it'll exist as a written language, and probably not in the oral language, so it'll probably flop at some point and just exist as something in a grammar book, or in a dictionary, that people can pick up and learn from the language, and learn the language as it is spoken. So that's kind of the future of Pennsylvania Dutch as the language. The culture, I think will also probably continue. The Folk Festival is a huge event that continues every year, I think they're going to keep going with that. Hex signs, you know, still dot the landscape, and they'll still be there until they tear down the barns, I'm sure, but they'll still exist as a commodity that tourists will buy, probably in a more limited sense, even more narrow to just the Amish, so those touristy-type things in south central Pennsylvania. But eventually, I mean, Pennsylvania Dutch has been around for such a long time that it's more difficult to get rid of, I think, as time goes on. So, one of things that we don't always know, but in southeastern Pennsylvania, there was the Welsh barony, and so it was a part of Pennsylvania that was inhabited by immigrants from Wales, and that cultural and linguistic, and all of those things, existed there. But today, no one is really talking about, you know, 'We have to bring back the

Welsh language, and bring back Welsh customs in south-eastern Pennsylvania.’ That isn’t happening, and that’s probably because it wasn’t there for a very long period of time. But Pennsylvania Dutch has been with us a little bit longer, and so I think that’ll be to its benefit as something that won’t be as easy to get rid of from the visual landscape, the oral landscape, it won’t be something that’ll leave within a generation. I think it’ll kind of stick around a little bit longer than that. Whether at the end of my lifetime, Pennsylvania Dutch will still be a thing, I think it will be. I think that certain organisations will still exist, and certain individuals will still exist that champion the culture and teaching about the culture, but I think maybe the interest in it would kind of diminish as people become less intimately associated with the language and the culture, yeah. So that’s my realistic stance between the people that say that it’s going to disappear in a generation and the current batch of people that are seeing this revitalisation and, you know, I think they call it a ‘Springtime’ for Pennsylvania Dutch or something like that, which I don’t see, I just don’t. I’m more realistic, I don’t see that happening (Laughs).

Holly: It might go into the State, into education for longer term, or more permanently!

Who knows? If Louisiana can do it with French...

Joshua: Right? Yeah, you never know. I mean, what happened with... Who knows? I mean – and that just depends. I mean, we could get someone who becomes the Governor of Pennsylvania who is a Pennsylvania Dutch speaker and wants to promote the language and put all of this money into it, and things like that, and there might be an even bigger revitalisation, but for the current efforts that I’m seeing, I don’t see... Realistically, I don’t see a big revitalisation that people are claiming, and for me, I don’t, even as a Pennsylvania Dutch person and someone who enjoys the culture and the language and wants to continue speaking it, I don’t view that as a terrible loss. For me, as a linguist, as someone who studies language shift and language death and language maintenance, this happens continually. Language changes,

the linguistic landscape continually changes, and that's one of the great things. You know, we do not have a number of cultural artefacts that we keep around us from medieval England – for the better, right? (Laughs) But we do have interested individuals and renaissance fairs who keep aspects of it alive and have created their own communities out of it, and we certainly don't speak the English that we did at that point in time. Language changes, the linguistic landscape changes, and so I view it more realistically as, you know, we can't... I mean, you can't really just double down and say you're going to keep the language and the culture as it is and just plunge ahead with kind of blinds on from everything else that's happening in the world, a world that's changing, because then it'll really just be an individual leading the charge through and isolating everybody else, to a certain extent. So, I view that sometimes as a good thing, that we have these changes that happen and they're changes, but I'm not necessarily going to attach a positive or a negative on to those changes. I'm not going to say, 'Oh, well that's denigration of the...' Like my sister buying the hex sign and putting it on her shed. It's not less Pennsylvania Dutch, it's not a denigration of the culture of Pennsylvania Dutch. To me, I just count it as an interesting kind of juxtaposition in the life of the language and the culture. And as everything else, every culture and every language has a life, and eventually, it will, you know, be forgotten. Hopefully, maybe, longer for some things than others, but, yeah.

Holly: A realistic answer, spoken like any academic would give!

Joshua: (Laughs) Right?! Just a realistic kind of... Just distanced enough, but even as a Pennsylvania German person, I don't necessarily see... I know that there are some people who talk about, 'Oh, English encroaching on Pennsylvania Dutch is terrible!' and all of these – can't stand certain words that people are using in Pennsylvania Dutch. Well, they're trying to make it more communicative by creating their own words, or maybe introducing English words into it, or whatever, and we can't... I mean, English, for example, is a Germanic language, only has about 20% of the Germanic root left, so those types of things happen, and we're still

communicating in English, so I don't necessarily see it as this 'all or nothing' cultural or linguistic viewpoint that a lot of people take. But I am more realistic in the fact of, you know, having these kind of programmes and street signs. I think that putting up street signs in Pennsylvania Dutch... It's very much like hex signs contributing to the visual landscape and taking it to a language perspective, so it's not just visual, but it's also linguistic, and it's tying it to place and tying it to history, and things like that. But people aren't going to use them to tell you where to turn right. Your navigation is not going to start saying, 'Turn right on this Pennsylvania Dutch road,' it's going to use the English word and 911 operators are going to dispatch ambulances to an English address and not the translated, Pennsylvania Dutch version, so it has limited currency, I think. It's not a revitalisation in my mind, which is perfectly fine.

Holly: It's just giving me this fantastic image in my head of a 911 operator picking up and speaking exclusively in Pennsylvania Dutch.

Joshua: (Laughs) There probably was a time when the operators did speak Pennsylvania Dutch.

Holly: This is true! If only there were recordings of it.

Joshua: Right? Yeah, yeah.

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW WITH MARK L. LOUDEN

Date of Interview: Tuesday 19th January 2021

Time of Interview: 16.00 BST, 10.00 CST

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

Holly: Before I begin, actually, which term do you prefer? I know that you use ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ in your book, and you said that that’s because ‘Pennsylvania German’ can be a bit misleading. Which term do you personally prefer?

Mark: I personally prefer ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’. So, when I’m – and I just experienced this recently, with... This is sort of an interesting, kind of coincidental story. So last week, our furnace in the house gave out, and so we had to get a new furnace, and so there was a worker and his apprentice, and the apprentice, they were here for nine hours and they were in the basement, and all my books are in the basement, and at one point, he looks to me and says, ‘*Sprechen Sie Deutsch?*’, and I said, ‘*Ja, sprechen Sie auch Deutsch?*’, and he said, ‘No, not really, but I’m interested in it.’ And we started chatting a little bit, and then he said – well, a lot of people in Wisconsin are of German background, he’s got some Austrian relatives, and he mentioned... And I said, well actually, my main area of specialisation, is something called Pennsylvania Dutch, and he goes, ‘Oh, you mean Dutch?’ And I thought, ‘Oh, what does he know about it?’ Well, it turns out his parents are divorced and his mother lives in Ohio, and her mother had a partner for a while who was ex-Amish and taught him and his mother a little bit of Pennsylvania Dutch, because it’s his native language, and he always referred to it as Dutch. So, it’s interesting, because there’s so many misleading things. Some Pennsylvania

Dutch speakers, who are not from Pennsylvania, think that Pennsylvania Dutch is the variety of Pennsylvania Dutch that is spoken in Pennsylvania, cause there are regional differences, so a lot of Midwesterners will say ‘Dutch’, and then some will say, if they know about Holland Dutch or Netherlandic, then they’ll say, ‘Oh, it’s really more German,’ and then they’ll say ‘German’, but it’s not like European German. So, it depends on who you’re talking to. I’ve always preferred the term ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ because I think it reflects the autonomy of the language from German, because the speakers themselves, especially the non-sectarian speakers of Pennsylvania Dutch from Pennsylvania, have always preferred that when they’ve spoken English. I mean, Pennsylvania German is really only used by academics, scholars, because it’s clearer to academics, and some language activists, so there were some already in the 19th century and in the 20th century that really wanted to stress the kindship between Pennsylvania Dutch and German, or to elevate its status a little bit, because the term ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’, like so many aspects of Pennsylvania Dutch, is associated with a folk culture which is high in my book, but it’s not ‘classy’ or ‘cool’ or, you know, that sort of thing, so the lack of an overt prestige associated with Pennsylvania Dutch and the term Dutch. And it’s like, ‘Oh, a Dutchie accent,’ ‘He’s just a dumb Dutchman,’ these kinds of things. That sort of stigma is something that some people wanted to offset by saying, ‘Well, it’s Pennsylvania German.’ And then there are others that say, ‘But wait, we don’t want to be associated with Germany,’ and then going back into, say, the 1930s or the World War I era or something, that wasn’t a big thing that they wanted to emphasise. So, I do use Pennsylvania German on occasion in scholarly articles. For example, I had an article appear just this last year in a volume on German in contact with English, so different kinds of things like *Denglisch* and stuff, so the editor, who’s actually an Irishman who teaches in Germany, he said, ‘You know, I understand why you prefer Pennsylvania Dutch, because that’s more like what the people themselves say,’ he said, ‘But for the purposes of this volume, to talk about varieties of German in contact with one another,

it would just be less misleading to scholars.’ And it’s not a popular book, it’s a scholarly book, so I used Pennsylvania German for that one.

Holly: It’s interesting, isn’t it, that academics do prefer ‘German’, because of the geographical background, I guess, that the dialect comes from. This was actually a question I was about to ask you, about whether you prefer ‘dialect’ or ‘language’, cause you do make a case, again in the book, for ‘language’ over ‘dialect’, and this is a question that’s sort of divided people. I’ve had a few say ‘dialect’, and I’ve had one or two say ‘language’. Where do you fall on the ‘dialect’ versus ‘language’ debate?

Mark: I say ‘language’ because it kind of ticks all the boxes in terms of what we would say is a language. I mean, there are no hard and fast linguistic criteria saying this is a language versus a dialect. I mean, we know these familiar examples of Norwegian versus Swedish, and Mandarin versus Cantonese, and Croatian and Serbian, and all these kinds of things, so it’s a question of the autonomy of its speakers and the culture. That moves the needle, to me, to language away from dialect, because I – the subtitle of my book was *The Story of an American Language*. The term ‘American language’ is intentional, to say ‘not German dialect’, because it’s something that really developed in America and it is autonomous. It’s autonomous structurally, because it’s not mutually intelligible with German, standard German, but even with Palatine German, I’ve had this experience numerous times where Palatine – I’ve used this quote, actually, in presentations before, and say, ‘I recognise every word, but I have no idea what you’re saying.’ So it’s like, you know, like the Germans often, when they hear or see Dutch, they can sort of say, ‘Yeah, I understand the gist of it, but I don’t know what you’re saying.’ Or Dutch to Afrikaans, very similar, where it’s like, ‘Yeah, I recognise it. What are they saying?’ – ‘I don’t know.’ And there are – Yiddish is also something that’s very familiar to folks that know German, but it’s clearly different. So, I’d say it’s autonomous, structurally, it’s definitely autonomous sociolinguistically, but what’s really interesting is that some people

sort of move the needle back to the dialect. Say, what is American English? Is it a dialect of something higher? Is it subordinate to British English? It's like, 'No.' And it's interesting, because the nomenclature is... No one would question the fact that what you speak is English and it's a language, right, and that there are distinct regional dialects. You've got Midlands dialect, you've got Cockney, you've got Scots English, and all kinds of different things, that's very, very clear. And certainly there are regional dialects in America, too, where you can say Appalachian English, and Ozark English, and New York City English, and New England English, and... just tons. But what about American English? If we just sort of say what I'm speaking now, which is kind of a bland, sort of generally considered standard oral variety of English, of American English – linguists don't say. I mean, there's no – so like, for example, the classic reference work I have on my shelf here is called, by H.L. Mencken, *The American Language*, and it describes the fact that, you know, even though what I'm speaking now is completely mutually intelligible and what you speak to me is completely mutually intelligible to me, we have zero problems understanding one another, so on that sense it would be, 'Well, how is it structurally much different?' And the differences are quite minimal, it's mainly vocabulary and pronunciation. There are very, very few actual grammatical differences, structural differences, very, very few, and phonological differences, essentially none. So, structurally they're very... But again, it's sort of like American English and British English really are autonomous from one another, so they're kind of like very, very close cousins that resemble one another, and for example, when, say, German translators translate novels from English into German, they'll say '*aus dem Englischen*' if it's British or '*aus dem Amerikanischen*' if it's an American one, and they avoid saying '*aus dem amerikanischen Englisch*' and they just say 'the American', '*das Amerikanische*'. So that kind of avoids that. So, I feel very confident in referring to Pennsylvania Dutch as an autonomous language. It also, when I do presentations and I share this with native speakers, it offsets – I mean, they're

inclined to say ‘dialect’, because they think of something that’s non-standard and is generally oral, and colloquially, they’ll say ‘In the dialect’, but dialect carries a certain amount of stigma. Again, it’s that sort of overt versus covert prestige thing. There’s plenty of covert prestige, but overtly, it’s like, ‘I speak a dialect.’ It’s almost like you’re being a sort of an activist for something, so it’s like you’re kind of asserting something, rather than just simply saying, ‘I speak a dialect.’ It’s something that you have to sort of justify or defend, I think, is probably the way of looking at it. So the little bit of activist in me also likes to emphasise its legitimacy in saying this is not, you know, just bad German, it’s not subordinate to German, it’s not even really ‘derived’ from German, in the sense of it’s not derived from standard German, in the same way that German regional dialects are also not degenerate forms of standard (German), or British dialects are not degenerate forms of RP, right? So...

Holly: I can definitely see your point on that. You’re making a very good case for ‘language’ over ‘dialect’!

Mark: (Laughs)

Holly: But what do you think has led to that perception of Pennsylvania Dutch being this kind of... Looked down upon, language, if we say? You know, by monolingual English speakers. Do you think it is the fact that the culture is very grounded, very tied to nature, very, like you said, very tied to folk culture? Do you think it’s that, or do you think it might be some other factor?

Mark: Well, there’s a – I don’t know whether this is a quote that can be attributed to a specific linguist, but there’s a sociolinguistic maxim out there that value judgments about language are value judgments about the speakers, so... Look at highly prestigious varieties of a language, or languages themselves, and you ask people, ‘Why are they so high-class, or high status?’, and they say, ‘Because so-and-so speaks it,’ right? So somebody will say, ‘Why is RP cool?’ It’s like, well, that’s what they use in the BBC and that’s what the Queen uses, right? And actually,

listening to the Queen's Christmas address, if she does speak the Queen's English (Laughs) (...)

So, you know, why has Pennsylvania Dutch been overtly stigmatised? And I like these terms, 'overt' and 'covert' prestige. These go back to William Labov, I'm pretty sure. So the way that Labov has used them is like there are certain... New York City working-class English, right, he says is overtly not prestigious, it's overtly stigmatised, but it's covertly prestigious if people identify strongly with their group, with their class – social group – and so typically, like in America, and I think this would be true for, certainly other Western industrial societies in Britain, if you think about people that are predominately rural, who have modest social status, which means – and what is social status? It's basically, in Britain, you still talk about classes and things like that, and there's actually very clear accent discrimination, which is somewhat of an issue here, but it's more ethnically based, in some ways, rather than regionally based. It's not quite as entrenched as it is in Britain, but it's definitely a reality here too, so if you're talking about sort of modest income, modest formal educational levels, modest occupational status, residents like, you know, where you happen to live, all these things sort of come together that would be considered, for example, 'working class', which is obviously a salient sociological term. Here, the term, we would say 'blue collar' is more, or 'farmer folk', or 'rural', or something like that, there's just this, it's a lack of overt prestige because people that are more urban, that have higher educational levels, are more white collar, so... Do you use the term blue and white collar in Britain?

Holly: I recognise them, I know what they mean. Luckily, I've done enough reading on American culture to (understand) this one by now (...) they've crept, slowly, into the British lexicon.

Mark: So yeah, so blue collar would be basically referring to people, like men traditionally, that wore blue shirts for manual labour, so working in factories or farming, or something like that. White collar would be the colour of shirt you put on to work in an office or in a school,

or teaching something. So, basically, we talk about the professions versus the trades, right? That would be the kind of general term, in terms of labour. So definitely – I mean, Pennsylvania Dutch has always been associated with... I mean, yeah, there have been occasional city dwellers or town dwellers that have spoken it, but they haven't maintained it over time, so basically where the language – and this I talk a lot about in my book from the beginning – it's always been thriving among people of rural status, and the Amish are a great example of that: people that live in rural areas, that limit formal education, whose professional occupations are associated with the trades and farming and agriculture. So that's what it is. I mean, basically any kind of rural speech is going to be considered at best rustic. If we think about, say, varieties of American English that are overtly stigmatised – you know, you add the racial element to it, so basically the most stigmatised varieties of English would be, say, Black English, and then places that are associated with the most economically disadvantaged regions, so like Appalachian English. But if you think it's like, where would sort of country folk be viewed as a more prestigious way? You could pretty much just say New England, and that's the old sort of, basically kind of racial or racialised stereotype of, 'Well, they're WASPS. They're White Anglo-Saxon Protestants.' And that, the sort of WASP status in American society has been, still to a certain extent, plays a role in old hierarchies. Thank goodness, that's breaking down quite a bit, even in my lifetime. There were things like certain social clubs that would not accept people who were of Italian background, or Jewish background, let alone racially diverse, but that's changed dramatically over the last generation, and it's improving. So that's where – and Cajuns would be in the same status, and basically, you don't have sort of urban New Orleans elite Cajun speakers, when you think of straight up Acadian French. And the Creoles in New Orleans would distinguish themselves very, very clearly from the folks working in the bayous who are catching crocodiles, and stereotypes, and all these kinds of things.

Holly: It's a shame, isn't it?

Mark: It is.

Holly: I mean, one of the first stereotypes I came across, when I was scoping everything long before the PhD began, was Dwight Schrute from *The Office*. And whenever I mention that to someone who works with Pennsylvania Dutch, that's the expression I get, it's that expression of, 'Ah yes, the one lasting stereotype from right now that people – their minds would always go to that first.' And it's sad really.

Mark: It is. That's – yeah, Dwight Schrute is really the only character or figure in popular media who's overtly identified as Pennsylvania Dutch. The secondary sort of association with Pennsylvania Dutch that people make is with the Amish, right? So Amish and Pennsylvania Dutch are basically, for a lot of people, synonymous terms, and again, it's like the Amish – they're very visible, in terms of popular media, very, I mean internationally, not just in the United States, but really (it's) just incredible how known they are, how familiar they are. But again the stereotypes are... You know, there's a certain amount of respect that's accorded to them, but there's also a lot of... I think it's hard for people to have neutral opinions, and there are a lot of negative opinions too, and I confront these stereotypes all the time, like at my outreach work. But again, it's like the Amish are... a lot of people really don't necessarily transfer, if they have a lot of respect for the Amish, necessarily translate that to their language as much. They just sort of say, 'Okay, this is more a cultural thing,' but again, it's so hard for people outside of Pennsylvania, like the hardcore Dutch country, even the speakers themselves, to think of themselves as really Pennsylvania Dutch, because they say, 'Well, that's really a Pennsylvania thing.' And then even, if you add the most folk culturally distinct subgroup of Pennsylvania Dutch, which would be the non-sectarians, so like in Berks and Lehigh and Lebanon Counties, the folks that are eating traditional food, associated with the barn stars on their barns and various kinds of crafts and folktales, and these kinds of things, a lot of that, the Amish don't really participate in that, so they themselves, even in Pennsylvania, would sort of

not really clearly identify themselves with the culture. I remember once, this is very interesting, I was with some Amish friends in Lancaster County and Lancaster County doesn't have a whole lot of non-sectarian Pennsylvania Dutch people there. There are some, but it's overwhelming, if you're a Pennsylvania Dutch speaker, you're (of) Amish or Mennonite background of some kind. But there's a Groundhog Lodge in Lancaster County, and I didn't know that, so we were just driving down some back roads, and I said, 'Oh my gosh, there's a Groundhog Lodge,' and he goes, 'Oh yeah, yeah, there's a *Grundsau* Lodge there,' and the Groundhog Lodge movement has done a lot to... It's probably the most important, ongoing institution, folk institution, to sort of celebrate the language and culture, and it's completely – the Amish and Mennonites would have nothing to do with it, not because they resented it or whatever, but because there are certain things, practices of the Groundhog Lodges that they would say, 'We're not going to do.' So, for example, patriotism. I'm a Mennonite myself, we don't salute the flag, we don't say the Pledge of Allegiance, and it's very, very patriotic, so the Groundhog Lodge is very American, and then the whole kind of – so, like Amish and Mennonites, our churches don't swear oaths, so for example, if I go into court – as I do this, I serve as a court interpreter – if there are Amish people, you never say, 'I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,' you say, 'I *affirm* that I will...' That's basically switching out 'swear' for 'affirm', and it's, some people think (it's) cosmetic or whatever, but it does carry some weight. But in the Groundhog Lodges, they actually swear a playful oath to an overstuffed groundhog, like this gigantic thing that they come in and... I mean, that just smacks of idolatry, right, in a Christian sense, like a golden calf almost, even if it's in fun. It's one of those things where just, sort of like Hallowe'en, the Amish and a lot of conservative Christians will say, 'You know, it's just too close to Satanism or devil worship, or Paganism, we just want to keep our distance from that kind of thing.' So it's a little bit too neo-Pagan, I think, for Amish and Mennonite sensibilities, but I thought this was interesting. I mean, it's

just we're driving down this road, and this Amish guy looks over and I said, 'Oh, there's a Groundhog Lodge,' and he goes, 'Oh yeah, those Groundhog Lodge people,' and it's just sort of amusing to them, but it's something where they're like, 'We would never go to *their* meetings,' kind of thing.

Holly: You actually mentioned something similar in your book, when you give the names of the two couples in the very beginning, I think it's Harvey and Ada Mae, who happen to be Amish, and you say, obviously, they *know* that there are people that speak PA Dutch in their own community, but they wouldn't necessarily know any speakers from the non-sectarian side, because of their beliefs and because of the way their community works and interacts with the outside, you know, the wider community.

Mark: Also more geography though too, because even among sectarians, there's a divide between those that are sort of Pennsylvania, like Lancaster based, southeastern Pennsylvania-based, versus those whose ancestors *did* come by way of there, but really very long ago, by way of eastern Ohio, so it's sort of like eastern Ohio, historically, and Lancaster, historically, are these two sort of poles, and so the kind of thing was like they'll be familiar with Pennsylvania Amish and some horse-and-buggy Mennonites from Pennsylvania, but because they really haven't spent much time there, they won't be familiar at all really with Berks County or Lehigh County or Lebanon County and all that other stuff. I mean, Amish in Pennsylvania obviously are familiar with that, because it's so close, and they're moving into areas, not only like Berks and Lehigh – but especially Berks, I don't even know there are any at all in Lehigh, actually, but there are a fair number of Mennonites and some Amish in Berks County – but more like in central Pennsylvania, rural central Pennsylvania, where Amish have moved, and every now and then, I'll stay with some Amish friends up there and I'll say, 'Ever meet any Dutch speakers that aren't (of) Amish background?' And they said, 'Yeah, yeah, I was at a store recently and some old guy talked to me, and he's a Dutchman, he's really Dutch,' kind

of thing. And they associate – like a stereotype is that they curse, they use a lot of salty language, and use some older words that have fallen out, that have been replaced by English among the sectarians, and there’s some truth to that, because, as I say in my book, if you imagine bilingualism as being usually imbalanced, the non-sectarians were typically like this (makes a gesture similar to a seesaw, wherein the Pennsylvania Dutch side is placed higher), so if they were fluent, active Pennsylvania Dutch speakers, that meant that their English was less proficient, and that was true for all Pennsylvania Dutch speakers, Amish and Mennonite too. And then, about mid-century, when English became just so absolutely necessary for everybody to use, it basically went like this (the gesture is repeated, with the sides switched) for the non-sectarians and then they lost Pennsylvania Dutch, but the sectarians have been able to basically maintain equilibrium, and so that means that they’re using some more English vocabulary. It’s still not a huge amount, but it’s definitely more. So there are certain shibboleth words, like the word for ‘bird’ – everybody used to say ‘*Voggel*’, right? And all the non-sectarians would always just say ‘*Voggel*’, but younger Amish would just say ‘*Birdie*’, so they all say ‘*Birdie*’.

Holly: That’s really interesting that the non-sectarians would actually keep the Dutch word, and it’s the Amish community that have kind of [swapped round and are using the loan word.]

Mark: [Yeah, it’s a paradox], because the Amish are more distant from the social mainstream, but their English proficiency’s better, so that’s the thing. I do mention it early on in the book, there were some studies already done, late 1970s, 1980s, so Marion Lois Huffines’ work documented that. There was a very important article by a guy named Joachim Raith, a German linguist who’s long since been retired from Essen, who basically looked at English proficiency – or accent, basically – and found that people that had the greatest Dutch influences, Dutchier accents, were the non-sectarians, and that the sectarians who, in theory would be the ones you’d think would be more distant from English, spoke the better English, the more standard, correct...

Holly: This has changed my entire thinking on the Pennsylvania Dutch language and its usage. I'm going to go back and read that study now!

Mark: Yeah, so that's early on in the book. If you just look...

Holly: Oh, it'll be in one of the first two chapters. (...) So, if I may, I wanted to ask you about your experiences learning Pennsylvania Dutch, and how you came to – again, I know you already talk about this in the book – but how did you come to: A, learn about the language; and B, how did you then go on to learn it, to learn to communicate in it? I gather it was through your work originally with the Amish and the Mennonite communities, to begin with?

Mark: Yeah, it was... So I was not raised in a church-going home, so I wasn't baptised, but I felt drawn to Christianity, and so the more traditional Christian groups kind of drew me, so people that were, you know, humble, the pacifism was a strong draw, and so Anabaptism – I was just kind of exploring that, and I was in my first year of graduate school, actually, at Cornell, so I'd been an undergraduate there and then graduated a semester early, went back to California, and then came back and started graduate work, and it was in my... 36 years ago, it'll be next month. It was during my first year of graduate work, and I had a good friend, who was older than I, who was actually a classicist, but he was a civil war buff. He was just fascinated with the Civil War, and he collected things from the Civil War. And so I would go – upstate New York, where Cornell is, is very rural – and so we would go out to antique stores and farm auctions and estate sales, and that sort of thing, and there is an Amish community just north of Ithaca, and we drove by and I was really intrigued. So, we were just kind of driving by, going up to an antique store or something, and then I happened to notice on this one highway that there was a bakery, an Amish home where they had a little family bakery, which was in a trailer basically. And so I went up on my own one day and then just pulled in and went in to the bakery and the father of the family was there and then we started chatting, and I said, 'I speak German,'

and I knew that they spoke something related to German, they used German in church, I'd read up a little bit, and I asked would they allow visitors in church? And he said, 'Sure, and actually, we're hosting church at our house in ten days,' and so I came and basically never stopped (Laughs). So, what was really interesting was that the people in that community knew in advance that I knew German, and they only spoke Pennsylvania Dutch to me. They actually didn't switch to English if I didn't understand something. And I had spent just a couple of years before, a full year in Munich in Germany, and been very interested in dialect and regional – I mean, you can't avoid dialect, you have Bavarian in Munich – and I sang in a cathedral choir there and so there were a lot of Bavarian speakers and stuff, so I was just interested in that. So my ears were already kind of attuned for things that were non-standard German, and so I, you know, was able to understand things fairly well, and then I just kept coming back and I would just try, and within about six months, I developed some pretty good oral proficiency, in terms of not only being able to understand, but to communicate, and then – so it was from February until about June, or something? – I happened to be back in Ithaca, and I was in a used bookstore, and I saw a Mennonite woman with a covering, and I went up to her and said, 'So where are you from?' in Pennsylvania Dutch, I said, '*Wo bischt du devun?*' and she goes, '*Mir sin vun Penn Yan*, we're from Penn Yan.' She said, '*Du musscht mit mein Mann schwetze*, you have to talk with my husband,' and he was in another aisle. And they became, they're still lifelong friends of mine, and they're older Mennonites from a – so, it's a related group, you know, similar to the Amish – and then I just started to get really deeply involved, especially in that community, with young people. I actually – the older Mennonites have a summer practice of what they call 'singing school', so when the schools close, then the young people gather on Saturday nights to practice singing, and they needed a singing school teacher, and so I know music, I like to sing, and so I taught singing school in Pennsylvania Dutch for a couple of summers, and then just got really immersed, and then I just – that was really, I wasn't baptised

as Amish or Mennonite, but I kept attending churches, and then I finished my graduate (degree) – so that was from, the first Amish service I went to was in February of '85 – then in summer of '88, I finished my degree and my first job was at the University of Texas, and there was an Amish community located about an hour drive south of Austin, and then I met with them within three weeks and just connected with them, and still, again, very, very close friends with folks... the community no longer exists, they've dispersed in other areas, including folks here in Wisconsin, so... Yeah, just eventually, you know, I ended up living down there for, I was in Texas for twelve years, attended church all that time, the last five years I actually lived on a ranch that was managed by Amish people and (was) just completely immersed and... Oh yeah, I mean, in graduate school, my dissertation ended up being on Pennsylvania Dutch, so it was kind of like the personal and the professional were just sort of intersecting. And then, when I came to Wisconsin, I was baptised in a Mennonite congregation, so we're an English-speaking church, but, you know, I still attend Amish services every now and then, and I do all this, I mean, just outreach and interpretation and all these other things, so... Yeah, basically immersion.

Holly: That's wonderful. Immersion is such a good way to learn about a culture and a language, and it sounds so wonderful that the community just took you in, but I suppose this is characteristic of the Amish and the Mennonite communities – what I mean is that they're renowned for being so welcoming and open.

Mark: Yeah, although they don't – they're very hospitable, but they don't do missionary work, so it's not like they're trying to recruit people at all, because they say it would just be too hard, they say a lot of people are kind of entranced or enchanted in the outside, they say, but as one guy told me once, 'It's a lot easier for us to go in your direction than for you to go in our direction!' It's easier to take things on materially than it is to give things up material(ly). And it's actually interesting, I was interviewed, just in early December, by somebody else from

Britain, some media company wants to basically create sort of a reality project of, like, during the days of COVID, of kind of recreating sort of Amish society somewhere in Britain, sort of like... They reassured me it wasn't going to be a reality TV thing, and I said, 'Well, you know, at the core of Amish and Mennonite society is the Christian faith. It's not about organic farming or back to the land or anything like that, it's about how they interpret how they should live out their lives as Christians.' They said, 'Well, we don't want to have anything to do with religion.' And I said (Laughs), 'Then go to a kibbutz in Israel and find people, or go to a hippie commune or something like that.' Their lifestyle is not about living simply for being ecologically aware and, you know, like vegetarians, so very clear kind of ideological things that are secular, right, or spiritual in a very vague sense. I said, 'This is a Christian community, it's a very conservative Christian community that has, you know, holds very specific doctrines about how discipleship should occur, like how one should walk the Christian life.' And I said that, and so she said, 'Really?', and I said, 'Yeah, really.' And I gave her a long interview and shared some ideas with her, and she said, 'Well, I don't know whether we're really going to follow up on this, because you have to understand, in Britain, we're a very, very secular society,' and I said, 'I know, Britain is very secular,' and she said, 'I don't know if the Christian thing would fly,' and I said, 'Well, it probably wouldn't. I know it's the same way in Germany.' It's like, even people that say 'I'm *evangelisch*, I'm *catholisch*,' – 'Do you go to church regularly?' And (they say), 'Of course not.' It's much more of a cultural thing, you know? It's like Christmas – I mean, a lot of people, here too, celebrate Christmas and the trees and the gifts and stuff, and it really doesn't have anything to do with Christ, per se, and that's okay. I mean, it's just how a lot of holidays are. But, as I said, the Amish, you really can't remove the core from who they are, so it's like... But I have to say that, you know, part of, it's a kind of... If there's a positive word for a vicious cycle, it's a positive cycle where the more we get into the language, the trust level just really builds up. You know, there are some people – actually, this couple that I met

at that bookstore, Ivan and Anna – we always spoke Pennsylvania Dutch except if there were English speakers around, and one time I was staying with them, like for a weekend or something, and there was an English visitor, or neighbour, that came over and we were speaking English all evening, and then the guy left, and Ivan looks – his name is Ivan – he looks at me and in Pennsylvania Dutch, he says, ‘You know, when you speak Pennsylvania Dutch,’ he says, ‘You’re my brother, you just sound like my brother, but when you speak English, it sounds like you’re a stranger.’ And it really is this association of languages with identities, and I’m like, I’m the same Mark Loudon, you know? And I was speaking a different language, obviously, but I wasn’t speaking in ways differently, so it wouldn’t be like I talk about different topics or express different values, or anything like that – Mark Loudon is the same in whatever language Mark Loudon is speaking. And actually, one thing that sort of carried over in my English that is from Pennsylvania Dutch, as sort of a language-use thing, is... Some of the greater caution about speaking about the future in definite terms. So, the Amish always say – you wouldn’t say, ‘I’ll see you next week,’ you’ll say, ‘Lord willing, I’ll see you next week,’ right? And it’s just a kind of caution, people would say maybe superstition or something like that. So, there’s this idea that you never count on the future as being firm. So like, for example, the Amish would never, ever, ever, *ever* have baby showers, never. Never. Non-existent. And even in Germany, it’s considered a bad omen, right, to celebrate a birthday before the actual day, and now they’ve started doing what they call a ‘*Babyparty*’, but still, it’s considered like, ‘That’s that *American* thing,’ and I’ll give you an example of something that just so goes against my sensibility. My wife’s nephew and his wife have a little boy, and she’s pregnant, she’s due in a matter of a few weeks, and their Christmas card said, ‘From Jordan and Liz and Matthew and Natalie.’ It’s like, Natalie? And then they had a picture of an ultrasound. So not only have they sort of revealed the gender, they’ve also named her, and they’ve shared the name, and they’re assuming that – and Lord willing, everything will go fine,

the chances of something not going fine are pretty low, yes – but it's just like... And so that influences the way that I talk about the future, too. So, in other words, my worldview has been affected by this sort of my immersion in older Amish and older Mennonite society, such that I'm more cautious about things. I mean, not in a fatalistic or weird, I think, way, and it's reflected in my speech, too.

Holly: Just in that 'Let's take it one step at a time' kind of way. That's a lovely way of putting it. I wish we could all be cautious about the future, (especially right now), given everything that's going on. (...) Maybe a bit more caution, maybe a bit more of the Amish and Mennonite way would do people some good, do us all some good.

Mark: I know, I know.

Holly: So, we talked earlier about the usage of Pennsylvania Dutch in the sectarian community versus the non-sectarian community. The majority of my research focuses on the non-sectarians, because there has been already a lot of research on the Amish and the Mennonites, and I don't want to tread on any toes. But when non-sectarians do use the language, what do you feel like the motivation behind that is? Is it a means of celebrating the heritage of the language, do you think it's maybe some resistance against English, you know, the increasing amount of English influence maybe on the language, or do you think that there's not really much motivation there, and it's just a case of passing on the language to future generations?

Mark: I think that it's definitely not an anti-English thing, because the vast majority of non-sectarian speakers are really either dominant in English, you know, in terms of their active knowledge of languages, or use English much more frequently. I mean, they'd have to, because, you know, there are really no fluent speakers who have learned the language naturally younger than about the age of 70, so that means that there are plenty of middle-aged and young, and then all the way down to children, descendants, that don't speak Pennsylvania Dutch and don't

understand it, so they've had to use English – and they've chosen to use English – in their own families where they have kids for at least two generations now. So if they were really so opposed to English, then they wouldn't be using it, and this is true for both partners. The spouses are, let's say, native speakers, grew up with Pennsylvania Dutch themselves, and, you know, what that generation has done is similar to what non-English speaking immigrants have done for generations here, which is, you know, there's a certain amount of affection and feeling for the heritage language, but then immigrants will say, 'But we're in America now, we're going to speak English,' kind of thing, and not a whole lot of emphasis gets placed on maintaining the language, by and large. Now, obviously, it's not an immigrant situation among the non-sectarians, and it's not a question of 'We're in America now,' because they've been in America longer than there's been a United States of America, they've been here a long time. So it's not asserting their Americanness, but it is asserting, I would say, the feeling of wanting to ascend socially, so it's viewed as something that is best left behind, because American society generally, immigrant or non-immigrant... people sort of have this, it's very progressive, meaning, like, thinking of you want things different and better and easier for your children, right? And that's a very un-Amish thing, which is like, 'I just want my kids to be as happy as I am,' so like (an) 'it ain't broke, don't fix it' kind of thing. So non-sectarians are very, it's a very benign attitude towards the English, but those that do choose to speak (Pennsylvania Dutch), I'd say nostalgia is the key word that I would use. It's not so much a kind of activist, like language maintenance, 'Let's set up classes and promote things,' it really is nostalgia. It's really... If you think about the institutions that promote and celebrate the culture, that they would, you know, be going to an ethnic festival, or to like a community festival or celebration, where they say, 'You know, I feel good about this.' So, like, the Kutztown Festival, which has done an amazing job of – you know, the rest of America has caught on to the fact that there is something valuable in regional folk cultures, right, and so people like folk celebrations. I feel

strongly – I mean, you can see this in Europe as well – that the sort of reaction against globalism is this, what they call glocalisation, kind of saying, ‘You know, there’s nothing wrong with being from my home region, and there’s nothing wrong with speaking things a little bit differently.’ You know, this idea that, for example, local, regional cultures, traditional cultures, are dying or something like that – no, it’s just that there’s a nostalgia that’s there, but the people that really have the time to indulge in that tend to be older folks. It’s like, you know, I look at, for example, German heritage societies. Like, here in Wisconsin, there are lots and lots of clubs, heritage societies who celebrate their ancestors coming 150 years ago and stuff, and you look around and you see a lot of grey hair. And you think, ‘Okay, what’s going to happen to this organisation in the next generation?’ Well, the people whose hair is brown now will, in 20 years, when they’re retired and they have more time and they get a little bit more nostalgic... You know, when you get older, you don’t have to assert much anymore, because you’ve kind of made your point. You’ve had your kids, they’ve gone on, and you can take a step back from things. So, I think that there’s always been a nostalgic element in Pennsylvania Dutch non-sectarian culture. If you look at the literature, so much of it is like, ‘Ah, the days of my youth,’ or ‘in the old days’, or ‘stories that Grandma and Grandpa told around the hearth,’ and some of it’s romanticised, in the sense of, ‘Oh, was it better in those days than it is today? Maybe it was, maybe not.’ But that sort of nostalgia that I think all people get as they get older can be transferred to a regional culture – and I’d be willing to bet, it’d be interesting to look at, for example, Welsh, and, I was reading since we talked about things like Manx, and even now Cornish as well; yeah, there are some really interesting (things), there are young people that are involved in this too, and probably it takes some middle-aged people to sort of convince the old people that yes, actually, Welsh is worth something. It’s not just this coalminers’ language that’s not going to do you any good in the modern world and will hold you back at school, and people make fun of you for your accent, or something. But it’s not going to be necessarily

teenagers that are going to be the absolute *Vorleiter*, the ones that are leading the crusade, but teenagers will probably participate in it too, if you've got people in the middle. So, I think it's a movement in the right direction to celebrate the heritage and to not be ashamed of one's heritage, and it's not puristic in terms of 'let's keep English out of our language,' because English is a part of it. It's not anti- anything, it's just sort of positive, nostalgic, but it's also, if you talk to them, I think they'll be realistic if you say, 'Well, what's going to happen to the language?' And they'll say, 'Well, the Amish and the Mennonites will keep speaking it,' but I know that they can see in their own families the clock is not going to be turned back among their grandchildren, right? That's not going to happen. A good parallel that I like to cite to folks who are sort of thinking about non-sectarian culture is Yiddish in this country. So, Yiddish is in a very, very similar socioeconomic situation, where you have a group of (what) you call sectarians, the Ultra-Orthodox Hasidim, and then there's non-sectarians, there's sort of secular Yiddish speakers, and the language is not widely spoken among secular Jews, but there's all kinds of festivals and music and Netflix series and stuff that take place in Yiddish, and a little bit of Yiddish is better than no Yiddish. And Josh Brown, a good friend of mine, he focuses now a lot of his research on this notion of opposed vernacular, so, like, you can still have a celebration of a culture that was associated historically with a language even if the language is not actively spoken under normal circumstances. So there are plenty of people in this country that celebrate their ethnic heritage: Italian, Yiddish, German, French, or whatever, and don't speak anything other than a few phrases, but that's okay. You can still be German-American, you can be French-American, you can be Hispanic-American, you can have these identities. Especially in America, there's this kind of almost fixation among a lot of people with family history and roots – I mean, I've shared that with mine, I'm a total genealogy junkie – and there's something that is just really... You can feel very, very connected to your past and your immediate ancestors and your more distant ancestors, and if they spoke another language, that's

great, but you don't need to speak their language in order to feel absolutely connected with them.

Holly: That reminds me of something Josh said, actually, when I interviewed him, and he was talking about this connection with old English and, you know, things like Renaissance fairs, even though no one partakes in that cultural practice anymore, because it's 500, 600 years old. But people still have Renaissance fairs, and they go around in clothing that is, you know, matched to the time period, and you see writing like 'Ye Olde' with an extra 'e' on the end, and that happens in the UK too, that is – 'Ye Olde' is one of the best ways to highlight that something is very, very old in this country, and the genealogy thing, the roots – I think that's quite similar to Britain. I think people are quite... I think, more and more, people are very interested in their roots, but they sort of forget – partly because there's only so far you can go back, in lots of cases – (but) I think sometimes they kind of forget that it is more than just four nations. There is a lot of world out there, and Britain, historically, just like America, has had a lot of different influences on it, from Norse to Roman to the Angles and the Saxons and the Picts, you know, you've got a lot of influence there, not just England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland.

Mark: Yeah.

Holly: (...) So, when you're talking about the nostalgia, then, and we're talking about returning to that sense – and you mentioned the Kutztown Folk Festival, I guess, is one way that it might be expressed. How do Pennsylvania Dutch communities express their culture, express the folktales and the folk narratives? Is it... Do they like to use written narratives, like poetry or prose, or is it more non-written things, like art, music, artefacts, festivals? Or is it kind of a mix of everything?

Mark: I'd say it's overwhelmingly more tangible, non text-based. So, a lot of it would be proverbs, foodways, definitely. You know, Patrick Donmoyer, obviously, has got his finger on

some really interesting pulses of things, but folk medicine, which is a particular passion of his. You know, sort of – I mean, the same way that family stories are passed down, and some of these things are kind of embellished and whatever – I'd say that it's definitely, you know... I mean, Pennsylvania Dutch culture was always a predominately oral culture, so, you know, people would learn things like songs and proverbs and, 'Oh, this is what my grandmother did when somebody was sick,' or something like that. A lot of that, I would say, is oral. The Kutztown festival, in terms of like material arts – there's always some small minority of people that actually know how to paint well, so you're not going to have a lot of, you know, everybody being a *Fraktur* artist, or everybody painting really nice barn stars. It's always a small group, and the same way – any society, like, not everybody can sing, right? Well, not everybody's a musician, an artist, that kind of thing. So everybody has different talents, but I'd say... You know, definitely there's been a sort of loss, when you lose the active vernacular language, in terms of like a lot of lore, a lot of stories, go out with that, because they don't get passed down in the same way that, you know, an elderly great-aunt that knew a lot about the family history – make sure that you get her on tape before she passes away so that you get those stories, because a lot of those things will be lost. You know, in earlier times, like into the first half of the 20th century, regional newspapers in Pennsylvania were really important in terms of... I mean, the so-called dialect columns. I just love those dialect columns, and that was a very, very important way of sharing information with one another, not sort of like news sort of things, but sort of communicating and, I'd say, transmitting the culture in many ways across readers, because those were – I mean, look, newspapers were commercial ventures, and so editors would only publish things that people would read, and there are thousands and thousands of texts written in Pennsylvania Dutch, starting from the earliest, like, 1840s, really until the 1960s and '70s, and now there's still – well, there's not really any columns anymore, but C. Richard Beam was having a regular column, *Es Bischli-Gnippli*. But really, I mean, you read these

columns and these were written – if they were written in Pennsylvania Dutch, only Pennsylvania Dutch speakers could read them – and so you knew that these were essentially kind of private conversations between them, and that, I would say, would be a lot of... It's so rich, with things like, you know, overt stories of 'This is how we used to prepare such-and-such a food,' but a lot of it's like, 'What do you think about politics today?'... Like I wrote an article about – so we just celebrated in America the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment being ratified, which is when women getting their right to vote in national elections, so, in state and municipalities, there had been, especially in the West, women were already getting the right to vote, but to guarantee that at the national level came finally in 1920 – so I was kind of curious. What was the reaction, the commentary in Pennsylvania Dutch, in some of these dialect columns? And I found a couple of things. And this was all at the same time that the prohibition, like 1919, I think, is when the Prohibition Amendment happened, and the two were sort of intersecting with one another, and the Pennsylvania Dutch were much more upset about the idea of Prohibition than they were about women... They weren't making a big fuss about women getting the right to vote. So a lot of it was sort of tongue-in-cheek, and, you know, 'Oh, now women will never be around, they'll always be at these political gatherings and not be at home to fix dinner for their family,' and that kind of thing, but that thing was particularly serious. I mean, there were some German-American newspapers that were like, 'No, this would be terrible, it's going to tear up the family, because a woman's place is in the home. Politics is dirty, it's mean, that's not what women are suited for,' that kind of thing, and there was sexism carrying over into misogyny in that, but, you know, what do you expect in 1890, or 1900, anywhere? But the Pennsylvania Dutch – it's interesting, they would pivot from sort of making a few jokes about things to saying, 'But we're really concerned about whether alcohol's going to be sold on Sundays, or at all, anywhere.' So there were little things like that where you can tell the reason that people wrote them, and the reason that many, many people read them, was

that it spoke to cultural values, and those are things that can still transfer in a post-vernacular era, I think.

Holly: I'm dying to read those columns now!

Mark: Oh, they're fascinating, they're fascinating.

Holly: I know about the *Eck*, the *Eck* was one of the later ones.

Mark: Yeah, the *Eck* was more curated. So, the *Eck* is amazing, but it was done by Preston Barba, who was, you know, a Professor of German, native speaker of Pennsylvania Dutch, he was part of that generation of, like my three namesakes of my Professorship, Shoemaker, Fry, and Yoder, Buffington, Barba, they were all part of that sort of born in the 1910s and '20s, around there, went to college, got PhDs, and that sort of thing, in German, and for Barba, it was really a documentary thing, sort of collecting poetry, collecting songs, publishing scholarship, as well. So, yeah, the *Eck*, was important, definitely important, and there were some letters to the Editor, but there were things like long-standing columns, not necessarily like advice columns, they weren't structured that way, but the editor – or somebody on the editorial board, or something or other – might say, 'Well, I'm just going to write about my views on what's going on nowadays,' you know? Just sort of commentaries about little things. But there were obviously very clever people that had some interesting things to say, and they were usually humorous on the surface, but humorous does not mean light in terms of substance. I mean, they're making some very important kinds of cultural observations. And again, the fact that these were written – if they're in Pennsylvania Dutch, there was only one group of people that could read, that was all the Pennsylvania Dutch speakers. As a German speaker, you really couldn't understand it, and, definitely as an English speaker, there was no way that you could understand it. These are very, very important resources – I mean, obviously linguistically, they're great too – but in terms of really getting into the heads of people and the values – very, very important. And then, you know, Dick Beam's kind of latter day *Eck* was, again, very

curated, right? So it was the kind of thing where it was like, ‘Oh, let’s reprint a lot of poetry from local poets,’ and some stuff about, ‘Here’s how they used to make apple butter in the old days,’ that kind of thing. But most of those columns were in English though, too, Dick Beam, and every time he wrote in Pennsylvania Dutch, he’d give a translation into English, because the purpose of his column was essentially to celebrate and rehabilitate, or habilitate, Pennsylvania Dutch culture for the larger community.

Holly: That’s wonderful. I’m going to jot down some of these columns after this. Aside from the *Eck*, I’m going to go back to some of these earlier ones, especially these ones from 1920. I’m now curious to read them! (...) So what do you think, then that the reaction is from outsiders, I guess, to speakers of the dialect or people that practice, still, Pennsylvania Dutch culture? And that can be just outsiders in Pennsylvania state, but it could be outsiders across the country. What do you think their reaction is nowadays to things like the folk festivals and writing and so on?

Mark: Much more respectful than, say, before the 1960s. So really, in the 1960s – I mean the folk festival goes back to ’49, but in the 1960s and that sort of, the Civil Rights Movement, and then kind of ethnic pride, there was a real change in American society, so like, the Smithsonian Institution, I think, had its first sort of public folk festivals on the Mall in Washington, like in the 1960s, and a lot of communities – they were aware of their roots, but they didn’t necessarily celebrate them in any overt way. So like, you know, in German and Swiss and French, and all kinds of things, there was this kind of local pride. That really, I think, happens, and so there’s this feeling of... Definitely, I would say, respect, not in terms of, ‘Oh, I really want to be Pennsylvania Dutch,’ but in the same way that people enjoy going to festivals and renaissance fairs, that kind of thing, it’s like, ‘Well, I don’t necessarily want to get too deep into what was going on in, say, 1500s Britain or something like that, but for an afternoon, I’ll have fun and put on a costume.’ The food is also something that’s very, very

appealing. One thing that definitely has worked in the favour of the Cajun culture is music and food, and then allied with that is the zydeco music, so on the Black side of Cajun culture, but definitely there's... I mean, Pennsylvania Dutch hasn't been discovered in the same way. There's not a Pennsylvania Dutch musical, a folk musical tradition that's equivalent to what you get with Cajun music, which is just so very, very popular (...) So, I'd say... In the same way that some folks in Pennsylvania would be mildly pleased – either ethnic Pennsylvania Dutch or non-ethnic Pennsylvania Dutch – would say, 'I never thought that people would actually be having a festival about our culture,' you know? And I notice this in Yiddish all the time, where it's older folks that grew up with Yiddish, and they say, 'Oh yeah, my parents spoke Yiddish, but they never wanted us to speak it because they say it's just this old language and it's just, whatever,' and they say, 'You mean you're teaching it at the university? Yiddish? *Really?* Yiddish?' And they just associate it with kind of that old world, fuddy-duddy kind of thing that you're moving away from. It's like, 'No!' There's a whole sort of body of literature and culture and music and food and all kinds of things. It's an important part of American and European history. And then people say, 'Oh, I guess you're right!' and then they feel good about that, so I think that American culture has definitely become much more respectful of regional cultures, and the Pennsylvania Dutch – I mean, look, the commercial success of the Kutztown Festival says it right there. I mean, it's a very, very successful enterprise, and the vast majority of the people that go there are not Pennsylvania Dutch.

Holly: I would have gone there myself this year, but hey, there's plenty of time yet (...) So, I've already asked you how the Pennsylvania Dutch community interacts with the wider community. It sounds beautiful, it's like mutual respect, I guess, and because so many already use English as well for day-to-day life, it's... There's not really that clear line, unless, like you say, in sectarian communities, there's not really that clear line of demarcation that says, 'This group is Pennsylvania Dutch, this group is English or of

Anglophone background.’ What do you think about the use of things like social media and the Internet in terms of spreading Pennsylvania Dutch? I know Doug Madenford, for example, does a lot of work on YouTube and on the *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* website in terms of putting content in *Deitsch* out there. What do you think about that? Do you think that might be an effective way of spreading knowledge about it, or do you think that maybe things like the festival are more of a draw, I guess, to people outside the community?

Mark: It varies. I mean, realistically, if you write something in *Deitsch*, only *Deitsch* people will be able to read it, and Germans can secondarily make their way through it, so my hunch is – it’s really interesting to know who are the consumers of, say, Doug’s videos, and that sort of thing. He does a lot in English, too – his blogs and ‘Your Pennsylvania Dutch Minute’ and that sort of thing. So, my hunch is that – I mean, I’d be confident in saying that – the *Deitsch* stuff, the consumption of that is from Germans, right, who are just fascinated with a very interesting aspect of American life. And *Hiwwe wie Driwwe*... that organ the DPAK, the *Deutsch-Pennsylvanischer Arbeitskreis* and Michael Werner and Frank Kessler – it’s a group of predominately Germans. There are not many Americans that are really affiliated with that, because it’s... their kind of take is that this is a little piece of the Palatinate, the *Pfalz*, in America, and, you know, from the, even the ethnic Pennsylvania Dutch perspective, but even sort of general American perspective, it’s not really seen as like ‘Little *Pfalz*’, right? And that’s something where I kind of differ in terms of, like, I don’t really share that ideology. Like, the subtitle of that movie that was made, and now Michael Werner’s publishing a book that’s sort of a companion to that, it’s like *Pfälzisch in Amerika*. It’s like, well... It’s not really *Pfälzisch in Amerika*, it’s like – you and I chatted, I think before, it’s not (like) we’ve transplanted English culture here, right? It’s an amalgam of things, and obviously there’s a strong connection to England proper, and then, by extension, to the British Isles, but we’re not just simply, like... ‘Go to America, or go to Massachusetts, and you will see how people lived in

England 300 years ago.’ I’m sorry, it’s not there. And yes, you find certain places that’s like... Like, I was interested in pies, the history of pies, it’s very Pennsylvania Dutch, is the pie, and it’s like the history of pies, interesting, but basically, it’s sort of like savoury pies that came from England, so things like, you know, meat pies or what we call a shepherd’s pie, right? That’s the kind of... And yes, there were things like apple pies, but it took quite a while before they could actually grow and raise apples, cause they’re not indigenous to America. And you have pumpkin pie, but again, that was, you know... But it’s not like – our pies are not the same as your pasties, right? And yes, you can find certain places where they’d say, ‘Oh yeah, shepherd’s pie is really similar to this meat and potatoes pie that you can find in a little pub in Plymouth or something.’ So again, going back to the question of social media and stuff... And Doug is very appealing, a very entertaining guy, and I don’t know who the consumers are on the American side, but the Germans just find it quaint. They find it amusing, and they find it exotic. I mean, Germans are not used to – I mean they’re getting that way – but one thing that Germans are sort of fascinated by is the idea that there are people that are sort of like them that live outside of central Europe. So there are these German shows – you probably saw them when you were in Germany – it’s like where Germans emigrate to Spain or to Africa or Canada, or something like that. So it’s like *Auf und Davon*, you know, these programmes, and it’s this idea of like, ‘Oh, there’s Germans in Brazil, there’s Germans in Africa, there’s Germans in America, Germans in Australia,’ it’s just kind of quaint. But realistically, if you don’t speak Pennsylvania Dutch, you can’t understand anything that’s in Pennsylvania Dutch. I mean, even with some English loan words, it’s not... And there’s not a real, you know, demand in, say, schools or colleges, to learn Pennsylvania Dutch. I mean, I teach it, so I know when there *is* some demand, but it’s not much, and so... Yeah, I don’t know. And Doug is really unique – I mean, there’s really nobody else that’s making YouTube videos and blogging and that kind of thing. I’m not a Facebook person, and I don’t know to what extent he’s got sort of a large

Facebook presence, but probably that too, I'm sure, but there are a handful of ex-Amish that do have some... They kind of find one another on Facebook as, like, to do Facebook as something, like... a lot of people, if they leave the Amish, are going to join. Facebook seems to be something a lot go to very, very quickly, and there are these ex-Amish Facebook groups, I understand. But it's less about... Again, because their experience of Pennsylvania Dutch culture is much more limited, in terms of, like, they were never into the barn stars and the *Saumagen* and, you know, hunting snipes, (Indistinguishable), these kinds of things that are, you know, very kind of *Ur*-Pennsylvania Dutch. That's not familiar, so they'd be more reminiscing about, 'Oh, do you remember...', you know, something about Amish culture, right?

Holly: I wonder if it's found quaint by people from Germany and from Germanic-speaking countries, you know, in Western and Central Europe, because there isn't really an idea of a Germanic diaspora outside of Europe? Like, French has *la francophonie*, and official organisations that say, 'Hey, all these areas are officially Francophone or have Francophone speakers,' and Spanish has similar. I wonder if it's partly because Germany, and the German language, is not really publicised in that way – as having a diaspora – that when they hear that there are places in America and Brazil, for example... Like, in Don Yoder's book, he spends loads of time in Brazil with a German-speaking community there. It's that sense of, 'Wow, I didn't know...' Like you said, they find it quaint, because they don't realise there are people thousands of miles away that speak a language that is similar in some ways, and very different in others. They are – like you said – they're cousins.

Mark: Yeah, I agree, and include Britain and the Commonwealth, as well. It's like, basically, when Britain and France and Spain – and Portugal, for that matter too, and the Netherlands – these are all colonial powers, and so it's not unusual. You know, the Netherlands is kind of used to the fact that there are Dutch speakers in Suriname or Dutch speakers in Indonesia. And

obviously, *la francophonie* and certainly the Commonwealth – there are still places where the Queen is still the Head of State, you know? (Laughs)

Holly: This is very true, and some that are rapidly trying to get rid of her as Head of State.

Mark: (Laughs) Yeah, yeah, so there's that thing. I mean, Germany was never a colonial power. Part of these little pockets *do* go back to colonies, namely Namibia, that's the most familiar one. I think that – I mean, Germans, as a culture, do have a kind of interesting sort of folk-anthropological curiosity, sort of armchair travellers. There is a kind of sense of adventure, and I think that, you know – we chatted about this before, these so-called 'Indian clubs', like Cowboy and Indian clubs in Germany. I mean, that's a very interesting anthropological expression. You just have to kind of go past the silliness to sort of say it's like, 'This is interesting,' and it's like, why? It's something that speaks to their sort of curiosity about, especially, the New World, and then when you kind of connect something related to their language, that's interesting. You know, the experience of the Russian Germans "coming back" to Germany is very interesting, and I'm sure... it's now been a complete generation, but you know, it's been over basically my lifetime that the Russian Germans came, and now they've pretty much settled in. And it's very interesting. The immediate reaction of Germans, when the Wall sort of came down and all these people came from, obviously, Eastern Germany opening up – but ethnic Germans, especially Russian Germans – it was not the feeling of, 'Oh, well let's welcome our brothers home,' kind of thing, because they were viewed more as Russian first and German second. And, of course, a lot of the younger people didn't even speak German, so there was a feeling of... that sort of general, like, 'We're fascinated about cowboys and Indians, we're not fascinated about Russians,' right? 'So why should we be fascinated about Germans in Siberia? You know, we'd be more fascinated about Germans under palm trees in Latin America, or Germans in the United States, or something like that, where we kind of like the United States more, or like going on vacation to Brazil, or something. We don't like

Siberia,’, kind of thing. (Sighs) Yeah, I mean, it’s... But I’d say Germans like to take vacations, they’re curious about a lot of things.

(...)

Holly: So, I just have a couple more questions, just a couple more.

Mark: Sure!

Holly: Before I ask my final question, I wanted to ask about the visual art, because we did talk about the barn stars and *Fraktur*, and these are not really things practiced by the sectarian communities, but these are things that are quite common in the non-sectarian communities. Do you think that these might be things that kind of stick around, even when the language – *if* the language – gets into a stage where it kind of declines terminally? Do you think that these will be the way of passing the culture on? And what kind of narratives do the barn stars and the *Fraktur* tell, aside from, you know, the overt narratives?

Mark: Barn stars, more than *Fraktur*. *Fraktur* is much... I don’t know of any modern *Fraktur* artists that are maintaining that. One thing that really kind of celebrated Pennsylvania Dutch material culture and visual arts is the antique market, so – starting in the mid-century, and very wise, forward-thinking, savvy collectors that, ‘I’m going to start buying this stuff up, cause some day, this is going to be very valuable,’ and it’s hugely valuable. I mean, it’s like the furniture, anything that’s part of this material culture, especially the *Fraktur* documents – things like clayware and dishes, these kinds of things – I mean, this is considered an important aspect of folk art, and there are people spending large sums of money to collect this. So, the market is very, very large. It’s aesthetically pleasing, there’s no question about it. I mean, *Fraktur* is beautiful, barn stars are beautiful. So, the aesthetics are definitely going to stand the test of time. In terms of, you know, it’d be interesting to sort of say what meaning is ascribed to it, cause the barn stars, despite the fact they were called hex signs, that was sort of the

outsider projection of folk witchcraft and all this stuff... I remember once visiting a non-sectarian family who lived in a rural area. They actually had been interviewed by Lois Huffines, Marion Lois Huffines, and they were excellent speakers, an older couple, so they're probably in their sixties at the time – this was a long time ago. And they live in a small, little, rural community in central Pennsylvania, and we were chatting in Pennsylvania Dutch and she was taking me through her garden. And we were kind of going through the front yard, and – I don't know, you probably have these in Britain too, it goes back to Victorian England, where it's basically like in the middle of a little garden, you'd have a reflective ball, like a mirrored ball on a pedestal. And the idea about this was that it was not just simply pretty decoration, but the mirrors would kind of give you different perspectives on all the beautiful greenery in the garden, so you're not just simply looking at the flowers directly on them, or the hedges or the ivy or anything like that, but you're seeing it in kind of interesting ways. So, you're not just looking at simply a ball, a mirror ball, you're looking at getting a different perspective. Now, that mirror ball has become sort of a very common American yard art, so like people put two little Dutch kids kissing in the front yard, or little statues, or little flamingos, or little ducks or something like that. Like, Germans have gnomes, the garden gnomes kind of thing? It's the same sort of idea. So anyway, they had one of those balls on a pedestal – in the yard, though, there's no garden, it was just a yard, right? And so it was grass, and then that in the centre of it. And I had never been up close to one of those things before. My parents never had (one), we never had one at my house, and I don't even remember in our neighbourhood having that. So, we were walking past that and I said, 'What is that? Why do you have that?' Cause it wasn't functional – it wasn't like a bird bath or a little fountain, or something. He goes, '*Ich weess net, die Fraa meent, 's iss schee.*', 'I don't know, the wife just thinks it's pretty!' And so I got it, and, you know, it was maybe tinted a different colour or something, and I thought, 'That's kind of how the barn...', you drive past a barn with barn stars and you think, 'That's pretty,', you know?

But it definitely is associated with Pennsylvania Dutch culture, and so I think that people that would choose to put them, and the whole – I mean, I’ve got one in my office at work. A lot of people have them over their garages, or in a family room, or at a cabin, or something like that, and then there are things that say *Willkommen* (and) have different kind of designs and stuff, and it’s kind of taken off as just sort of a nice, decorative thing. In some ways, it’s like, you know... when people buy bagels, they don’t think, ‘I’m eating Jewish food,’ it’s just, ‘I’m eating food,’ whereas thirty years ago they’d say, ‘I’m eating something Jewish,’ you know, so it’s like barn stars and things that are, like, ‘garage stars’, and cabin stars, these are really just becoming sort of decorative arts that are just kind of American, right? They may not necessarily be associated with that, but I think, you know, it’d be really good to talk to people that belong to the *Versammlung* and the *Grundsau* Lodges, because that is something.... You know, where the sort of intentional celebration of the culture and wanting to keep something going, including the language, is very much front and centre. And it’s amazing how healthy those lodges have been; there are very, very few that have ever closed that I know of. And Patrick (Donmoyer) is really a good person to talk about this, because he belongs to one, and Bill Donner at Kutztown University’s written *the* book on *Grundsau* Lodges. You know, the challenge with that is that those are basically once-a-year things, so it’s not like an ongoing sort of... ‘Every weekend, there’s something going on,’ sort of thing. The Festival is a once-a-year thing too, so to know sort of what the lasting power is of these institutions – and including the Festival – during the year would be interesting, but it’s... It’s a little bit like tourism, though, too. You know, when you go somewhere, you have a really good time and you kind of immerse yourself in it, but then you leave and you don’t take much of it with you, even if... So, for example, there’s so many Americans, they go to, like, Britain, especially Ireland. I mean, Irish Americans, they go to their ancestral village. And Ireland, in particular, is big in terms of – more so, I think, than England – in terms of having these... Cause there’s so much chain

migration from Ireland, like, from this county, from this village, or from this region or something, to there. So, for example, Biden's Irish ancestral thing; it's like Scranton is the sister city with this little place, because there were so many Irish that came from that area. But there's these sister city relationships, and these ties, I think, are really, really good in terms of helping keep a sort of heritage feeling alive. Yes, there are German or Palatinate – like Eberbach and Ephrata are sister cities and paired up, and stuff like that – but (in terms of) the awareness of the Palatinate and the cultural memory, the vast majority of Pennsylvania Dutch have no clue what the Palatinate is. They just know vaguely that their ancestors came from Germany, and maybe Switzerland. So, it's not as sort of present, whereas with the Irish, it's really present. And a lot of other immigrant groups with chain migration – so, like, Greek Americans – they'd say, 'Oh, I know exactly what village everybody came from because everybody here is from that village,' kind of thing, or their ancestors are, or their cousins are there. And Ireland is different from England, because so much of the English migration – like in the earlier times, like my ancestors – if they were Puritans, they were coming from here, they were coming from there, they were coming from everywhere. It was very, like... one person from this, or one couple from there, one family from there. It wasn't like all of a sudden, the village of such-and-such decided to uproot and move to Massachusetts. Didn't do it.

Holly: It didn't happen. Well, no, not with the Puritans, like you said.

Mark: Yeah.

Holly: Again, it's another research project to add to the list of things to look at! And I am maybe going to speak to Patrick again about the *Versammlinge*...

Mark: Yeah, I would probe that a little bit more, because that's the... to understand really what the community reception is of the *Versammlinge* – I've never attended a *Grundsau* Lodge, I've been to a *Versammlung* – and my experience of the *Versammlung* was that it was, you know, predominately senior citizens, it was sort of like the community dinner. You know, like

churches often have certain regular festivals and I felt like I was at a sort of a church supper kind of thing, which was, you know, again, sort of the demographic is a little bit older. Food was sort of classic American/Pennsylvania Dutch, little bit of theatre in there, and it was, you know, a little bit like Harry and Ida, the couple that I talk about, you know, at the beginning (of the book)? You know, that's a sort of a type, where it's like they feel good about it, they don't have to assert their Americanness, they don't have to worry about, you know, how their kids are going to turn out, because their kids are themselves established and have their own families, and so forth, so it's this sort of... You know, you can sit back and enjoy something and feel nostalgic, but not necessarily mournful, because in the same way people think it's like, 'Yeah, this is how it was in the 1930s,' but the 1930s was the Depression, you know? And then we lived through World War Two. And it's just, in the same way that American society has gotten much more open to ethnic diversity, which gives us space for the celebration, and the respect for celebration of things like regional cultures, like Pennsylvania Dutch and Cajun. So, to American society, it's also sort of... 'I don't want to go back to the 1930s or the 1950s,' you know? If they really think long and hard, they'd think it's like, 'Well, then we didn't have antibiotics in the 1930s,' it's like... there were just a lot of things that were just not as good about life everywhere. I think that's...

Holly: Subjective truth...

Mark: Yeah, yeah.

Holly: Given ninety years' difference. So, again, before the last question, I just wanted to ask, and I know I asked this last time, if there's anything that we haven't covered that you think I should maybe know, or anything that I should bear in mind in progressing in this research that we haven't already discussed? I don't know if we've... I mean, we've been quite comprehensive, but I'm sure there's something I've missed (...).

Mark: (Brief pause) I'd say, you know, kind of... I find myself really connecting with Patrick and Josh quite a bit. I don't know Doug, actually, personally. Seems like a super nice guy, but Patrick and Josh really kind of get non-sectarian culture in the 21st century in ways that I think are really, really important, because the sort of realism that, you know, the language is not going to be revived, but that's okay, because post-vernacular life is... There's a lot to be said for 'even a little bit of Dutch is better than no Dutch', and even just knowing something about the culture, the food, the folkways, that kind of thing is really important. And I think that the geography of Kutztown, located as it is, down to sectarians as well, is very interesting, because, you know, Patrick also has some connections with the Old Order Mennonites that live very, very close by, and that sort of... Looking at, like, talking to Old Order Mennonites and getting their take on Pennsylvania Dutch culture, and things like barn stars and the Folk Festival and... I mean, I know that some would go to the Folk Festival. They technically – like, Amish shouldn't be going to circuses and amusement parks, what do you call them, pleasure parks or something in Britain?

Holly: Theme parks, we like 'theme park'.

Mark: Theme parks, yeah. So that kind of thing – but they love zoos, they often go to zoos. I'd be interested to see what the sectarian take is on some of this, especially in those areas where they actually live close by and they live in Berks County. And Patrick, his connection with the folk medicine – I mean, there are people that still practice, or have this interest in, this kind of folk medicine, the powwowing, including Patrick, who... Again, it's one of those things where you don't need to speak Pennsylvania Dutch. You may learn certain phrases or prayers, or something like that, but you don't need to be a fluent speaker of that to partake in the culture, and it's a little bit like – there are folks here, like Wiccans, (who are) similar, like neo-Pagan, and those that – like in Britain, they would go to Stonehenge on my birthday, which is the solstice (...) Actually, there's a really good BBC series that I watched. I think it's just called

The Celts (...) and they go back to Germany and, you know, they have the old Celts of Continental Europe, and then... But then they do talk about, 'Well, these people that dress up in white robes and process around Stonehenge, that's not exactly a continuation of anything, that's a kind of neo-recreation or creation of something.' So, there's a little bit of that, I think maybe, in that aspect of Pennsylvania Dutch folk medicine or maybe folk spirituality, that's there. But Patrick knows this stuff, and Patrick has the... I mean, he's got enough influence, he's just got very good instincts, like an anthropologist, I would say, where he understands the true folklore, folklife, versus the 'fakelore', that kind of thing? I just really, you know, I wish Patrick and I lived closer. He's somebody that I would just enjoy – I mean, we talk a lot, or we're communicating all the time on email, and talk on the phone, and whenever I get out there I like to visit, and I really, really respect... he's a very unique person, cause he's doing a lot to document and, through the Center... And that's something that has more lasting power, too. I hope that the Center – I mean, the Center has not gotten a lot of respect from the University overall, because it's just considered sort of, you know... If they think about sort of being diverse, they're thinking of, like, internationally diverse or ethnically diverse, but not celebrating Pennsylvania Dutch culture. That's not something that the University, as an institution, feels like they are excited to celebrate. And a lot of it has to do with funding, like how much money do they have to support different things. If they're going to do something on, say, something for business students to be more culturally savvy about China, or something like that, they're going to do that, or to make Hispanic first-generation college students feel welcome at the University, that kind of thing, it's a little bit different, so... But Patrick, he's done an amazing job, and I wish there were more Patricks out there. And, for Josh and me, we're removed from that a little bit because of our professional status. I mean, we work in universities, and so we're doing teaching and research and public outreach, and me especially, with public outreach stuff. And Patrick is basically... Documentation of research, and a lot of

public outreach, and he's in a perfect place to do that. I mean, Kutztown is just like the centre of all this, and he's just so respected by everybody, you know? The Germans, the people that are involved in the *Hiwwe wie Driwwe* stuff, the older, like, Mary Laub, the folks that are translating things and offering dialect classes, and then the Mennonites that live in the area, you know, that are also kind of interested in being connected with that, so...

Holly: I'll be definitely interviewing him again! I haven't spoken to him since the summer. I interviewed him a while back, but I will be emailing him again very shortly, I'm sure, to ask more about his work, especially his work with the Center. I think that's a phenomenon that's quite common with universities here as well, is that regional identity sometimes get lost in being... Obviously (in) being a very welcoming place for everyone, and being a diverse institution, sometimes they kind of lose where the university comes from, geographically and historically speaking. So, I will be asking him again – if he has any time, because I know he works an awful lot at the Center and he's probably very busy... But the final question, which I think you kind of touched on there with the Center, is what do you think the future might be for Pennsylvania Dutch as a language and as a culture?

Mark: Well, definitely, the future is looking very bright because of the sectarians, right? In the same way that Yiddish among the Hasidim is – you know, as long as there are going to be Hasidim, there's going to be Yiddish. As long as there are going to be Amish and Old Order Mennonites, there's going to be Pennsylvania Dutch. So, the language will definitely continue, and (the future)'s very, very bright. Yeah, I think I'm optimistic. If the non-sectarian Pennsylvania Dutch culture is similar to, say, other heritage communities – let's say German American stuff, or Scandinavian American, which is big here in this part of the country too – I think that it's always going to be part of regional identity. So, I think that festivals, maybe smaller... it would be interesting to know whether school curricula cover that. Typically in the

United States, fourth grade is a time when they do, like, state history or local history, so... One thing that I've noticed in German studies in this country... So, German studies is not *Germanistik* – and in fact, Germans will refer to it as *German Studies*. They used to say *Auslandsgermanistik*. But they say German studies in America is very unique. It's sort of hybrid in some way. It's not just about studying the classics of literature, or even just literature period. It's very, you know, interested in history and cultural studies and women's studies and philosophy and media studies. It's very interdisciplinary, and I think German diaspora studies – if we can sort of say that, I mean – there's space in German studies. Like, I notice in my own Department: I teach courses in German American Studies, I teach courses in and on Pennsylvania Dutch, and students come, they're interested in that. I teach a course in the Amish, and they're interested. So, you know, there's that. I think that, in the same way, if there is space in the Academy for Ethnic Studies... You know, there will be a kind of anchor in some ways. It's not going to determine, like, popular interest per se, but the combination of interest and respect for and awareness of regional history and culture, combined with, you know, a body of scholarship. That sort of says, yeah, this is valid, right? This is interesting here. This is worth studying. I think that there will be – I mean, it will continue. I don't think it's going to disappear. It's not like... I mean there are some – if you think about immigrant cultures that have been submerged here, it's really only in places where there was never really a strong critical mass of people and members of that culture. So for example, there's a town not that far from here called Wales. Not surprisingly, the immigrants came from Wales. And there is some awareness that there was a Welsh community there, a heritage community, and there are places named Davison, Lloyd and Jones, and that kind of thing – street names – but there was never a huge population centre there, so it's been sort of swallowed up by suburban development and that kind of thing, so it's not so... But rural Pennsylvania is different. I think that Berks and Lehigh Counties are far enough away from Philadelphia, and Reading and Allentown are not going to

overwhelm them such that, you know, that... The geography works in Pennsylvania's favour, the cities can only sprawl so far there and then the mountains can stop them. And I think that will help provide a kind of insular cushion to keeping the sort of awareness of the regional culture alive.

Holly: It's wonderful. Perhaps we can get on to the Pennsylvania state Board of Education.

Mark: Yeah!

Holly: Get some cultural education on Pennsylvania Dutch instilled. Thank you so much again for your time Mark.

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW WITH BARRY JEAN ANCELET

Date of Interview: Wednesday 10th March 2021

Time of Interview: 16.00 GMT, 10.00 CST

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

Holly: So, I wanted to ask, if I may, - I mean, I've read your books, I saw your interview with the American Folklife Center that's on the Library of Congress website – but I wonder if you could start by telling me about your experiences as a speaker of Louisiana French.

Barry: My experience?

Holly: Mm-hmm.

Barry: Well, I grew up in a family where French was spoken and among my family members, there were several who didn't speak much English at all. My mother's mother spoke English with great difficulty. My father's mother... I think she – I counted one time – she knew about eighteen words in English: Yes, no, hello, goodbye, please, thank you, hot dog, hamburger, utility room, television, radio... I mean, very, very little. And because I was very close to them... it's not like I learned to speak French, I just spoke French like you learn to speak English. And because I remained close to them and spent a lot of time with them as I was growing up, that initial experience with acquiring the language didn't fade away, and it might have faded away, except that when I hit high school, I became interested in French as an academic subject, because... I'll tell you what happened: When I was a freshman in high school, I was chosen to represent our high school at an academic competition here in the state, and I won a medal. I

had never won anything in my life! You know, I weighed 120 pounds soaking wet, holding a brick, when I was in high school, and I didn't play sports or anything, so this was one of the things I discovered that I could do well. And so, I continued to pursue that, and for that reason, I acquired not only the oral French that I got from my family, but I added to that a knowledge of so-called 'standard French'. And for a while, there was a bit of conflict, you know? You use words that you learned in school back home and it was like, 'What? What is that?' And then, when we hit university – there were several of us in that generation, Richard Guidry, Amanda LaFleur, and others... and Richard Guidry in particular, he had become a real... purist, I guess, or fanatic, about Louisiana French and his own Cajun French, and he was somebody I knew and spent some time with him... He had become very interested in validating the local variety, and so, if any of us were talking around him and we would use a *ne* for the negative or, you know, something we had learned from school, he would say, 'Aha, aha! See, you've been corrupted by...' (Laughs) So, we all became hyper aware of it, and it took a while for me to sort out, you know, when was when and what was what – what version of the language I was talking at any given time. I continued, I got a BA in French, and then I went to graduate school and studied French in graduate school and eventually got a doctorate from the University of France in French, in linguistics. So, I, you know, when you're talking to professors or in some sort of formal setting, academic conference or whatever, you kind of... I've learned to tend toward the standard side of my repertoire. And when I'm not in that setting, I let myself tend toward the other side. But you know, early on, there was, as you might imagine, some funny conflicts. I remember when I got back home from a year in France when I was a junior, I got back home and I called my aunt, who was one of the people that helped raise me and spoke French, and I started talking to her, and she cut me off after about two minutes, and she said, '*Ben, ben, on dirait je te comprends p'us!* I don't understand you! What are you talking about?' And it occurred to me, 'Oh, wait a minute, what am I doing?' I'm making her feel

uncomfortable because I'm imposing something that's not in her repertoire. So, it was a matter of figuring out who you're talking to and what the context is and after a while, it became kind of natural, although I have to admit that even in academic settings, I often let myself drift into my home repertoire, because I feel like it has a legitimacy and I feel like that ought to be recognised. That is also a part of what I've been doing, in terms of trying to figure out ways to represent Louisiana French in written form in a way that respects the style and vocabulary and language of the orality, but at the same time, doesn't make it impossible to read by using some sort of phonetic code, and... I mean, the basics of that strategy, I figured out rather early when I was doing my dissertation. As a matter of fact, (it was) as far back as my master's thesis back in the '70s. I figured out the basics of it, but refining that has taken a long time, and it's also something that I came to understand you can't do by yourself. You have to have collaboration, you have to have a team, so people like Amanda LaFleur, Richard Guidry, Brenda Mounier, Helena Putnam, and any number of my colleagues – David Cheramie – have all been essential to helping to figure that out.

Holly: That's wonderful. Like you say, it's a real community feel almost, it's a community working together to put it –

Barry: Yeah, now when I say 'working together', yes, but on the other hand, there were a lot of arm wrestling contests over, 'How are we going to represent this?' or, 'Is this the most usual form of this particular expression?' or whatever. I remember it took me several years to convince Shirley Abshire that the 'oo' from 'tu' could be elided to produce '*T'as fait sauté ta chair.*' Totally legit, there was no reason why the 'u' couldn't be elided, just like the 'e' or the 'i' is sometimes elided in French, and she resisted that for a long time, and then she finally caved in. It took a similarly long time for some people to convince me that the 'ui' of '*puis*' wasn't eliding to produce '*pis*' – like '*Il fait ça, pis ça*' – we don't say '*puis*' for that, we say '*pis*'. And I had always reasoned that it was the ease of 'ui' merging together, but I think it was

Amanda LaFleur that said, ‘Yeah, but we say *puit, comme un puit pour l’eau,*’ you know, a water well. ‘It’s not that we can’t say ‘*puis*’ or that we say ‘*pis*’ whenever you and I come together, it’s just that we don’t do it in this situation, and if we don’t do it in this situation consistently, that means there’s a rule and it has to be respected.’ So, we continued to work on perfecting this argument, teasing out this system that we were coming up with, and we discovered a lot of things like that, like... Things that might have been pronunciation drifts, when in fact (they) were not pronunciation drifts, they were the way that word was consistently. And one of the things that we figured out was that if you can attest – and the only way you can attest is if you have a *huge* repertoire to deal with – but if you can attest that in the linguistic community, this particular thing, feature, that you’re dealing with is done consistently, that means it’s not a mistake or an accident or just a pronunciation glitch. It means that, if it’s done consistently, that’s the way you do it, you know? And so, we had to figure out quite a few, like – a perfect example is ‘*petit*’, little. Consistently, we say ‘*un ‘tit garçon*’, ‘*une ‘tite fille*’, ‘*une ‘tite maison*’, ‘*un ‘tit chemin*’, but ‘*le chemin est petit*.’ So, in the post position, where it comes after, it’s always ‘*petit*’. You never say ‘*le chemin est ‘tit*’; you say ‘*le chemin est petit*.’ So, in the post position, in that grammatical position, it’s always ‘*petit*’, but before the noun, it’s consistently ‘*tit*’. So, if you attest that that’s consistent in hundreds and hundreds of pages of transcriptions of orality, then you have to recognise that seems to be a rule, that the word for little, when it comes before a noun, is ‘*tit*’ or ‘*tite*’, and when it comes in a post position, you know, objective position or not before a noun, then it’s ‘*petit*’, and also when it’s used as a noun, like ‘*les petits*’. We never say – (for instance,) ‘the children’, we never say ‘*les ‘tits*’, we say ‘*les petits*’. So, just to give you an example of the kind of thing that we’ve discovered and we’ve been teasing out the minute details, and the devil’s in the details, I can tell you that.

Holly: I can imagine! It’s the joys of putting together an orthography for a language that, like you say, was extremely oral – well, almost exclusively [oral for a long time.]

Barry: [Well, only] in usage, because the fact that those people didn't write what they said was only an unfortunate accident of lack of education, but when my grandmother said, '*Je fais, j'ai envie de faire un soupe,*', anybody who could write the French language could have written down what she said, and she could write down what she said, if she knew how to write the language. So it wasn't that the language only had an oral form, it only had an oral usage.

Holly: Got it. Got it. Actually, what you were just saying about a lot of the rules and the nuances between Louisiana French and 'standard' French... I mean, I guess so-called 'standard' French...

Barry: Because, you know, where is standard? Standard is what got imposed by the kings and royalty at some point. Somebody decided that they were going to use this version rather than this version, or this word rather than this word. Why did we end up with '*jumeaux*' or '*jumelles*' for twins, instead of '*bessons*' or '*bessonnes*'? Because the people in Ile-de-France use '*jumeaux*', and somebody else used '*bessons*', and, 'Too bad for you, we get to decide, cause we have the money and we have the power and we have the influence, and we have the access to printing and education and...' So that's how that happened. And it wasn't nefarious. It wasn't evil-intended. It was just the people who had the ability to impose that did.

Holly: It's a sad state of affairs, though, because you come to mainland France – I studied in Poitou-Charentes, and in Poitou-Charentes, I remember a colleague of mine doing some research on Poitevin. No one speaks it anymore. The dialect is gone, and there aren't that many big, well-known French dialects left in the *métropole*, except for maybe Breton and things like that.

Barry: You'd be surprised, though. I spent some time in that western part of France several times, and I was really astonished at how much they sound like my grandparents and my aunts and uncles. Outside of the academic setting, there still is quite a bit of usage; probably not as much as there once was, of course, but there still is quite a bit, more than one might think. It

flies under the radar, because it's only used to buy vegetables or sell a plough, or some ordinary use out there in the rural setting.

Holly: Why do you think it tends to fall by the wayside, then, when it comes to academics looking at it? Aside from academics in Louisiana, because I know that there's a very strong circle of people that look at Louisiana French and Louisiana French folklife and folklore quite extensively, but why do you think dialects tend to get missed? Do you think it is because it's a day-to-day thing, and sometimes we just brush over that?

Barry: Well, it has to do with our money and influence, and what you see on television and what you hear in schools... And look, schools – in France, it's even more revelatory – it's called *l'école normale*, and that's where *on normalise les choses*. They try to impose a norm, a standard, and anything that doesn't conform to that standard is discouraged or brushed aside or disparaged, and again, it's not evil-intended, it's intended to enable people to participate in the socioeconomic advantages that are available. It's a short-sided thing, because those people could participate in the socioeconomic benefits without betraying or abandoning the way they spoke. A good example, a comparison, is English. Look at the variety of English in the world, from Australia to New Zealand to Canada to here to England to... And, you know, I don't know why it is that in the French-speaking world, there are all these judgments about purity of language or 'standard' forms, whereas in English... I go watch *Crocodile Dundee*, and I don't judge how they're speaking, I just listen to what they're saying. I don't think people from Leeds or Liverpool are any less sophisticated because of the way they speak, or somebody from Omaha, Nebraska, or St Augustine, Florida, or anywhere else. I mean, the English-speaking world, for some reason, has a level of tolerance for variety that the French-speaking world is only just now beginning to acquire.

Holly: That's fascinating. It's fascinating that one world (the English-speaking world) is so clued up on it.

Barry: And I'll tell you what, the French-speaking world is changing for the same reason the English-speaking world ended up that way long ago: because the colonial empire was so vast and there was necessarily such variety in the ways that English was being used, in part, if nothing else, to express local realities that you wouldn't find in Liverpool, you wouldn't find that in Delhi. So English had to be supple and evolve to express different realities. And the French-speaking world began to change when former French colonies in West Africa and Northern Africa began to impose themselves literarily, in cinema and books and poems – and in government, for that matter. Same with Quebec. You know, it's hard to discount – take Quebec for an example – it's hard to discount Quebec and its accent when somebody like Gaston Miron is writing in it, or somebody like Ousmane Sembène is writing in French, or any of the Maghreb authors who have keenly interesting stories to tell, and so they began using the French language in their own way. There have been a number of African and Maghreb authors, and Quebecois authors and Acadian authors for that matter – and I daresay Louisiana authors – who have essentially hijacked the French language to their own devices. And that has only enriched *la Francophonie*. I often say, 'You only lose when you subtract, when you restrict.' I think that *la Francophonie internationale* has been vastly enriched by admitting, accepting the varieties of French from all of this vast diaspora. And we have been obviously enriched by Paris, but I daresay that Paris has been enriched by Montreal and Dakar, you know. I often quote Jacques Godbout, a novelist from Quebec, who wrote *La couteau sur la table*, and in that book, he had this epithet, like a little epithet. He said something to the effect of, '*Nous le reconnaissons tous dans cette francité, de Montréal à Dakar, mais au lieu d'être français, nous préférons être l'humaine en français.*' And I think that precisely is what is enriching *la Francophonie* today.

Holly: I absolutely agree, absolutely.

Barry: If I read Victor Hugo or Albert Camus or, for that matter, Jacques Godbout, or any French writer from anywhere else in the French-speaking world, I have to make an effort. I have to make an effort to penetrate the references, the vocabulary, the style of language, because I didn't grow up in Montreal or Paris or Dakar, or anywhere else. I grew up here. So, if I want to understand a story that is quintessentially set in France or Quebec, I got to make an effort to go there. So, does a person from Paris have to make an effort to understand a Quebec? So, this person from Montreal has to make an effort to understand a story from Bordeaux? It's the same, and if the story is good, it's worth the effort. So, why wouldn't they make the effort to understand the way I am using the French language, if they're interested in the stories and the songs that we're producing?

Holly: I mean, that's an excellent question. It's an excellent question. So, within the Francophonie, if every – Let's call them 'variety' of French – is equal, which it obviously is... How do you think it will be that the *metropole*, European French people, can start to know more about – and get engaged in - Louisiana French, or Acadian literature and folklore?

(...)

Barry: There, the issue is distribution and access, right? I mean, they know a lot more about *Acadie* because of Antonine Maillet. She won the *Goncourt*, and she attracted the attention even of the French in the *metropole*, *l'Hexagone*, because of the sheer quality of her storytelling and her writing. So it's a matter of access. It's a matter of distribution. I've pointed this out before, but in order to be read, you have to be distributed (Laughs) And in order to be known, you have to be read... So, you know, to what extent are we going to solve that problem? I don't know. I mean, we're a tiny, little piece of it here. But tiny pieces often are important. I often say that... we often talk about universality, right? But the universe is composed of an infinity of localities. Every locality is important. Every locality adds to the perspective of the whole.

Holly: Absolutely. I always think of it as a giant machine or a clock with all the cogs working together to make it work. If that one – no matter how big or small that implement is – if it's not there, the whole thing falls apart.

Barry: Right. It's at least lessened.

Holly: Mm. I mean, I personally find it fascinating. I think...

Barry: I mean, could *la Francophonie* do without us? I might think so, but how do you know?

How do you know, right?

Holly: Well, this is true.

Barry: On some remote Pacific isle is where Darwin did his indispensable research. You never know what's going to be important, so you have to give value to everything as though it were potentially important. Would *la Francophonie* fall apart without Louisiana French? Probably not, but it would be lessened. If there would be less of it, then it would be different.

Holly: Absolutely, particularly because Louisiana French is a place where there's so much in the way of a *métissage culturel*, as Glissant might put it, because Louisiana's had the Acadians, the Germanic peoples, Hispanic people, people from Africa, people from the Caribbean, the Native Americans... I mean, it's such a mix of everything right there.

Barry: There may not, in fact, be any other part of *la Francophonie* that is as socioculturally complex, ethnically complex, as we've been.

Holly: I've really noticed that.

Barry: If for only that reason, you know, wouldn't you want to hear what people who have been through that complex history have to say about things, you know?

Holly: Absolutely, and the folk tales that you collect really speak to that. I've been introduced to *Bouki et Lapin* for the first time, and I adore the *Bouki* and *Lapin* stories, but like you say in the introduction to *Cajun and Creole Folktales*, *Bouki* is a Wolof word.

Barry: Right.

Holly: And that alone, right there – before you even start the story, you have something that links back to the diversity of the Louisiana French community, cause you have a Wolof word that’s crept in.

Barry: Yeah, we even eat Africa, right? Cause gumbo is a term that comes (from Africa). The Africans are the ones who brought the rice culture here. So we have this very complex blending of cultures and influences on all levels: culinary, dance, music, language, storytelling, architecture – It’s one of the reasons why our houses have porches – it pervades everything.

Holly: So... This is probably a bit of an obvious question, because we’ve just talked about how important Louisiana French is, but for you personally, what does it mean to you to be a speaker of Louisiana French?

Barry: I don’t know if that’s something I think about a lot. I mean, it’s just who I am. I think that if we were to lose speakers of Louisiana French, we would be losing a really valuable resource, so in that regard, I guess the fact that I continue to do it is that (a really valuable resource). But on the other hand, because of my personal quest to attain a really high level of performance and understanding of this thing. I have become one of the go-to people. Like, for example, some of the musicians around: when they want to understand lyrics of a song, an older song, that they want to do a new recording of, they often check with me to see, ‘What exactly is he saying?’ So, more generally, it’s important for anybody who speaks French from Louisiana, it’s important to continue that. But in my own personal (life), it’s, you know... Because of the expertise I’ve gathered over my life, I can contribute to passing that along. You know, related to what you’re asking... The conversation about what happens to Louisiana French in our context. We often talk about, you know, ‘It’s important to preserve the French language in Louisiana.’ Well, the word ‘preserve’ implies keeping something that is already there alive. We’re not talking about replacing Louisiana French, we’re talking about preserving that. And why preserve that? Well, because that’s the French that produced those stories and

songs that we all love, and dances, and everything else. It's that... *Comme on dit en français, c'est pas une question de préserver le français, mais préserver ce français.*

Holly: Absolument.

Barry: *This* one, because it has affective value. It's not just French, it's *this* French.

Holly: That's such a profound way of looking at it, and again, like you said, it fits into the idea of Louisiana French being one of many parts of *la Francophonie*, and it's this particular part. That's a beautiful quote. So, when someone says to you 'Louisiana French', or brings in Louisiana French, what would come to your mind? What kind of evokes Louisiana Frenchness for you? Is it the language that comes first, or is it a cultural element, like the music or the stories that would come in first?

Barry: It's all part of the same thing, really. I mean, is *Jolie Blonde* sung in English still *Jolie Blonde*? It's all interactive, they're all integrated. And what comes to mind with your question, if I could off on a tangent...

Holly: Of course!

Barry: There are any number of varieties of Louisiana French. I mean, there's the French that is sort of influenced more by what came down from Quebec that we still find in Avoyelles and Evangeline Parish, where they have the sibilance. We have some influences from Quebec, we have some influences from *Acadie*, we have some influences from various parts of France, we have influences from the ways that Africans learned the language and used it, Native Americans learned the language and used it – the Houma, for example. We have any number of varieties, and it all sort of shifts and merges. I mean, historically, there were tendencies, where certain regions, you'd hear more influence from *Acadie* than others, or more influence from Quebec or the Mississippi Valley French or influences from the French Creole planter societies from the River. And nowadays, of course, with social mobility, that's starting to fade a bit, but there are still identifiable tendencies. So, Louisiana French is not a monolithic thing

either. It's one of the reasons why the dictionary we did is called *Dictionary of Louisiana French: as spoken in Cajun, Creole, and Native American Communities*.

Holly: It's fluid.

Barry: It's fluid, yeah. And varied within itself. It's one of the reasons why speakers of Louisiana French, I think, are perhaps more attuned to the possibility of variation in the French-speaking world, cause we were dealing with variation within our own little, tiny context here.

Holly: That's wonderful. I mean, I've seen, like what you said about the *metropole* being slightly slower to pick up on it – with an institution like *l'Académie Française* there to keep it...

Barry: And also, you know, (Unintelligible) and other scholars have pointed out that often, that kind of variety that is due to historical residue persists more strongly on the edges of the *periphérie* rather than the centre, because the centre is what's defining the thing, and so they don't have to worry. They don't have to cling to that kind of right, they could just do what they do and assume that it is what is done, whereas on the outskirts, on the periphery, you know, we don't know, we didn't know what was being determined at the centre, so you cling to everything because everything might be potentially important. You never know what's going to be important or not. And so you find more persistence of... say, for example, historical terms. On the edge is where we live: Quebec, *Acadie*, Louisiana.

Holly: Terms like *piastre* for dollar, for example, cause I remember looking that up for the first time in the Louisiana French dictionary and being quite surprised and going, 'Oh, I know that word, but it's not a word I would use in a modern context necessarily.'

Barry: What was the word?

Holly: *Piastre*. I've probably said it incorrectly. But yeah, it's a pleasant surprise to see...

Barry: And words pertaining to everyday life like that, or the ones that continue to be useful in a way, they persist. For example, seventy-five cents is *six escalins*, and *escalin* was a twelve-and-a-half cent piece.

Holly: Oh really?

Barry: So, we have *deux escalins* is a quarter, twenty-five cents. *Six escalins* is seventy-five cents. And when I was growing up, I mean, nobody ever said *soixante-quinze sous*. Everybody, it was *six escalins*. You know, just one of those things, because that's what was used every time you went to the grocery store or hardware store or feed store, or wherever. It's a term that persisted.

Holly: That's fascinating!

Barry: Certain terms persist within context where they're useful and they're necessary. For example, in Louisiana French, there's not a word for astrophysics, because we didn't have astrophysics (Laughs). A mother would say, '*Ah, ouais, mon garçon est à l'Université de Texas afin d'étudier astrophysics.*' (Laughs) She'd use the English word. Well, you know, that's perceived to be a problem that's sort of mocked by French speakers from other areas that we have a lot of English encroachment. But the French themselves – '*Ils vont faire du shopping pour le weekend,*', you know? So, why do they get to do that, and we don't? I mean, they get to do it their way, but we don't get to do it our way. You know, sorry, yes we do. So, with my grandmother, when my grandmother said, '*Un homme quel tel (sic) a eu du tracas avec son char et il a eu un flat tire,*', well, 'flat tire' for her was a French word. She didn't know that was (an) English term. 'Flat tire' was what she called... what happens when your tire ran out of air, so... Same with – for some reason, we had the *fèves blanches*, but we didn't have black eyes. Black-eyed peas came in later, so you would say '*Est-ce que t'as eu des fèves rouges, des fèves blanches, ou des black eye?*' So they just used the English term for it, and nobody had any particular judgment about that, it's just the word you use. Like the word for that screen

through which we watched ‘I Love Lucy’, it was a television. The word ‘television’ came with the apparatus, and so my grandmother, ‘*Alle regardait la television, alle écoutait le radio.*’ Those were all recent arrivals, and they arrived with a word attached to them, and so they just adopted that – well, what is the difference between that and a French person saying, ‘*Il essaye de faire du business, ou du management, du marketing.*’ It’s exactly the same thing! It’s exactly the same phenomenon, except that they get to not judge themselves, they get to judge us. I say baloney.

Holly: Is that because, for them, they see themselves, do you think, as the centre and the source?

Barry: They are the centre, they are the centre. And so, whatever they do is what *is*, it’s what’s general. What I’m suggesting is that they need to enlarge their notion of centre to include everybody.

Holly: Exactly! Or have lots of centres, right?

Barry: Right!

Holly: Have no centre, no edge, just lots of centres.

Barry: Exactly, so you’d have London and Sydney and New York and Los Angeles, and...

Holly: So, where did your work, your ethnographical work and your work with music and folktales, and all of that – cause I’ve seen your work in the archives, there’s so much there. Where did your fascination with that begin? Was it from family?

Barry: Yes, I had access to that. I grew up with hearing all of that stuff and loving it, but when I got to college, it occurred to me that we weren’t represented in the system. We weren’t in the library, we weren’t in books. And I became interested in trying to figure out what we had in terms of *imaginaire*. What were our stories? What were our preoccupations? And because we weren’t writing novels or poems or short stories or plays, we had to figure out how to go at it another way, and that other way was orality, and so I... And it was also the only way that you

could study the language itself was to capture it. You had to capture it and then record it, transcribe it, and then you could sit there and contemplate it, cause otherwise, you know, you can't study orality in real time. It's happening, it's moving on, by its very nature. So, for all those reasons, I became interested in documenting what there was and then fixing it, making it sit still long enough to take a look at it and understand what it meant and what was going on. And so, the way to do that was to record and then transcribe, and amass enough critical mass together so that... You can't tell anything from one folktale.

Holly: Very true.

Barry: But if you get a hundred or two hundred (of them), you can start understanding humans. It wouldn't be fair to derive too much from one example, but it is fair to start deriving from hundreds or thousands. So, that's what we did. We started gathering them together, so we could try to figure out who we were and then leave a trail. It was not only a matter of gathering that stuff and studying it, but we had to report findings and figure out, let people know what we were figuring out, even if some of it was *provisoire*, in process. It was worth putting it out there, and then somebody else could come and say, 'Well, yeah, but there's this, too,' and that was okay. That's part of the process. It's exactly what scientists do all the time: 'I think I've observed this' – 'Yeah, that's true, but if you do this one other thing, it does this.' And that's an ongoing conversation. It's an ongoing discussion that eventually gets you to understand more and more and more about what is. One of the things we realised along the way was that we had to do everything at one time. Everything was 'to do'. You know, in the '70s, when we started doing this, it was music, storytelling, oral histories, architecture, cuisine... And then I had to produce stuff and it was poetry and songs and plays and academic conferences... We had to do it all at once. We had to photograph things, we had to make films... Every media possible. (Like) Malcolm X (said), 'by any means necessary.' It was quite a thrilling time.

Holly: I can imagine. It feels almost... Because you would have been on the very cutting edge of that area, because, like you said, there wasn't any representation there previously in the academic sphere.

Barry: Yeah, yeah. And if you were a young academic like I was, it was actually a benefit because it wasn't all that hard to get published; nobody else was writing anything about this stuff. And so those of us who are working in these areas, we're prolific, only because there was so much to look at and so much to do.

Holly: Pioneers, true pioneers of...

Barry: Well, we weren't driven by ego. We were driven by a need to get all this stuff and so on. And then, if you get a collective, you know, a group of people who are all looking at this stuff together and you get together, you say, 'Oh, look at this thing I just figured out!' – 'Oh, look, I figured this out and it dovetails with that!' It was really, really... Just breathtakingly exciting.

Holly: I can imagine it. I can just picture it in my mind's eye now and thinking, 'That must have been,' as you say, 'such a thrill.' And I think, as well, for all of you, because you're all from the community, that obviously means a lot as well, because you're all people from the community representing your community, and putting it into the academic sphere. It's not quite the same – in many ways, cause of the time difference (for example) – but it's not quite the same (as) a British person coming in and doing it. Because I'm not a Louisiana French or a Cajun French speaker, and I speak Parisian French, let's say, and it's not the same as someone from the community themselves coming forward and getting your voice out there, for yourself and for your community.

Barry: Yeah. Another benefit was that we didn't spend a whole lot of money on field work trips. We were in it.

Holly: That is true!

Barry: You just have to look around (Laughs). It's all right there. We were in the middle of it.

Holly: That's true, and, I must say, it's probably a heck of a lot prettier than grey British weather!

Barry: I mean, I don't know how many times it happened, but you start thinking about something and you call somebody up, you call Amanda LaFleur, or Richard Guidry, or Zachary Richard, and say, 'Hey, have you thought about this?' And (Clicks fingers) boom, something would start. It was exciting.

Holly: I can just picture it. Honestly, I'm so excited. Is there anything that, when you were all working on this together, that surprised you at all?

Barry: Everything! (Laughs) Just about everything, really. I have never failed to be surprised every single time it happened, from the very first time I started collecting stories and songs back in the early '70s until just a couple of years ago, when we did the Caesar Vincent project. The extent to which stuff that you run across in Louisiana French tradition goes back to medieval France or Africa or... The connections that it makes are just absolutely astonishing. Just a few years ago, we sort of rediscovered the songs that were recorded by Harry Oster and Catherine Blanchet of Caesar Vincent singing on his porch. They were collecting singers and storytellers and this Caesar Vincent guy, I knew, was responsible for the first fieldwork recorded version of *Travailler c'est trop dur*, a song that's become iconic in the French-speaking world. I knew he was the original source of that, but I didn't know he had recorded any other songs, that he had sung any other songs for these folklorists, and I was made aware of that by a conversation that I had with one of his grandnephews over coffee one day in Lafayette, and I started getting curious. So, I went back into the archives and found that he had sung a total of – I think it was forty-four, forty-five different songs – over those fieldwork interviews. When I started looking at them, I realised, 'Oh my God, these things are ancient, they're gems, they're treasures,' and lyrically – and also melodically – the melodies were very

interesting. So, I started transcribing them and tracing them, and I traced over half of them back to the French Middle Ages, and some of the others – stuff that wasn't as old – it was obvious that they were very influenced by Louisiana or country music or the blues, and once I started getting a handle on this stuff, this fascinating repertoire, I started contacting some of the usual suspects – you know, Zachary Richard, Steve Riley, and Wayne Toups, and David Greely in *Feufollet*, and Megan Brown, and others – who had long had an interest in old material I'd gathered and recycling it to make it come alive again. So, I started contacting and dealing out songs to them, and we ended up putting something together, this double CD, of brand new version of these old songs, so, just to give that as an example, that's the most recent example of something that's been going on throughout my entire academic career. The first field recorded I did was of Inez Catalon in 1974, I think it was (NB: Inez Catalon recording made on 1st January 1975), and she was telling me children's rhymes and singing these songs that I recognised, as early as that, went back to France and the Middle Ages, so that's never stopped surprising me. I'm always astonished at the value of it. And the value of it is not always how it connects back to France or Africa. When we discovered *Bouki* was the word for hyena, like, oh my God, right? But it's not only that, it's not only how it connects back. Sometimes it's how it evolved *here* that's really interesting – producing, essentially, a blues, or what the Georgia Sea Islands calls ring shouts – there's a tradition of that in Louisiana called *juré*. I remember the first time we listened to the Lomax – I'd just acquired the Alan and John Lomax Collection that they had done in 1934 and placed in the Library of Congress – and I negotiated with the Library of Congress and Alan to have a copy of what they recorded. And Michael Doucet and I were sitting in the archives to listen to this stuff for the first time, and the very first song was a *juré*, I learned later. And I remember, after that first song was over, I pushed the pause button on the recorder and I looked at Michael and I said, 'We're going to have to rethink everything we thought we knew. This is an entirely new batch of information that

changes everything.’ So, I have constantly been surprised, and – interestingly, (it’s) so funny you should ask that – one of the best pieces of advice I got from my father as I was growing up... He always say, ‘Always keep yourself in a position to be surprised.’ Cause if you do that, you’ll learn things you didn’t already know. If you don’t do that, you confirm or disprove things that you already knew about, but if you keep yourself (in a position to be) surprised – don’t assume anything – whole new avenues will evolve.

Holly: That’s a fantastic piece of advice, even now. There are so many people there now that you want to say, ‘Keep your mind open.

Barry: Yes, yes.

Holly: Especially nowadays will all of the other stuff that goes on.

Barry: I always told my students, ‘Don’t ever assume anything. Don’t gobble anything up. Always ask yourself ‘Who’s telling me this? When are they telling me this? Why are they telling me this? Why are they telling me this *now*? Is there anything behind this?’’ And that has been a very useful study strategy for me.

Holly: It’s an excellent tool as an academic, but an excellent tool, I think, for life, that open-mindedness and yet, simultaneously, the critical thinking behind it. So, you talked about the music there, and I can tell how much passion you have for the music. And I know that you’ve written poetry and you’ve provided lyrics for music, too. So, can you tell me more about what the music is like today, how it’s evolved? I’ve listened to music from people like *Feufollet*, the Lost Bayou Ramblers, and the music, to me, is something else, it’s something I’ve never heard before. What’s the music like today?

Barry: A lot of it is something I’ve never heard before either. That’s the wonderful thing about it, it keeps evolving. Now, when this is working at its best, it has to keep evolving, because if it stops evolving, it dies. Then we set up a Preservation Hall and it’s done, it’s stuck. Luckily, that’s not how we think about it in Louisiana. It’s constantly moving and shifting and growing

and changing and evolving, and that's the wonderful thing about it. Now, the thing about that is, if that's the case, it will produce necessarily new things all the time and things that will surprise you. But when this process is working at its best, it produces things that both surprise you and reassure you in the same motion; that is, it represents something new, but it also represents a continuity. It's coming from somewhere. It's not just getting artificially grafted from outside, you know, willy-nilly. It's growing – it's new – but it's growing out of this past. As one of my former professors at Indiana University, Henry Glassey, described living tradition as 'the use of the past to create the future', and at best, that's what's happening.

Holly: I mean, it sounds a lot like some of the zydeco I've been listening to, and... I mean, even the zydeco is extremely diverse. I kind of had a picture in my head – again, like you said, open-mindedness – I had a picture in my head of what I was going to expect, and then I listened to several different zydeco songs and I thought, 'Okay, this isn't...' Each song is *very* different. It's not something that you can kind of put in a box and say, 'You've got to do this, this, and this for it to be this type of music.' And I've noticed that, I think, with modern French music coming out of Louisiana from people like *Feufollet* and the *Lost Bayou Ramblers*. You can't really put it into a box.

Barry: No. And we often say, 'It's important to think outside the box.' It's even more important to disregard the fact that there is a box, you know? Just assume there is no box. Have you heard any of the Caesar Vincent stuff?

Holly: No, not yet. I'm working my way through the archives right now, so I'm catching up, slowly, to the Caesar Vincent.

Barry: Here's an example.

(At this point, Ancelet plays the original recording of Caesar Vincent singing *La fille triste et désolée* a capella. The lyrics are as follows:)

Sa mère qui arrive, elle dit Tra la la, la la la la
Sa mère qui arrive,
elle trouve sa fille triste et désolée
Trouve sa fille triste et désolée, Oh Dieu

Her mother arrives, she says, Tra la la, la la la la
Her mother arrives, she finds her daughter sad and
devastated
Finds her daughter sad and devastated, Oh Lord

Et qu'avez-vous, ma fille, elle dit Tra la la, la la la
la
Et qu'avez-vous, ma fille,
d'être aussi triste et désolé, Oh Dieu
D'être aussi triste et désolée, Oh Dieu

And what have you, my daughter, she says, Tra la
la, la la la la
And what have you, my daughter,
to be so sad and devastated, Oh Lord
To be so sad and devastated, Oh Lord

Barry: Okay, so that's Caesar Vincent.

Holly: Wow.

Barry: And this is what Megan Brown –

(Ancelet plays the new arrangement of *La fille triste et désolée*, as performed by Megan Brown and Kelli Jones. The lyrics remain the same.)

Holly: Oh! That's so wonderful!

Barry: It's amazing, isn't it?!

Holly: How does someone do that? It's so creative.

Barry: Wait, hold on. Another one:

(Ancelet plays the original recording of Caesar Vincent singing *Avec sa Mary Jane et du coton du nord et deux dix sous la yard* a capella. The lyrics are as follows:)

Avec sa Mary Jane et du coton du nord et deux
dix-sous la yard
Avec sa Mary Jane et du coton du nord et deux
dix-sous la yard
Si toi, tu l'aimes pas moi, si toi tu l'aimes pas moi,
c'est un pécher mortel tu fais
Avec sa Mary Jane et du coton du nord et deux
dix-sous la yard

With her Mary Jane and cotton from the north and
two pieces of ten cents a yard
With her Mary Jane and cotton from the north and
two pieces of ten cents a yard
If you don't love me, if you don't love me, you're
committing a mortal sin
With her Mary Jane and cotton from the north and
two pieces of ten cents a yard

Barry: Okay, that's Caesar Vincent, and here's what Roddie Romero and Zachary Richard and

I did:

(Ancelet plays the new arrangement of *Avec sa Mary Jane et du coton du nord et deux dix sous la yard*, as performed by Roddie Romero, Zachary Richard, and Barry Ancelet. The lyrics remain the same.)

Holly: Oh my goodness!

Barry: (Laughs)

Holly: Such different approaches.

Barry: Amazing! (Laughs)

Holly: Okay, I might need to go back and rethink everything I thought now! (Laughs)

Barry: Yeah! You know, it never stopped moving. It never stops moving, and it produces things that you couldn't see coming. I produced this project, and when I went into the studio and Roddie Romero came in with that arrangement, I was floored. So like, 'Oh my God!' I would not have seen that coming. But, you know, they've been doing this forever and they keep doing it, and they keep producing these amazing things.

Holly: That's incredible! Oh my goodness, right, I'm going to have to go back and go straight to the Caesar Vincent project.

Barry: Yeah. And then listen to some contemporary *Feufollet*, listen to some contemporary Lost Bayou Ramblers... For that matter, contemporary Wayne Toups and Steve Riley.

Holly: Oh yeah, Steve Riley! He's another one that I already had on my list. I've just not gotten around to him yet, cause I started with *Feufollet* and Lost Bayou Ramblers... I think it might have been Nathan Rabalais that gave me their names and said, 'Go and look and them.'

Barry: Steve Riley did something on this project. Here's what he did; this is the original:

(Ancelet plays the original recording of Caesar Vincent singing *La belle en danger de mourir* a capella. The lyrics are as follows:)

Par un dimanche matin, en allant voir la belle
Par un dimanche matin, en allant voir la belle
Je l'ai trouvée dessus son lit malade
La belle en danger de mourir

One Sunday morning,
while going to see my darling
One Sunday morning,
while going to see my darling
I found her lying sick on her bed
My darling in danger of dying

Barry: Okay, so if you know something about, if you've lived Louisiana French music, what you hear in there is 'd-d-d-d-d-d-d-d-d' (Replicates the plosives found in the lyrics) Okay?

So, Steve heard that, and he did this:

(Ancelet plays the new arrangement of *La belle en danger de mourir*, as performed by Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys. The lyrics remain the same.)

Holly: (Whispering) Oh wow! (Returns to normal volume) It's so clever.

Barry: Isn't it amazing?

Holly: It's so clever!

Barry: Now, just to give you the full range of the kind of stuff that happened – this is one of the most amazing, miracle songs. It has... I forgot how many, thirty-some odd verses. And the only person I could trust to do this was Anna Laura Edmiston, and here's the original:

(Ancelet plays the original recording of Caesar Vincent singing *Les anneaux de Marianson* a capella. The lyrics are as follows:)

Marianson, femme jolie, ayòu ce qu'il est votre
mari?
Marianson, femme jolie, ayòu ce qu'il est votre
mari?

Marianson, lovely lady, where is your husband?
Marianson, lovely lady, where is your husband?

Et mon mari, il est pas ici, c'est à la guerre il est
allé
Et mon mari, il est pas ici, c'est à la guerre il est
allé

My husband is not here, he has gone away to war
My husband is not here, he has gone away to war

Barry: Okay, so this is an ancient song about a woman whose husband goes away to war, and, in his absence, their neighbour tries to seduce her, and she resists, insisting she's faithful to her

husband. And the seducer is mad and makes copies of the rings – that her husband had left her on her fingers – he has copies made at the goldsmith, *l'orfèvre*, and goes to the battlefield and says to the husband, 'I've had your wife. Look at your rings. She gave me your rings,' fooling him. And the husband, who has no reason to not believe that, races home in a rage and he eventually kills his wife – actually, kills their young child, who has been born in his absence, which... she's holding him to try to calm him down, and he thinks that she's flaunting the child of this other man. (He) grabs it by the heels and bashes its head and kills it, and then eventually kills his wife. That is just an absolutely unbelievable murder ballad. I traced it back to Normandy in France. So, I gave this song to Anna Laura to do and she wanted to sing it as though it were in the time, from the Middle Ages, and so she did this:

(Ancelet plays the new arrangement of *Les anneaux de Marianson*, as performed by Anna Laura Edmiston. The lyrics remain the same, although the following verses is also played:)

*Oh oui, Madame, femme jolie, vous me donneriez,
tu passes les trois anneaux de tes doigts
Oh oui, Madame, femme jolie, vous me donneriez,
tu passes les trois anneaux de tes doigts*

Oh yes, Madam, lovely lady, you will give me the
three rings from your fingers
Oh yes, Madam, lovely lady, you will give me the
three rings from your fingers

Barry: Isn't that amazing?

Holly: How does someone even think to do that?

Barry: I know.

Holly: It's incredible!

Barry: At the end of her performance of that song, Anna Laura, the singer, was in the process nursing her own child, and brought the child to the studio. And she's singing a song about a man who killed his child through a misunderstanding. Understandably, (at the end of the song)

—

(Ancelet plays the closing verses of *Les anneaux de Marianson* as performed by Anna Laura

Edmiston. The lyrics are as follows:)

*Oh oui, Madame, femme jolie,
vous sauriez ti me le pardonner?
Oh oui, Madame, femme jolie,
vous sauriez ti me le pardonner?*

Oh, Madam, lovely lady, could you ever forgive me for this?

Oh, Madam, lovely lady, could you ever forgive me for this?

*Tant qu'à pour moi, je vous le pardonne, mais pas
pour le sang de mon petit enfant*

As for myself, I forgive you, but not for the blood of my young child

*Tant qu'à pour moi, je vous le pardonne, mais pas
pour le sang de mon petit enfant* [Barry: Her voice is wavering. Can you hear it, the cracking?]

As for myself, I forgive you, but not for the blood of my young child

*Oh oui, Madame, femme jolie, quel médecin il
vous faudrait?*

Oh, Madam, lovely lady, what doctor would you need?

*Oh oui, Madame, femme jolie, quel médecin il
vous faudrait?*

Oh, Madam, lovely lady, what doctor would you need?

*Je vois pas ni médecin, ni prêtre, ni saint qui
pourrait remettre mon corps en sain*

I can't think of a doctor or a priest or a saint who could heal me

*Prenez quatre planches clouées ensemble et
mettez-moi avec le sang de mon petit enfant*

Take four planks nailed together and bury me with the blood of my young child

Barry: After she finished that, she said, 'Oh, I'm going to have to do that again, cause I started sobbing.' And I said, 'Oh, no, no, that's going to be fine, that's going to be fine!' You can't buy that, you know? You can't produce that. It happens. Anyway, just all that to say... We have somebody like Anna Laura – a native Louisiana French speaker, young person – with a voice like that and an understanding of the story to the extent that it made her cry while singing. If we still have that, we're gonna be okay for a generation.

Holly: I mean, I would certainly think so. You'd assume so, I think, given... The music is so good, the music is just...

Barry: (Laughs)

Holly: My brain can't process now, the music's just so good! I mean, that answers so many of the questions I wrote – I asked about music, the future of the language, I was gonna ask – well, there it is!

Barry: We got all of that. So, let me... If I can indulge...

Holly: Of course!

Barry: Let me play you something that Sam Broussard and I did... So, it's not only in recycling all songs, but it's introducing new ones. *Feufollet*, you can hear *Feufollet* – brand new songs and they're just absolutely stunning, and modern and ancient at the same time. This is one of the songs that we made. It's based, it's using the lyrics of Jean Arceneaux, which is my alter ego:

(Ancelet plays an excerpt from the song 'Le Loup', taken from *Broken Promised Land* by Ancelet and Sam Broussard:)

*La nuit s'aperçoit
Que tu rêves sans moi
Et les larmes dans tes yeux
Tombent sur le feu
Qui rage entre nous
Et ça réveille le loup*

The night becomes aware
That you are dreaming without me
And the tears from your eyes
Fall on the fire
That rages between us
And it awakens the wolf

Barry: Just to give you an idea.

Holly: (It's) so different again!

Barry: Yeah, yeah. So, it would be dishonest of us to pretend that we didn't grow up with, you know, Lead Belly and Muddy Waters and the Rolling Stones and The Beatles. I mean, we did! So, why is that somehow a detriment? No, it's an asset.

Holly: Absolutely.

Barry: We fold all of that in together and produce something fun and new and if it works, it works, and if it doesn't, it doesn't. If it doesn't work, it'll fade, and if it works, it sticks around.

Holly: I mean – As you know, the other community that I'm looking at, cause I'm looking at Louisiana with the Pennsylvania German community, or Pennsylvania Dutch community, up north, and there's someone there who's just started doing like a reggae-rock fusion in the dialect, and that's brand new. And again, it's one of those things where

you sit there and you think, ‘How does someone do that?’ But it’s using modern influences, it’s using the influences you grow up with that shape you with the language.

Barry: It’s being honest. It’s being honest about who you are and what you got access to and what’s fair to... I mean, the last thing we need is cultural police. This process has been working great all by itself, and so I don’t see a reason to change that. I wouldn’t want to be the one to announce the change to any of these people, cause they would laugh you off the stage. (...) So, one more example:

(Ancelet plays an excerpt from the song ‘Conte de faits’, taken from *Broken Promised Land* by Ancelet and Sam Broussard. The lyrics are, in this interview, unintelligible.)

Barry: I’ll let you listen to that stuff at your leisure, but sort of (to) give you an idea of the kind of stuff that’s coming out. It’s absolutely astonishing. It never fails to – and, for some reason, these kids continue to feel like they need to do this in French. I’m not sure why that’s the case, but that’s what they’re doing.

Holly: And how do the wider community react when they see projects like yours coming out, when they see music like this coming out, literature coming out from people like David Cheramie – what’s the reaction like from the wider Louisiana community?

Barry: They’re not surprised at all. They’re used to this. ‘Oh yeah, well, eventually somebody was gonna do that.’ Or they’d say, ‘Well, I didn’t see that coming, but it works, it makes sense.’ This community as a whole is very, very supple. They’ve learned that this is, in fact, the way it works.

Holly: That’s wonderful. I always imagine – I mean, again, the other community, there are people that kind of react with surprise and they go, ‘Oh, that’s still a thing!’ But I love that in Louisiana, people are just thinking, ‘No, no, this was always a thing, this didn’t leave or go anywhere.’

Barry: Right.

Holly: That's so wonderful. So, is music the way that people tend to tell the narratives most now, or is it...?

Barry: Yes. And the reason for that is that it's the most consumable form of literature, if you understand what I mean. You know, there aren't enough people, there isn't a critical mass of people who could consume it in reading and writing. They listen to it, so many of the poets, storytellers, artists, have figured that out and have turned to song writing as the way to get the message out to the people, and in fact, sometimes that message is directed to those people.

Holly: What about the visual arts? Do people... I mean, from what I've gathered so far, I've heard that visual arts nowadays (aren't) quite such a popular way of telling Louisiana French narrative, but...

Barry: Visual arts?

Holly: Yeah.

Barry: Yeah, and, you know, television or videos would be a great way to do it, cause you can consume it orally, aurally as well. But the technology is much more complex, and so it's taking a while to figure that out, although some of that is happening.

Holly: Well, there's *Télé-Louisiane*, which is a great way of starting it.

Barry: Well, what we're talking about is evolution. I mean, listen, as far back as the 1970s... (An excerpt of music in Louisiana French is played; the lyrics are indistinguishable).

Holly: To be honest, if you hadn't told me that was the '70s, I wouldn't have guessed. I'd have just thought that was modern.

Barry: It's been going on for quite a while.

Holly: And when it comes to the lyrics of the song, what tends to...

Barry: Listen to the lyrics of this; lyrics by Jean Arceneaux, recorded by Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys, and sung live in front of a crowd:

(Ancelet plays an excerpt of the song '*Danser sans comprendre*' ('To Dance without Understanding') by Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys. The lyrics are as follows:)

*Comment ça se fait, bébé,
Je suis après chanter, bébé,
In a language you don't understand?*

How come, baby,
I am singing, baby,
In a language you don't understand?

Barry: Did you catch that first line? '*Comment ça se fait, je suis après chanter, in a language you don't understand.*' That was directed at the crowd in front of which he's singing, saying, 'Hey, y'all claim claim to love this stuff? You're enjoying dancing and claiming to love the music, but why don't you understand what I'm saying?' I mean that was really...

(Ancelet continues playing the song while singing along with the lyrics)

*T'es après danser, bébé,
Et t'amuser, bébé,
While my words just echo 'cross the land.*

You're dancing, baby,
And having fun, baby,
While my words just echo 'cross the land.

Barry: That's tough, that's tough, right?

(Ancelet continues playing the song while singing along with the lyrics)

What's at stake?
What will it take?
*C'est pas assez...
Danser sans comprendre*

*What's at stake?
What will it take?
It's not enough...
To dance without understanding*

Barry: '*C'est pas assez, danser sans comprendre.*' I mean, (Laughs)... Using this form to get those kinds of messages out is the single most powerful way to do that.

Holly: And what kinds of... is that the kind of message that is most common now, in terms of the lyrics of songs? When we're talking, like, modern Louisiana French music.

Barry: No, it's one of the repertoire. I mean, there's broken-heart songs and love lost and frustration, there's political songs, there's songs about pollution. There's songs about

absolutely everything. But the identity crisis is a part of the story, and thus does indeed appear in song.

Holly: I mean, like I said, I read *Cajun and Creole Folktales* and you had all the different categories – you had your animal tales, your legends, your historical tales, your tall tales – which I loved – the jokes, which I thought were brilliant...

Barry: Have you read *Le trou dans le mur* (*The Hole in the Wall*)?

Holly: No, I don't think I've seen that yet.

Barry: It's a collection of contemporary *fabliaux* (fables) written by Jean Arceneaux. It's written in a style that is intended to make the reader understand how it would be said. It was published at Perce-Neige in Moncton (...), it's called *Le trou dans le mur*. (...) Cause there's a lot of identity issues in there, as well as, you know, stories about the quirkiness of our world.

Holly: When people do write in the written form nowadays, like David Chermie with his literature and his poetry... Is identity the main theme, or...? I mean, I've noticed a lot of ties to nature.

Barry: There's a lot of love stories, some political stories, some identity stories.

Holly: Again, it's everything.

Barry: It's everything, yeah.

Holly: That's incredible. I'm not going to ask you what you think the future might be for Louisiana French, cause I think we've already dealt with that. That's strong, the future looks strong.

Barry: Well, what I often say about that is that it's not my concern anymore. I did what I could and now it's up to them.

Holly: That's a great way of putting it!

Barry: But I'm handing it off into good hands. (...) And the wonderful thing about it is that they don't always agree with me, which is great. (Laughs) If they want to go some other way, that's

wonderful! I don't have a problem with that at all, I think it's the spice of life. Variety is the spice of life.

Holly: And academia wouldn't be academia if people didn't disagree.

Barry: Yeah, gotta keep challenging it, gotta keep rethinking everything, right?

Holly: And I mean... I don't know if you know Chase Cormier at Lafayette?

Barry: I do.

Holly: I know he's really into the foodways and he's been looking at the foodways, and when I got to speak to him, it was such a joy to hear about the foodways. And in my head, I was going, 'Okay, that's his area. My area is this, it's the literature, it's the music.'

Barry: Did he talk to you about crawfish enchiladas?

Holly: No, he didn't, actually.

Barry: And crawfish egg rolls. That, too, evolves. You know, just the other day my friend Pat Mould – a chef here that's a good friend of mine – sent me a picture of a gumbo that he had made with lobster, shrimp, and a freshwater fish. What the hell?! And it was delicious, it was delicious, so, you know, all of that keeps evolving too, you know (...) I was tickled one time about some guy who was saying, as I was making a gumbo – I was chopping some garlic in it – he said, 'What are you doing?' And I said, 'I'm making a gumbo, you know perfectly well what I'm doing,' and he said, 'Yeah, but Cajuns don't put garlic in gumbo!' And I said, 'Well, this one is, and my mother did, and my grandmothers did, and my aunts did. I don't know what you're talking about.' I said, 'Where are you getting this?' And he said, 'Marc Savoy said that Cajuns don't put garlic in gumbo.' I said, 'I have had Marc Savoy's gumbo and I know for a fact that he puts garlic in here.' So, I reached for the phone and I called Marc, and said, 'X is here, and he said that Cajuns don't put garlic in gumbo. He said that *you* said that Cajuns don't put garlic in gumbo.' He (Marc) said, 'Well, I do!' So, I handed him the phone, and (they) talked for a while. I hung up, and he said sorry. I said, 'I'm about to put some celery in here

too!' Why do you (...) get to determine what is actually Cajun or not? And why can we not continue to evolve in all ways, not only linguistically, but culinarily and architecturally... (In any new way we want to? You know, why would we stay stuck in the past? The past is important as an inspiration, but we should be careful not to become prisoners of it.

Holly: Absolutely. There are living history museums and things like that, and they are brilliant, but, like you said, they can't be the only thing that remains, you've got to have other things. Otherwise that's the only image people are ever going to have.

Barry: It's the difference between studying a butterfly that's pinned to a wall or studying a butterfly that's flying around in a field. Butterflies flying around a field's harder to study, but it's about actually living butterflies, as opposed to a dead one.

Holly: So, I think the last question I will ask, because we've already talked about the future of Louisiana French, is... Is there anything that you wish people that weren't in Louisiana, weren't in the community – be they Anglophone, Francophone, wherever they're from – is there anything you wish people knew more about, that you think that they don't know?

Barry: I can't think of anything in particular, really. I think that, you know, I wish people knew more about everything, although I have to say that's not my priority. It's not my priority for somebody from San Jose to know everything about us. My priority is for somebody from here to know as much about us as we can, because it gives us a solid base from which to jump. Somebody from Spokane, Washington coming down here to learn to how to play accordion, but what does that do? I mean good, I'm glad for him, but, you know, it doesn't do me any good. I'd rather the kid from up the road learn and continue to have that resource.

Holly: That's a really interesting point, and I hadn't considered at all, because whenever I look at it – I mean, again, Brit looking from the outside – I think, 'Oh, it would be great

if people knew that Louisiana French was there in the diaspora, and it's a really valuable part of the diaspora, even though it might be smaller, geographically speaking or...

Barry: But if there's anything that I would wish, I would wish that they would know more about us in depth, because all too often, they have a caricature understand of us, you know, very one dimensional: *Bon temps rouler*, drunk in the swamps, fighting with, you know. If they have to learn about us, I wish they would go all the way and not stop at the first step.

Holly: Maybe one of the ways to change it is to put it into educational programmes at a younger age more widely. I mean, it's going to be in state education anyway, surely; I know that there's CODOFIL doing a lot of good work trying to put it into Louisiana state education, but... It might be good to have something nationwide where, you know, they look at different aspects of America that are not Anglophone.

Barry: That might help the current conversation, if we (consider) that America is very diverse and rich, but for it.

Holly: Exactly. The 'melting pot', but someone I spoke to in the Pennsylvania German community (...) used the term 'a quilt', cause they quilt there, [quilting is a big thing for them.]

Barry: [Or gumbo pot.]

Holly: Mm. Where everyone is a piece, but when you look at it from a distance, it's one beautiful whole. But then when you go in, every piece is unique.

Barry: Yeah. Kinda like – if you want to stick to culinary terms, I'd rather a gumbo. All the pieces stay distinct, although it contributes to a wonderful whole.

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW WITH JENNIFER SCHLEGEL

Date of Interview: Friday 19th March 2021

Time of Interview: 14.00 GMT, 10.00 EDT

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

Holly: I wanted to start by asking about your experiences as a Pennsylvania German, or Dutch, or *Deitsch*, speaker or researcher.

Jennifer: Okay. I certainly grew up Pennsylvania Dutch, in a Pennsylvania Dutch family, Pennsylvania Dutch household, in (a) Pennsylvania Dutch-dominant county. I guess I'm 12th generation in the county where I live, so for the US, that's pretty long! And I grew up visiting the family farm weekly, and the family farm was purchased from one of the sons of William Penn in 1735, I think, and the house dates to 1737, so it was all part of my present. The past was always part of my present. My father is – he's still alive – he grew up with parents who spoke Pennsylvania German as a first language. It was not a first language for him, but it was a language that he had some competencies in. His older sister had more competencies in it, his younger sister has less, but he certainly would speak it working on the farm, in the fields, in the barn, doing chores, with his uncles.

Holly: Wow! So, it was a huge part of your identity growing up, I guess.

Jennifer: Yes, but I didn't know it, right? So, I didn't know, when I was a young child, that this was different. We would go visit... my great-uncles lived on the farm, several of them were bachelor farmers (...) but it was basically a male space. I guess four brothers and a gentleman, X, that they called the handyman, lived in this stone house together, and we would go visit and

I would sit in the kitchen – the house was heated mostly by wood fireplaces – and I’d sit in the kitchen and they’d talk in Pennsylvania Dutch and I would just sit there and listen. I wasn’t engaged in... I was female, and females were meant to sit in corners and be quiet. So, I was able to hear the dialect. I wouldn’t know what was being said. But I didn’t know that... I mean, I knew it was my family, and I knew that families weren’t like mine, but at the time, growing up, I didn’t know that this was... In the United States, it was distinct, but certainly where I grew up, it wasn’t distinct.

Holly: Did you get chance to learn the language later on, or...?

Jennifer: So, I know this much of the language (Makes a pinching gesture to indicate a limited knowledge of the language). My experience with the language is as somebody who tried to learn it by reading and by going to some dialect classes, by listening, and I’ve kind of let it slide, I’ve kind of let it drop. I don’t really have anyone to speak it with right now, so it’s a... If I go to places where Pennsylvania German is being spoken, like a dialect church service or an event at the folk festival, I’m probably gonna catch about a third of it, so I don’t speak it. I can do some readings, I can understand maybe about a third of it, but I don’t have anything near fluency.

Holly: That’s still amazing, though, to have that much knowledge of it, still.

Jennifer: Well, you know, it didn’t hurt doing a dissertation on it, so... (Laughs)

Holly: That’s true! It never hurts doing a dissertation on anything!

Jennifer: Yeah.

Holly: So, for you personally, when it comes to the terms ‘Pennsylvania German’, ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’, ‘*Deutsch*’... I’ve spoken to a few people, and the views are generally that they tend to prefer ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ on a day-to-day basis. Is that something you would go with as well, or...?

Jennifer: I use both. I use them both. I use ‘Pennsylvania German’ when I’m in more, maybe, academic or formal situations. So, we do have a Pennsylvania German minor, as you know, here, and we have the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center, so, in those audiences, certainly I use Pennsylvania German, and I consider myself Pennsylvania German, but I also consider myself Pennsylvania Dutch. I have so many Dutchie characteristics, I like Dutchie food, and so ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ is something that... When I was doing interviews, if that was a person’s preferred term, I would use it. A lot of people I speak with, or spoke with, are like, ‘Who are the Pennsylvania Germans? Who are they? What’s that?’ And as an anthropologist, I try to be mindful of the language that people use to refer to themselves, and I’m comfortable using both.

Holly: That’s great! I mean, I’ve noticed that with everyone, that ‘German’ tends to be for the academic setting, but when you’re actually talking to people in the community, everyone uses ‘Pennsylvania Dutch.’ I mean, as an anthropologist, and as a member of the community, where do you see Pennsylvania Dutch in terms of language or dialect? Do you see it more as a dialect, or as a language all its own?

Jennifer: Okay, so my students would tell you that Pennsylvania German is dialect, but so is pretty much everything else, right? So, I do emphasise the definition of ‘a language is a dialect with a navy’, and certainly Pennsylvania Dutch does not have a navy. And so, yes, it’s a dialect. But some of the people – even some of the dialect instructors that I spoke with – they would say, ‘It’s not like a *real* language, like French or Spanish. It’s a dialect.’ So, they would make the distinction that somehow, it’s different, as in ‘less than’, and, of course, it’s not ‘less than’ at all. It’s a language with a grammatical system, and so in that case, it’s a language. But in terms of its positioning as a language that has any type of power or prestige, then it’s much more like a dialect. So I’m going to be wishy-washy on this one too, Holly, that it *is* a language, but it’s experienced mostly as a dialect. And people will say locally – again, to be sensitive to

local usage – they’ll say ‘the dialect’. They say, ‘I speak the dialect,’ ‘I spoke the dialect,’ and sometimes even, in doing interviews, if I say, ‘Do you speak the language?’, they’ll look at me. And I’ll say, ‘Do you speak the dialect?’ – ‘Oh, no, but my parents did.’ So, again, I think there’s some sensitivity to the community that you use dialect over language, but as a linguistic anthropologist, it’s both (Laughs).

Holly: That’s really interesting that there is, again, that divide between academic and non-academic, and I talked to Josh Brown over at Eau Claire (...) and he was saying a very similar thing: it’s a question of... Sometimes, to hear ‘dialect’, there’s this implication that it’s less than, when the culture is so rich, and so vibrant, and... I ask this question of everybody, but for you personally, what comes to your mind when you think ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’? Is it language and family, is it food, is it music?

Jennifer: For me personally, it’s my identity, and, you know... I make some of the foods, I like the foods, but it’s not the food. The language is incredibly important to me, yet I don’t know it well enough. It’s just who I am. And this is something Bill Donner and I, we’ve been doing some interviews asking people about Pennsylvania German identity and it explains a lot about me, I think. It feels warm, mostly... Yeah. It’s weird being on the flipside of the interviews! (Laughs)

Holly: Oh, I’m sorry!

Jennifer: No, no. You know, it is, for me, the work ethic. A work ethic where, in many cases, hard work is its own reward. Whether it’s in agriculture or academia, hard work is its own reward. It’s kind of, I’d say, moral grounding also, so I associate, I identify as a Lutheran, and my Lutheranism is kind of Pennsylvania German Lutheranism. But that kind of moral framework of ‘love God, love neighbour’, bottom line. And so, not getting fancy about it – even though we’re the ‘fancy Dutch’ – not getting fancy about it, but really the basics of the

work ethic and the moral framework and mostly being a very warm thing for me, and... Then, of course, I'm sure many people have said this: the stubbornness.

Holly: [A little bit!]

Jennifer: [Our obstinacy], yep, and I think the obstinacy is something that is a characteristic that I've been socialised into, but then there are also things that, to me, in my own personal experience – I know, certain generations in my family... It was not misogynistic, but certainly... Compartmentalised roles for males and females, and sometimes, in some families, those compartmentalised roles also are braided with gender hierarchy and gender stratification. I don't see it everywhere, but I experienced it, certainly with my bachelor great-uncles who, when my sister got into... my sister went to Yale University for undergrad – she's my older sister – and when my father let his uncles know, they said, 'Well, why would you want to send her to get educated?' And so, it wasn't my father's perspective, but certainly his father's generation, there was a lot of that.

Holly: Quite traditional, I guess.

Jennifer: Yeah, but – most of all this is gonna be in my father's side of the family. My mother's side of the family is also Pennsylvania Dutch, but I had more exposure to his side of the family. I teach at Kutztown, and my father's a graduate of Kutztown. And his sisters – my aunts – are graduates of Kutztown, and my father's parents – both his mother and his father – were graduates of Kutztown, cause my grandmother was a schoolteacher, and this was a well-known school for teaching. So, while there were professions that women could be in, and it was certainly okay for a woman to work, it just depended on what work.

Holly: That's amazing! So, third generation at Kutztown?

Jennifer: Yep.

Holly: That's fantastic that everyone has kind of come to the same place.

Jennifer: Yeah, and I will tell the students that here, that I really committed to this place for more than the usual reasons; that in many regards, while I don't have a degree from Kutztown, I have been educated by Kutztown, because my father and his sisters and my grandparents, who socialised me, who had an impact on raising me, for sure, they were all educated here.

Holly: That's wonderful. It means even more to you. Just like growing up on your family's farm and having that long heritage, it's the same thing with Kutztown. It's that long heritage of it being involved.

Jennifer: Yes. It does feel like home, but I'm also mindful that it feels like *my* home, but that kind of sense of home can also be alienating to others, so, you know, I'm very mindful of that, and I'm mindful that – in addition to all the white privileges I have – that I have a privilege that, right now, I'm sitting five miles from the family graveyard, that nearly 300 years of ancestors (are) buried (there), and I think about how there are students at this university, there are colleagues at this university who can't go back to graveyards, because of being enslaved and losing history after a couple generations, and I can count twelve, and it's right here. So, I don't want that to be alienating to people. I'm sensitive to that too, that I love this place enough that I think it's big enough to be home to all sorts of people.

Holly: That's a running theme among people I've spoken to in the Pennsylvania Dutch community. They're so generous with time and with their words, and it's such a welcoming community.

Jennifer: It is. There's a thing, though – and I've seen it happen on numerous occasions – that the whole 'six degrees of Kevin Bacon', and the 'six degrees of separation' – and one of the things I've seen as, I think I might have even written about it once... Local Pennsylvania Germans can locate a newcomer, somehow, in their sphere. It's good. So, it's like... if a local family, here for multiple generations, welcomes a neighbour or welcomes a new person at work, they might go through the names, go through the introductions, and then say, 'Well, where do

you live?’ – ‘Well, I live in that house that’s next to the farm with the green shutters.’ And then it’s like, ‘Oh, so you’re next to the Dietrichs’ place!’ And then as soon as that point of connection is made with somebody who’s new to the community, it’s a way in. It’s a way to connect. And I’ve seen this happen multiple times, and it’s just trying to find that common ground and once the Pennsylvania German local can make that connection, then things are going off. But if there’s a struggle making that connection, then there’s going to be a struggle opening up that relationship, too. It’s part anecdotal, but it rings really true – like, it feels right. They’re generous and willing to do things that help, like if something happens and there’s a tragedy (...) they’re going to help, but the rest of the time, they’re going to leave you alone, because mostly, they want to be left alone and so, if you respect that kind of distance, it’s... For some people, it’s to be read as being respectful. Other people read it as being cold, and if you demonstrate respect differently, then you can have miscommunication.

Holly: I can understand that. It’s quite Germanic, I guess, to bring it back to... It’s that quite Germanic respectful distance.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah – ‘I’m not going to get in your business, your business is your business, but if you need help, here I am and I will help you and then I’ll go back to my business, and you can go back to your business.’ And as a form of respecting each other’s boundaries.

Holly: That’s so important nowadays, as well. That’s a quality that is so important in terms of community, is having the community there when you need them but also that – certainly in Corona times – that little bubble of distance.

Jennifer: Yes.

Holly: So, for you, then, when you hear ‘Pennsylvania Dutch’ or ‘Pennsylvania German’ being spoken out in the community – when you’ve observed it – what do you think is kind of the main motivation behind it being spoken nowadays by younger generations – when

it is spoken by younger generations. Do you think it's a celebration, like at the Folk Festival, or is it, I guess, a more active pushback against English?

Jennifer: I don't hear other people speaking it.

Holly: Really?

Jennifer: Yeah, I don't hear young people speak – Patrick's probably the youngest person I hear speaking it, and... No, I don't hear young people unless they're local... We have a Wenger Mennonite community here (...) so that's where I would hear the young people, so I only ever hear it spoken by people older than myself, or, you know, sometimes Patrick with colleagues. And that's very intentional. It's because we're having a (meeting) and it's explicitly about this topic. I don't hear it spontaneously in the community, and when I hear older people do it, certainly it's in a reminiscing kind of context, asking about family, asking about friends and relatives. But yeah, I don't hear it.

Holly: That's such a shame.

Jennifer: Mm.

Holly: I mean, there's the Pennsylvania German minor at Kutztown – is that something that has proven quite popular? Is that community spoken about a lot with this –

Jennifer: (Moves her hand up and down to simulate waves)

Holly: – it comes in waves?

Jennifer: (Laughs) Yeah, so like right now, I think we have, officially, four minors, but I think it should really be seven – I just emailed them yesterday. Like, some of them haven't declared it yet (...) so I would say that currently, we have about seven minors. We don't necessarily do a good job promoting it, and because we can't regularly offer the introductory language class – because the interest, you know, an exceptional thing, like this – so that's been a problem. We do have students – in fact, we got another request yesterday – we do have students who choose KU because of the minor and it is lacking some institutional support. But Patrick – and Patrick

is only one person – Patrick Donmoyer is freaking amazing! He's really, really, really amazing, and I think the MacArthur Genius Grant people need to recognise Patrick. The work that he has done nearly singlehandedly, and his commitment and his drive is just phenomenal, so without Patrick – even though he doesn't teach in the minor – I don't know what we'd really be able to accomplish. He does a lot with the supervision of our internship requirement, so our minor students do their internship at the Heritage Center and he oversees them.

Holly: That surprises me, that something so unique – I mean, granted, I'm from the UK, but I've not seen anything else out there that does Pennsylvania German as a minor or a major or...

Jennifer: Right.

Holly: Anything along those lines. It surprises me that...

Jennifer: And part of it is the institution and part of it is that those of us who are involved in it, it's like one of fifteen responsibilities, so we can't dedicate the time and energy to it that it needs and deserves. The Center, there's a building project in the works, and so there is some community support for it, but it needs to be matched by the university. At one point, it was part of our President's plan to provide, release time for a Faculty Director, but right now, there's no release time for anyone, so we just kind of do this along with all of our other responsibilities. For example, I have an independent study this afternoon, we meet every Friday, she's a History major and a Pennsylvania German Studies minor, and she needed one more class and it wasn't being offered, so I'm doing it as an independent instruction and it just becomes one more thing (Laughs).

Holly: It's wonderful that you can offer it, but it's such a shame that you have to spread yourself so thinly in order to keep the offering there.

Jennifer: Well also, Bill Donner is on (a) full year sabbatical leave right now, and he teaches the Pennsylvania German introductory class, and a couple of other classes that relate to the

minor, but the Pennsylvania German 10 class is his and he would like me to teach it. And I would like to teach it some day; however, I have three-quarter release time to be director of the Honors Program, so I only teach one class a semester, which means I have to teach a class in my major, in Anthropology. So, it's a struggle right now, but for the fall, we'll have the Pennsylvania German 10 class and History of Pennsylvania class, and that goes to the minor as well. And then next Spring, I will be teaching Pennsylvania German Cultural Traditions, which is one of the minor classes also.

Holly: That's wonderful! It's still amazing that you can do all that with everything else that you do. I mean, it would be so lovely if the institution would give it more support. Isn't there anything – I mean, I've seen this. My other dialect that I'm looking at in my thesis is Louisiana French, and they do quite a lot at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, which is where the majority of their dialect studies, or language studies, are based. They do a lot with the community. I know how busy the community is, but isn't there something that the university could do, not just with the Heritage Center, so that Patrick's not also having to spread himself so thinly, but with the local community in Kutztown to try and bring the attention to it?

Jennifer: Yeah, I think there probably is, and Patrick and Bill are both active in the *Grundsau* Lodges, so that's a community connection, that is good. The Folk Festival has been a great community connection, but on a day-to-day, or weekly, basis, or celebrating each other – other than working with the local historical society, which is another relationship that's there – it's just not explicit. It just hasn't been developed, and one of my hopes is once the physical building is created, or once they fix up the building they're fixing up, and if the president of the university does commit to a faculty director position, that work could get done, and the relationships can be built. But I also don't see – this is kind of a Pennsylvania German thing, too – I don't necessarily see the commitment or concern... Like, some people don't care if the

language dies. You know, it's almost like, 'Well, why would we use it anymore?' – 'Because?' And, you know, some people don't see... Kind of how I was explaining when I grew up, I didn't really recognise I was a member of a kind of small subculture in the United States, didn't recognise it. So, around here, if you grow up in it and it is part of your day-to-day life, it isn't necessarily something that one sees that has to be revitalised or celebrated, because it's just what we did.

Holly: That kind of taking it for granted, I guess, that it will always be there, until it's not.

Jennifer: Part that, but part – I don't know how much it's valued as a culture. It's certainly valued in families and there's a lot of pride, and there's a lot of joy in terms of 'These are my people, this is my family,' but to see it as a distinctive culture and language, I don't know that that level of awareness is present.

Holly: It's like the attention that it should get is just missing somehow, the recognition that is gets. I mean, when I first came to (it), pre-PhD, unfortunately, the very first thing that you see when you start Googling things like 'Pennsylvania Dutch' or 'Pennsylvania German' is one of two things: You see the Amish and the Mennonites, and you see the closed sectarian communities; or you see Dwight Schrute and you see *The Office*.

Jennifer: Mm-hmm.

Holly: And it seems such a shame that there's a whole, massive, non-sectarian community there that just sort of gets overlooked by pop culture or by the sectarian community.

Jennifer: I agree. I think there's a fantastic model in North Carolina. So, Walt Wolfram – he might be retired now – he started the North Carolina Center for Language and Culture, and it's been this whole state-wide examination of all the languages, all the cultures, that exist in North Carolina, and they did a lot on the coast of North Carolina and were covering dialects that were spoken only there and celebrating them. And Appalachia is part of North Carolina. So, they

really did this investment into the languages and cultures of North Carolina, and I think it's a superb model for what could be done on a much smaller scale for Pennsylvania German language and culture in this area. So, they did lots and lots of community outreach, they involved students in making documentaries and conducting research, and I mean, it's really vibrant. They involved K-12 schools, so that younger students get excited and interested in what's going on around them. Fantastic model for what could be, and I think it would be an ideal way to reinvigorate and revitalise around here, to get that – as you're talking about, Holly – the community relationships and the community partnerships. And I've always seen this here: How could it be a true interdisciplinary endeavour to do good research? It doesn't just have to be Patrick and Bill and me-ish, trying to piece things together. It really could be a collective, and the model is out there, it's just – is there the will?

Holly: Do you think that's something that state government maybe should get involved with? Because with Louisiana... Louisiana has a state mandate with regards to French, and they have an organisation to promote the use of French in Louisiana, and they have immersion programmes with K-12 – well, it might just be elementary, actually – but they have immersion programmes with children learning about the dialect at a young age. Do you think that's something, maybe, that the Pennsylvania state government might be interested in doing, money permitting? I mean, it's all about funding, I know that...

Jennifer: Yeah, it's all about funding. That's a really, really great question, Holly, and certainly trying to... It's like piggybacking on how well-known the Amish and the Mennonites are in Pennsylvania, and the Old Order Mennonites and the Old Order Amish are, because of the sectarian status, they don't deal with the state. The state benefits, but they don't have much of a partnership at all, so how to create that triangle – like, yes, it's sort of like that, but not; the language is mostly like that, but it's not. We would like to have that full investment of the state,

so trying to figure out how those three would fit together... Some people might say, 'Well, there's already enough going on, there's the Amish and Mennonites.' I'm like, 'No, [no.']

Holly: [But it's more than that], it's richer than that.

Jennifer: Yeah, yeah.

Holly: There's a lot more to the culture than just the sectarian side of things, and that's – for me personally, that's why I'm not looking really at the sectarian side, because there's so much research on it...

Jennifer: Yeah.

Holly: ...and it's almost... I wouldn't say it's to the detriment of the non-sectarian side, but they do kind of get missed a lot of times, unless it's done by researchers who are from the community and know first-hand, like you and Patrick and Mark Loudon (...). So for me, I completely agree in that it seems such a shame that there's nothing there.

Jennifer: Yeah, and Patrick and Bill and I have talked about this I don't know how many times. If only one of us, or all of us, had the time to sit down and really write an excellent grant proposal... Bill and I have done cursory looks at things and where money would come from is, you know... Cause there have been initiatives for at least twenty years, going on thirty years, about preserving American cultures and languages, but they tend to go to – and rightfully so – Native American languages and cultures, languages and cultures of marginalised populations, and while Pennsylvania Germans are small, I don't think it's accurate to talk about them as marginalised groups. They have benefited from being of European ancestry for sure. So, finding the correct funding sources is also a bit of a challenge for this group, but no, I think, Holly, I think you're spot on! I think you've got a career and a future as bright as you want, because the work needs to be done, and there's plenty of it!

Holly: Thank you! I'll be pitching in, I'll pitch in with whatever is needed, honestly! (...)
Honestly, every day I just find something new and I just go, 'Oh, that's cool! I didn't know that before!'

Jennifer: That's wonderful! Like powwowing – I mean, how cool is powwowing? We were talking about that in class yesterday, about how basically, wherever you have a major world religion, there's also always the local flavour to it, and how Pennsylvania German healing rituals are part(ly) derivative of pagan beliefs, and then they have this *huge* overlay of Christianity on top of it, so that it becomes this unique set of practices that you don't find anywhere else.

Holly: Exactly! Like the red thread, the use of the red thread. I read Don Yoder's book on folklife, which kind of introduced me to powwowing for the first time – I know that's one of Patrick's big interests – so I'm going to have to go and find more books on it. And then I found that that same concept is there in Louisiana, too, they just have a different name for it and slightly different practices, but it's the same concept – It's this, like you said, pagan element that has Christianity in both cases layered over the top, be it Catholic or, in Pennsylvania, it's Lutheranism and Reformed and Methodist, I want to say?

Jennifer: Methodist a little bit. Mostly Lutheran and Reformed.

Holly: But yeah, every day I get excited to get to learn something new and read new papers and read new stuff and, yeah (...)

Jennifer: Well, I love, even with powwowing – you know, in class I was talking yesterday about how it was passed on as an oral tradition, like how a novice became an expert was the result of apprenticing, basically, and that the apprentice had to cross gender. And I just think that's fascinating that males have trained females, and females have to train males and it's just some of these hidden details that are really curious.

Holly: Exactly! I was quite surprised when I read that it crosses genders, because I would have assumed that it would have been father to son, or mother to daughter, and it would have travelled down that way. So, the fact that it was convention to not do that and to go a different way, I just thought, ‘Oh, that’s cool! Why didn’t I know that before?’ But, you know, German and diaspora doesn’t really get covered, I guess for probably certain historical reasons. The Germans don’t really talk about diaspora, but they should, because there are the Pennsylvania Germans, there are still communities in South America that speak German – I mean, Don Yoder writes about a community in Brazil that still spoke German – there’s still Namibia speaks German, South Africa has German, so... I don’t know, I feel like they should maybe talk about that more? But I’m not the German government, I don’t get to decide that one! But yeah, it’s just a joy, and I guess for you, it must be exactly the same, now doing anthropological work with Bill Donner looking at your community.

Jennifer: Mm-hmm.

Holly: Have you found anything out that surprises you?

Jennifer: No, it’s just frustrating, the extent to which the people we speak to – and we’ve done a lot of interviews over the past, I don’t know... like with COVID, I never know how long anything has taken. We didn’t have the Folk Festival last year, but I guess the previous three Folk Festivals, we’ve been doing interviews there on growing up Dutch and so, in an environment where we thought this would be a great place, cause people are going to have a heightened sense of awareness, they’re going to be thinking about this stuff, and we’ll ask them, ‘So, what are some of the characteristics that make you Dutch?’ – ‘I don’t know.’ I suppose the surprising thing to me is how little consideration most people give it, right? And it’s kind of sad. But Bill’s looking at the interviews now as part of his sabbatical leave – I haven’t looked

at them for a long time – so we’ll see what the interview data really reveals, but it’s kind of my impression. Bill and I would look at each other like, ‘How do we get people to talk about this?’

Holly: It’s interesting, isn’t it, because it seems like such a safe space as well to do that in, because it’s all themed around that. The whole festival’s themed around that, so you’d think it’d be a really nice, open – you know, ‘The floor is open, come forward and share your experiences.’ It’s interesting that people didn’t necessarily feel that they could, or maybe they were just shy.

Jennifer: They talked about things, and we’d ask them questions and they’d answer them, but they just don’t have a heightened sense of identity. And one of the curious things to me – this wasn’t curious to Bill at all, and this is really kind of a side thing – so many of the people we spoke to really enjoyed travelling around the world, like travelling to different places in the world. And I guess I must have some deep-rooted stereotype about that, but they like going elsewhere, they like learning about other people, like most people do. Person after person that we interviewed would talk about travelling and being other places in the world, and – ‘Oh, okay!’ I guess my bias is that, and probably from my family experience, about it being so closely related to agriculture – and agricultural families, there’s no time, you don’t travel, you can’t go, you’re kind of stuck to your place. But most of these people also were retired individuals.

Holly: I was going to say, that surprises me too, because I always saw it as this kind of rootedness to the land in Pennsylvania, but I don’t know.

Jennifer: Maybe there’s some *Wanderlust* after all!

Holly: Maybe there is! Doug Madenford had wanted to organise trips to the *Pfalz* for people to go and see their roots and see their heritage. Maybe that would appeal to people and get people thinking more about what it means, for them, to be Dutch, or German, or however they want to identify. But when you’ve spoken to people in the community, how

do people... I mean, you've said with your family, it was oral tradition that kept stories going from one person to the next. Have you found that that's similar whenever you've spoken to people at those events with Bill? I know that wasn't really about narratives.

Jennifer: Well, Bill and I have different takes. Certainly there's a history of Pennsylvania German literacy, but I still think, and I haven't done the research – and Bill hasn't really done the research on this – we don't know the percentage of the population that is literate in the dialect. My hunch is it's pretty small, and when I would go to the *Versammlung*, or I would interview people, and they're like, 'Oh, I don't know how to read it.' And going to events, like *Versammlinge*, where (they were) encouraging young people to come and try to learn the dialect and have printed programmes of what's going to happen, and it would be in the dialect and maybe some English translations, and there'd be some books, or the Pledge of Allegiance, or things that would be put into the dialect, and people who are native speakers of the dialect attending some of these *Versammlinge* events, they don't know how to read it. Like, 'What's this for? What good is this going to do me?' They can say the things, but they can't read them. So, I think there's Pennsylvania German literacy that was part of a more... Those who were educated or part of professional fields or academia or ministry, there was literacy there, but I think for the average farming household, Pennsylvania German literacy was very little. Yes, there were the dialect columns in the newspapers, but unless someone was reading it aloud, I don't know that it was... They weren't writing in the dialect for sure. If they were reading the columns aloud, they could probably get it, but I think literacy was for that group and literacy is for younger people, and literacy now is a tool to help preserve and maintain the language and to teach others. And that – in my dissertation, I go into a bunch on how frustrating the emphasis on literacy was for students in the class who didn't want to learn to write it, they didn't have anyone to write it to – they wanted to learn how to speak it, because they had people to speak to.

Holly: It's interesting, because Lloyd Moll's columns were, from what I can gather, really quite popular, and it seemed like maybe, with things like that, it might start to develop a written form, but the orthography anyway is so fiercely debated that maybe it's more suited to being an oral form.

Jennifer: I mean, the language isn't going to survive if it doesn't happen. There needs to be the literacy component, there absolutely does, and if we could just land on one orthography – just commit – that might be helpful. I remember one of the dialect teachers from my dissertation research, he had an eighth-grade education, and he came up with his own orthography. Like, he wrote – because this would have been in the 1940s, probably – he started writing things and songs... He was a musician and he'd write songs, and then he'd translate them to the dialect, if they were English songs, and then he wrote them out the way he thought they should be written out. And so, he came to teaching dialect class having to start with his own orthography, and then try to learn these other orthographies that didn't necessarily make sense to him, and then teach the students and teach the students, also, to write, and... And the students didn't want to write, and so students in his class were exposed to non-standard orthographies.

Holly: Maybe they do need that Council, like Louisiana has, where you'd have, I guess, representatives from the community – not necessarily an academic institution – but you'd have representatives from Schuylkill and Lancaster and Berks and they'd all get together and sort of sit down and go, 'Right, how do we standardise this?'

Jennifer: Right. And then there's Dick Beam, who finally – you know, Dick Beam's completed dictionaries and then, well, okay, he's spent much of his life doing those dictionaries, how do we say no to that?

Holly: Exactly, but it's also that thing, I guess, of... I mean, I live in a place where we're not all necessarily – I'm first-generation university – the amount of people that go on to university education here isn't always that high, and sometimes I can sense, especially

among the older generations, this sense of, ‘Oh, well who are you to tell us X, Y, Z? You’re just off with your head in books.’ And I don’t if it’s like that in Pennsylvania at all, but that’s the difficulty sometimes, is that you want to reach out and engage with everybody, but you don’t always have everybody wanting to listen to what you have to say.

Jennifer: Yeah, oh yeah. And there are definitely disparate voices in the community (Laughs).

Holly: As there is with everyone, everywhere in life!

Jennifer: And in... I don’t know how many females you’ve interviewed...?

Holly: Do you know, you’re the first!

Jennifer: See? That’s part of this community too – so, in the community of scholars on this – and I’ve been in some of those discussions, and they aren’t necessarily the most welcoming places. And Bill and I have had this conversation... You know, (for example,) this group is bickering with this group, so now they’re going to sever their relationships. Well, now there’s a new leader, so this group wants to get back together with this group, and then they bicker about it. And it’s all males who are doing this, right? And different leadership styles can accomplish different ends, and so a lot of my frustrations – now, we’re talking about twenty years ago – one of my frustrations and why I didn’t dive in deeper was I did not feel as though there was room to engage in conversations unless one was an older male member of the community.

Holly: Mm. Like that slight gatekeeper-ness of ‘To be in the club, you’ve got to be...’ I see that, I understand that. As a woman, I completely understand that. That’s an issue in Louisiana French as well, where I’ve spoken to... I’ve done seven interviews so far, you’re number eight, and everyone before you has been white and male, and the last person I spoke to on the French side of things, I was saying, ‘Who do you think I should interview next?’ And he gave me a list and said, ‘I really think you need more women, and you need more people of colour, because it’s a very diverse community in terms of ethnicities in

Louisiana.’ And everyone I’ve spoken to so far has been white, so he gave me this list and he said, ‘Everyone on this list is either a person of colour, or a woman, or both. Contact these people.’ And it would be so nice if... I know the backgrounds aren’t quite the same on the German side in terms of ethnicities, but it would be lovely if there could be more women. I’m sure you feel that way, because like you said, there aren’t that many. It’s you and very few others.

Jennifer: Yeah. Like (there are) a couple of people locally, and they’re craftswomen who have some voice, but when it comes to the cultural organisations, or the Pennsylvania German society, or local historical societies – I mean, the *Grundsau* Lodges, for goodness’ sake. Those are male organisations. And I’ve often said, ‘Bill, when you’re there, set up a recorder in the kitchen!’ Because women are there – get their take on stuff. There’s definitely a way underexplored gender component to the maintenance efforts and whose Pennsylvania Dutch gets celebrated; whose dialect gets celebrated. And so, we celebrate the speakers – and it’s not like I don’t think we should – but we celebrate the speakers at the *Grundsau* Lodges, and they’re really entertaining, they’re really funny, they’re really good, and they’re really male. So, we celebrate them. The columnists have all been males. The *Versammlinge* are mixed-gender, and that’s why I could go to those when I was doing my research, and they’re great, it was fine. There is one *Grundsau* Lodge that is women-only in East Greenville, but still – so then, whose voices always get centred? And it is the male voices. And it’s not Patrick, and it’s not Bill, it’s not like they’re...

Holly: Oh yeah, it’s not an intentional thing. It’s just something that’s been, I guess, ingrained without even realising it over generations of it being that way. (...) Like I said, on the German side, it’s been you and then everyone else has been male, and that’s not particularly balanced or diverse.

Jennifer: Right, and I absolutely do not want to represent female voice in Pennsylvania German community, you know. I can represent myself and my experiences and my observations, what I've seen, but I know that there are lots of other experiences out there. I interviewed some couples that were these really solid relationships of mutual respect and admiration in homes, but I wouldn't necessarily see it in leadership positions.

Holly: We've got to change that. Hopefully it will change as things go on – well, we'll find out, won't we? (...) I just have two more questions, if that's okay. Is there anything that you wish was known more widely about the Pennsylvania Dutch people? I know we talked about this in depth, but if there's something that you wish people outside of the community would know, what do you think that would be?

Jennifer: That's a good question, Holly. That's like a 'sleep on it' kind of question. I don't know... Okay. First word that popped into my head is 'dedication', and I'm trying to figure out dedication to what. So: definitely a dedication to land and place; dedication or commitment to work ethic; dedication, like investment, in the American experience, which makes the non-sectarians so much different from the sectarians. The non-sectarians have been participating in the American experiment all along, and I think that there's dedication and commitment to that American experiment. Doesn't mean that it was all rosy. There wasn't always cultural inclusion and there certainly are plenty of racist Pennsylvania Germans, Pennsylvania Dutch people, but... Okay, what I would want the greater population to know, the wider population to know, is that this is a distinctly American culture and it doesn't exist elsewhere, and as a distinctly American culture – as a distinctly European American culture – a little time and attention to it wouldn't hurt.

Holly: That's a great way of putting it, and I think that's such an important thing as well. As Patrick said, it's a language that's survived so much longer than any other European language that's come to America. He was talking about Italian American families who –

you get two, three generations down – the language is gone, and yet you can trace yours back twelve, thirteen generations and you still know some of it.

Jennifer: Yes. It is distinctly American. It is not like any other European immigrant group. Even in the United States with Spanish immigrants, who come with Spanish as their first language – by the fourth generation, it's gone. By the fourth generation, I think it's about seven percent of the fourth generation is still speaking Spanish, so how there was 250 years of stable bilingualism is really remarkable, (a) remarkable achievement. It was an achievement and a privilege. The efforts to erase the language were internal; mostly the loss is the choice of the community, but it's just distinctly American. There's nothing else like it.

Holly: That's such a great way of putting it – it is distinctly American. I know people talk about the American Dream a lot, and I know that's a bit of a cliché, but it kind of is – it's a group of people that came to America centuries ago in search of something new and they found it and they made it, and it's still there, and I think that's incredible, personally. (...) The last question that I have – I did have others but, I mean, we've talked about so much that they all got answered in their own ways – but what do you think, based on your experiences with the language but also your experiences as a linguistic anthropologist, what do you think the future might be for the language?

Jennifer: So, there's good news, bad news. Good news is that the Pennsylvania German of the sectarians is similar enough to non-sectarian Pennsylvania German (and) it is growing. The number of speakers is growing, and so that's the good news side of things that, you know, Old Order Amish, Mennonites, always rank up in like the top two or three in the US of (the) fastest growing ethnic group(s). And when I tell my students that the fastest growing ethnic group is a European-based group – 'That's not my stereotype!' Well, it's these people. So, the language is growing, but in the sectarian group. So, that's the good news. I think the bad news is that, unless there is a collective effort with public support, as you suggest... With states, even though

many of the Pennsylvania Germans I spoke to have said, ‘No, the state shouldn’t get involved because it’s just a dialect. Our children should learn Spanish. They shouldn’t learn this, they should learn Spanish, because Spanish is going to be useful. This isn’t useful, so no, we shouldn’t put resources towards it,’ – but unless there’s a collective effort that somehow is able to unite public interest, private interest, non-profit interest, scholarly interest, I’m not optimistic, I’m not. But you see something like the revitalisation of the Wampanoag language in Cape Cod – like, singlehandedly brought back by one person – so... Languages don’t die, people do, and as long as there’s some interest, there’s hope.

Holly: That is quite an optimistic future for the non-sectarians, as long as people get involved and work together on it to come up with a solution.

Jennifer: But I don’t see it becoming a first language in a household.

Holly: No... I’m trying to keep a very open mind as to what my conclusions are – I think I would agree with you on that, but it would be lovely if the state would give it the attention it’s due, rather than... Spanish is great, there’s nothing wrong with Spanish, but for every person that says, ‘You could learn Spanish,’ there are so many other languages in America that you could learn, and they’re all (unique). I guess it’s a question of what you define as useful.

Jennifer: Yes, yes.

Holly: And they see Spanish as useful, but it could be just as useful, a few years down the line, to have the dialect there. I don’t know, maybe that’s just me being an idealist! It has been such a pleasure, Jen.

Jennifer: Oh, thank you Holly, it’s been my pleasure. I’m glad we had this conversation.

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM DONNER

Date of Interview: Friday 26th March 2021

Time of Interview: 19.15 GMT, 15.15 EDT

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

Holly: To start with, I wanted to ask you what being Pennsylvania German, or (Pennsylvania) Dutch, or *Deutsch* – whichever term you prefer – what does that mean to you?

William: Well, you know, I have a book out – I wasn't raised Pennsylvania Dutch, I was raised outside of Philadelphia – so I was raised in a family where, at least to me, I had ancestors that were Scotch-Irish, English, German, and Pennsylvania Dutch, but I was mostly told the ancestors were Pennsylvania Dutch. But to me, that was actually a bad thing. You're much younger, but I was born in 1950, we were still dealing with World War II and many of our fathers had fought in World War II, and they had fought against Germans, and, to me, Pennsylvania German didn't make any – I found out later it was much different – but Pennsylvania German and German really were the same thing. That word 'German' was in it, I didn't want anybody to know that there was anything German in my background. I remember, growing up, there wasn't the Internet, there wasn't all these digital things, we just had these little toy guns and (we'd) shoot each other, and the big kids always took the Americans, and the little kids had to be the Germans or the Japanese and get killed... and I remember a kid in the neighbourhood who just had a German name – he was American, there was nothing German about him – and they were making fun of him for being German. So, growing up, I always

thought of myself as Pennsylvania German in ancestry, but I was never attached to it. My mother's quilt in the background (NB: This quilt is hanging on the wall behind Donner throughout the interview) is from her great-grandmother, who was Pennsylvania German. She used to go up there with her grandfather, who lived with her – he was from Womelsdorf, which is a pretty Dutchie town – and so, she would talk a lot about it, and later on, when she was researching genealogy and I was much older, she was talking a lot about it. So that was really the strongest ethnicity that I felt, but I actually, when I was young, I just wanted to get away from it. When I went to graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania, there was a guy, Don Yoder, who was in an apartment nearby. I knew he was there, I knew he was an expert on Pennsylvania German stuff, I didn't want to have anything to do with it – I was an anthropologist and I wanted to go out to Polynesia. In terms of my own history, it wasn't... I lived on a little (...) probably for about two and a half years, and among the people – because they migrated – (for) about three and a half years (on) a little Polynesian atoll. And I came back, got my dissertation in 1985, there were no jobs – there still aren't many – and I decided, 'Well, I want to see if little towns are like atolls.' And the only little towns I knew about were the ones my mother would talk about from going back to visit her grandfather, and so I moved up to Wolmersdorf then and started looking at little towns, and... It's a longer story, but I ended up teaching at Kutztown University and by the time I got there, 1988, they really didn't have much to do with Pennsylvania Germans, but I found out their background – actually, I mean, that was... it was founded by Pennsylvania Germans. It was really a school in the late 1800s for Pennsylvania Germans, and I sort of backed in and learned more and more. So, I'm something of a... I don't know – I wouldn't really call myself a full insider here. Now, I don't know... Patrick Donmoyer, I think you're going to talk to him -

Holly: Mm-hmm.

William: He was brought up in this area. Jennifer Schlegel, she was brought up in this area. Their roots are much stronger. I think Schlegel might be a little ambivalent, not as ambivalent, I don't think, as I was growing up, but Donmoyer was more immersed in the culture. And, you know, there's a lot of people (I can) give you to talk to, but that's my background. Now, Schlegel and I have been doing a project where we interview people about what it means to be Pennsylvania Dutch, and all of them, what we're getting, again and again, is farm life. Growing up on the farm. So, you know, I think there's something rural in my own research. What I found was... as opposed to other immigrating groups, migrating groups, the Pennsylvania Germans are somewhat unusual in the length of time that they retain their language and instinctive cultural patterns. The Italian Americans, the Irish Americans, the other groups, tended to assimilate in just a couple of generations. Pennsylvania Germans, you know, you start in the 1700s, and they still kept their language up until – for the most part – at least mid-20th century, maybe – to some extent – even till today, and they're very American, they see themselves as American, they're proud of being American. On the other hand, they're also... I know this is politically incorrect, but I think, even compared to some of the Native American groups, they preserve the language longer. So, certainly compared to any of the other immigrating groups – this might even include Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans – they preserve their language much longer, and there's a guy, Steve X, I don't know if you read his book...

Holly: No, not yet.

William: Yeah, you might want to take a look at it. I don't know if you read any of my stuff, but I cite him. He says one of the things about Pennsylvania Germans is that they felt – he was talking in the late 1700s, into the 1800s – they felt the way to be American was to maintain their difference, that being American meant that you could actually be different, and I think he onto something. And I think that's something that they preserved, certainly well into the 20th

century, and, to some extent, I think that that's going on today. Now, it's complicated because, again – you probably know, there are these Old Order groups who do preserve the language and are distinctive. They're structured mainly around a set of religious beliefs. About 90%, 95% of the people are these mostly Lutheran, or German Reformed – now United Church of Christ – people, who are far more, I don't know if you want to say, socially liberal, progressive... They always use technology, and by the second half of the 20th century the kids weren't learning Pennsylvania Dutch. They weren't on the farm anymore – well, a few were – but most people had left the farm and for those people, I think it's more an ancestral identity that they have preserved and then they have certain celebrations that they maintain. But I think, you know, the people that I would say are hardcore Pennsylvania Germans, I wouldn't really include myself in this, would be something to do with farming life. That seems to be something that's very important. Now it's complicated, cause they do have a lot of ceremonies today, there are... the organisation I was interested, if you read my book, was the Groundhog Lodges. It was formed by the kind of... they were people whose roots were in farming in the late 1800s, but they themselves, oftentimes, were preachers, teachers, William Troxell, Pumpnickel Bill, the leader there, he wrote for a newspaper. So, you know, that group of people tended to be more middle class, kind of lower-level teachers, preachers, professional(s). And I think you could argue they were really Dutchie, but I think, you know... When we did our interviews, there was something about farm life that seemed to be everybody would talk about, 'Well, what does it mean to be Pennsylvania Dutch?' – 'Well, I was brought up on a farm.'

Holly: That relates to what Jen said. She was talking about her experienced growing up on the farm and being around farmland. Do you think it's that rural, that agricultural aspect – and I guess that relative isolation, to a certain extent – that kept the language – I don't know if you prefer language or dialect when referring to Pennsylvania Dutch – that they kept it going as long as it did?

William: I think it's something different, cause I think they weren't isolated in many respects. What I think is, unlike the later immigrants, who usually moved in urban areas, they had land, they had a rural area which was based, and so they had some control, because they were kind of a like an ethnic group that would spread out. They had some control over the politics, over the education, initially if they wanted to, they could teach – back in the 1800s – they were such a powerful lobby that the state said you can teach in any language you want. It wasn't going to be Swahili, it was going to be German or English, so they had that kind of political clout, but by the 1860s or 1870s, almost all of the schools are going to try to teach in English. The kids are all coming in speaking Pennsylvania Dutch, but there was a real pressure to teach in English. But anyway, I don't think they were really isolated. I think they had some political and economic control over their lives in ways that maybe other immigrants didn't. They were dealing with larger society – one thing I argue in my book is a lot of the jokes, the themes, the stories they tell are actually borrowed from broader American society, and so, in that sense, they're incorporating broader American values in a way which becomes localised. That seems to me what's going on. But there's Patrick and there's Jen and there's a lot of other people to talk to who are really brought up in the middle of the culture.

Holly: So, it almost ends up being their strength, then, that they were so rurally based as opposed to being in an urban area. It was because, like you said, they could control the whole [management...]

William: [I think there's the] economics and the political system, at least that's the way I think of it. In the urban areas, there was some control, but there was also a mass of people. There are other people in your political division – you know, the Irish (for example) would get a hold of the police force or the fire companies – but I just think Pennsylvania Germans, to me, one of the reasons they were able to last so long is because they did have a political and economic control over a geographic area. I don't see them as... the language, to some degree, they're

isolated, but they are participating in larger society as well. I mean, one of their arguments was you have later-arriving Germans – they didn't get along so well with them, and they felt they were more American than these later-arriving Germans, even though they're speaking Pennsylvania Dutch, even though the Germans are going to assimilate in many respects – you know, they're going to join unions, they're going to speak English faster – but the Pennsylvania Dutch said, 'Really, those guys are not as American as we are.' And that had something to do with, I think, their feeling that they had deeper roots in what they saw as an American experience.

Holly: You mentioned that in Simon Bronner and Josh Brown's *Interpretive Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Dutch*. I remember you writing about the second or the later waves of German migration – they called them *Deitschlenner* – which I found really interesting that they might even be people migrating from the same area geographically, but because of them being a later wave, it's, 'Oh, you're not as American as us.'

William: Yeah. They were different in other respects – you know, a lot of them didn't necessarily come from the southwestern part of Germany and Switzerland – cause when the Pennsylvania Germans came over, Germany didn't exist as a nation. That's why some people want to call them Pennsylvania Dutch – they're coming from a region of what became Germany and Switzerland and parts of France. So, those later migrants, they tended to come, I think, with standard German as their language as opposed to Pennsylvania Dutch. They tended to settle in urban areas, they tended to look at themselves as more sophisticated. I think they thought that Pennsylvania Dutch were kind of hillbillies and the Pennsylvania Dutch looked at them as – not always – but kind of snotty. Now, there were some Pennsylvania Dutch who were Germanophiles, it wasn't a large group – Yoder had an interesting essay about three types of Pennsylvania Germans. One of them, he felt, was a kind of Germanophile, they wanted to be Germanised; another group, he felt, (was) Americanised; and then the third group was what

he called the ‘Dutch’ or the ‘language’ ones. That’s where he associates the Groundhog Lodges, the people that identified with the languages. Americanised certainly – not Germanised – but also is somehow different. That’s the group that I see as the majority and that’s the group that interests me.

Holly: The dialectised?

William: The dialectised, that’s right.

Holly: That’s really interesting. It’s like they’ve carved out their own space, as it were, aside from one or the other – ‘Well, let’s have our own space,’ which is wonderful.

William: Yeah. That’s breaking down now, I don’t know what Jen and Patrick have to say about it, but it’s hard to find somebody – if you’re talking about dialectisation, the importance of the language – it’s hard to find anybody born after World War II in that group who speaks Pennsylvania Dutch, so...

Holly: In the non-sectarian side. I remember you mentioning as well that the sectarian side is still very strong in the use of Pennsylvania Dutch.

William: Yeah.

Holly: But, of course, like you said in that section on education, they have their own schooling system. They have their own means of passing the language on that is completely different [from mainstream education.]

William: [Well, there’s a religious affiliation.] That schooling system, though, they developed probably mid-20th century, it doesn’t go all the way back. It’s something they developed as they saw schools consolidating and moving in a secular direction that they didn’t like, so... But yeah, they do have their own schools now, though I think those schools are all in English, it’s just at home that they really keep speaking Pennsylvania Dutch.

Holly: So, when you see or hear people using it now, *if* you see or hear people using Pennsylvania Dutch nowadays, what do you think is the motivation behind that? Do you

think it's a means of celebrating that the language is still there, or do you think it's some means of resistance, I guess, against English, to a certain extent?

William: No, I think it's more identification. I think, again, my view may not be right about this, but my view is most of the Pennsylvania Dutch I know are pretty solid Americans. Now, we're not talking about the sectarians, we're talking about these Lutherans and German Reformed... What I see is very patriotic Americans, but I think the language is a way for them to – if they're using it – a way for them to identify themselves as separate. Schlegel, in her dissertation, made the point that there's some nostalgia here, that if you're brought up on a farm and you're thinking about your grandparents and, as you get older, they aren't old fogies, you might want to use the language just to kind of get back to your roots, and I think that's part of it. The Groundhog Lodges, those guys all spoke English, but they wanted to have a chance to speak Pennsylvania Dutch, and the ones who use Pennsylvania Dutch, they, I think, again because of their upbringing, they just feel a special kind of allegiance to it as part of their heritage. And I think that's really a lot of what the Groundhog Lodges are about today. Now, you know, I'll be honest with you, I think if you were here 100 years ago, you would have heard Pennsylvania Dutch in all the stores, everything. You only hear it if you go to a farmers' market and there's Old Order people there, you may hear it, you may hear it from some of the older... you're calling them non-sectarians. I don't like that, because you're calling 'non' the people that are the overwhelming majority. But anyway – I call them Church people, but yeah, non-sectarians – some of the older ones run into each other they may just do it out of a sense of solidarity, but, you know, in the stores in this area... If I go to Walmart in this area, I'm going to hear Spanish for sure. I just have to go ten miles in either direction, North or South, and I'm going to go into a store and I'm just as likely to hear Spanish as I am English. I'm not going to hear Pennsylvania Dutch, so that's a change.

Holly: That's such a shame that – you know, Jen and I were talking about this last week – that you might go somewhere and not, you know... that Pennsylvania Dutch is something you only really hear at special occasions like *Versammlinge*, Groundhog Lodges, the Folk Festival at Kutztown. It's a thing reserved for special occasions, to a certain extent.

William: Yeah.

Holly: We were talking last week about things like the Pennsylvania German Minor over at Kutztown. Do you think things like that would be of some use? I don't know how many young people, or younger people, are that interested in learning more about their heritage, or taking up Pennsylvania Dutch.

William: It, of course, has a decent draw – at least, recently it has. Now, one of the things is it was not doing well, and then they changed the Gen Ed requirements – and I don't know if you know how our colleges are set up, but you have to take certain kinds of courses – and that fit into a certain box there that, I think it was going against Philosophy or something (...) But when I teach the intro class, I can get 30 to 40 people a semester and a substantial portion of them feel they have a Pennsylvania German, Pennsylvania Dutch heritage. And I think they find... My sense is they find the course interesting, cause when I talk about things that they've taken for granted they realise, 'Oh, that's part of being Pennsylvania German,' you know, scrapple, or *Fasnacht* Day, or things like that. There's things that they hadn't realised as part of their heritage. But the University has 6,000 undergraduates – we're not talking about large numbers. The language – We do sometimes teach the language course. Now, talk to Patrick about – I don't know if you can meet again – he was in a group that, actually, that language course did teach the language to. When he was an undergraduate about fifteen years ago... I helped set this thing up, but we got money from the Folk Festival to subsidise students to take that class and there was a couple of years there. A guy named Ed Quinter, who you probably should talk

to – I don't know if you've heard his name – but Quinter was teaching that class and there's a cohort there of two or three years, and they really learned the language. That group did. It hasn't happened since. We've offered it sporadically since then. (...) Anyway, it really sucked, because Ed was a great teacher, but that was the last group that really learned the language. (...) So, we don't offer it anymore at the University. There are different classes around that are not for credit, and they're less successful. Jen actually did her dissertation on those. They're less successful in getting people to speak the language, so yeah. I think it's hard to say, cause when I was in graduate school, they said, 'Gaelic's dead, it's gone.' And it came back (Laughs), so you never quite know what's going to happen, but I think the Old Order people going to keep it for a while at least. It's pretty well gone, I think, amongst the Church people. There's one more thing I should mention about why people would use a language at *Versammlinge* and Groundhog Lodges. The speakers say – and though I know the language, I can believe it – that the language is more lively, more colourful. It's better for expressing certainly rural farm kind of life. And there is a certain, I think, kind of humorous aspect to the language, which is maybe... I don't know if it's the context of the language being rural, or if it's actually the language itself is more colourful, but what they tell me is – a lot of them say – they wouldn't want the Groundhog Lodges, or *Versammlinge*, to switch to English cause they don't find it as vibrant a language. So, that's another reason why people use it, I think, maybe, is its tied to rural life and it might be that it expresses things about that life more effectively than Standard English does.

Holly: It's a colourful language. That's one thing I've picked up on, when you read it, when you listen to it, it's got that colour there that... I guess it's like the essence of it, at a Groundhog Lodge. It would strip away a core part of its essence, but...

William: Do you know it? Can you read it? Can you speak it?

Holly: I can read it. I can't speak it. I can speak 'Standard' German, but...

William: Can you understand it?

Holly: I can understand it, to an extent. Reading is easier than listening and easier than speaking. I'm learning bits and pieces, and I'm learning the basics, like 'Guder Daag', and I'm learning more about the traditions, like the Belsnickel and *Fasnacht* and things like that, so... I love it personally, but... So, when I lived in Germany, I lived in the *Pfalz*, but I didn't live in the parts of the *Pfalz* where Pennsylvania Dutch came from. I lived nearer the Moselle, so different dialects, and it's weird to think that I was so close, and yet...

William: Well, I'll tell you, I've been developing an archive at our university – I don't know if you know that our library has an archive – and there's a lot of Pennsylvania Dutch materials. There's some *Versammlings* that I've recorded, that other people recorded, that are digitalised, and this guy, Clarence Ron, who was probably the best speaker – the best 20th-century speaker at *Versammlung* – I have about 30 or 40 of his tapes (...)

Holly: I'd love to hear more of it, I don't get to hear very much of it. I spend most of my time reading it!

William: The one thing we have – we have Liars' Contests at the Folk Festival, I don't know if Patrick talked about that – but the Liars' Contest would be in Dutch and followed by English, and I have about 15 years of tapes of the Liars' Contest, so you'll be able to hear it in Dutch and then they follow with an English translation.

Holly: That sounds amazing! I would love to hear the Liars' Contest, (Patrick) told me quite a lot about that, and it seems to me like a lot of the stories that get told in Pennsylvania Dutch are very... Humour's a huge part of it. It seems to me like that's the case.

William: Yeah, that's true.

Holly: With the Liars' Contest, tall tales, jokes... It seems to me like that's kind of a core part of it. I don't know if I'm right to assume that.

William: I think in terms of the kind of ceremonial expression of it, there was... When the newspaper switched from High German to English in the 1800s, usually, in the late 1800s, they were all incorporating a dialect column in Dutch – in *Deitsch* – and those were usually humorous, not always, but humorous columns. And then there's other stuff going on at *Versammlung* and Groundhog Lodges, but a lot of it is humour. The Liars' Contest, there's humour embedded in there too, so a lot of the – I don't know if you want to call it ceremonial or celebratory – but a lot of the ongoing, I guess, heritage use of the language did have a lot of humour. But again, what I see is that those humorous traditions aren't German, they're...

Holly: It's such a shame, because when I first started looking into Pennsylvania Dutch, the first things that come up as the stereotypes are – and this is no disrespect at all to the stereotypes in question – but the first assumptions are that everyone that speaks the dialect is Amish or Mennonite, or Dwight Schrute from *The Office*, and it seems such a shame that the church people get... not forgotten about, but they get overlooked.

William: Yeah, that's one of my gripes. I think that's true, and my guess is if... And this was true of me, too, I talked about this in the beginning of my book. I just mashed them together and, you know, when my parents said they had Pennsylvania Dutch ancestors – well, you know, were they riding horse and buggies and wearing big, black hats and things like that? It was nothing to do with those people, but I think in the popular imagination in the United States, we talk about Pennsylvania Dutch, it's what the tourist industry is in Lancaster County, centred around the Old Order Maish, so that's something I think is unfortunate.

Holly: So, Jen was telling me about the study that you and her had been working on lately, and you're working with the local community of Pennsylvania Dutch speakers, or people that use it.

William: Well... Is she talking about the project we do at the Folk Festival where we ask people to talk about growing up Dutch (**Holly** nods). Yeah... Basically we just go and find different people we know who have been coming to the Folk Festival, call themselves Dutch. I think most of them do speak Pennsylvania Dutch, were raised in households... maybe all of them were raised in households that were Pennsylvania Dutch, but I don't think all of them speak Pennsylvania Dutch – (there's) at least one who doesn't (...) Probably the majority do speak some Pennsylvania Dutch. (...) It was a broader group that included people who were brought up really, you know, parents who spoke it, brought up in a Pennsylvania German, (Pennsylvania) Dutch context. But yeah, she's right, probably (the) majority do speak, or did speak, it in their childhood, heard it and still know enough to be able to converse in it.

Holly: When you do those events at the Folk Festival, what are people's responses generally? Not just the people that you invite to participate, but then the wider community, as well – how do people react to that? Cause I'm curious about the dynamic between people who are involved in the communities from an academic perspective and then the people that are in the communities who are not, and the way that interacts.

William: Yeah, well, those events – I wouldn't really call them academic events. We're asking people to talk about their lives, and most of the people we're interviewing don't have – you know, a lot of them finished college, but I wouldn't call them, really, academics. And the festival itself, you know... I guess we do have kind of academic things – Patrick does a couple talks, he does talk about powwowing and the hex signs, I do a talk about education and sometimes about the origins of the festival – but the talks themselves, to me, are not the kind of talk I would give at an anthropology conference. They're maybe geared for my undergraduates, maybe, you know, an intelligent layperson. Those interviews that we do of growing up Dutch – I don't consider those academic at all. We're just talking to ordinary folks and asking them (the) kinds of questions you're asking me: What was it like growing up

Pennsylvania Dutch? What about the food? Do you remember *Belsnickel*, or do you remember powwowing? That kind of thing, it's just general things. Those things are usually done later in the day, usually Jen or I have already identified a couple of people that we know are Dutchie, we hear them talking Dutch or we know them from working at – you know, I've been at the festival 25 years, so I have some idea of the different people. I get a lot of the Groundhog Lodge people, and you're right – those people do, they'll all speak Dutch – but we don't get many people coming in to watch. There may be a few people who stopped by to watch the interview. Oftentimes it's how we get new interviews: somebody comes and watches his brother talk and says, 'Okay, I'll talk too.' But at those events we don't get a lot of people. The Liars' Contest does get some, but because it's in Dutch and most people don't speak it... We get good attendance from people who know Pennsylvania Dutch, which aren't that many people anymore, but again, the stage I'm on is the smaller – they have a really big main stage (where) they have the quilt auction, and they'll get a couple of hundred people – I'll never... If I'm full, I'm going to get forty or fifty people, and usually, the Dutch language events, I'm doing well if I get twenty to thirty, so it's not as.... We do have a writers' festival, where people write and then read things in Pennsylvania Dutch, and again, we'll get ten or fifteen people who tend to come because they have something to present (that's) written, and we might get another twenty or thirty people in the audience, but to me, those aren't really big pulls, not big events. And the Old Order people, occasionally they come through the festival, but they don't really have much to do with (it). I think they see it as too secular.

Holly: Again, that's such a shame that the Folk Festival's there to celebrate all aspects of the folk culture and yet anything that's in the dialect seems to be... I mean, I guess that's the nature of it when you don't have that many younger speakers...

William: Yeah.

Holly: Do you think there's some way of combatting that, of increasing the speakership among the church people? I've talked to Patrick in the past about other states that have done immersion programmes with languages – you know, Louisiana, I'm looking at Louisiana French as part of my thesis as well, and they have, for decades, had a council designed to promote and preserve the use of French, they have immersion programmes that started out with people coming from Europe to teach and now it's filtered down to the point where it's now people from Louisiana doing the teaching.

William: I thought Cajun was in worse shape than Dutch, actually. It seemed to me that there were many more things going on with the Pennsylvania Dutch than there were with Louisiana French, but to me, your project's interesting, cause it's comparing those two groups. Good for Louisiana – we don't have that kind of... I'm into this, because, this little island where I did my research (uses) a Polynesian language, and when I was there in the 1980s... Younger males prefer to use pidgin (...) it's a common language in New Guinea, in the Solomon Islands, and this was in the Solomon Islands – Almost everybody speaks Pidgin, the younger boys, men tended to prefer to speak in Pidgin rather than Sikaiana, but (...) all the older people – and when I say older people, over like thirty, thirty-five – most of the kids, they all spoke Sikaiana. IT's not spoken anymore. And there's I think, 2022, the United Nations has some decade of the language or indigenous languages, or something like that, because they're under such pressure. But again, we have Gaelic, and I don't know – if Cajun's coming back, great – but it's very hard to bring back a language, I think. From what I've seen, individuals really have to want to do it, parents have to want to do it with their kids, and you have to have enough parents left who are willing to do it. And then it seems to need some institutional support – a government or something, somebody who's going to make it public policy. And we don't have that here. Patrick and Jen can give their view, but there's always a lot of pressure to Americanise, to prove you're American, to be American, and even in the 1860s and '70s, most the schools,

even though they could have taught in – they had to teach in High German because Pennsylvania Dutch didn't really have a standardised orthography – but most of the places were in English, you had a lot of pressure. The educators at Kutztown (...) in the 1860s and '70s, they actually came up with a kind of bilingual programme that was about 100 years ahead of its time; by the 1890s, 1900, they're going for immersion, it's like, 'We gotta teach kids English, we gotta make sure they know English.' So, there's always been this kind of pressure that, as part of Americanisation, you would also speak English, and they hit a tipping point somewhere in the '30s or '40s. So, I think one of the things was that schools started really pushing the use of English by the early 1900s and you do hear people – most of them have passed away now – but they talk about their parents saying they went to school, they didn't know what the language was, they felt really bad, and then, when they started having their kids in the 1920s and '30s, they wanted their kids to know English so they wouldn't have to go through that. It seems to be a pretty common trajectory there, and part of it was again things that had to do with Germany weren't cool, even in the Pennsylvania Dutch. They didn't like Germans, they didn't have anything to do with Germans, but still, I think, they wanted to make sure people didn't think of them as Germans. That seems to have been a problem in WWI, not so much WWII. For language, have you talked to Mark Louden?

Holly: I have, I spoke to him a couple of months ago, but we're still in contact by email and all of that stuff.

William: He's really the expert on the language and he's somebody who did learn the language and his experience is mostly with the Old Order groups, I think that's where he learned the language. My sense is that's where his primary interest in the language is, but he'd be a good person to talk about. I brought him up because (Mark) doesn't think that World War I was such a big deal for Pennsylvania Germans in terms of their heritage and loyalty. The people I talked to, it would have been mostly their parents, yeah, they thought it was a big deal. World War II,

not such a problem, but World War I with Germany – the people I talked to seemed to feel it was a problem in terms of loyalty.

Holly: That's interesting, cause it wasn't Mark that said that, but I did hear someone else who is Pennsylvania Dutch suggest that it might have been World War II that had the greater impact, so it's interesting the debate. I think the answer is if it was a World War, [it didn't do Pennsylvania Dutch any favours].

William: [Laughs] Yeah, I don't know. My sense was World War II wasn't such a problem, World War I was. Mark doesn't think World War I was a problem.

Holly: It's really interesting, even the debate in the community between what was the thing that caused more trouble. Again, it's like you said with Gaelic and – particularly in the UK, Welsh and Manx have gone through revivals recently. Welsh is now a compulsory part of the school in Wales. On the Isle of Man now, there are some schools – and we're talking primary education – where Manx is part of the programme, and they are using it in new ways. I saw a news report where they had some of the primary school children – we're talking seven and eight years old – and they did their own little miniature news report on camera in Manx. It just makes you think – little things like that that maybe...

William: You know, you could try here, but the community now, to me, is too heterogeneous, there's too many different kinds of people now. And there aren't enough really Dutch-speaking people so that... It would be hard for me to see the public schools in this area – I don't know, maybe there's more homogeneity in Wales and the Isle of Man...

Holly: Quite possibly.

William: But in this area, I don't see it. And then our recent issues about diversity and issues about whiteness and things like that, I think it's going even going to be a longer shot now. Maybe things will change, but right now there's a real push to be more inclusive of non-white

groups. It's hard for me to imagine that there's going to eb... Maybe, but it's hard for me to imagine that people are going to want to put a special hard emphasis on white ethnic groups.

Holly: Yeah, I can see that argument because it's something that you said in one of the books, and that's something that I've heard quite a lot, but when you've got communities like the Native Americans and with everything that happened last year, in the UK and the US, with things like Black Lives Matter, it's difficult. But again, – well, in my opinion – linguistic diversity is something that should be celebrated too, and Pennsylvania Dutch (has) been around, like you said and like Patrick said, longer than any other migrant group, linguistically speaking. So, I don't know, it seems a little odd to me, but I'm not in the community. I am just a Brit looking at it from over the sea.

William: No, you give your opinion, and I hope something can happen, but one thing – I think, from my perspective of America versus Europe, and I put Britain in Europe in this – I don't think any of those European nations, maybe recently but at least historically, had the kind of linguistic diversity that the United States had with people coming from all over the place. On the other hand, our school system really pressures people to learn English, and second languages... Kutztown, the University, knocked out language requirement over the last couple of years, and it was pretty atrophied. Europe... I think Germans know usually two or three languages – I don't know if that's the case in England – but it seems to me, Europeans all know English and they all know their home language and they all know something else, and that's not the case here. And our educational system, it just is atrophied in terms of handling different languages. I think that goes back, probably to the late 1800s, when we had all these immigrants coming in and school systems wanted to somehow assimilate them.

Holly: I often think it's something of an Anglocentric thing because we have that same issue with pushing everyone into one language of communication, and... I don't want to say modern language learning is on the decline in the UK, but it's certainly not been that

strong lately (...) I wonder if it's an Anglocentric thing, maybe with the exception of Canada where French is protected.

William: Oh, that's right, yeah, that's true. I just assumed it was the American situation of having so many immigrants coming in – in fact I know... Nathan Schaeffer, who was this Pennsylvania German guy, always spoke English with a Dutchie accent – he was State Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1900 to about 1919 here in Pennsylvania, and he was, 'Learn English.' But he's got Italians, he's got Poles, he's got Irish, he's got all these different people coming into Pennsylvania and he didn't want people learning Dutch, even thought that was probably his first language. He wanted to assimilate them, and I assumed it was that kind of multi-ethnic thing. But maybe it is an Anglo privilege.

Holly: I don't know. It's a shame because it seems like both nations, to me, are – I mean, again, I have not yet been to the US (...), but it seems like both nations are very, very proud of being multicultural. I mean, the biggest metaphor I hear all the time with America is 'the melting pot.' And yet neither is that comfortable with multilingualism. It just seems a bit of a contradiction to me, but...

William: Well, the melting pot, you get melted in and everybody becomes blended, so...

(...)

Holly: So, when you interact with the community and when you're doing things like the Liars' Contest – I know you said the orthography is not standardised, which is a whole other thing by itself...

William: Well, they push for a standardised orthography that's based on German, you probably know it, it's a hyphenated name...

Holly: Was it (Buffington-Barba-Beam)?

William: Yeah, something like that. (...) Anyway, there is a standardised one, but a lot of people don't know it and it's relatively recent that it's been used. But you have to kind of know

standard German and you have to know what those guys agreed upon, and a lot of the writers just aren't – even if they've been to college – won't necessarily know that standardised writing system.

Holly: But when people are telling their stories, or passing folk narratives down from one generation to the next, or from one group to the other, I take it, then, that written isn't really the common way of passing it on? It seems to be more oral narratives, more art, more music, as opposed to 'conventional' written formats.

William: Yeah, though sometimes, I do hear stories that I know were written down in some of the popular, widespread comedian books sometimes. You know, there's *Boonastiel* – there's a popular book, early 1900s – but sometimes I'll hear a story that's been lifted from *Boonastiel* and (the author of that, Thomas Harter) lifted some of his stories from the English press, so these things move around through different channels. But I think for the Liars' Contest – it might be some of these are narratives that they've heard from other people, but I thought most of them actually were kind of made up on the spot, they're made up, kind of generic, exaggerated farm life. Talk to Patrick, he does some great ones, but usually they're more kind of critiques of modern American society, critiques of current events and kind of frames it from a Dutch perspective. Now, one thing I was told when I did the book on the Groundhog Lodge – almost all the people referred to hotels, they call them 'bars', the humour that people would tell in taverns and places like that, and that the best speakers – not all of them, but a lot of them – would have roots in whatever kinds of jokes were being told in the corner of taverns, so I think that would have been a kind of oral impetus for the narratives. But, you know, Patrick was talking about this – one of the Liars' guys, he's really good, and he does a lot of his own stuff, but – I don't know if you know Professor Schnitzel, he's somebody who's recorded, who actually told jokes in English, it was very popular, there's some Internet recordings of his – and a couple of years, he lifted something that Schnitzel had used in English, put it back into

Dutch, and gave it... so Schnitzel stories, I guess, they got written down, but I guess that's kind of (an) oral tradition. And then some of the stories this guy used were written down. So, I think there's many multiple sources, but yeah, it not being a written language, I guess you're right, a lot of the narratives are verbal over written down.

Holly: What about modern media? You mentioned in – I can't remember if it was the section you wrote on cultural heritage and tourism or if it was the section on education – but you were saying that there's not been a lot of research into 21st-century or late 20th-century Pennsylvania Dutch writings or narratives. What about things like music or digital media? Cause I know that there's people like Doug Madenford out there that do vlog series that try to educate people on aspects of the culture.

William: There's... I don't know, I said that – I didn't express myself well – cause what I've been thinking is digital media is actually pretty potent, it's pretty robust for Pennsylvania Germans. Madenford is one of the key people, maybe the key person, but I think there's a Wikipedia page in Dutch... The irony of modern technology is it seems to be blowing away these small languages; on the other hand, it's a way for them to express themselves, I guess. If I didn't say that I think – even when I wrote those articles, it was so long ago – I meant to say that there are new ways in which these languages were being expressed. To me, it's exciting, and it's actually pretty vibrant, what's going on digitally, but whether that's going to actually turn the language around in terms of spoken narratives, I don't know. One thing – take a look at my website, cause I'm going to be putting up, there'll be a hell of a lot of stories that are digitalised now and are going to be up (and) available if people want to find it. I don't know that that website's one that people are going to go right to... You know, the ones that Madenford has, they're going to go to much sooner. But that could be part of a kind of ongoing back-loaded digital narrative culture or something.

Holly: I guess it's about building – like you said, you have things now like a Wikipedia page in Pennsylvania Dutch – it's things like building a library, building an archive that is accessible online to people around the world, and I know that that will be... Obviously, Old Order groups wouldn't be part of that because (of the) technology, but it would certainly get church people [involved.]

William: [You know, the Old Order groups] aren't static, so who knows? Maybe in a generation or two, they may...

Holly: That is true!

(...)

William: I can't remember, but I think by the time I wrote those articles for Bronner's volume, I was thinking, you know, the digital materials (are) actually pretty robust, so if I didn't say that then, I'll say it now. (Laughs) I think, I don't know how I expressed myself then, but I would say now, yeah.

Holly: I mean it was published in 2017 – even three years ago, though, social media wasn't quite what it is now where it's so prolific.

William: Yeah, but I think I was onto... stuff was happening there. I did think that academically... Pennsylvania Germans, church people, weren't of great interest, and even the historically academic places that had, you know, Franklin & Marshall, Muhlenberg, Ursinus College, even – way back, a couple of hundred years ago – the University of Pennsylvania, there wasn't really a great interest in Pennsylvania German stuff... Just wasn't seeing this, so that's not important. Kutztown is the exception, though sometimes I wish they'd put even more resources... I think they've been very ambivalent about this Pennsylvania German heritage. At times, they embrace it, and then at times, they want to get away from it. There's a really good article – I'm sure I cited it – by Brendan Strasser (...) There was some monument to the Pennsylvania Germans that had actually one of its sides, I think, was in English, German, and

Latin, or something like (that). Anyway, one of the sides was in Pennsylvania Dutch and it was right in front of Old Main at Kutztown, and that was set in 1876 to celebrate the centennial of the American Revolution. And about 1900, they threw it in the trash can, and so people picked it up and they put it in the park which is down the street about a mile and a half, and then about 1930, there was a revival of interest in Pennsylvania Germans and so the University wanted it back. And then 1960s, everyone, ‘Who cares about (it)? We want to be universal,’ so they gave it to the Historical Society. And they’ve bene back and forth – the Heritage Center started in 1990, they’ve been supportive, though sometimes... You know the Folk Festival, they’re reviewing what they’re going to do with it. Their commitment’s good, it’s more than any other institution in the country, but sometimes I see a certain... Historically, certainly, there’s been some ambivalence about it.

Holly: Jen expressed similar sentiments and again, it seems a bit bizarre to me that if you’re the only higher education facility in the entire United States that offers modules and classes on the Pennsylvania German language, the culture, the people... It seems a little strange to me that they wouldn’t want to make that more of a unique selling point, if we’re thinking in financial terms, economic terms.

William: Well, I want to be happy for what they do (...) Compared to what everybody else is doing, which is nothing... Yeah, well, I guess there’s the Center for Anabaptist Studies at Elizabethtown, but in terms of the church people, they’re doing a lot more than anybody else. Given the budget cuts, they have let the Heritage Center go, they’ve kept it going, it’s just some of the decisions in the past, to me... I don’t know. They could have made better decisions, I think, about what they were doing. But the Heritage Center has been going for thirty years and they are doing a lot more than anybody else. Even in these tough times, they seem to have maintained that commitment, so I don’t want to (annoy them), and then make them say, ‘Oh, you don’t think we’re doing nothing? We’ll show you what nothing is.’ But definitely

historically, they've been ambivalent. Patrick does, he's just fantastic – if they didn't have him, I don't think we'd really have anything going. I could teach the minor, but it wouldn't have the vibrancy that it does.

(...)

Holly: So, when stories are being told... We've talked about lies and we talked about tall tales being quite a common thing, we talked about humour being quite a common theme throughout, and rural being quite a common theme throughout. Is that... Whenever I read it, I get sometimes this sense of – not in a mean-spirited way – this sense of gentle poking fun at the Other, whatever the Other might be in that story, be it English speakers or higher authorities, to a certain extent (...) Do you think that's something that gets covered quite a lot in the stories?

William: Yeah, I'm writing a paper about this – I want to give it to *American Speech* – and I think I talked about this in the Groundhog Lodge book. I think there's two things going on. One is: They do make fun of themselves a lot, and, you know ethnic humour – one argument is one way to own it is to make fun of yourself. But I think there's another thing, and, to me, this is actually kind of an American theme, and... Where you see it is – I don't know if you know Mark Twain, but he's the most famous of this – you get these kinds of heroes who seem to be yokels, local people, or simple, and yet they have real insight. And I think... That was my thing about Clarence Ron. People who saw him said, 'Oh, you couldn't imagine this guy being smart or anything.' He always came off as modest and, you know, 'I'm just a dumb Dutchman,' and then he'd come forth with all these kinds of insights and this perspective. And I thought a lot of the Groundhog Lodge humour to me is... They're talking about this dumb Dutch guy – in a sense, they're making fun of themselves for being dumb Dutch – on the other hand, you compare him with a lot of things going on in the modern world, and he actually has some kind of insight. And the stuff that seems so simple back then actually makes more sense than what's

going on in the modern world. And so, it seemed to me there's a kind of subversive critique of people who are, I don't know, highfalutin' people who think they're smart, people who think they have it together, and that's the kind of humour that – cause everybody's always looking down on the Pennsylvania Dutch – that simple, rural folk, I think, can get right in to. In a sense, they can make fun of themselves. On the other hand, I think if you look at it, what they're also doing is criticising people who think they know the answers, think they're so smart, think they're superior. And this, actually... There's a book about American humour where these guys argue – this is actually a central theme, goes back to Ben Franklin. Ben Franklin was actually a snotty guy, but he always had this kind of humour, which was the ordinary guy making fun of stuck-up folks, and this is a kind of continual theme that you find throughout American humour. They say it comes from the Greek word for irony, which is a stock character in Greek plays who seems to be weak and incompetent, and turns out to be able to defeat other people. They say that's where the word 'irony' is from, so... I talked about that in the Groundhog Lodge (book), and I'm going to talk about that in this paper I'm working on, so to me, that's a central theme of the kind of humour they have. Some of it's self-deprecatory, but also it's taking the perspective of a simple person and emphasising that that person may have insights that these supposed elites didn't have. To me, it's kind a natural role for the Pennsylvania Dutch, being rural farmers looked down upon – that's something that might come natural to them (...) It's an important theme in American humour as well.

Holly: I mean, that's an important moral, I think, for life, isn't it, is to not underestimate someone that you might think of as 'lesser', maybe, because of their background, because they can have just as many astute opinions and insights as you.

William: Yeah.

Holly: How do... I hesitate to use the word ‘outsiders’, but people that aren’t really involved with the community – how do they react when they come to things like the folk festival or hear some of the stories that you might get at things like the Liars’ Contest?

William: Well, they probably won’t stay for the Liar’s Contest if they don’t speak Dutch.

Holly: That is true.

William: They might hang around to hear the English translation, but my experience is they don’t stay around that much. I guess there are levels of outsiders, thinking about it. I mean, there’s the people from the town itself, whose grandparents worked at the folk festival and may have Dutchie roots. And then there could be people who are from the town, but they moved in a generation ago, and they kind of know about the festival and they know about Pennsylvania Dutch, but they’re not fully involved. And then people from New Jersey, New York, you know, Maryland, who come up – some of them will have Pennsylvania Dutch ancestors, some of them are just coming to see what they think of as a folk festival. My impression is that latter group comes because they’re part of looking at what they perceive to be a kind of pre-industrial folklife, that they think of this as being – you know, people are making things with their hands, they’re doing stuff that’s pre-industrial – they’re looking for a sense of a simpler, handmade, folk experience, and I don’t think they’re going to be... I don’t know, I just don’t think they’re going to be that intellectually involved in, beyond that, who the Pennsylvania Germans really are. We can talk about it on the seminar stage for – if they stay to listen – for half an hour, but I think they’re just here for a kind of folksy, pre-industrial experience, and I suspect if we had Cajuns in the area, they’d go to the Cajun Folk Festival and pretty much get the same thing out of it. Maybe I’m wrong, but that’s my overall impression. You know, there’s a big quilt auction that they have that’s very well attended – I think those people are there for the quilts and the handmade thing, and not for the Pennsylvania Dutch. You know, the food, in my view, it tends to be highly commercialised and oriented towards the tourist audience, so... I think, for the

outsiders, they tend not to be, in my view, as involved in what I see as the real Dutchie events – and that’s the majority of people – but I think they go for some kind of folk experience, pre-industrial experience.

Holly: Again, it’s such a shame, because they miss out on the... it’s a bit of a loaded word, but the authentic experience if they’re just there to see certain things.

William: Well, maybe I’m wrong, but I think this is pretty common that people who go to these folk festival-ish events, they’re really there to see what they think is pre-industrial life, handmade life, and they kind of – I don’t know if you want to use the word fetishize – but in the midst of manufactured goods, they have a certain value on that kind of thing. I suspect that’s what they’re there for, that’s my sense. I might be wrong. One of the things – I have to be honest – I think of my seminar stages having a real academic content, and we’re not the biggest stage, we’re not the best attended stage... Sometimes people don’t like to talk on my stage because people can come and go. I tell them, ‘You can come and go,’ if you’re in my class, don’t leave it cause I’ll flunk you – my class at the university – but when I’m teaching at that stage, people will sit down for ten or fifteen minutes and they’ll move on and that actually, to me – that’s the way it was set up. But some people come and say, ‘Oh, that was a great talk, I learned a lot,’ but I think for the most part, people are there to be entertained in a general way, not educated about Pennsylvania Dutch.

Holly: They’re there for the package, as it were.

William: Yeah. It always was (commercial), actually. There were some actually really important academic origins of it, but it always was a commercial event and the only way it was going to survive by making money. That’s true for the future, I think. One of the things is – I don’t know if Patrick talked about this – they’re talking about maybe making some major changes, and I think the impetus is ‘How can we keep something going, but make more money as well?’ Cause it’s dicey, you know, they don’t always make money – they have rain and heat

and something goes wrong, COVID, and I don't blame them. I don't know if Patrick talked about this – the festival itself, its origins, are actually academically important. It was the way in which these guys were shifting from folklore to folklife and trying...

Holly: It was Don Yoder's ground, wasn't it, (...) and Shoemaker, as well, his realm?

William: Yeah. Yoder was the more intellectual, academic one, but Shoemaker was the charismatic leader. But it was an attempt to have a group of people display their lives to outsiders, and it was actually kind of revolutionary for its time. It was a great idea. And it became important – the Smithsonian National Festival, which is our big festival on the Mall, is actually modelled, at least, on the ideal of what the Kutztown Folk Festival's supposed to be. But it always had to make money. And even in the beginning, Shoemaker would sell off images of the Old Order Amish, even though there were no Old Order Amish – there was an Old Order Mennonite community that came up in 1949, but at that point, they weren't really part of the community – but Shoemaker knew he could sell with the Amish and... It was for good causes, but he wanted to make money. So, I think there was always that aspect to it.

Holly: I think that leads quite nicely on to – I have three questions left – but that leads quite nicely on to something I had, which was: Is there anything that you wish was known more widely about the Pennsylvania Dutch? And you write in that encyclopaedia about the commodification of the Amish and the Old Order groups.

William: Yeah.

Holly: Is that... I'm not going to put words in your mouth! Is there anything that you wish was known more widely outside of the community?

William: Well, did you read my book *Serious Nonsense*?

Holly: I'm reading it as we speak!

William: Because in the first chapter, first couple of chapters, I wanted to give my background of what I thought the Pennsylvania Dutch were, and then what I learned that they were. And

so, in that book, I try to explain that I had all these superficial images – even though that was my ancestry – I had all these superficial images, and the things that I think are important about them is you have a group of people that were able to preserve their language and culture in American society for 250, maybe 300, years. You have a group of people who, I think, expressed American values but in their own localised way, which I think is kind of cool. You have a group of people who constantly were kind of reinventing themselves, inventing traditions that – I mean, even going back into the middle of the 19th century, about the time of the Civil War, maybe even earlier – they were developing different ways to express themselves. Writing the language, for instance, in poetry and in newspapers – that was something that came mostly after our Civil War here, and that was one way in which they came to express themselves. And then in the early 1900s, they started writing plays, and then the *Versammlung* movement, the Groundhog Lodge movement, and then the folk festival – they’ve constantly come up with ways to express their identity, and one of the things that I find fascinating is these earlier ways of expressing their culture that they make up over time become heritage. So, now you look at the Groundhog Lodges – which are something completely new in 1934, well, basically new that they kind of made up – and by 1960 or 1970, this is real Pennsylvania Dutch heritage. This is who we are. So, they constantly had ways, I think, to express themselves and the new ways that they had of expressing themselves, over time, became part of who they were seen in terms of their heritage. So, I think those are the things that are, to me, interesting, fascinating about them. I also have to say, growing up in the suburbs of Philadelphia – you know, the Dutch, they’re actually cool, they’re really nice! I mean, one of the things that actually flabbergasted me about the Groundhog Lodges when I went to them was – I think I keep using the word enthralled – here (was) a group of... I always think of the Dutch as being kind of nasty and mean and tight, and things – and here are these guys just laughing and joking and having fun and, in some ways, to me, more expressive. I thought they were the most uptight

ethnic group, and what I found was they're the most expressive, humorous ethnic group, so they're just... and they always were really kind, nice to me. You know, sometimes people say, 'Well, they're ingrown and mean.' That wasn't my experience at all. They were always very helpful, very nice to me. So, whatever those images that you have of the Pennsylvania Dutch, it's just really... Cause I had them, and that was my ancestry – that's not really my experience of who they are.

Holly: I guess it's that message of 'whatever you think you know about the Pennsylvania Dutch, you might want to put that to one side... Put Dwight Schrute to one side and actually... find out for yourself.'

William: Well, but it's, you know, in some respects, it's going, so... Yeah. But look at – they really did accomplish a lot, I think, and right now, the whole American experience, I think, is really being challenged and reassessed, but... You know, I'm older and if you have an older view of American experience, about being able to express yourself and develop... They really did it, and for a long time, they really didn't fully assimilate, but they did incorporate a lot of American society into their lives. And I think they did some cool things, in the way in which they were constantly redeveloping these kinds of – I don't know – these ways of expressing themselves and writing down the language and performing plays and then the *Versammlung* and then the folk festivals.

(...)

Holly: I only have two more questions, but one was very brief, really, which was – it was one that I wanted to ask at the very beginning, but then we got into (a) discussion and it slipped away from me, which was what would come to mind when someone says the word(s) 'Pennsylvania Dutch' to you? But I mean... my assumption is it would be the Groundhog Lodges, but I'm not going to assume.

William: I think, now, for me, it's the people I know, who I met over the last thirty, thirty-five years, who are Pennsylvania Dutch, you know. I think, 'Oh, X, or his wife Y,' or just different people that... Patrick, to some extent, with a little hashmark next to him that... I think it would have to be the people. Carl Snyder, he was the hop man of Lodge Number One, so I think that would be it. And then it would also be just my experience of learning about them historically. But actually, when I think about them, I'm going to think more about the people I've met who were Pennsylvania Dutch, rather than any particular trait. You know, these guys speak English, they're, in many respects, assimilated Americans, and yet they had, to me, an important commitment to a certain heritage, lifestyle, way of expressing themselves.

Holly: That's wonderful. It transcends... people, and the relationship between people, transcend that...

William: Yeah, it's just... yeah.

Holly: ... Framework. My last question, which I think we've kind of discussed very briefly, in brief references here and there, is what do you think the future will be for Pennsylvania Dutch? I think I can guess.

William: (Laughs)

Holly: I know when I ask this to most people, most people have said, 'Well, Pennsylvania Dutch people tend not to think about the future too much.'

William: Respect it. Yeah, yeah. Well, actually, I don't know – Doug Madenford asked me, and Patrick actually, just yesterday, I was with him yesterday, (said), 'What do you think is going to happen to the Groundhog Lodges?' And Madenford, he has five different channels on YouTube, but he interviewed me a couple of weeks ago, and he asked, 'What's going to happen to the Groundhog Lodges?' You know, I did a kind of academic thing – this would have been about ten or fifteen years ago – where I said, 'Well, maybe there are many futures. Do we have to assume there's one future for Pennsylvania German?' So far, they've always come up with

new ways of expressing themselves, and maybe there will be – it might be in English – but there may be a new way that they have of expressing what it means to be Pennsylvania German. The Groundhog Lodges may evolve into something different. I think, for a lot of people who are PA Dutch today, the future might be just eating *Fasnachts* on Shrove Tuesday, and going to see Patrick being the *Belsnickel*, or something – it would be much more, I don't know, superficial. From students in my class, there do seem to be family things that get passed down – Troy Boyer said, 'Food is the last thing to go,' and I think there's going to be some traditions that are passed down from family to family that probably won't hang on. So – this is kind of the postmodern academic in me – but there might be different futures. There might not be just one future. I think one of the futures will be a pretty... Even if we just keep everything the way it is today, you're looking at a lot of assimilation, a lot of integration or incorporation of the larger society since a hundred years ago, but I don't know. I also think, you know, different people do different things. Some people will be coming out to eh – whatever happens to our folk festivals – they'll be coming out to festivals and making... You know, my son made a flintlock rifle at one of the local historical societies, you know. Both my sons are in the military, and one of the things I did was – here's another person you should talk to is sign painter Eric (Claypoole) – but he's a really good hex sign painter, and I had him paint a kind of traditional hill star, which is a traditional star in this area, and they put their unit sign in the middle of it, so now they have a hex sign with their military unit on it, and they think it's really cool. They're actually a little more Dutchie than I am, because their mother is pretty fully Dutch and I'm, I don't know, one quarter, three eighths, something like that, but it might be that it's just a series of relatively remote symbols that people consider to be part of their heritage. In most respects, they're just modern kids who don't want anything to do with the past, you know – they do Instagram and everything else – but they think the hex signs with their military insignia are cool, and so I think there might be a lot of different futures, and some people will be more

driven by the heritage, some people preserving the culture, other people, they're going to marry somebody from a different ethnic group, just give it up... And some people, I think, will be kind of part way. This is another one of my arguments – I don't know if I talked about it in those essays (in the) Bronner and Brown book – Eric Claypoole, he's excellent – you should talk to him, cause he's actually Irish, but does a lot of really Dutchie things – anyway, if you think of somebody who was born in 1725 and then died in 1800, whatever it meant to be Pennsylvania Dutch was different in 1800 – in fact, I'm not even sure you can talk about the Pennsylvania Dutch in 1725, I don't they'd been here long enough, really, to form a culture. The language, apparently, had not really formed at that point, and by 1800 they're living in a republic, they're living a whole different life. If you go from 1800 to 1875, they're probably taking the train, lived through the Civil War, they're part of real big things about nationalisation. A person born in 1875, dies in 1950, (is) probably still mostly Dutch around his life, but he's going to be driving an automobile, he's probably still going to be growing his own crops, but he's going to start thinking about shifting the crops he's growing to mass producing, you know – just go with dairy, just go with wheat or corn, or something like that, instead of growing a full base of different plants. A guy born in 1950 might have served in Vietnam and is going to have a whole different experience. So, whatever it meant to be Pennsylvania German was certainly not stable from 1725 to 1950, if we make that kind of a cut-off place for traditional culture. The 1950 person is very different from the person in 1725. Now, I don't see why you can't think it's going to be different in 75 years from now. That's my answer to this, sorry (Laughs).

Holly: It's a very positive outlook! It's a, 'Well, let's see. There's many paths.'

William: And it isn't like there's one tradition. I mean, I think, maybe, even a lot of the Pennsylvania Dutch think 'This is the way things were in the past,' but it was never stable in the past, it was always changing. We shouldn't expect... I think one of my arguments about

ethnicity is we tend to see assimilation as being something stable to something else stable, but it wasn't stable in the past and whatever we're assimilating into is changing itself, is changing rapidly, too. So, it's not that you're mixing it, none of the stages are stable. Both things are involved, both what the traditional culture is – or what the initial culture is – and what it's changing into.

Holly: It's such a wonderful way of putting it. The status quo doesn't exist.

William: (Laughs)

Holly: Let's not assume it exists.

William: That's the other thing – what's traditional Pennsylvania German life? Well, it's different in 1950, it was different in 1850, it was different in the 1750s, and I think it will be different in 2050.

Holly: We'll find out! Thank you so much.

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEWS WITH CHRISTOPHE LANDRY

Date of First Session: Tuesday 3rd May 2021

Time of First Session: 16.30 BST, 10.30 CDT

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

Holly: I wondered if you could start – if it’s okay – talking about your experiences as a speaker of Louisiana French, Louisiana Creole, whichever term you prefer.

Christophe: Okay, well (...) So, I grew up in Southwest Louisiana in New Iberia, so it’s the home of Tabasco – everyone knows Tabasco – so Avery Island, which is where Tabasco’s headquarters are, is a part of New Iberia. It’s just southwest of Lafayette, and it’s part of the region where people still speak French and Creole. Creole is also known as *Kouri-Vini* in Louisiana, so... I grew up, my family speaks both, but in my specific branch of the family, we speak French. We have neighbours, and also tons of relatives from St. Martinville and Lafayette, in the area, who speak *Kouri-Vini*, and so I ended up picking that up as well. So, I’ve been speaking French most of my life, I would say. I did all my schooling in English... The immersion programme started after, I think I was already in high school, so quite late in New Iberia, and so, from middle school, I think, I was already involved in the linguistic movements in Louisiana. My town is twinned with a city in Belgium, as well as in French, and every summer, we would host students who would come down to our sister city from Belgium and French. And then, in high school, I ended up going there, so... In high school, I was also making the announcements in French, the morning announcements that the student leaders did, and then, after I started at university, I was also working in the linguistic movements, doing a

lot of work – not paid – but doing lots of community-type stuff with CODOFIL, which I’m sure you’ve heard of. So, I was really close at that time with David Cheramie and with Elaine Clement. I worked at the Acadian Memorial in St. Martinville – I was giving tours in French and English there – and I was working as a genealogist while I was an undergrad, so I was very involved in the linguistic movements, and *Kouri-Vini*, Creole, Louisiana Creole, didn’t come until a little bit later, and I ended up abandoning the Francophile movement in Louisiana because I realised at some point, ‘Okay, there is absolutely no one who’s working at the forefront of a movement to help protect Louisiana Creole, *Kouri-Vini*. French is always going to be present in Louisiana,’ is what I was saying to myself, which is true. It’s on street signs, it’s on TV, you hear it, people speak it, it’s in schools, you have the option in public schools, for the children, to choose between English or French in many places, so my rationale was that there are a lot of people working on French in Louisiana, it’s institutionalised. Creole, on the other hand, totally different situation. So, I sort of changed course from doing a lot of my work in the Francophone movement to working with *Kouri-Vini*, and that ended up in the creation of an orthography that’s unique to *Kouri-Vini*, which I worked on with other members of the community – all young – and also in this practice group that we have on Facebook. It’s a closed, secret access practice group. At the time, I think there were a thousand people who were part of it, and there were these tiered classes that we had inside there, and so we ran a lot of the thorny questions about the orthography through there, through the practice groups, so that it wasn’t just a group of elitists who were creating this orthography that meant nothing to people on the ground. These were just, I mean, the age range from high school up to the 70s, for the participants in the group, so we really wanted to stress that this was a community effort, in that it was grassroots and not something that came from top down. And so, here I am. I ended up going to Brighton – the University of Sussex – to do my PhD, and I was actually going to go to Berkeley and do the same project in Ethnic Studies, and a cousin of mine from New Orleans

contacted me out of the blue one day and said to me, ‘Hey Christophe, I know you have your eyes set on California for your doctorate, but I really think you should consider the University of Sussex in Brighton.’ And I’m thinking, ‘California, England, Brighton, Berkeley,’ (Laughs), ‘Is there really anything to negotiate here?’ And so, he said, ‘That’s a good point,’ and he came back a couple of weeks later and said, ‘Okay, listen. I have some things I want to run by you.’ And then he started talking about the pricing – because education in Europe, of course, is very different from the United States – and then he also mentioned process, which is also extremely different. In Europe – everywhere outside of the US – you speak in direct communication with your thesis director, whereas in the US, you talk to the school first, and then you start taking classes, and then you start thinking about your project. So, in terms of length, and also money, it immediately jumped out me, like, ‘Oh my God, what?’ So, I did exactly what he said, which was to write to the guy who was his doctoral thesis supervisor, and he had already briefed me on him, told me that Richard Follett is his name, that he was British, but that he got his masters’ and his PhD at LSU in Baton Rouge, and that he was a scholar of sugar cane cultivation and Emancipation in Louisiana, and I’m like, ‘Oh my God. In the UK? What is this all about?’ So I wrote to Robert Cook, and then he put me in touch with Richard, and Richard – this all happened in the same afternoon, and I was so flabbergasted – because when I was window shopping, so to speak, for my PhD programmes, I was writing to all these departments and these universities – not a single one in Louisiana ever responded, Berkeley responded, and then I have Robert Cook and Richard who respond in the same afternoon, and I was mind blown. And that’s the way the story goes. So, I ended up going to the University of Sussex and I did my PhD thesis there, and I think it was the best place for me to do it, because of Richard’s particular interest in Louisiana history, the sugar cane cultivation, Emancipation, and, of course, these are places where the Creole language emerged in Louisiana. It emerged on the sugar plantations, so it made sense there. And then, the question of the Emancipation

also made sense, because the linguistic movements in Louisiana largely come out of the sugar cane cultivation areas of South Louisiana, so here I am, and now I work at Ancestry. I'm a research manager over a team of Black American researchers. We do historical and genealogical research for TV shows, for law firms, individuals, and it's great. I took a non-academic route after graduation.

Holly: That's an amazing story, how you ended up from Louisiana to Brighton – I mean, I'm from Blackpool, if you've ever heard of Blackpool...

Christophe: Yep, I do know it.

Holly: The Northern Brighton (...) I'm kind of surprised, as well, that there's someone in Brighton that is so interested in the subject. I'm a bit surprised at Louisiana, that none of the Louisiana, or Lafayette, institutions got back to you.

Christophe: No, because my project calls into question the Cajun narrative. Louisiana institutions are firmly invested in that narrative, because now, it generates money, and so any sort of approach that's confronting issues that the Cajun movement have created is a sort of existential-type threat to the institutions in Louisiana. And so, of course, it made sense that they wouldn't respond. (...) My research really, really, really hits at the core of an infrastructure that exists in Louisiana and beyond now, and so, yeah. It made sense (Laughs) that they didn't want to respond to me and have me work on my project there.

Holly: That's really shocking, because (...) I don't think it's (...) I thought your thesis made a really compelling argument for the way in which the rift, I guess, or the division...

Christophe: Bifurcation.

Holly: ...Yeah, the bifurcation of what would become Cajun and Creole post-World War II, and it wasn't really... It was Anglophone America's provocation, really, that led to it, it wasn't really... That shocks me a lot, that it's still such a controversial topic today.

Christophe: Oh, yeah.

(...)

Holly: Do you think there'll ever come a point where there might be, I guess, an *entente* between the two sides, where they might come to some understanding or maybe, eventually, might merge together as more and more people embrace Creole as a term again?

Christophe: There are two things, three things that are going on right now. We have lots of formerly Cajun-identified folks who are reembracing Creole identity publicly, and there are lots, I mean, hundreds, maybe even thousands. So, you have that, and then you also have this splinter group from the young French speakers in Louisiana who are fed up (with) the fighting over Cajun and Creole, and who have created this new identity, *francolouisianais*. And it is mostly coming from folks who went to immersion schools in Louisiana. Because they were in a different context with the language – their teachers were coming from Europe and Africa, the Caribbean and Canada, and all these places, and with a different sort of identity, values, also, they're there to teach French – and so it makes sense that the students who go through this programme will use language at the forefront of their identity versus this racial ethnic-type stuff. And so, *francolouisianais* comes out of this context. And then, you also have the ones who still identify as Cajun, but they've become even more entrenched in their concocted mythologies about the Louisiana past. So, you have those three things happening at the same time. I do think that most people will return to Creole identity, in part because now, publicly, people know that Cajun comes out of an exclusionary-type movement, one that excludes non-Whites, and one that is also a reaction to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, where you have White-identified people in the US running for the door, any door, every door, possible to not be accused of racism and discrimination, because after the Civil Rights movement, you'd get arrested for it and fined and jailed, and things like that. So, what happens is that you get a whole bunch of White-identified folks who start to rearticulate their identity as kind of White,

but really as a White ethnic group – this is when all the hyphenated identities come about in the United States: Irish-American, Italian-American, German-American, and all these identities, and Cajun comes out of that movement, because if you say that, ‘Well, yes, we have some privileges as White-perceived people, but the Anglos were also discriminating against us. We couldn’t get this, and they beat us in school for speaking French,’ and on and on and on, ‘And therefore, you can’t accuse me of racism, because I was being discriminated against by the very people who were lynching you and not allowing you to sit in the same restaurant, and things like that.’ So, this is where the mindset comes from that creates all these White ethnic groups in the ’60s and ’70s, and Cajun comes out of that. Now people know in Louisiana – because, of course, I didn’t make up all these records that I used, and I didn’t make up all these stories and stuff, it’s documented, so people have access to Newspapers.com, they have access to the Library of Congress’ newspaper archives as well... This is all in newspapers, and now ordinary people have access to it and are seeing it, googling it, and they see it. So, because Cajun people now know that it comes out of this context and is related to White exclusionary movements, people are moving away from it, and the logical place to go is Creole, so that you would not be perceived as racist and discriminatory, and it’s also becoming more fashionable at the same time. So, I do think most people will return to Creole identity, but you’ll always have these fringes, these fringe movements like *francolouisianais*, which isn’t going to go anywhere, I don’t think, because the relationship with French that comes out of the schools in Louisiana and the French that’s spoken in the community in Louisiana... There’s a disconnect there, partially because the Cajun narrative pushes this idea that we speak some archaic language and people in Europe, in particular, don’t understand it, because it’s from the 14th century and they speak a different version, and they always want to correct us, and all of this stuff, so it pushes this distinction between French spoken in Louisiana and French spoken in Europe – there are, to a certain extent, differences there, but it’s no different from American

English and British English, it's literally the same thing – and so, in the schools, you have these teachers who are not from Louisiana, for the most part, and the students end up speaking international, sort of standard, French, and so, they don't speak French at home for the most part. They sometimes speak French among themselves, the students, but not with their family who speak French at home. So, there's a disconnect there, and people tend to view the French immersion students as a little bit snobby, because of that. The student'll come back and say, 'Oh, well, you really shouldn't be saying *asteur*, you should be saying *maintenant*,' and just silly things like that.

Holly: Is it that Eurocentric kind of sentiment creeping in?

Christophe: Yes, yes, yeah. Anti-Europe, pro-Nova Scotia – there are lots of people who go to Nova Scotia, *Sainte Anne*, the university, to do French immersion there, but these are adults who didn't do French immersion in the public schools in Louisiana, so as adults, they go to Nova Scotia, to *Sainte Anne*, and spend six weeks or a summer, and that's all fine and accepted, because they're Acadians, and they speak the exact same French, which is nonsense. I mean, anyone who has ears can hear that it's not the same French either (Laughs) It's not the same! So, I don't think the *francolouisianais* movement is going to go anywhere. I do think that most people are going to go back to Creole identity.

Holly: That's fascinating! It's fascinating, the dynamic between all these terms. It does make you wonder, 'Why don't we just have, in 2021, the one term for everything, and have it be everything covered by one?' But the '60s, it had that effect.

Christophe: Yeah, massive change.

Holly: So, for you, when you started work on *Kouri-Vini* and you started work on the orthography, what inspired that for you? Was it out of the sense of needing to have a standardised orthography?

Christophe: Yes. It's because, at that time... So, the academics who wrote about *Kouri-Vini* were writing in French orthography. And then, there was also Tom Klingler at Tulane, he and some other linguists had published a dictionary in the late '90s, *Dictionary of Louisiana Creole* – it's currently the only one that's ever been published – and they use a Haitian-type orthography, it's 98% Haitian with some minor tweaks in there. But the problem was that the dictionary was never published for public consumption, it was published for academics. There were a limited number of prints – I think 200 – so, most people on the ground: A, didn't hear about this dictionary, never knew it existed; and B, didn't have access to it; and then C, couldn't understand a word in it, because it was written in this weird way – they had never seen this before, they had no connection, no interaction with Haitian Creole orthography, so how would they know this? And nobody was there to teach them the orthography, either. So, there was French orthography, and then there was the Haitian orthography, that comes out of Tom Klingler's work, and then ordinary people were using English orthography to write their words, so you've got three different orthographies. And my sense of it at the time was that it was causing confusion. It was not helping to unite people, it was helping to splinter people into all these different camps – the French-language camp, the Haitian camp... And so, I'd done my homework, I did the research on orthography wars throughout the world, in different places, and I was well aware that it's a very contentious type of project to undertake, because of this, and there are literally orthography wars, and stuff like that... so, I knew this, but I always felt that if we could just create an orthography that was unique to Louisiana, that was specific to its linguistic heritage, specific to its linguistic components, that it would unite people. So, we started working on this in 2008, I think, and then 2016 is when we published the orthography. And it took a while – there were heated debates among us, those of us who were creating this orthography, about different aspects of it and whatnot, and, in the end, we came to agreement through democracy, (a) democratic process, we voted on things, and that was it. And that was

how we came to have our orthography. And yeah, there are people who complain about it and say really derogatory things, like ‘It looks like ghetto French,’ ‘Why is it written phonetically?’, ‘It looks Haitian,’ ‘What’s this ugly w and k?’, on and on and on, but by and large, we expected people to react that way – and then, at some point, they come to identify with it. Why? Because they see it’s being used all over the place, the popularity of it. It’s like (a) bandwagon effect, which we expected would happen, that you would have this group of people who would not like it visually – without even learning anything about it – and then, when they see that there are lots of people who are using this orthography, then they’re going to start coming around, and that’s, in fact, what is happening right now, people who are coming around to it and seeing it being used all over the place, all over the Internet, which is cool.

Holly: That’s fantastic! It reminds me of Pennsylvania (German), because they had a big debate – that still goes on – between whether they want an orthography that’s more German-based, or more English-based, and I don’t think they’ve had a war over it, but they’ve had quite strong debates about it. But they have managed to get themselves a Wikipedia (site) in Pennsylvania (German). Maybe we need a *Kouri-Vini* Wikipedia (site).

Christophe: Yeah. We’re working on some things at the moment – I can’t talk too much about it – but there are some great things in the works (Laughs).

Holly: I’ll be keeping my eye out! (...) And Anglophone Louisianans, what’s their reaction to Louisiana French, or *Kouri-Vini*?

Christophe: They just sort of go with the flow. You know, everything – I’m sure people have referred to I-10, Interstate 10 in Louisiana, that basically cuts off the southern portion of the state, and communally, people will say, ‘Everyone who’s north of I-10 is Anglo, and everyone who’s south of it is part of our community, Cajun, Creole, *Isleño*.’ And it is true, to a certain extent: everything above St. Landry and Pointe Coupee Parishes is firmly Anglophone Protestant. They come completely out of a different ethnic group, and their culture is also

different. And I'm sure – I've never worked on them, per se – that they feel a bit left out, because our community has taken the... When people think of Louisiana, they think of us, not them, and so, I'm sure they feel like they've been excluded in this process, but at the same time, the state gets popularity for our community, which then, in turn, creates jobs and stuff, and because these jobs, you don't have to be a French speaker or Creole speaker or Spanish speaker, people who are from Anglophone Louisiana can apply for them, too – like in tourism, and things like that. So, I'm sure they feel excluded. I would, if 60% geographically of the state is Anglophone Protestant, and then the rest is what everybody knows. It makes sense. That would be an interesting study, actually. What are the Anglophone Louisianian reactions to us? There was always a sort of stark division between Anglophone Protestants and Creoles in Louisiana, up until – in my part of the state, up until the mid-20th century, so it was really the World War I and II period that bridged that gap through the schooling. But up until then, Anglophones lived on one side of the city, everybody else lived on the other side of the city, they interacted at work, but not much socially, because they didn't go to the same churches, they didn't speak the same languages. They didn't like one another, either; there was prejudice that was involved there, as well. The Creoles always thought of the Anglophones as 'money-hungry', and '(they) don't know how to enjoy life, all they do is think about work and make money and make babies and that's it,' and vice versa, that 'we spend too much time with booze' and we're 'idle', and all of this stuff. So, someone should do that. That would be an interesting study, what the Anglophone Louisianians think and thought about us.

Holly: That would be, especially because – on a national scale, but also on a state level, if 60% of Louisiana is Anglo – they are the linguistic majority, [so it would be interesting.]

Christophe: [Yeah. In New Orleans, they are,] so we know more about them in New Orleans than elsewhere, because they came to outnumber Creoles in New Orleans quite early on – So, Louisiana became a state in 1812, and by 1870, 1880, they were much more numerous in New

Orleans than the Creoles were, so much so that the city started growing outward because of them, which is why people will always say uptown New Orleans is the American Quarter, whereas downtown, the French Quarter, is where the Creoles stayed. And that is true, to a certain extent, and it was a city that was mostly divided by Canal Street. Canal Street was the dividing point, so everything that was north and west of Canal Street was American, and everything that was on the other side, in the French Quarter, was Latin, and that's true. But eventually, they became so numerous in New Orleans, and so powerful – because the money started flowing through them by that point – that they didn't even really care what Creoles thought about them, because they were the powerbrokers in New Orleans at that point. I mean, Creoles were there at their mercy, kind of. And so, at some point, through the English language, there was a bit of a merging of the two, and so, we know more about that process in New Orleans, but we don't know all that much outside of New Orleans (in terms of) what the Anglophones thought and think of us.

Holly: We'll have to get some sociologists on it!

Christophe: Or a historian, even, yeah.

Holly: So, when someone says 'Creole' to you, what comes to mind, when you hear the word 'Creole'?

Christophe: So, for me, it's simple. It's just a Latin person from Louisiana who speaks a Romance language and is either Roman Catholic or their family used to be at some point. So, really, it's that simple for me.

Holly: Okay. Do aspects of the culture sometimes come to mind, when you think 'Creole culture'?

Christophe: Um... (Pauses) No, because, you know, whether you're in Natchitoches Parish or Orleans (Parish) or Plaquemines Parish, we eat the same food... The music does change a little bit. So, Cajun, zydeco, those are things that come out of Southwest Louisiana. East Louisiana,

you have jazz and blues. And then Northwest Louisiana, they have their own thing. Musically, there are different aspects of Creoleness, but by and large, the culture is the same.

Holly: It's more of the identity itself.

Christophe: It's the identity, but for me, culture is much more important. Now, I don't define culture the way that most people do, because lots of people will say – and they will yell this from the top of Mount Rushmore – 'Creole is a culture, it's not a race! Creole is a culture, it's not a race!' And then they'll say, 'Oh, well, she's not Creole because she's Black,' or, 'He's not Creole because he's White,' you know? They'll racialise it. So, in the US, race and culture very often synonyms, and you see this in the current sort of political atmosphere, where folks will say QAnon and whatever, those are representative of 'culture wars', but what they're really saying is 'racial (wars)', but they can't say 'racial', because you want to use a synonym for it, right, so 'culture' is the synonym. But for me, it's not, because you have people who – all Cajuns practice Creole culture. Okay, they're racially different, but they still practice the same culture as people of colour who are from the exact same place. So, for me, it's the actual culture that makes the distinction between Creole and non-Creole in Louisiana, and for me, it's a Latin culture. We do the exact same things that people in the Caribbean, Central, and South America do. We have the same label system, based on the Napoleonic Code, but it's part of the old Roman system – so we're not a British Commonwealth. Mardi Gras is the exact same thing as Carnival. The food – beans and rice, okra, all this stuff – it's literally the exact same stuff as what people consume and do, and observe, all over Latin America. So, for me, we're just part of the Latin world, and Creole is our Latin identity.

Holly: That's amazing! I've never heard it described that way, but that's such a nice description of it, and, like you said, you're part of that whole realm of Latin culture in the Americas.

Christophe: Mm-hmm.

Holly: So, how do members of the community – when they want to tell stories, or they want to pass narratives on from one generation to the next – how do you find that they do that? Is it more of an oral tradition that's stuck around, or do they use...?

Christophe: Not anymore, and that's one of the aspects that we lose with language drift, right? Our community used to be full of folktales: the *Bouki* and *Lapin* folktales, and the *loup-garou* folktales, and the *feu follet* folktales, and on and on and on. And people like Nathan (Rabalais) and Barry Ancelet have been trying to rekindle those, and they do so bilingually or trilingually. So, they'll present the original language of the short story or the folktale and translate it into English – from French or from Creole into English – until what ends up happening is that most Creoles now speak English, and so they'll go to the English translation, but it's not like they're reintroducing the folktales into the family, or into the community. They sort of read it as (a) curiosity, and then that's it, (they read it) as literature. So, when we transitioned from our own heritage languages, community languages, to English, we lost that aspect of the culture. I did not grow up hearing folktales. Very rarely, my grandmother would talk about this sort of folkloric figure who was half man, half horse, and a neighbour who was very superstitious, who I didn't know – so, my grandparents were born in 1916 and 1917, and so, they knew people who were still... English was not their preferred language, it was not their main language – and so, sometimes they would talk about some of these people, the neighbours, and one neighbour in particular, Miss X. She was very superstitious, and so every day, when she was going to work, she would pass in front of this telephone pole that's, like, one of those big, tall, wooden poles, and she would see this man who was half man, half horse, but there was no name for him. He was always just this sort of mythological figure. And she would say, 'Hello Sir, how are you? How are you, Sir? Good day to you, Sir,', and walk away. And this was her way of protecting herself, by greeting him and things like that. That's the only folkloric type (of) story I ever heard growing up. And I speak the languages, I'm from there, and all of this

stuff – I’m not transplanted – so, there was a lot that was lost in the transitioning to English, cause these things, by Anglophones – even though Anglophones are superstitious, like all humans, but superstitious in a different way about different things – and so our stuff became viewed as weird and superstitious, potentially voodoo and things like that. And so, it got shunned and lost along the way. So, yeah, I don’t think that stuff is ever coming back.

Holly: What about music, or visual art, is that something that’s, for... I know it is for the Louisiana French, to some extent – music, less so visual art – is that something [that for Creoles...?]

Christophe: [Yeah, music is really] important for both Cajun-identified and Creole-identified – Cajun music on one side, zydeco on the other side – but what’s interesting is that the Cajun-identified musicians, that camp, tends to still sing in French and, sometimes, in Creole, too. So, people from St. Martin Parish, like Al Berard – who just passed away not long ago – he used to sing in *Kouri-Vini*. Now, people heard it and would call it ‘Cajun French’, which we hear a lot, but it’s still performed in the community of languages. But zydeco has now mostly gone to English. So, you see a linguistic difference there between the two styles of music, but music is still really important. I would say it’s the most important aspect of identity – Cajun and Creole identity – in Louisiana for most people. You know, when people ask them, ‘What is Cajun culture? What is Creole culture?’, one of the first things they’ll say is ‘Music’, and then the second is ‘Do you put tomatoes in your gumbo or not?’, which is nonsense. But this is, like, a defining factor for Cajuns about Creoles: Creoles put tomatoes in gumbo and we don’t. It’s nonsense. I’ve never seen [anyone put tomatoes in their gumbo.]

Holly: [That’s like asking what] you eat with your fish and chips in the UK, or what you call a bread roll.

Christophe: Right, right! Yes (Laughs).

Holly: (...) It’s that kind of question where it seems slightly silly, I guess?

Christophe: Yeah, it's silly! Of course, it's silly, but people make these distinctions and they're serious about them, and they'll swear up and down, tell us how we cook our gumbo, you know, which is crazy. But they do it, you'll see it on Facebook and social media, the Cajun and Creole wars, and you'll always find gumbo in the discussion. (...) Visual art, I think it's coming around. People like Jonathan Mayers – he's from Baton Rouge – he's producing art, and also literature, in Creole, so he's conceptualising it in the language and also the languages represented in the imagery. So, he's the one who did Nathan Rabalais' cover for his new book...

Holly: Oh, I've seen that, it's a beautiful cover!

Christophe: Yeah. Jonathan did that, and it uses folkloric figures in the cover, so I don't know if you noticed the rabbit, and then there's this bright light in the background...

Holly: That's the *feu follet*, right?

Christophe: Yep. So, this type of work, he brings to life the folkloric figures from our folktale and uses the language to bring that to life. But he's one of the only artists I know that does that. I call it 'vernacular art'. I don't know how he was terming his art, but that's what it is to me, Creole vernacular art. He's the only one I know that's doing that type of visual art.

Holly: I may have to speak to him, because that art is amazing.

Christophe: Yeah, yeah, it's so cool.

Holly: I'm going to leave you with one more question, which is: When you see people today using – Cajun-identified people and Creole-identified people – using French or Creole today, do you see it more as a means of celebrating the culture, or is it more a resistance against Anglophone culture, or is it something else entirely, do you think?

Christophe: I think all three, because, for some people, it's just habit – specifically the older generation, but that older generation also tends to be the most resentful of the Americanisation of the region, also, so that melds into resistance, I think. For the younger generation, it's definitely resistance: resistance to Americanisation, and also resistance to race. They won't say

this, but whiteness... This is a fascinating discussion – I mean, it’ll take forever to talk about it – but you often hear folks in our community refer to ‘White people’. When they’re using that specific term, they’re thinking ‘White Anglo’, even though they identify as White. But whiteness and blackness is sort of like the ‘Others’, and so, with the younger generation, who are now rekindling these languages, that was their choice to do that, because they grew up in an English-speaking environment. They chose, at some point, to relearn our heritage languages, and so, because of that, that’s resistance as well, but much more forcefully, right? Because they’re the ones who will go into a bank and ask for services in French or in Creole, they’re the ones who will go on social media and who will be encouraging people to speak, and read, and write, in the languages, not the older generation – they’re much more passive. They’ll speak the languages in their own confines and their own orbits, but outside of that, not so much. They’re not the ones who would picket for language rights, they’re not the ones who would do these types of things. So, I think there’s resistance in both, and habit in the older generation, and I also think the third category is sort of emancipation – so, getting away from both of those things, for the *francolouisianais*, because their eyes are set on Europe, in getting out of Louisiana, in getting away from the identity wars and issues, and emancipating themselves in that way. So, using language as their exit point from Louisiana, and that’s an interesting question. I hadn’t thought about... No one has ever asked that before, but yeah, I think it’s something like that.

Holly: That’s an amazing answer! I think, if it’s okay with you – I did have some more questions, I might like to schedule, if that’s okay, another (session) at some point?

Christophe: Yes, yes.

(END OF FIRST SESSION)

Date of Second Session: Friday 28th May 2021

Time of Second Session: 17.00 BST, 11.00 CDT

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

Holly: I actually wanted to know a little bit more about your work with Ancestry and your genealogy work, and how you got into that, because I find it fascinating – if you're okay to share, that is.

Christophe: No, that's fine! So, my family... One of the things that's unique about South Louisiana is that family reunion traditions are quite old. They seem sort of more modern, more recent and commercial, even, outside of South Louisiana, but down there, it's an old tradition, and so on one branch of my family – my grandfather, on his mother's side – they had family reunions every five years, I think. And when I was in high school, my family – my particular branch of the family – were hosting the family reunion in New Iberia. And so, my aunts and uncles and Mom, all of them were making preparations and everything, and genealogy came up. I mean, genealogy was always discussed with the family openly, but in particular, what struck me at that point was – and I heard this growing up, but I guess because we were hosting the reunion that year, it just resonated a little bit more – and it was that an ancestor, who's sort of the guy who's recognised as a patriarch on that branch of the family... His parentage was always sort of trivialised and people whispered about his parentage and stuff like that, which I always found weird. You know, 'Why do you whisper about dead people? (Laughs) They can't hear you or anything, they're dead! Why are you whispering?' (...) And it wasn't clear who his parents were, and it wasn't clear to me if that was a personal choice by the family, the descendants, to sort of concoct some creation story about the family, or if there were

circumstances surrounding his birth that really left his descendants without being able to know who his parents were. So, I started conducting research – this was in 1999, 1998 – to figure out this question, like, ‘Why are these guys whispering about his parents?’ And that began as just trying to figure out that question, and it expanded into a multi-state, multi-national, multi-generational genealogical database, cause then it grew from just our specific family to all the ones we were – so, I pushed the generations back, I answered the question about the parents – but in doing so, I pushed the family’s lineage back more generations and then, I also started including more recent generations and then who the children married, and all this stuff, and so it grew into this community ethnic database – you know, Louisiana Creoles, and that, of course, includes Cajuns and *Isleños* and *Québécois* and Acadians – and so on and so forth. So, that’s what got me interested in genealogy. I feel like I’ve always been immersed in genealogy because of the circumstances of my upbringing, being around people a lot, who – my grandparents were both raised by their grandparents, so right there, that’s covering over a hundred years of stories and memory. And so, I feel fortunate in that way. There are so many people who don’t even know who their great-grandparents are, and I can name you several generations of my family tree without looking at sources.

Holly: What a memory, and what an amazing story of you being able to build up such a massive database that spanned the community.

Christophe: Yeah. I started to conduct research for people, clients, after that point, so in my early twenties (...) and then, I got really burned out by my studies at university, I had to work as well – which I didn’t mind doing – and I continued to sell genealogical research services and/or reports that I had created for public consumption, for clients who wanted, like, several generations on a particular family, or something like that. They could go to my website – and still can, by the way – and purchase genealogical reports, narrative reports on any one of the 300 families I’ve researched in my database.

Holly: That's an amazing number – 300 families?!

Christophe: Oh, yeah, it's over 300 (Laughs).

Holly: Gosh! And what were people's reactions – before you started doing the client-based work – did you ever approach, when you started going down the generations to descendants of other branches... If you ever approached them, what were people's reactions to that? Were they fascinated to hear about their history, or...?

Christophe: You see everything, or I saw everything. There were some who were disappointed, cause I cracked the puzzle (Laughs) the mystery, and it wasn't really a mystery, it's just that... What I think happened in that particular – my grandfather's mother's family – was that my grandfather... His mother was one of thirteen, and her parents died at kind of a young age, they were in their sixties, and they died several months apart. And then, the family started to ask questions about her father's parentage. All the people who knew first-hand were dead, and so, it meant that the rest of the people – it was all hearsay. Humans are storytellers, and so, I think... You know, my grandfather's aunts (and) cousins started to concoct these creation stories and things like that. It wasn't anything nefarious, but at some point, these creation stories become identity, and so, because they become identity – as we see with Cajunisation, for example – when you present new knowledge about whatever the topic is – in this case, genealogy – you find some people are disappointed, because it doesn't match with whatever the creation story had become. And so, I had relatives who were a little bit disappointed, even though, you know, his actual parents, their story is, to me, even more fascinating. And then you had others who were totally fascinated by it and wanted to know more about it. And then, you had others who were just sort of indifferent, and they had always been indifferent to it, so... In genealogy, we see that quite often, these different reactions. So... I'm going to put this out there, I disidentify with race, and I choose to – like the older generation – identify with Creole as an ethnic identity, and so in *créolité*, we have people of some West African descent, some without West African

descent, some with Native American descent, some without that, and so it's always difficult for English speakers, for whatever reason, to grasp that. And so, the easiest thing that I've found to get around that problem is by just comparing it to Hispanic or to Brazilian (identity), or something like that – people will usually get it at that point. And because the community has people of all these diverse roots – 'routes' in the American sense, and 'roots' in the literal roots and genealogical sense – in genealogical research, I always come across families whose racial identities have changed over time, and some who left from Louisiana deliberately to live a better life with a new identity. That's referred to in the United States as 'passing for White'. So, I've been in contact with descendants of Creoles who left Louisiana to go to various places, to have a better life and assume a new identity, and then their descendants come and start conducting research and find out that their ancestors were racially marked as Quadroon, or racially marked as Black, and they identify as White – or they identify as Black – and some people struggle with that. And in that struggle, I've had clients who have completely severed contact with me after receiving the report, and then I've had others who are so grateful for the research explaining these things to them, and it helped them to understand certain choices that their ancestors made. So, we see all sorts of reactions, including in my family.

Holly: For some reason, I didn't expect the negative reactions, but I guess, like you said, for some people it's bringing to light things that they didn't want to know, even though when you go into genealogy – my Dad is hugely into genealogy – you do find things that you don't expect, and that's kind of the whole point...

Christophe: Yeah.

Holly: ... that you're going to see things that you didn't necessarily want to find, but you find them.

Christophe: Well, so this may be somewhat unique to genealogy in the United States in terms of the way that people think about genealogy. So, what generally happens is that a lot of people only view genealogy as starting when their ancestors arrived in the United States.

Holly: Oh, okay.

Christophe: And so, they'll conduct research – the major point of interest, usually, for people in the United States in genealogy, is the ancestors up until the immigrant ancestor. But because a lot of them don't know who their great-grandparents are... So, if you don't know who those close, recent generations are, then you have a whole bunch of generations to learn about, and all these people went through all these different changes, social, political, economic changes in the US. So, that period between the immigrant and the present really is what fascinates American citizens most. The immigrant ancestor's also of interest, because then Americans attach their identities to that immigrant ancestor, to one of them, and so this is why you hear lots of Americans say that they're Irish and that they're Italian, German, French, whatever. So, if it's an immigrant ancestor, they're satisfied in general. But I always tell them, like, 'Your ancestry goes on and on and on... Since the beginning of time, since Noah's Ark!' And so, you can't just stop at your immigrant ancestor, because that ancestor also has a story and also comes from a family and also comes from a community, and so on and so forth. But there's this sort of general mindset that once you've cracked the puzzle of identifying an immigrant ancestor, you don't really have to (carry on), because that's your lineage. Well, yeah, kind of, but no, not really, because in England, there are lots of English who are of French descent and of Scandinavian descent and of German descent, and on and on and on. And so, there's this idea that once you get back to the so-called 'mother country', 'mother continent', everyone is pure there and there's no reason to research anything further and the assumption is that those families have been there for thousands of years. And so, they're not much interested in the deep genealogical ancestry before the immigration happened.

Holly: They like to keep the mythology reserved, like you said, for, ‘We arrived in America, and then this is the family mythology from there.’

Christophe: Yeah, yeah. And so, that’s why the disappointment happens, is that the research complicates the mythology, or dislodges it, and so people will reject it or people will find it suspicious or people will... They have these different reactions to it. And we see that in genealogy all the time: ‘No, that can’t be right, Christophe! Yeah, I know you have a million documents here showing that this is the son of this couple and stuff, but you’re mixing up the names, because the son had the same name as the father...’ – ‘No, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, that’s not true, you were conflating the generations and the names.’ It’s a very delicate industry to be in, because we have to walk a fine line all the time. It’s constantly walking on eggshells for lots of people, in particular for people who are researching ethnic groups that are not their own. So, I have colleagues on my team, for example – my team is the Latin American team – but none of my colleagues are themselves Latin Americans, and so, for example, in the US, everyone wants to be Native American, but most people are not, or even of that descent, and so, we get lots of people from the American Southwest and Gulf Coast – like, Texas to California – who are of Mexican descent and have been in the US, maybe a generation, sometimes deeper – like, seven generations – who then come to us and say, ‘I’ve taken Ancestry DNA, and the results said that I’m 30% Native American, and I’d like for you to find out who my Cherokee ancestors were,’ (...) So, then you have to say, ‘Well, Cherokees didn’t exist in Mexico, they didn’t exist in the American Southwest, so you’re not of Cherokee descent.’ You have to explain this to them, and explain how it will be received. It’s tricky, because it depends on tone, it depends on the openness of the client to new information, and on and on. And so, genealogy is a tricky industry to be in, but ultimately, it’s fulfilling, because regardless of whether or not the client likes the results, we can’t change history and we can’t change who we descend from, and that’s what I always say to them. It is what it is.

Holly: That is very true, it is what it is. (...) I have one other question for you that I wanted to ask last time, which was: For you, was there anything that you which – from your experience with research, and then, your genealogical work – was known more widely about the Louisiana Creole people, or the Louisiana French people, or both?

Christophe: Yeah. In both my community work and also academic work – one of the things I always say... Because it's always the question of, 'What makes Creole? Who are Creoles?' Creole gets trivialised nowadays, because of the rise of Cajunisation, and so people's reaction is that, 'Oh, it's complicated, it's changed over time,', and all of that stuff. Well, what identity hasn't? But my take-home message always is that Louisiana Creoles, which include now these subgroups – like *Isleño* and Cajun – are a Latin ethnic group in Louisiana. We are Latin Louisianans. We share the same legal code as every country in Latin America, we share 90% of the same dishes, food, as people in Latin America – the beans and rice and gravy, and all this stuff – and linguistically and religiously, we share the same background as well. And so, this is why, when people come to South Louisiana, they often say that, 'Oh, it seems very Caribbean here! You guys feel and look Caribbean. What are you, Cajun-identified or Creole-identified?', or even, 'Are you Black- or White-identified?' People will often say to folks in South Louisiana who are Creoles, 'Oh, you look Cuban, you look Dominican, you look Mexican,' – there's a reason why. It's because we're all part of that same Latin world, and, because we're part of that same Latin world, we share genealogical, historical, and cultural ties with all these people and all these different Latin countries. And so, when I frame it that way, it helps people to deracialise the ethnic group, because otherwise, the tendency is to always racialise everything, and when we racialise everything, we're looking for difference but not looking for commonalities – stuff that Cajuns and Creoles actually share, or that *Isleños* and Creoles share, and so on. So, my sort of *raison d'être* is to show people the commonality, show people what we share, rather than focusing on division or difference.

Holly: And that's so important nowadays as well, isn't it – for us to recognise, particularly given recent events with the pandemic, and also politically, it is so important to recognise what we share in common with each other, rather than constantly dividing.

Christophe: Yeah. Difference exists, but in these sort of caste-oriented societies – and to me, race is caste – difference is the primary focus of people's identities, and so, if you focus on difference so much and it's your go-to and your default, then it's hard for you to understand why this whole idea that Cajun and Creole are different is nonsense. It's hard, unless you can look beyond race, and once you look beyond race, it's crystal clear, and so this is what I help people to see and experience in my academic and community work.

Holly: I mean, my mind is blown – hearing about the stories, and hearing about how far your genealogical work has gotten... I mean, to go back as far as you have, that is hard work. That is impressive.

APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW WITH DAVID CHERAMIE

Date of Interview: Tuesday 25th May 2021

Time of Interview: 12.00 BST, 06.00 CDT

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

PLEASE NOTE: THIS INTERVIEW CONTAINS SENSITIVE LANGUAGE THAT MAY CAUSE OFFENSE. THIS HAS BEEN RETAINED AS IT IS RELEVANT TO THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THE PARTICIPANT.

Holly: I'd like to start, if I may, by asking about your experiences as a speaker of Louisiana French, or Cajun French, or *cadien* – whichever term you prefer – how did you start speaking the language?

David: Well, it's a long story, I guess you could say. First of all, I did not – French is not my first language, but I did grow up hearing it all around in my grandparents... and my parents, it was their first language. And I grew up in a small town in South Louisiana where, at that time – so, early '60s, even through the late '70s – most people spoke French, and everybody who was 40, 50 years old at that time, French is probably their first language. And so, you'd go to (the) store, you'd go to church, and Mass was in – cause we're all Catholics – was in English. I mean, people speaking to you in French, you'd go to the store, go to anywhere and all the people, older people were speaking to each other in French and in our English, also. My generation is very much inflected with a lot of French expressions, you know, so (there's) a lot of French feel to it, I guess you could say. So yes, I always wanted to learn to speak French. I

remember when my grandfather – when I was a little boy – started teaching me a little bit of French, my maternal grandfather, who lives fifty yards from us here. I had one uncle inside the house, another uncle on the other side, you know – that was pretty much typical of the time, like families would kind of live in these little... I wouldn't say compounds, but everybody, brothers and sisters, would kind of build their houses near the parents' house, and that was the case with my mother's family. And so, my grandfather would teach my French, and I always wanted to learn to speak French, but he passed away when I was eight years old. Nobody else really wanted to teach me French after that, everybody thought that was a waste of time and then I went on to other thing, but that was always in the back of my mind, to learn to speak French. I always loved the language, always knew what it sounded like, I knew (how) French was supposed to sound, I knew how it's supposed to feel. I just like the whole musicality of it – I remember my grandfather's brother, we called *Nonc Fernand* – in Louisiana French, instead of *oncle* for uncle, we say *nonc* – *Nonc Fernand*. They would sit down and talk to each other, and I remember sitting in front of them as a little boy, just listening to them talk, and I just thought it was the most beautiful I ever heard in my life. So, that's where it (began). It wasn't really until I got to college, many years later that – I went to Loyola University in New Orleans, and I started meeting a lot of Hispanic kids, cause New Orleans has a big Hispanic (population), and a lot of kids whose families were Cuban refugees who fled when Castro took power – some were either born in Cuba or came shortly thereafter – but they were all bilingual, bicultural. And that just blew my mind – saying, 'These kids and I can be just as American,' ...We all liked a lot of the same bands and what not, but then they'd have this whole other side where they'd listen to salsa music and Gloria Estefan, she was Cuban, with her band, the Miami Sound Machine, I remember that was a pretty big deal with some of those kids at that time – and they'd speak to each other in Spanish, and I said, 'Why can't I do that?' So that's why I decided – and I did do French in school, and I did very well, but I was never able to get over that hump

to become actually fluent, cause I never was immersed in a completely Francophone environment, I was never forced to speak French, you know. So, that's when I decided. Through CODOFIL, the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana, I was able to get a year-long stay, did a programme in Montpellier in France, (and) in that year, '81, '82, I really learned to speak French fluently, and it all started from there, really.

Holly: That's amazing! So, you kind of got to move towards, like you said with the students that had come from Cuba, you got to move more towards that bicultural world?

David: Yeah. Cause back home, there was a lot of, how should I say, hesitancy – you know, 'Oh, this all just the old people's French, and the music is just *chanky chank*. We want to listen to Led Zeppelin and what not – we don't listen to the Mamou Playboys and bands like that.' And where I'm from in South Louisiana, the kind of music we associated with Cajun music really wasn't what we called French music – where I'm from, in Bayou Lafourche, it was more like Country Western sung in French. That was French music. The accordion was not at all prevalent, you know, steel guitar, violin. A lot of waltzes – there's still waltzes and two-steps – but it was more country western than I guess you would... And no Zydeco either, because we didn't have a significant Black population where we're from, so we didn't have that influence, but we did have an influence from New Orleans. That's one thing about where we're from, (we're) closer to New Orleans, so we catch all the New Orleans television stations, so there's a big influence of jazz and the whole New Orleans culture, that New Orleans Creole culture where we're from, more so than in the Lafayette area, where I live now.

Holly: I mean, I've heard a lot of the modern music, like the Lost Bayou Ramblers and things, and the accordion's always there, so it's really interesting to hear that for you, it wasn't really so much a part of that. It was more leaning towards the country side of things.

David: Yeah.

Holly: So, when someone says to you ‘Louisiana French’, what comes to mind first for you? Is it the language?

David: Well, yeah, it’s the variety of languages together, cause Cajun French is a little bit too reductive. It’s very controversial, cause the word Cajun itself is derived from ‘Acadian’, and I consider myself a Cajun, but I have very little Acadian ancestry, really. Most of my ancestry is straight from France, quite frankly, but on my French side at least, and German. My mother’s side, they’re German, my great-grandfather immigrated at the end of the 19th century to New Orleans, and then he ran away and went to live with a Cajun family on Bayou Lafourche, and he never spoke German after that, even though New Orleans did have – a lot of people don’t realise – New Orleans did have a very large and significant German-speaking population. There was even a German-language newspaper. There’s a very interesting novel written in German called *The Mysteries in New Orleans* by somebody who knew New Orleans at that time, in the late 19th century, it’s a very interesting book. But yeah, he got assimilated into the French, so anybody (who) was moving into the countryside – I guess you could say outside of New Orleans at that time – they had to learn to speak French in order to survive.

Holly: That surprises me, that there was such a prevalent German-speaking population in Louisiana. I didn’t know that.

David: Yeah, well, actually, almost from the beginning, from the 1720s, you look at the maps of Louisiana, you’ll see towns called *Des Allemands*, *Lac des Allemands*, They were actually German, they were Alsatians in the 1720s, and they spoke a form of German, but they had names like Schexnayder, Waguespack (or Wagensbach), but those are all good Cajun names nowadays, just like there’s Romero and Hernandez, a lot of Spanish (names), cause Louisiana was Spanish territory for a long time, so a lot of those families got assimilated also into the Louisiana French, or Cajun, realm, I guess – the Louisiana Creole realm. So, when you say, ‘My name is Waguespack, and I’m Cajun,’ well, he’s right, you know? It’s a Cajun name. A

lot of other families, like (those) of Spanish origin – Ortego is another big one, also. A lot of people don't realise that when Louisiana was a Spanish territory – that's when the seven boats of about 1,600 Acadians came over from France in 1785 – but that same year, there was about the same amount of *Isleños* who came over from the Canary Islands and moved into Saint Bernard Parish in eastern New Orleans. And there is a small Spanish-speaking population in that area, where they speak that type of Spanish. that they got from their Canary Islands ancestors. And New Iberia – with the name, of course – that was founded by people from Malaga, they came over about that same time, but most of them, eventually, got absorbed into the French-speaking world. Afterwards, we got absorbed into the English-speaking world.

Holly: That's really cool! So, you've a truly international group [in Louisiana.]

David: [Mm-hmm. And then we talk about the Africans] that came over on the slave ships, that's a whole other story, also. So, there's this big *mélange* of all these different cultures. And the Native Americans, a lot of the Native American tribes adopted French, also, like the Houmas and the Chitimachas, the Tunica-Biloxi, a lot of them all speak French cause they had to learn the French language in order to trade with the French sellers around them.

Holly: Amazing! So, what would you say the attitude is nowadays to Louisiana French? I know CODOFIL does a lot of excellent work with the immersion programmes – is there still a strong interest?

David: Oh yes, yes, there is. The irony of it is that fifty, sixty years ago, it was kind of looked down upon if you spoke French in public. You know, 'You speak English, you're Americans, forget all about that.' And now, when people hear me speaking in French in public with other French speakers, they say, 'Oh, I wish my parents would have taught me French, or my grandparents would have taught me French. I wish I could speak French. I gotta go to France or Canada and spend some time and go to an immersion programme, learn to speak French fluently, it's just so wonderful.' So, it's the total opposite of before, where it was a language

that people tried to shame you for speaking. Now, it's considered something very desirable, to speak French.

Holly: That's fantastic! That really is fantastic news.

David: But getting from it being desirable to actually speaking it, there's a lot of hurdles you gotta overcome to get to that point.

Holly: This is very true.

David: Everything is in English. You have to really carve out a little niche for yourself, define these spaces where you can really learn to practice, to speak French.

Holly: So, when people use Louisiana French now, if they're using it, let's say, in a storytelling scenario, how do people tend to do that? Does it tend to be still kind of an *oraliture*, or is it more written, or do they use something completely different, like music?

David: Well, music is, the lyrics to songs – yeah, that's very important. A lot of the younger musicians all consider... You know, it's not Cajun music if it's not in French, that's just basically it. There's no such thing as English lyrics in a Cajun song. And spoken, yeah, a lot of it is in spoken French and I guess what distinguishes it, of course, is in the vocabulary – a lot of expressions, some of the grammar – but that's about it. You know, there's a great variety of different ways to speak English – you bring up that point, cause people get stuck on this thing, you know, 'You say *j'vas*, I say *je vais*.' And I always say, 'You ever watch those *Crocodile Dundee* movies? Do you understand a word that guy was saying in the Australian accent? No, you didn't understand a darn thing before we got used to...' In America, at least, that was the first time we started to hear, really, Australian accents. People really couldn't distinguish it, quite frankly – at first – from a British accent, cause we had no idea what that was. And they would be talking about the 'barbie' – we thought they were talking about the doll, and the idea that they were talking about a barbecue... And there's a lot of examples. Vocabulary – you explain it to people and then they understand, 'Oh, okay.' And it's even worse in Spanish,

cause there's a lot more Spanish-speaking countries, and every country has its own little quirks and expressions and vocabulary shifts and what not, that a lot of people, as soon as they open their mouth, you know where they're from, and I don't see it as a bad thing. But in French, I guess, a lot of people have postulated what the problem with French is, and I think a lot of that has to do with the fact that the largest English-speaking country in the world is not English, the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world is not Spain, but the largest French-speaking country is still France. There's still that concentration and *l'Académie Française*, and still this desire to exert soft power, quite frankly, on the part of the French diplomatic corps, through the French language and French culture. There's still this tendency to want to normalise, standardise the language, even though the French have started making great strides – at least now they recognise that in Quebec, they have this different accent, different vocabulary, sometimes that's about as far as they'll go, but at least they recognise (it.). In Africa, of course, they certainly recognise that there are a lot of African Francophone countries too, with all different expressions and accents.

Holly: Mm-hmm. Yeah, I've noticed similar, where we have *la Francophonie*, and then the *métropole* is its own, discrete entity, as opposed to it being a united diaspora, I guess.

David: Yeah. And I always find it kind of funny when they talk about Francophone writers, as one example. What they mean is people who write in French who aren't French. They don't consider themselves to be Francophone for some reason. When they say 'Francophone', they're not talking about themselves, they're talking about everybody else. When you talk about, you know, Hispanic writers, that's everybody from Spain to Argentina, you know.

Holly: That's very true.

David: In English, it's the same thing. A writer from South Africa, or Australia, or Britain, or wherever, that's still English language. They might change, you know, they might stick some 'youse', where we kind of find that funny, for flavour and colour, you know – 'What are youse

doing?’ How did that get in there? Well, we know, cause it comes from French, ‘y’all’, but a lot of people don’t really understand that. But as far Louisiana French is concerned, even within the state, there’s quite a bit of differences (sic) – nothing vast or difficult but just some of your expressions, just... things you wouldn’t say in Ville Platte that you would say in Galliano. The accent will be a little different, but it’s still part of the same family. And then there’s the Creole element, also, that kind of makes things a little more interesting too, because a lot of people speak the Creole, which is a different language. And some people speak kind of an intermediary between Louisiana French and Creole also, especially people who live in the Atchafalaya Basin, for example – in that area is a big mixture, a *mélange* of the two languages, you’ll find (that) there. But technically speaking, we’re all Creole. You look at the definition of Creole, you know, people of Spanish or French origin born in the New World – that’s us. That’s everybody except people of African and of Native American origin, and even then, there’s a lot of mixture with that, also. A lot of us have, you know, ancestors who were either Native American or people who, as we say, pass for white (who) descend from former enslaved people from Africa, also. There’s a lot of racial components in there that it starts getting very tricky and difficult and painful, quite frankly, once you start bringing those things up, but it’s there. It’s our reality.

Holly: Yeah, I’ve read about that. I’ve read a few pieces on the divide between Cajun and Creole, and you can sense the tension there still.

David: I think it’s getting better. I think the younger generation is kind of getting over... It’s an older generation, really, you know, on the African American side, the people who’ve been through the civil rights movements of the ’60s, and on the other side, people kind of look at that (with) backlash, you know, ‘Why is this happening? We never owned slaves, why should we have to worry about that?’ That kind of mentality. And so, it’s very complicated and something that you really have to tread lightly on.

Holly: I will bear that in mind in this process. So, if I may, I've got with me a copy of *Lait à mère* and I've got a copy of *Julie Choufleur* and I wanted to ask what inspired you, really, to start writing these, because they're fascinating.

David: Thank you. Well, *Lait à mère* really started when I started doing my masters here at UL (University of Louisiana at Lafayette) and then I started reading a lot of some of the local writers, like Barry Ancelet – who wrote under the name of Jean Arceneaux – and Zachary Richard the singer – who's also a fantastic poet – and just basically went, 'I could do that!' So, reading that, and then Barry, in his office one day, just kind of handed me a book by a Franco-Ontarian poet by the name of Patrice Desbiens – a book called *Sudbury* – and when I read that, I said, 'Oh my God. That is exactly what I want to talk about,' this fact that you have this language that's in you, it's part of your heritage, but you're just kinda swamped, surrounded by this Anglophone environment, you're struggling to keep... There's one of the quotes, at the beginning of *Sudbury*, where he's talking about the waitress, and he said, 'Yeah, I'm French but I don't speak it.' And I said, 'Oh yeah, yeah.' And then he goes on saying how, 'Well, you've gotta speak it if you want to be it,' and so that's who pretty much inspired me. And a couple of the poems in there were actually some poems that I wrote originally in English – cause I was doing a little bit of poetry always, from grade school – that got translated into French, and I thought they were better in French, so I just started writing more French. Everybody said, 'Oh, you know, Cajun French, Louisiana French, it's not a real language, cause it's not written.' Well, it's not written until somebody writes it. So, that was part of it, too, to get the words down on the page and try to give some value to some of our vocabulary. Like *chaoui* for raccoon – when the European explorers started coming, they had never seen a raccoon, cause that's not a European animal, it's North American, but of course, the Native Americans knew all about raccoons, and they'd say, 'Oh that's a *chaoui*,' but the French said, 'We're going to call it *raton laveur*. He's a big rat that washes his food.' That's kind of lazy,

just coming up with a name, ‘Oh, it looks like a big rat that washes its food,’... Okay guys, that’s about right, but it’s a *chaoui*. That’s what the Indians called it, and that’s what we call it. And so, (I’ll) just get that word down and get it out there that this is how we say it, this is the word we use, and other examples like that in our vocabulary... and we’re talking about maybe – I’ve never sat down and counted them – but I doubt there’s more than fifty to a hundred words like that, if that many. It might have a few semantic differences, like instead of ‘*J’attends*’ for ‘I wait’, you say ‘*J’espère*’. Or the present progressive – ‘*J’suis après espérer*,’, you say ‘I am waiting’. You’ve got *après* in there, which is an old form, you’ll find it in some of the older texts in France, and even in some parts of France today, you might find some people still use that, but we use that every day here in Louisiana. So, this is just – like Michel Tremblay in Quebec, who wrote in *joual*, he said, ‘This is the way we speak, so this is how I’m gonna write it, to show people how we use the language here’ Or Antonine Maillet, who wrote in Acadian French – (she’s) from New Brunswick – so that’s just to say this is how we speak, this is who we are, and we’re still part of this family, but we’re just these cousins who do things a little differently, and that’s why I started. And *Julie Choufleur*, that came about because after I published the first book I continued writing, but I never really thought about doing a second book, and then I got contacted by Dana Kress, who’s a Professor at Centenary College in Shreveport, who founded *Les Éditions Tintamarre*, and he said, ‘David, you don’t have any other poems in your drawer?’ I said, ‘Well, maybe,’ and he said, ‘Come on, I want to publish your books.’ So that’s why I did the second, *Julie Choufleur*, and the title was kind of interesting... I thought it was funny, I don’t know if what I write is funny, but some of the stuff I think is funny. I was in an airport – and those poems, I really wrote a lot in airplanes and airports, cause I was Director of CODOFIL at the time and I was going back and forth to recruit teachers and what not – and, you know, in the airports, you hear these raspy voices over the intercom or whatever, and I just could have sworn it was asking for a woman by the name of

Julie Chouffleur – ‘Julie Chouffleur, please report to...’ wherever – and I thought, ‘Julie Chouffleur, that’s a great name.’ And she just became this kind of, I don’t know, idealised, mystical, mythical kind of woman that I just wrote about in a lot of the poems. So, that’s how it just kind of came about, fun things just come to me. I always have these notebooks around – I got a bunch of these right here in my desk, actually – and something will just come to me, just a funny sentence. Just to give you an idea of something I just wrote here, just pull something out... I can’t even read my handwriting.

Holly: That’s always the way!

David: So, like, ‘*Nous ne sommes que nos souvenirs, nous ne vivons que dans les souvenirs des autres*,’ just something like that. ‘We are only our own memories, but we live in the memories of others.’ That’s not something I’ve ever published for anything, I just said, ‘I gotta continue working on that.’ So, I just come up with little phrases and I just jot them down, and they might grow into something, they might stay in the notebook, I don’t know. And I’ve actually published a third book, and that was really because they started a special edition in a publishing house in New Brunswick – *Perce Neige* – and they have a collection within it called *Acadie tropicale*, and I just really wanted to be part of that, so I just submitted a manuscript... Cause it had Barry (Ancelet) – Jean Arcenaux – had published, Zachary Richard had published, Debbie Clifton – also a great Creole writer here, a good friend of mine, who I love to death – and a woman named Beverly Matherne, also. I said, ‘Well, if they could publish Beverly, they could publish me.’ So, I just submitted a manuscript, and they published it – *L’allée du souvenir* – and I’ve submitted a fourth manuscript to a few different publishing houses. That was just about a month or so ago, so it takes a while to see if anybody’s interested in that one, but I still write. I don’t really do that with the idea to publish, cause, you know, you don’t make any money off of that - at least, I don’t. The best I’ve gotten out of it is trips to literary festivals in France and Canada (where) they would pay for my way. That’s always a lot of fun – they read

other poets, and they read my poetry in public in front of a Francophone audience. And I organise that kind of stuff here also in Lafayette, but with COVID, it's been difficult to do that kind of stuff for the last year or so, but we were talking about doing something in June, a poetry reading, late next month sometime.

Holly: Do you get to do things like that at the (*Festivals Acadiens et Créoles*), do they feature poetry there?

David: Not there, but in *Festival International (de Louisiane)*. *Festivals Acadiens*, it's outdoors, it's really mostly arts and crafts, and the music and the food, and they have a couple of little things. We might do a book signing there, there's always a little book thing, like me and other people (who) have published books who might try to sell our books at the merch tables. But *Festival International*, we've done a couple of those, cause it's outdoors, but it's downtown. There's a lot of venues, restaurants, cafes, theatres, where we have these little readings and we brought poets in from Canada, for example, and we do Louisiana-Canadian poetry readings during *Festival International*, yeah.

Holly: Wow! I didn't realise it was more music as the *Festival des Acadiens*, but I'm going to have to come out to these when COVID is gone.

David: Well, I mean, it's, supposedly in October, it's going to be in the park. They're planning on doing it outdoors this year.

Holly: We can only hope. (...) I mean, in *Julie Choufleur*, like you said, there's a lot of travel, and you get the sense that... I'm not trying to put words in your mouth, but I get the sense sometimes that when you read the descriptions of France or *la Métropole* versus Louisiana, there's a sense of, I guess, a slight distance. But your descriptions are so rich, they use all the senses. Do you have any favourite poems from any of the books?

David: Well, one of my biggest hits, if I could call it that, is '*Il y a du loup dans mon pays*', because the werewolf, the *loup-garou* or the *rougarou* – and I'm not totally convinced that the

loup-garou and the *rougarou* are the same thing, cause when I was growing up, the *loup-garou* was not necessarily a werewolf, but it was like a shapeshifter, kind of mystical beast, who was out to eat children who didn't obey their parents or who skipped Mass or whatever. But yeah, and Barry Ancelet, or Jean Arceneaux, has written a lot more about that, and I think that there's a pretty good description of how we are as French speakers and in South Louisiana, we are kind of shapeshifters, in a sense. We have to shift back and forth between English and French and we have to find these spaces. You know, there might be a full moon at night, in the dance halls or wherever, where we can really let our inner Francophone come out, our true identity come out, and that could be dangerous, at least from the dominant American point of view, cause, you know, in America, you speak English and we're one nation, one language, and as Teddy Roosevelt said, 'You cannot be a polyglot boarding-house,' everybody has to speak English, you know, for the sake of national unity... Which is a fallacy because we've always been a polylinguistic country. Even though English has been the lingua franca, that didn't... That didn't stop my grandfather from going to France in World War I to fight for the United States (...) A lot of people went to war for this country who didn't speak a lick of English. (...) So in '*Il y a du loup dans mon pays*', we talk about that, the transformation that we have to go through in order to really become who we are. And that's something else that I've talked about – a lot of people in my generation who grew up hearing French, not necessarily speaking French, maybe a few words and whatnot, but once we did become fluent in the language, then we felt like the floodgates had opened, and we finally had access to part of our personality that was always there, but because of the language barrier, we couldn't get to it, we couldn't let it come out. Like, I always say I didn't acquire the French language, the French language came out of me, it was already in me. A lot of people say, 'Yeah, I feel that, too.' It was something they did build up inside, cause we grew up hearing it and wanting it and desiring it, but once you're able to get past that hump, as it were, that's when it came out.

Holly: I think, I really feel that in (*À 22.000 pieds au-dessus du Canada*). That's one poem where, I think, you really feel that sense of 'Now you're...'

David: And I really did write that one at 22,000 feet over Canada (Laughs). I was in an airplane, 22,000 feet over Canada, when I wrote that.

Holly: That's a great place to write a poem!

David: In airplanes and airports, you know, you've got nothing else to do but just sit there, just hope you don't crash, and that's about it.

(...)

Holly: One thing I really liked as well was that you included things like *Jolie Blonde*...

David: Mm-hmm, yeah, to demystify... Yeah, cause we have all these cliches, and Evangeline, we talk a lot about Evangeline, how she – in a way, she really brought the Cajun culture, the Acadian culture, to Louisiana. We talked about it, but you've gotta realise that she never existed. She's not a real woman, and she was the invention of the WASPiest WASP American – White Anglo-Saxon Protestant – you could ever imagine: Longfellow. And so, it's really a paradox of the woman who is pretty much our symbol – actually, she's actually a symbol of American dominance, quite frankly, and I always compared her to the Virgin Mother, cause in theory, she dies before she finds her love, so she dies a virgin, like the Virgin Mary. So, we have this virgin birth of Cajun culture from this woman who never existed in any way. So, there's a lot of contradictions, I guess you could say with Evangeline.

Holly: Yeah, and it's... Again, I don't want to put words into your mouth, but when you read both books, you get the sense (that) you want to bring up the stereotypes, but then smash them.

David: Yeah.

Holly: And be like, 'Okay here's what it's actually like in Louisiana French.'

David: Yeah, like the one of ‘*Si près de la mort*’ – and also, I do a lot of wordplay, like *cyprès* like the cypress tree, but also *si près*, you know, ‘so close to the death’, but ‘the cypress tree of death’, cause there’s... When I was growing up, also, there was this long road where you’d go down toward the coast, a place called Grand Isle, and before that there were huge oak tree groves, also, but over the years, saltwater intrusion has killed them, so you have these skeletons of oak trees that are still there. So, that was kind of like the imagery, you have these skeletal and just a reminder (that) death is right here. And also, you know, we all tell stories about people (who) fall into the bayou and drown, so, you know... Also, we’re talking about these cars that sometimes will go into the bayou and it’s always, you know, it’s always right there, the danger. We talk about ‘Let the good times roll,’ but I know a lot of people who got rolled over by the good times, unfortunately.

Holly: Do you consider the land one of the primary themes when you write your works, then, because identity clearly is quite a prominent theme that comes up a lot – like, what it means to be Louisiana French. Would you say the land and the environment is similar?

David: Definitely, that’s important for us, the whole thing. I mean, our culture and identity comes from this land that we work, or used to work – you know, farming and fishing – in my office at work I have shrimp boats and fishing boats all around me, just to remind me where I come from. My grandfather was a shrimper, and that work ethic, that whole *métier*, that implies a certain lifestyle and a way to live off of the land. And once that started shifting toward more oil production – instead of working with the land, you start extracting these minerals and digging these canals in order to get to these wells, and that allowed more saltwater intrusion, and that’s adding to erosion... So, instead of trying to work with nature, we’re fighting nature, and, you know, we might win a few battles, but we’re not going to win this war. It’s Mother Nature, as we see here now with climate change, that a lot of people are denying, because that’s just the oil industry’s line, ‘Oh no, we’re fine, you can continue burning hydrocarbons as long

as you want, cause the climate's been changing, and we have nothing to do with that.' So, that's the official line, which we know – that's not true. But a lot of people have been able to make very prosperous lives. My father told me, when he was a little boy, sometimes the only thing they had to eat were crabs that they had to get out of the bayou. They grew up poor – no electricity, no running water in his house. And when my youngest son was born, we had three computers in the house, you know (Laughs) So, it did bring a lot of prosperity. Some of the first things that people did with some of the money was buy refrigerators, cause people were tired of salting their meat, they wanted to be able to keep things, not live day-to-day, you know, subsistence (living), try to build up some buffer zone, I guess, between them and starvation, basically – cause that's what they were dealing with for many years. But that had a price, also – changing the culture. And that was when the shift for the language really was the strongest, cause if you wanted to get a job in the oilfield, you had to speak English and you had to pretty much forget about (Louisiana French), cause a lot of the bosses would come in – they were from Texas and Oklahoma and Pennsylvania – you know, they were just *des Américains*, we call them here. So, you had to learn to speak (English) and had to put up with being called 'coonass' or 'Frenchie' or whatever and just try to show that you were not a 'dumb coonass'. That's another slur that they... A lot of people are trying to turn it around. Like, in the Black community, a lot of people, they use the 'N word' as a way to disarm, I guess, the negative effects of that, but I'm not a big fan of 'coonass' at all, I don't like using that word, I don't like hearing it. And I really don't like people trying to use that as a badge of honour, cause it is anything but that. But that was something that was used against (people) – that was something that was used against me, when I was a younger man working in the oil fields, cause that was the only way to make enough money to go to college. Just do that. And I've been in situations where I was the only Louisiana Cajun – of course, I was 'Frenchie', I was 'coonass', whatever.

Holly: It's such a shame, though, because the United States has always been so linguistically diverse, it does seem – especially when you mention people coming from Pennsylvania. I mean, Pennsylvania German is still around, but it seems such a shame.

David: Well, I guess, back in the '60s, that's when you start seeing the beginnings of this nationalist movement that we're right in the throes of right now, here in the United States. We have this dichotomy between the Black Lives Matter movement, which is advocating for all minorities to be put on an equal footing, and also the saying 'all lives matter', which is kind of a disingenuous retort to that, as a way to delay the inevitable, where white people will not be the majority in this country, probably within the next generation, for sure. And I feel they're just kind of freaking out about that, and I always say, 'Why are you afraid of white people becoming a minority? Don't we treat minorities nicely in this country? What are you talking about?' (Questions said sarcastically) But there's a lot of pushback against, like the 1619 Project – I don't know if you're familiar with that – trying to teach people the true history of slavery, how it really began, what is done. And there's people that say, 'Oh, slavery wasn't that bad. They didn't really beat their people. Would you abuse your own property?' People said, 'You don't abuse your tractor, you use it. Why would you want to...?' People can't just get that idea in their head that you're talking about a human being here, you're not talking about a tractor. Or, talking about Native Americans and the ethnic genocide we tried to perpetrate – and we did perpetrate against the Native Americans, a lot of tribes. We just recently had a former US Senator, Rick Santorum, who became a TV pundit, like a lot of them do... He lost his job on TV because he said, 'Well, you know, when the European settlers came here, the Indians weren't doing anything with the land at all. We came here and exploited it. Indians have not contributed anything to American culture.' And a lot of people believe that still.

(...)

Holly: One thing I get the sense of with these books is – like you said – it’s the putting down the flag almost, and saying ‘Louisiana French is here. This is what it looks like. This is what it sounds like.’ What was the reaction from the Louisiana French community when these books came out?

David: Well, very little, actually, because... I mean, it depends, cause still to this day, the majority of French speakers don’t really read in French, they don’t read French, cause they were not educated in French. But now we have a new generation coming up, because of the immersion programme, where people are actually learning to read and write more in French. And among that group, yeah, there was a good reaction to it. People who can actually read French liked it a lot. But otherwise... I get, I wouldn’t call it mainstream, but your average Cajun or Creole, they’re more interested in who’s playing at the Blue Moon this weekend, what festival’s coming up, when hunting season’s going to start, when do the Saints start playing American football again. That’s their main concern, really, and things to do with art, you know... And I guess it’s pretty much everywhere. That’s more, I don’t know, academic, maybe? I like the word ‘elitist’ – I know that kind of has negative connotations nowadays, but I have nothing against the word. Somebody calls me ‘elitist’, I say, ‘Yeah, thank you very much.’ (Laughs) I’ll take that, I’ll be a part of the elite. I always thought that was something good, to be part of the elite, you know, but not being a snob about it, that’s something else. You can be part of the elite and still be humble and down-to-earth about it, but they have to recognise, ‘Yeah, I’ve done stuff with my life. I’ve built myself up.’ But unfortunately, in the United States, the only ‘elite’, I guess you could say, recognised are people who amass fortunes. I’m by no means a wealthy man, but I think I’ve done some pretty good things in my life. But, you know, unless you’ve got a million dollars in the bank in the United States, that’s just the way it is. That’s how we measure success in the United States – it’s by how much money you make.

Holly: Rather than the ‘cultural capital’, as Bourdieu might put it.

David: Yeah. Oh yeah, we've had some politicians who kind of recognise the fact that you have to develop a bit, cause we already have great potential here in South Louisiana, people (who are) very innovative, very creative, trying to translate that into the tourism industry, music, art... A lot of movies are filmed here, TV shows are filmed here. That's part of the cultural economy, as it's called, but it's still dwarfed even today by the petrochemical industry. But, you know, restaurants – but unfortunately, under COVID, that's who got hit the hardest: the restaurant industry, the music venues, the artists, the actors, the producers. They got hit hardest, and oil kept being pumped. They kept drilling for oil the whole time, they never stopped. (...)

Holly: Was it things like that – like your work with the oilfields – that inspired you to start working with the Bayou Vermilion District? I know you still write poetry, I know that you've done some things for Feux Follets, cause that's been revived recently, and I know you co-founded Feux Follets... But what inspired the move to work with the district?

David: Well, it's cause of both, actually, cause it's not only the work we do in the environment, but also, we run a museum, the Vermilionville Museum, which talks about the three major cultures – Cajun, Creole, and Native American – between 1765 and 1890. And I've tried to show the connection – I think I've done a pretty good job with that – the connection between the land and the culture, between the environment and who we are and our identity. So yeah, that's really what I've tried to accomplish at BVD since I've been there.

Holly: I can't wait to come and see this museum, when all is well again with the world!

David: Well, I'll give you the tour.

Holly: I would love to be there. (...) I will just ask, if it's okay, two more questions.

David: Okay.

Holly: So, one question I wanted to ask earlier that's just re-arisen is... Is there anything that you wish was known more widely about Louisiana French culture, the Louisiana French people?

David: I think it's... I was asked to write a chapter that I've been working on about promoting French in North America, in the United States, and I've been working on it, and I've called it 'Sisyphus on the Bayou: The Eternal Renaissance of French in Louisiana.' It's like we keep... You know, it's almost like *Groundhog Day*, we're fighting the same battles. Yeah, Louisiana French is good French. Yeah, the French that the native speakers (speak), that's still good French. No, we don't have pet alligators. No, we don't go to work on pirogues. The swamp people you see, they exist, they're real people, but that is by far not how life is over here. Just kind of trying to do away with these stereotypes you have. And the idea that we're these backwards, toothless, swamp-dwelling kind of creatures you saw in the movie *Southern Comfort* back in the '80s... that's just not the case. We're lawyers and doctors and university professors and hunters and fishermen and trawlers – some of that still exists – but we have a wide variety. A lot of us don't necessarily think you need to speak French to be Cajun, and I think that's something that's also evolving. I think, at the very least, you have to have a certain affinity for the French language – at least for the mentality, the sensibilities, the whole culture that goes along with it, and be Francophile, I'll put it that way – but actually having to speak French, I don't think that's to be Cajun anymore. And a lot of the French speakers we see coming up here are not necessarily of Cajun or Creole origin. We have a lot of young people whose families move here, or not necessarily anybody spoke French in the language a lot. When we started French immersion in Lafayette Parish, back in the early '90s, you noticed that a lot of the families who were putting their kids in French immersion were not Cajun. There was still a lot of reticence on the part of a lot of families, especially my generation – like I said, we didn't grow up speaking French but we always, at the back of our minds, (were) still kind of receiving the whole trauma that our parents went through. That's why they didn't want us to speak French. They didn't want us to get beat at school, and that whole trauma of kids getting punished and humiliated was transmitted to our generation in large part, I guess, unconsciously

or subconsciously. A lot of parents didn't want that to happen. And then there's still a whole controversy about, 'Oh, but they're not teaching Cajun French, they're teaching Standard French.' Because, well, where are our French-language teachers from Louisiana? Who are they? We don't have them, because it got wiped out. Nobody learned to speak French. We had to import these teachers. And I thought that was a great wealth of information, and it's kind of connected us with the French-speaking world, cause there's teachers from France, Belgium, Canada, Quebec, *Acadie*, Africa... And I thought that really went back to the origin, I guess, of how French in Louisiana was started, cause it was all these peoples from all over the French-speaking world who came to Louisiana to form this culture and this life we have here. So, I think that it's kind of a roundabout way to get back to where we started, but at the beginning, it was... mostly people whose families had immigrated to Louisiana in the 18th, 19th century.

Holly: So, what would you say the future is looking like for Louisiana French? From what you say, to me, it sounds like with everything CODOFIL's doing, and the immersion programmes, it sounds like the future's looking quite bright.

David: Well, it's never going to be... I don't think we'll ever have a large population. Fifty years ago, we had over a million French speakers. Today, we have maybe a fifth of that in Louisiana, we might have 200,000. But I think the 200,000 we have are very much... Almost militant, I guess you could say. We have a lot of young people who are engaging on social media, media companies, *Télé-Louisiane*, a lot of people doing blogging, a lot of people doing vlogging. People are writing more and more, still a lot of people writing new songs in French... So, I think from the creative point of view, that's still happening. But to where you're going to... And that's never really happened in Louisiana, either. When we had a million French speakers, we didn't really see a whole lot of... We didn't see any, you know, French-language newspapers after 1921, (when) the last French-language newspaper stopped publishing in New Orleans, *L'Abeille*. So, we'd have to create this whole... Parallel economic environment, where

you can live, work, and die in French, and I think the best we're going to do is establish (bilingualism), where Louisiana French is going to be still second to English. I don't think the American country will ever allow it to go beyond that, quite frankly, because they have ways of doing that they're very successful (at), that keep French in its place – you've just got to see what they're doing with Spanish – Spanish is a much bigger language in the United States, but they do a very good job of keeping it at home, in only certain areas. That didn't spill into the true public marketplace, even though you do see a little bit of advertising here and there in the Spanish language, like in Houston for example, you'll see some billboards in Spanish, but that's still very much contained in certain areas.

APPENDIX L: INTERVIEW WITH MARGUERITE JUSTUS

Date of Interview: Wednesday 1st June 2022

Time of Interview: 16.30 BST, 10.30 CDT

Interviewer in bold, interview participant in normal text, [overlapping speech in square brackets], (other information in ellipses), *non-English text and emphasis in italics*

Holly: My first question for you is: Can you tell me about your experience as a speaker of Louisiana French?

Marguerite: Okay. So, I wasn't born a speaker of Louisiana French, in the sense that I wasn't raised in a household where everyone was speaking Louisiana French around me. That's pretty rare these days, particularly for my generation. Generally, if someone was raised that way, they are now in their – at the youngest – sixties, probably, and more often than not, in their seventies, eighties, nineties, things like that. So, I grew up – I don't know why, maybe because my name is Marguerite and it's distinctly French, unlike my siblings – but I was named after my grandmother, my Mom's Mom, and her whole family is all French speakers, all the way back, and she's kind of that first generation that has no French (and) was only raised in English. And I just took an interest in it, in French in general, when I was a kid. I think I asked my mom for Christmas or my birthday, when I was like eight or nine – and my grandmother had died when I was about six, my grandfather died before I was born, but my grandmother died when I was about six – and maybe a couple of years later I was like, 'Mom, I want to speak French like Nana,' and so she got me this little Randall Whatley's *Conversational Cajun French 1*, which was like a little paperback booklet and little cassette tapes, and I tried to teach myself French. And, you know, it's a little introductory thing and I was eight or nine, so I learned how to say

the months and how to count, and things like that, by listening to the little cassette tapes, but didn't get much further than that. But I was always interested, and then I started taking French in high school, because that's when it was offered, and really liked it and – obviously that was school French, that was... you know, very Parisian-based, let's say. I don't think I ever even heard a *Québécois* accent or any other major French accent until I was in (the) second or third year of college... They're getting a lot better, these days, about – even in high school French textbooks and stuff like that – kind of exposing people to more than just 'Paris, Paris, Paris', so that's cool, but I guess I'm old enough that that wasn't the case at that time. And so it was just all this kind of very European, very Parisian French stuff, but I really liked it and took to it, and I changed my major to French when I was in college... I was originally a theatre major, and I went to college in New York City, but after a couple of years, I was like, 'I like eating and paying my rent,' and I was watching my friends – who were superbly talented and hard-working – struggle and fight the good fight (...) I just decided after a couple of years that I didn't have the thick skin for it and was like, 'You know what? I don't know if I want to do this.' And at the time, it was like a big, 'What do I want to do, then?' Cause when you grow up in an arts discipline – and I really grew up with theatre my whole life, and it can almost be cult-like of like, 'Well, if you're not strong enough for this, if you can imagine yourself doing anything else, go do *that*, cause clearly you're not hardcore enough for this arts discipline,' – so it was a bit of a, like, 'Argh, what do I do?' And then, the one thing that sounded like something that I would actually want to do was to come home to Louisiana, because I missed Louisiana and my family and food and warm weather and cheap things, because everything is expensive in New York, and I was like, 'Maybe I'll go home, and I'll do something to help French in Louisiana. That sounds like something I would want to do.' So, I finished up in New York, but I applied to grad schools only in Louisiana – just two because there was only two that were really a possibility. Tulane, it was still coming back from (Hurricane) Katrina, so

Tulane didn't have a grad programme when I was applying. So, I just applied to UL Lafayette and LSU (...) I went to LSU, and did grad school there, and while I was there, I audited a class with Amanda LaFleur that she taught called 'Structures of Louisiana French', where she basically teaches Louisiana French for people who already speak French, so 'What's the difference', and that really helped give me a basis. And I also started just getting involved in community stuff... There was a group called *FrancoJeunes* - it was like an informal grassrootsy group for younger people who spoke French - and I became friends with them and started doing projects with them, and really liked projects a little bit more than I liked the academia, researchy, distanced side. So, (I) started focusing on that more, even though I finished my PhD, but (I) definitely didn't really worry too much about conferences and things like that by the end of that. (I) was mostly just doing stuff in the community, things that I thought would be a cool project to do. And as I was going through grad school, I was getting more and more exposed to local people and speaking French with them, and listening more and more to old recordings and things like that, and so, that helped to give me a bit more of a stronger basis in Louisiana French. And to this day, I mean, people always say, 'What French do you speak?' and I'm like, 'I speak Maggie Justus French. It just comes out how it comes out!' And, you know, I wish that I could totally separate them in my little brain (and) be like, 'When I'm speaking with this person, I will only use Louisiana structures and Louisiana grammar and Louisiana vocab,' ... and I can somewhat control it, you know what I mean? I can certainly lean more Louisiana or lean more international, depending on who I'm talking to, but sometimes, I'm like, 'God! I know three words for hummingbird, but I don't know which one goes where: Which one is the Louisiana word? Which one is the France word? Which one is the Canada word? I can't, argh!' And sometimes, the brain just doesn't work fast enough, so whatever word it is just comes out, and so, sometimes, people are like, 'What French do you speak?' I'm just like, 'It's like Frankenstein's monster, man!' It just comes out, and whatever comes out,

that's what I speak, but if I have more time, I can be a bit more careful. So, if I'm writing something like I've been writing – this past year, I've been writing these scripts for the *Boudini* cartoon, which the goal is not to be entirely in Louisiana French, cause this is for immersion kids, it's more to have a kind of bridge that includes lots of Louisiana structures... but obviously, I think it's fine that someone whose original exposure to French was a more school French... it's fine, cause they're getting exposed to school French, so we're really just baby-stepping them towards Louisiana structures and Louisiana vocab, and things like that. So, anyway, I think the original question was about my experiences as a Louisiana French speaker. So, I like to say that I am a Louisiana French speaker but being a Louisiana French speaker when you're 34, like I am – almost 35 – is very different than being a Louisiana French speaker when you're 85, you know what I mean? It's a very different experience of French, very different experience of Louisiana French. I mean, I'm lucky that I grew up in a world where it was never not cool to be French speaking, to be Cajun or Creole, or whatever. The whole stigma thing (was) gone by the time I came into consciousness, and that's a very different experience than, you know, some of the older people that I know who... really, they've been through all the different waves of it. Like, being called *cadien* was like an insult, and then being called *cadien* in the '90s was like, 'Everyone's Cajun! Cajun fries, Cajun chicken – yay! Blacken everything,' you know, so... Yeah, I think I have a young person's – or one young person's, maybe, not all young people are the same – but one young person's experience of being a Louisiana French speaker today.

Holly: I was actually going to ask you about what the reaction was from people outside of the community, but it's nice to hear that it was very positive for you, because, like you said, you hear stories of – even in the writing, people like David Cheramie write about it being kind of forced out of their lives through education, so it's really nice [to hear...]

Marguerite: [Oh yeah, then it was,] but nowadays... Yeah, I said this at an opening of an exhibit I did when I first started working for CODOFIL in 2018 – I think that the trouble now is not that French isn't cool, it's that it's not normal, so I'm like, 'Make French normal again.' It's like, 'Okay, French is desirable, French is a good thing, we want to keep French, but when do we start? *Asteur, ou...?* I don't know, do I start talking in French now?' This is awkward, because we're just swimming in the English, so I think normalising it is a lot bigger of an issue today than, say, valorising it or making it cool – normalising it and valorising it, not in an 'it's not cool' sense, but in an 'it's not just for fun, it's not just a hobby, it's not a sometimes food' (sense)... People focus a lot on the historical ties between Louisiana and French Canada of 'Oh, *les cousins* and *Acadie* and history and genealogy, and look at all their last names, and sometimes we sound alike,' and that's great, I love that and I'm not against it, but I really wish I could kind of shake into people more the reality of today in French Canada and how, like... like, their potato chips are bilingual, and it's not because they're inherently different or have always been inherently different than us, it's that they were like, 'No, our language can't just be for special occasions, and we're not going to put it in a little box and only take it out when it's not going to offend anybody. No, we want to not just have it for cultural things, but work in it and fill out this form in it, and get our education in it,' and things like. And I try and, you know... I don't know, when appropriate and when possible, I try and open up that idea to people more than, like, 'It's not just a historical tie. Look at what can happen nowadays, even as a minority linguistically speaking. If you really push and you work and you kind of accept nothing less than...' – and obviously we have a ways to go before we get to Canada – but I would like us to push in that direction and not just say, 'Oh, we'll keep French for when it's a festival, or with just my sister-in-law...' You know what I mean? We need to expand its territory and the retraction of the territory that's happened over the last century or more, even, but...

Holly: I know that Louisiana French is most concentrated in certain parishes, so what's the feeling outside of those parishes, like elsewhere in the state where it's not as common language to hear, to experience? What's the general sentiment there towards Louisiana French having a greater role?

Marguerite: I can't say that I know North Louisiana that well, because I don't go up there enough, and it can sometimes feel so culturally different than South Louisiana, you know? To me, North Louisiana feels a lot more like other southern states, whereas South Louisiana feels like its own distinct thing, and everything from religion – I mean, most of North Louisiana is Protestant, a lot of South Louisiana is Catholic, things like that, anything like that, just the historical foundations of it... But that being said, they do have a French immersion programme in Ruston – it's school French, obviously – but for things like French immersion, I think there's definitely at least some sense that bilingualism in general is good and good for kids' education and whatnot, and so there is one in North Louisiana, there's one programme there. As far as South Louisiana, the rest of South Louisiana, I feel like a lot of South Louisiana, even parts that aren't super historically French, are still just like, 'Yeah, but we like all the cultural stuff that comes with it. We want to do Mardi Gras and we want to, you know, eat historically French-based food, Cajun and Creole food, and we want to do a lot of these kind of cultural (things)', so everyone just kind of joins in for that. I don't know. I mean, how is it seen in the rest of Louisiana? There's still definitely... The cultural stuff, like I said, is generally well seen. The language itself is sometimes seen in opposition to Spanish, and French is either cool and cultural or kind of posh, if we're talking about a more standard, international French, but Spanish is useful, you know? Like, French is not, but Spanish – 'I told my kid to take Spanish,' I mean, I hear that all the time when people are like, 'What do you do for a living?' I'm like, 'Oh, I work for CODOFIL,' they're like, 'Oh well, I told my kid to take Spanish, cause it's more useful, you know.' And I'm like, 'Well, Spanish is great, but there's not one useful

language!’ It’s not like, ‘Oh, there’s the useful one, and all of the rest of the languages of the world are just for fun, just for giggles.’

Holly: Exactly! And it’s not like French is not a global language.

Marguerite: I know. And the thing is, I think people – What I often, a little bit cheekily, tell people who tell me that is that ‘Spanish is great, and if anyone wants to learn Spanish, go for it!’ I’m never going to tell somebody to not learn a language they want to learn – I am attempting to learn Spanish slowly, I’m not that great at it, you know. But people who think ‘Well, if my kid takes some Spanish, they’ll be able to get those bilingual jobs,’ and I’m like, ‘Do you know how many Spanish-speaking bilinguals – like, raised bilingual – there are in the United States? If the job is really dependent on speaking Spanish and being bilingual, there’s a lot of options for that.’ And also, what I always say is ‘Why do we in Louisiana want to try for Spanish when, compared to other states, we’ll always be Number 8 or 9 or 10 in Spanish? We could be Number 1 in French.’ Like, work with what you’ve got, don’t try and compete against... I mean, New Mexico will always have more bilingual Spanish speakers than us, Texas will always have more bilingual Spanish speakers than us, California... Like, we’re never going to get to the top of the line in that one, so why not just specialise in what we already have the resources for and build on that and work with the French-speaking world? Which we’re trying to kind of push a lot with CODOFIL, since Louisiana joined the OIF, the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, but we have to explain to people what *la Francophonie* is, because there is no *Anglophonie*. I mean, there’s no organisation for English-speaking countries, so we have to be like ‘Well, it’s kind of like the British Commonwealth, and maybe a smaller version of the UN, but it’s not as fancy as the UN, but it’s still kind of formal,’ and they’re like, ‘Okay, I kind of get that, that’s cool.’ But, if you just say it, people are like ‘Well, that’s cool. What’s that?’

Holly: I want to actually move on to what you were just saying about *la Francophonie* and CODOFIL, just in one second, but before I ask those questions, I just wanted to ask you what, for you personally, being Louisiana French means? What it means... However you want to interpret that, culturally, linguistically...

Marguerite: I mean, to me, it's a pretty big part of my life and so, in that sense, it's hard to even say in the sense of, like, 'what does being a woman mean' or 'what does part of being a larger family mean'. I don't know. I've never really known what it's like to be an only child, so you know, I only know what it's like to be the fourth child. And it's not to say that I've never not known what it's like to be something other than Louisiana French, but it's kind of on that level, for me. I'm actually pregnant right now, and I'm about to have my first kid...

Holly: Congratulations!

Marguerite: Thank you! People are like 'Are you going to raise the kid in French?' I was like, 'Well, heck yes! I didn't do all this for nothing! What do you think? I'd learn French the hard way so that my kid won't have to, duh!' And it's not to say that it's easy, cause I have friends who have struggled with it. You need a lot of backup and support and other sources, particularly if you're like me and you're married to, you know, a boy from Mississippi who, bless him, his French, he's working on it, but it's not exactly fluency at this point, so... Yeah, I mean, it's a pretty fundamental thing for me.

Holly: Oh, that must be lovely though, because as part of CODOFIL, you see where the language is going as well.

Marguerite: Yeah, plus I have connections to all the backups, so that I know that, like my co-worker's daughter could be my French speaking babysitter, and I'm like, 'Okay, good, I can figure this out! I can find playgroup dates and...' Because it's really hard to raise a kid in another language in the United States unless you have a strong community that's not just you, cause the kid's going to figure out at some point in time, 'Oh, you're the only one who speaks

this language? I don't need it, then. Everyone else speaks this other language that you also speak – I can tell that you speak that language too, Mom or Dad,' and they'll assert themselves. You know, Joseph Dunn has a beautiful blog post on it called something like *La Déclaration d'Indépendance Linguistique* about his experience raising his first kid when he was a bit younger and didn't have, either the support, but also just the 'Oh, God damn it, I'm just going to do this!' The sort of 'soldier on' mentality. And his son was just like, at a certain point, 'Whatever, I'm American, I'm going to speak English,' when he was a tiny child, and then when he had a daughter later on in life, really just being like, 'No, I'm doing this.' And he succeeded and his daughter speaks beautiful French, and that's their language together. It's a lovely recounting of that sort of experience, of a parent in that situation.

Holly: That's really interesting that his son said, 'I'm American, I'll speak English.'

Marguerite: Oh, I know plenty... I can think of an older activist who has a couple of children and she said when her son was a little kid, she would be like, '*Tu veux du jus ou du lait?*' And he'd be like, 'I don't speak French.' She was like, 'Well, nothing I can do about that, but *tu veux du jus ou du lait?*' Like, you can't control what your kid does or speaks, all you can control is what you do in response, and nowadays, he certainly is capable of speaking French – he's in his twenties now – but it's not always a smooth road.

Holly: Exactly, and also to be like, 'American equals English.'

Marguerite: Oh, yeah (Rolls eyes). I mean, that's what people believe, that's why we have a whole generation of non-French speakers who are the children of French speakers.

Holly: Very true. And that's why CODOFIL is so important.

Marguerite: Mm-hmm.

Holly: So, for you, what was your first interaction with CODOFIL? What that when you first came to CODOFIL a couple of years ago?

Marguerite: No, no, no. I mean, all the people, all the younger French speakers I know, almost all of them have had some sort of contact with CODOFIL, either because they did French immersion or CODOFIL has scholarship programmes. You know, CODOFIL's kind of a catch-all for a lot of things, and it's almost like all roads in French Louisiana lead to CODOFIL at some point. So, I volunteered for CODOFIL when I was just finishing college. I was finishing college, and I'd just come back from New York and I was about to start (at) LSU in the fall and I had the summer, and I think I didn't have a job, or whatever... I guess I had a bunch of graduation money and didn't need a job and I thought it would be cool to volunteer for CODOFIL or somehow get involved in CODOFIL, cause that was my new mission was to save French in Louisiana – 'Go back home and save French in Louisiana!', (Said sarcastically) like that's a one-stop task. So, I volunteered for the summer and just answered phones and stuff like that, and then later I got a scholarship – they were offering a scholarship to somebody to go up to Canada for a three week programme there about using more Canadian, French Canadian, stuff and *Québécois* stuff in teaching of French, and that was a cool programme in Montreal. And yeah... I mean, I don't know that I had, like, a strong relationship with CODOFIL, but CODOFIL's just always been the French thing in Louisiana, so if you're interested in French Louisiana, you end up finding your way to CODOFIL one way or another. And then, when I was in grad school, I was just doing so many projects, just cause you have a little bit of flexibility in grad school – more so than I do now, I guess – so what I chose to do with my other time was to do a whole bunch of projects, and then eventually, luckily, even though I was only in academia, I had enough of a resume of just doing stuff for free that I could be like, 'Hey, you could actually pay me and I could just do this stuff all the time!' And they were like, 'Okay, that's cool, we can work with that.' And I was like, 'Okay, got it!' And that's how I started working for CODOFIL in 2018.

Holly: That's amazing!

Marguerite: I was very, very lucky as well! I mean, lots of luck involved in that, that they had the space for me then, and things worked out very well for me, so...

Holly: But also, it must be quite exciting to be like, ‘Okay, this is what I want to do,’ and there’s a whole group of people there that also want to do that thing.

Marguerite: Yeah! I mean, I have my dream job. I’ll say it flat out, I have the coolest job.

Holly: It sounds like a very cool job! And you got to set up the *Oui!* Initiative, right?

Marguerite: Yeah. Well, I rebooted it, so to speak. So, in 2010, there was a restructuring of CODOFIL and one of its specific mandates, and this restructuring was to develop a system for labelling, identifying and labelling businesses and whatnot as *francoresponsable*, which comes from this French Canadian coinage based off of *écoresponsable* – French-friendly, eco-friendly – but it was mandated in 2010, and then in 2011, the Governor at the time cut the budget of CODOFIL to pieces, so there was no people or funding to actually accomplish this for a little while. And then, slowly, CODOFIL built itself back up to actually having something of a proper staff, and they had one person who had about nine hats, one of which was this project, and he was able to get a little something off the ground, like a map, and there was a committee for it, too, like a board committee for it. And it had one way of approaching it, and it was kind of like a rating system, where you could be like ‘Gold’, and ‘Gold’ meant that there was always a French speaker, and there was this... And there was ‘Green level’, and it was based off this kind of logo, and so, whenever I started working for CODOFIL, they said, ‘Well, we want you to go handle this project,’ and I said, ‘Well, can I restructure it?’ They said, ‘Sure!’ So, I said, ‘Well, let’s not make it like a ranking system, let’s not add any judgement to it here, let’s make it just purely descriptive.’ And so, we retooled it as a website that has both a map, but also a search function, and every business has an entry that just says, like, ‘Ask for John’, because – that’s the other thing, because they had so few resources, they didn’t have the time to even attempt to do this, really – rarely did it ever say who at this grocery store speaks French. It was

just like ‘Someone at this grocery store speaks French’, and they’re going to be like ‘*Bonjour!*’ and see who responds. I mean, I’m not saying there’s anything against that, but not many people are feeling that confident about just running into a random place of business and spouting French at everyone they see. So, I said, ‘Well, let’s try and figure out who at the business speaks French, so we can at least include their first name, and roughly how often they’re there,’ to the degree that that can be predicted – if it’s somebody who is there Monday to Friday, 09.00 to 05.00, and they’re fine with us outing that, then we’ll put that, but if it’s like a lot of service industry jobs, and their schedule changes, so, you know, a waiter at this restaurant, we can say he’s there three to four days a week, or he there’s just two nights a week, generally on the weekends, just to try and manage expectations. The goal is just to make it as actually user-friendly as possible, so to make it something where people felt like it’s a tool and something that they could use – not only tourists, because I’m also pretty keen on... Obviously the idea in the legislature was to think about tourism and the possible money that that can bring in, and I’m not against that – you work with what you’ve got, and I think we should support international tourism, it’s good for everybody- but I also didn’t want it to just feel like Disneyland, and like ‘We’re just being French for the tourists, so we’re only going to include touristic things on here!’ So, we decided it’s really any public-facing role in a business, so not if you work in a refinery with 1,500 people and they’re going to be like, ‘Is Johnny there?’ (Laughs) But it could be a lawyer, it could be a real estate agent, it could be a therapist, because sometimes... You know, I have a friend who’s a therapist, speaks French, and he said the first time a CODOFIL teacher, or maybe a CODOFIL teacher’s spouse – you know, someone who’s here for a few years – wanted to see a therapist and this person was talking to him in English, and he went, ‘You know we can do this in French?’ And she just started crying, like, ‘Oh, God, thank you!’ Cause it’s nice to be able to do certain things in either your native language, or, if we want to – once again – increase the territory for French, if I know that the barista at this

coffee shop speaks French, well, why the heck am I not going to speak French to the barista? It kind of gives more occasions and gives that little push to be like 'It's not just for the people that you already know and the people that you already speak French with, we can expand this.'

Holly: It sounds like the feedback, then, must have generally been really positive from businesses and from people.

Marguerite: Luckily, it seems... I mean, I wish we had an entire team of people to do this, because it's not as big as it should be. I have to go and find the business and call around and just sort of explore all the different corners of the state and I'm just one person, but whenever I started on the project, there was a lot of talk of, 'Yeah, but this can't be kept up.' And it's not up-to-date all the time and stuff like that, and I said, 'Well, yeah, it's not a one person job, but y'all used to have, like, half a person doing this and now you have one person, so let's see what we can do with one person and just get this off the ground, and we'll deal with the other stuff later.' And like I said, it definitely needs more updates, particularly post-COVID. It's not my only project, so other stuff sometimes swallows up my time for that, particularly since it's so time intensive of calling around and finding people in these small towns... who would know where I should look for it? Do you know any businesses in this small town that have a French speaker? So yeah, but I think people in general see it positively. I think a lot of people like seeing just how much French there is – just sort of visually, almost seeing on a map like, 'Wow, it's in a lot of places!' It's not just, you know, isolated to this one corner or this one town.

Holly: That must also get quite a good reaction from... You mentioned tourism, and international tourism, and if French is such a common language internationally speaking, then it must be helpful, as well, for people coming from – let's say metropolitan France – finding out, 'Okay, there are places that will speak French.'

Marguerite: That is definitely an argument I try to make when I'm talking to people in the tourism industry, particularly people in the tourism industry who are maybe monolingual and

don't have a concept that... A lot of times, people just feel like, 'Well, everyone speaks English, so I'm sure it's fine,' and I'm like, 'Well, first off, I don't know if you know about France that much, but...' Or just trying to explain to people language ideologies and being like, 'It's not just a neutral choice to speak English to certain French speakers.' I find... I don't mean this as an insult to French people or anything like that, but it's understandable to me that they're maybe not the strongest foreign language speakers in Europe. I think it makes sense, because French has been this lingua franca internationally for a long and was that for a long time, so – much like a lot of English speakers are like, 'I don't really need to learn another language, English is the best anyway and everyone speaks it,' – I think there's still a little bit of that ideology around French as well, like 'We have *the* language, so people should just speak ours wherever we go.' Obviously, there's plenty of French people who are good English speakers and there's lots of French people who are very open to other languages and whatnot, I'm just... When I try to explain that to a monolingual English speaker, like, 'There are other languages that think like we do.' – 'I'm just going to go someplace, and they will speak *my* language,' you know? And then, it's certainly not a neutral choice to speak English to, like a *Québécois* person. Even if they can speak English, it makes a pretty big difference to them whether or not you speak French to them. It's not just like, 'Oh, that's fine, I speak English too. We'll just speak English.' They have some pretty strong feelings about bilingualism there, so...

Holly: It can only impact positively on them, as well, because if they know that... Let's say someone from *Québec* comes and finds a business that speaks French with them and they have a positive experience, then they might go back and say to friends of theirs who are also *Québécois*, 'Next time you go to Louisiana, you should go check out such and such a place,' and it spirals.

Marguerite: And I think sometimes, the opposite happens. I think sometimes the opposite happens and someone comes to Louisiana from a French-speaking country because they've

either been sold it in a sort of marketing, tourism way, or because of just – in the atmosphere – this idea that Louisiana is, you know, a little French paradise, a little island of French. And they show up and no one's speaking French to them, and they're like, 'Wait, what? I thought I could come...?' I mean, I made this presentation when I was relaunching the *Oui!* Initiative: I had a presentation for the local Convention and Visitors Commission – like the Tourism Bureau for the Lafayette area – and it was at the McIlhenny Company, which is the company that makes Tabasco hot sauce, it's in Iberia Parish in Louisiana... And so, it was in the Tabasco restaurant, and I went a couple of weeks before just to see what the space was like and to ask the people there, 'Can you put the little French Tabasco bottles on the tables?' and stuff like that – just prepping – and when I walked in, I heard this couple speaking French, and I was just going to wait for the person I was meeting, so I just said, '*Bonjour,*' and I went to what I was doing. And then, after my meeting, I walk out, and the couple was lying in wait for me. They'd been waiting this whole time because I literally just said, '*Bonjour,*' and then, in French, they're asking me, 'Excuse me, ma'am. We were wondering... We're here, we're tourists, and we're from Quebec, and we'd like to go on a swamp tour, but we don't really know if they speak French, and we're kind of afraid to call, our English isn't really good. Would you call for us?' They were asking me to call the swamp tour place and help them schedule a swamp tour. And I told the story two weeks later, when I was presenting this, and I said, 'Y'all, why do you think French Canadians, whose English wasn't that great that they needed me to call the swamp tour place – they were nervous about making a phone call in English – why do you think they came to Louisiana? Because they thought they could do it in French! They thought they didn't need English that much to do a vacation here, so what are the expectations we're setting, and are we fulfilling them?'

Holly: Has it kind of emphasised community spirit among the Louisiana French, having an initiative like that, where you can really highlight what's there? Because it sounds to

me like there's almost that instant connection there between you and that couple from Québec who are like, 'Okay, French speakers unite.'

Marguerite: I mean, I think contact with the Francophone world definitely builds up that kind of community spirit and it definitely... You know, Sam Craft, I think, described it once as like a secret club and, all of a sudden, it's like all you have to do is just say these words and 'Whoa, we're all in the club, yay!' But I would love to believe that the Initiative has some sort of part in that, but I don't know that it does. I don't know that it's there yet. I mean, I think it's still just this kind of website that we're trying to make useful to people that, you know, it's still got a way to go in terms of actually cataloguing everything that's there and staying accurate and being even more user friendly. I want to put more videos on there, which is an idea I stole/borrowed from the people in Arnaudville around the NUNU Arts and Culture Collective – they started doing little videos, little iPhone videos, and I was like, 'That's freaking brilliant!' in the sense that it shows the person who speaks French, you see their face, you know the face you're looking for, you hear their voice, so you know what kind of French they speak, you know what I mean? If it's an old man speaking his native French, or if it's an immersion graduate – you hear their French, and it almost starts the conversation before you can get there, so it's just, even, maybe, the teensiest bit less awkward to speak French to this person, because you've already kind of spoken French to them. I did them on the iPhone, continued doing them on the iPhone with the hopes that people would just do them themselves, but I haven't been sent a ton of videos. It works much better if I say, 'Hey, can I come and video you with my iPhone?' And generally, they're like, 'Okay, that's fine.' But there's only a handful on there, I'd like to have a lot more.

Holly: (...) So, you have the *Oui!* Initiative, you write scripts for *Boudini*, which is on *Télé-Louisiane*, right?

Marguerite: Mm-hmm.

Holly: Does CODOFIL work quite a lot with *Télé-Louisiane* in terms of...?

Marguerite: We have. I mean, CODOFIL's always been kind of an innovator. So, *Boudini* just finished its season, and I won't be writing for future seasons, but this first season of nine episodes, CODOFIL has always kind of taken a role in a lot of things: festivals, things like that, where it's like 'Get it off the ground,' and then you let it have its own life over there and find its own way, and so I think that's kind of the role we play with stuff like *Boudini*, for example. But yeah, we work with anyone who does French stuff in Louisiana. It's a pretty small world, so we run into them and we try and work with different organisations, non-profits, for-profits, whatever it is.

Holly: What do you feel the importance (is) of those festivals, or maybe the media that organisations like *Télé-Louisiane* is putting out? What do you think the importance of that is for the language and the culture today?

Marguerite: I think Barry Ancelet said, 'Languages don't exist in a vacuum'. You have to give these kids something – If they're learning French, you have to give them something to do in French, you know what I mean? I can just, like, 'I know French. Let me put it on the shelf and I'll take it down whenever I need it..' But I think seeing stuff created in French is really important. Creativity in French, whether that's music or videos or whatever it is – and I think, at times.... I mean, I'm a festival junkie in the sense (that) it's my favourite thing in the world. I mean, that's my version of heaven, a good South Louisiana festival with nice spring or fall weather, and everyone's dancing and eating and you're hanging out, and... I mean, you can't beat it, so I think it's good to have times to... But it's easy to capitalise on times like that to remind people of the language aspect, too, you know what I mean? Jordan Thibodeaux did a really, really amazing mic drop moment at *Festivals Acadiens (et Créoles)* in 2019 – it's on his Facebook if you want to go look at it – and it's called *La Prière*, and he had just come back from the *Congrès Mondial (Acadien)* in New Brunswick, and I think that was maybe his first

time in Acadia, in French Canada, and he was just amazed – kind of like I was talking about – (by) the everyday reality of how much French they have and how they’ve kept it and how they’ve insisted and stuff, and he wrote this amazing song called *La Prière*, and he did this awesome thing where, before he sang the song – cause the song is all in French, and it’s not necessarily the entire audience that speaks French – he kind of made a speech that hit a lot of the points in the song in English first, and then just hit them with the song afterwards, and it’s very... I mean, Jordan’s awesome, he’s got star quality, man. And there was a French Canadian who was down here, who was like, ‘Who’s the next Zachary Richard?’ And I just it, I was like, ‘Right there, boom. There you go. That’s the next big, you know, musician leader right in front of you.’ But check it out if you have time.

Holly: You’ve got to love a good mic drop moment!

Marguerite: Yeah.

Holly: And it sounds like, again... I mean, Zachary Richard is so successful at being able to get the message out there about Louisiana French wherever he goes. I’ve seen interviews with him on, like, (TV5Monde) where’s he talking about Louisiana French, and there’s still... I guess, a sense of amazement, curiosity, maybe, from mainstream French media – metropolitan French media – that’s like, ‘Oh, this exists.’ I don’t know – with CODOFIL, do you feel that you’re contributing to the...? You said you work with the OIF, so do you feel sometimes like you’re contributing to it, you’re like, ‘Yes, it plants the flag’?

Marguerite: (,,) Getting the message out there is the... and the rest of the French speaking world being like, ‘Oh, there’s French speakers there?’ Yeah, no, that definitely happens still – in the United States, as well as in the French-speaking world – of like, ‘Oh, people speak French in Louisiana?’ Yeah, I mean, I think somebody has to kind of... It’s something that I kind of figured out with *FrancoJeunes*, when we were at *FrancoJeunes*, and I was like, ‘We spend a

lot of time just doing basic interviews, like ‘Hey, we exist!’’, which can kind of feel a little bit weird after a while, but at the same time, it’s one aspect of it, it’s just making sure that: A, it’s out there; and B, that it’s well represented – and it’s not always. Zachary Richard is obviously authentically representing Louisiana, but we get plenty of film crews that, you know, will come to Louisiana, and you watch what they make at the end, and it’s clear that they had this idea going in of what it was like and despite what anyone told them, they were like, ‘Yep, still what I thought! Ha ha ha!’ And you’re like, ‘Okay, you could actually listened, but whatever.’

Holly: It’s true though, and then you get the images of... I guess presented to you of, like – I guess the best image I can think of in my head is what you would see in Disney’s *The Princess and the Frog*: it’s like it’s all beignets, and crawfish...

Marguerite: And New Orleans.

Holly: Yeah, yeah.

Marguerite: Shane Bernard just wrote an article and he put New Orleans Cajun pizza as an example of, like, ‘What? We make pizza? In New Orleans Cajun... what?’

Holly: Cajun cuisine is extremely rich, that is zero surprise!

Marguerite: Yeah, we don’t really make pizza, though! (Laughs) We’re not pizza people. I mean, we make pizza, but that’s not because we’re from Louisiana, it’s just because pizza is good!

Holly: So, which project that you work on, or have worked on, have you been most proud of? I mean, I’m sure you’re extremely proud of all your projects.

Marguerite: Yeah. I guess one project that you haven’t mentioned yet is that I do a lot of work with French tables, and French tables are amazing, and so I’m not proud of them, cause I didn’t take a part in making them for the most part – other than the one that I run – but it’s an aspect of the job that makes me very happy, because I get to just travel all over and find these little groups in different parts of the state. And French tables are really just these grassroots groups,

independent groups that meet up regularly to speak French in some sort of public space. Sometimes it's a restaurant, or sometimes it's a public library, or sometimes it's a coffee shop, and there are new ones that sprout up. We lost a lot of them during the pandemic, obviously, when people couldn't meet in person. Some of them went Zoom. Some of them have stayed Zoom, there's even one that has a Zoom day and an in-person day, cause they liked both aspects. You can get people from all over on the Zoom, but they still wanted to meet in person, so they meet on Mondays via Zoom and on Thursdays in person. But they're just these groups that meet up to speak French, and in my mind, they're the ones doing... You know, CODOFIL, we're a handful of people, we're not like a gigantic office, so they're the boots on the ground. How do you save French in Louisiana? You speak French in Louisiana. It's a language, you don't save it in a box, you save it by using it, so they're the ones doing that. And in communities all across the state – I've been as far south as Cut Off, in the Southeastern part of the state, where literally the river cuts off, the bayou cuts off, and then all the way up to... It's not back yet from COVID, unfortunately, but there was one at the top of the triangle in Marksville – Avoyelles Parish is sort of the top of the French triangle – and kind of all over. And yeah, I think they're something that I think Louisiana can be proud of, certainly.

Holly: They sound amazing!

Marguerite: It's really... And like I said, we lost a lot. We had over forty prior to COVID, over forty different groups, and depending on need – there were a few in Baton Rouge, a few in New Orleans, several in Lafayette, and then these tiny little towns: Maurice, Louisiana, or Crowley... I mean, there are some even that are in towns where I'm like, 'Is that a town? Okay, so, like, this little corner of Opelousas, they call it X, and okay, cool!' But it's one of those towns where, unless you're from there, you probably don't know that that's a town, or its name. So, there were over forty before the pandemic, and even post-pandemic, with things coming back, there's still twenty-four, twenty-five. There's a new one starting this week. This Saturday,

one is starting up for its first meeting, and so in the twenties of different groups across the state that meet regularly, either once a month, once a week, twice a month... I run a happy hour one that's twice a month, and we just drink beer and talk French. Some of them are structured like a little class, and some of them are just like, 'Let's meet up and speak French.'

Holly: The happy hour one's a dream!

Marguerite: Well, I find it helps the nervous people to be like, 'Okay, just have a little beer, it's going to come to you. It'll be okay.' Lowering the affective filter, in linguistic speak, but also just fun to do.

Holly: Absolutely. What's the make up like, generally, of a French group? I know it will depend on where you are, cause...

Marguerite: Most of them are older people. The happy hour attracts maybe a younger crowd, but most of them are older people, largely native speakers. Some of them, though, particularly the ones in, say, Lafayette, they'll get expats, people who maybe moved here from a French speaking country and live here now, but they like to have a French hang regularly. Occasionally you'll get people who are visiting – like, sometimes we'll have tourists. The happy hour one is always on the same night at the Cajun Jam at the Blue Moon, which has been going on for a long, long time. It's kind of for both. We do happy hour and then do the Jam, cause it's all free. But yeah, I would say most of them are more older native speakers, and then sometimes learners. It's a great learning tool, because you learn to speak by speaking, and a lot of people will say, 'Oh, I can read it, but when it comes time to speak or understand, I'm like, 'Argh!'' How do you do that? Well, you put yourself in there and you get exposed to it, and so that's a great way to get exposed to just normal people talking, you know?

Holly: Would that be something that you could maybe – obviously not the happy hour one – but is that something that could maybe be brought over to the immersion programme in schools? Like a kids' version, I guess, of the French tables.

Marguerite: There is a really sweet French table in New Iberia. So, the New Iberia French table, I always talk about them when it comes to this, because I think, I hope other tables adopt this practice. They started years ago, before the pandemic, they started once a month. They meet every week, but once a month, they invite one class from the French immersion school in New Iberia, so maybe it's the second graders this month, and the next month it'll be the kindergartners or whatever, and they invite them to breakfast – because they have a breakfast timetable – and they come with their teacher as a little field trip, and they have breakfast with the French table and talk in French with them, and I think that's... Oh man, everyone should do that. So, I always try and tell other French tables about that, like, 'Hey, if you're ever interested, y'all could... Do you need me to put you in contact with the local French immersion programme? Let's make it happen,' kind of thing, because it's really cute and seems like an awesome idea.

Holly: And that must be so exciting for the kids as well, to be like, 'Oh my God, we get to hear it spoken in the world, not just in our school.'

Marguerite: Mm-hmm. And particularly for the littlest kids, they might have a grandparent who speaks French, but they're more likely to have maybe had a great-grandparent – if that great-grandparent's still alive, great, but as we keep going and the older generation gets older, it's getting harder and harder to have somebody in your circle who speaks French, so it's good to get them in contact with those people through other means than just, say, their natural family dynamic.

Holly: I actually want to ask quickly about the immersion programme – if that's okay – and about the effect that that's having at the moment, because I have met with other members of the community who are also, like, your generation and slightly younger, also, who have been exposed to the immersion programme and have had very positive feedback about it, because it's reconnecting them with their heritage and their identity

as Louisiana French. How are you finding the feedback from that, as kids are aging up out of that programme?

Marguerite: I mean, French immersion is very positively seen. It, generally, is growing. We've added new parishes over the past, say, ten years. We've added several new parishes where they started an immersion programme, and then you always start with just a kindergarten, or kindergarten and first grade, class, and then as you go, it gets bigger, because those are now second graders and third graders, and then their little siblings are behind them in kindergarten, and whatnot. And we're always looking to continue adding – I mean, we would obviously love to see a French immersion programme in every parish in the state of Louisiana. But I would say, generally, like I was saying earlier, I think even just French in general and bilingualism in general is starting to kind of catch on to some degree in the American consciousness of like, 'Oh, hey,'... Particularly if it's "easy", cause it's kind of easy for a kid in the sense of, you know, you throw them in the classroom, this lady speaks only French to them, they'll catch on, and they get a lot of exposure – (that's) the other thing about it, too, that I think people don't think about. They're like, 'Well, I'm not a kid anymore, so my brain isn't a sponge.' I'm like, 'You realise that child is also getting six hours a day? If you had six hours a day, you'd probably do okay in another language, adult!' So, I mean, there's something that is another thing that I think Louisiana can be proud of, because we have a lot of them compared to a lot of other states and public school immersion programmes, they're accessible to anybody, and a lot of them have a lottery system for that reason, and it's not just a kind of elite thing for certain people's kids. It's in the public school system and they can finish with a seal of biliteracy on their diploma that shows that they're literate in two languages, and they generally pass the DELF exam a few times at different stages in their schooling. Most of them end at a certain point. I would love it if we could expand that, but it's very complicated. There's only about two high schools that still continue immersion, and once you're in high school... Just because you don't

just have to have somebody who can teach fourth grade and speak French, you have to have somebody who can teach, like, civics, who is certified to teach civics and, like, biology, and all these very specified courses, *and* you can do all that in French. So, it's a little bit trickier on the staffing side, but there is a programme at Lafayette High, here in Lafayette, where... generally all the Lafayette Parish immersion kids end up when they're in high school, and they do have a teacher who speaks French who can teach them chemistry, and they do have a teacher who speaks French who can teach them geography, and things like that. So, it's kind of on a 'What teacher is available?' basis, but they still can take classes in French in high school. And then there's a charter school – it's called the *Lycée Français*, it's based off of the *Lycée Français* model, but it's not an official part of the French government – it's a charter school in New Orleans that has started, I guess, probably eleven or twelve years ago. I'm not sure if they have juniors or seniors yet, but they started adding a grade every year, and they're getting to the end of high school now, those kids, so they're getting there, which is awesome

Holly: And what a cool thing for them to be able to say as well that they, yeah, grow up bilingual in English and in Louisiana French, or in French, in whatever way they want to look at it.

Marguerite: And beyond the language stuff, I mean, their teachers... If you go to Myrtle Place Elementary here in town, which is not too far from where I live, you know, their teachers are from Niger and from Belgium, and they have exposure to all these different parts of the world, which is part of one of the things that all of the CODOFIL teachers do, even the temporary ones who just stay here for a few years, and the ones who decide, 'You know what, I like it here, I'm married, I found a cute Louisiana boy or girl, I'm going to stick around,' is that, in their original visas, for the first few years that they're here, they – every year – have to do some sort of presentation to their students or to the community about where they're from, and, like, 'This is where I'm from in France or in Canada, and this is this festival that's we have, and look,

this is our special cuisine, and this is our special... whatever,' which is awesome, just exposing them to the world, travelling the world, without actually ever leaving their hometown. They already have that kind of exposure.

Holly: That's so cool and so important, because, like you said, for you – and for me, when I was younger – it was the *metropole*, and that was it. Maybe you did Algeria, maybe, and it isn't until (university) that you start learning about, 'Oh, hey, there's a third of Africa that speaks French, or hey, there's *Québec*.' (...) So that's really cool, that the kids and the community get to learn that through their teachers, as well.

Marguerite: Mm-hmm.

Holly: What do you think the next...? I mean, CODOFIL's always working, but what do you think the next big steps are for CODOFIL, in terms of where it wants to go next?

Marguerite: Ooh... Well, obviously, it's still new, the OIF thing, and I mean, it's not CODOFIL that's the member, it's the state of Louisiana that's the member, but being that we're a state agency, we're some of the state employees who can actually communicate with the people, and so we end up helping organise, you know, when the Secretary General was in Louisiana, maybe a month or two ago, CODOFIL helped arrange her visits with the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor, and things like that. But we're really excited to see how that grows, that kind of relationship, and what being a US state that is an observer member – we're not a full member – but an observer at the OIF, what that can lead to in terms of international agreements and cooperation and projects and stuff, so that's going to be really cool, hopefully. And there are other... Like I said, we're a small team and we have lots of ideas, so it's just a matter of getting the resources and manpower to actually act on them sometimes, but we're scrappy, too, so we've figured out ways to make it work thus far, and I think there's a lot of great energy, particularly since 2018, which was the fiftieth anniversary of CODOFIL. There was a special budget that was given just to do activities and events and a lot of outreach that year, and I think

it really paid off. The budget was only for that year, but we've built off of that momentum, I think, in the following years, even with COVID. I think we're just trying to continue building that sort of momentum and having more and more ties with people who are in the community. Right now, we've got some projects that are specifically to help connect local French to French in the school, so, like, resources for teachers that really help them bridge that gap. And because a lot of them just came here, so they don't necessarily, like, 'Okay, I'm interested in helping, but I don't know anything about y'all's French, and I don't know what I'm doing here, I'm still finding my bearings.' So getting them resources, whether that's flashcards or whether that's stuff like the cartoon, where, with the cartoon, I always make a... I call it *La Cheat Sheet Louisianaise*. It's like, 'Okay, when they say this, *this* is what they mean, this is the equivalent in Standard French.' Cause, a lot of times, I think, other French speakers will be like, 'Is that an error or is that a dialectal thing?' And so, it's just being like, 'Well, this is what we're doing here, and that's why we say this. This is the rule in Louisiana for that grammatical thing.'

Holly: I love it! And then it helps, too, because... Again, I've learnt metropolitan French and when I was reading things by, like, David Cheramie or May Waggoner, it was like, 'Okay, is this a Louisiana French thing, or is this just me misreading something?' So, a cheat sheet is always helpful! I know that CODOFIL, quite a long time ago now, set up the state mandate for Louisiana French, which... It's amazing that there is a mandate there that has ring-fenced protection, or preservation, for Louisiana French. Is that something that you think CODOFIL might take further?

Marguerite: So, in '68... In the early days at CODOFIL, there was a mandate that French be taught in all elementary schools. That still exists. Unfortunately, it's not that it's totally unfunded, it's just that it has an out clause that has been used more frequently in recent decades, so it's a mandate unless the school sends a form that says 'I don't want to do this', in which case they don't have to do that. But there are some schools that still do it, and that's awesome!

And there's still a lot of programmes in elementary schools, whether they be immersion programmes, but also French as a second language programmes in elementary schools that probably wouldn't be there is not for that mandate.

Holly: That is amazing, that fifty years on, it's still had that impact. Do you think there could be, I guess, a piece of more formal legislature at some point? The US doesn't have an official language, which is... People usually think it's English, but then there isn't actually a mandate for it to be English.

Marguerite: So, Louisiana also doesn't have an official language – there's no *de facto* and *de jure* bilingual – we are *de facto* a bilingual state, so there are certain things that I think were probably written in part because of old documents, like old contracts and stuff that were written in French and need to be used, maybe for, like, the title of a house (when) you do title tracing and whatnot. And so, because of that – this is me coming up with a reason, I'm assuming that's why, but I don't know – there are certain thing in the law that said that basically any contract in French is just as valid as a contract in English. Technically, I should be able to write a cheque in French if I wanted, and it should be able to be cashed. But as far as *de jure* official languages, Louisiana doesn't have that. I think the only state that does have an official bilingualism is Hawai'i. I think New Mexico is like us, I think they're *de facto* bilingual, but it's something people ask a lot. I think it's a big project, and it's one of those things where... I hesitate, because on the one hand, like, 'Yeah, let's go for officialization and let's legitimise this!' But on the other hand, do you want to wake the sleeping 'English-only' beast, you know what I mean?

Holly: In the last few years, well, it has only grown.

Marguerite: So, I think it's a decision that probably shouldn't be made lightly and should be made with a real strategy in place. And the thing is, I don't have a strategy for that. I focus more on, you know, bottom-up. If you increase more people's awareness about what bilingualism actually looks like, because this is a fairly monolingual – if not in reality, at least

in mentality – country. I think a lot of people don't really even have a concept of what bilingualism can look like, so I think, for me, it's an easier decision to say, 'Well, this I can do right now and it's less likely to...' It's a slower road, certainly, but you're more likely to just win people over rather than mandating something and seeing how they feel about being mandated to, you know what I mean?

Holly: It's encouraging rather than imposing.

Marguerite: Yeah.

Holly: My last couple of (questions) are: Is there anything that you wish was more widely known about Louisiana French culture, people, the language?

Marguerite: Okay, it depends on who it is. I would say, among the English-speaking world – and the United States particularly – I think it's just an awareness that it's here, that the language is still here, that there are still people alive who grew up speaking it and that it was here before Louisiana was part of the United States. Joseph Dunn talks about the sale of Louisiana, as opposed to the Louisiana Purchase, which I've totally adopted, I'm like, '(Gasps) Mind blown, adopting!' So, now I don't say 'Louisiana Purchase' anymore, because, like, my people didn't purchase anything! (Laughs) Nobody in my family, at least on my Mom's side, nobody purchased anything, they were all here! And then the land they were on became a different country. So, he always insists on saying '*La vente de la Louisiane*', *au lieu de* '*L'achat*'. So, I think, as a legitimising thing, I want other Americans to know that we were here kind of before you were. We're not imposing our culture on you, y'all bought us, y'all bought our territories, so we come with it, you know? The pilgrims don't own all of America, if you will, the English pilgrims. And if it's the French world... I don't know, but if it's Louisiana itself, I'm on a little crusade to always impose on people – because even if French is well seen, there's definitely still a lot of bad understandings of the linguistic variation, and you still hear people say, 'Well, I speak broken French.' And we don't have hangups about this in English. No one's like, 'Oh

well, I don't sound like Kate Middleton, so I don't speak proper English.' We don't have a complex about American English. We understand that people sound different in Australia and Scotland and in Canada and in Georgia, but it's all English. We don't, like, 'Well, maybe one of these things isn't really English,' you know what I mean? No, it's all English! But we sometimes get really caught up in the linguistic variation in French and say, 'Oh, we don't really speak French, it's its own language,' and you're like, 'I'm sorry, this is your *main*, and this is your *nez*, and this is *droit* and this is *gauche*.' Are there differences? Yes, but it's not Chinese, it's French. So, that would be my thing for other Louisianans. I don't know what my thing is for the French-speaking world... 'Hey, we're here, let's be friends.'

Holly: Maybe, again, that thing of our *français* is also *le bon français*.

Marguerite: Yeah, though that's certainly gotten better, I would say, over the years. From what I understand in, say, the '70s, there was a lot of 'Let me help you, tiny Louisianan. The word isn't *chevrette*, it's *crevette*,' and a lot of times – at that time – Louisianans were like, 'Okay, I don't know. We just say *chevrette*.' It's just evolved differently, it's not all bastardisation or deformation, even though deformation is a linguistic phenomenon that happens in all languages as a way of evolving, but it's not all just, like, 'We took your French and made it lesser,' or something. It's like, 'Well, maybe there were two words, when in 1600, when the people who ended up Louisiana left,' and the *Académie Française* got started in the 1630s, and they decided 'No, no, no, we don't want *those* words, we only want this one,' and we still have the old word and held on to it. There's other reasons, it's not just, 'The English has infiltrated your French,' or something. No, it's just a different word.

Holly: The second to last question is really... Is there anything I've missed that we haven't spoken about that's glaringly missing? Or is there anything that you think I should bear in mind as a researcher that's coming at it from another country, from another (linguistic) perspective?

Marguerite: The only thing I can think of is that we haven't really talked a lot about the language of Louisiana Creole, which is part of the situation, in that Louisiana French doesn't exist just in relation with English in Louisiana, it also exists in relation with Louisiana Creole, which has a French-based lexifier, you know, (it's a) Creole language that is indigenous Louisiana. It's its own Creole, it's not the same as other creoles like Haitian Creole, or (Réunion) Creole, and it's very complicated when you start about both language and ethnic labels, because you can have people who identify as Creole, but they only speak Louisiana French, and you have others who maybe identify as Creole and they speak both Louisiana Creole and Louisiana French, and it's a continuum that they'll go across depending on who their fellow speaker is. And then you even have the question of race, which gets really complicated, that plays into ethnicity, and so, somebody might identify as White, and identify as Cajun, because, in their mind, people who are White and speak French are Cajun, people who are Black and speak French are Creole, or speak Creole. There's a movie called *Tout le monde veut être un Cadien* – it was a little documentary that some French Canadians made eight years ago, something like that, it's on YouTube – but I find it hilarious that, even though they say at the beginning, 'We're just going to focus on Cajuns and not Creoles or Native Americans,' which are – the most French-speaking group in Louisiana, by some accounts, is the United Houma Nation, as far as percentage of people who identify as that and speak French today – but... It's funny, in this documentary, they say, 'We're just focusing on Cajuns,' and then the first words out of the Louisianan's mouth in the movie are '*Mo gin di piti*,' which, [like...]

Holly: [Creole...]

Marguerite: [... '*mo gin*'] is Creole for '*j'ai*.' And you're like, 'Okay. I guess we're not going to talk about this, but that's fine.' (Laughs) 'Not my movie, no comment!' But I think it's something that has to be considered when you think about French in Louisiana, because it doesn't exist in a vacuum, it exists alongside these other languages, you know.

Holly: (They're) just as essential to its makeup as (Louisiana) French.

Marguerite: Oh, yeah.

Holly: So, my last question to you is – and you can answer this however you like – what do you think the future might be for Louisiana French?

Marguerite: Well, I have to be somewhat idealistic, otherwise what's the point? I'm not going to be a nihilist and do the job that I do. So, I think it's... Like most things in life, and most things in the world, it's going to look different, but I think it's going to find some sort of path. And I think if Louisiana can really, as a state, see the amazing resource that it is, the distinctiveness – and I think a lot of people, and this is something that I talked about in my thesis a lot, but this idea of Louisiana as unique, or special, or exotic, it's like, 'Where do you think it comes from? Alligators?' Well, alligators are great, but, you know... Crawfish étouffée, it's like, 'Where did we get the word *'étouffée'* from? Why don't we just call it smothered crawfish?' But I think if people can, increasingly, make that connection and see that it's at the base of almost all the special things. There's the environmental stuff, obviously, the landscape is not French, it's not language, but if they can recognise that and really lean into it, I think it's this awesome wildcard that we have as a region and let's work with it. We did just get bilingual signage in downtown Lafayette, and I was at the meeting. We helped translate it at CODOFIL, and I was at the meeting where they presented it, and someone asked a question: 'Yeah, but why is the French higher and bigger than the English?' – it's wayfinding signage – and the people up there, I think, struggled a little bit with it. The person up there was like, 'Well, I mean, we want to support French, it's a minority language, we need to help it out.' And I was like, 'Excuse me?' And I had them go back in their presentation to where they showed other countries' signage and showed the Dublin airport, because I had been to Dublin airport a few years ago and I love their signage, it's beautiful, and I was like, 'Look at that Irish Gaelic. Irish is not an international language; if you speak Irish, you're probably from Ireland... You're not,

like, from Zimbabwe and you speak Irish...' And it's not an easy language to parcel out. A lot of French – thank you, William the Conqueror – any '-ion' word, like '*information*' or '*nation*', you can kind of piece it together sometimes – not so much with Irish Gaelic. Like, I have no clue which one of those words means 'terminal'... But they put it higher and more prominent than English. And I was like, 'Why do you think they did that? Cause they wanted to support Irish? Maybe, but I know that whenever I walked off that plane, I knew I was on vacation, I knew I was in a different place, I knew, like 'Woah, look at that, this language is coming out at me!'" And that's what I told the crowd there, I was like, 'It's not something we're going to do for French, this is something French can do for us.' They can't put signs like this in, like, Topeka, Kansas – everyone would be like, 'Why are the signs in French?' – but we can do that here. We're legit enough, there's a reason for it here, and so maybe when people come here, they'll have that same reaction I did when I stepped off the plane in the Dublin airport, like, 'Woah! New place, new things, things to discover.' And that's, I guess, what I'm talking about, about leaning into it. So, I guess that's what I hope people can see more of and be like, 'Okay, this is our thing.' It's not just a little pocket nano-pit or something that we're going to put away and take out only on special occasions. Let's cultivate this and really make it front and centre.

Holly: And celebrate it.

Marguerite: Yeah.

Holly: I mean, why not? It's a cool thing to have!

Marguerite: Celebrate it *and use* it, cause I think we do celebrate it. We celebrate it for festivals, and then on Monday, we go back to 'normal life', and it should be a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday thing.

Holly: That is such a positive, lovely note to end on, Maggie. Thank you so much.