Journal #5

Our reading for this week was Naomi Griffiths article, “Acadian Identity: the Creation and Re-creation of Community”, which focuses on the 1755 deportation of the Acadians and the struggles and hardships they endured while trying to build and secure not only land but community as well.

The 1755 deportation was the involuntary removal of Acadian peoples from the Canadian Maritimes and was part of a British military movement against [New France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_France). There where many factors that contributed to the deportation, Griffiths writes “…there was a considerable area of action in which no single set of traditions existed and where the demands of the immediate environment could be met on their own terms rather than in the light of past precedent”1 . The Acadians at this time had developed traditions that had political, social and economic standards for their peoples. The relationships between the Acadians, British, and French seem to be very business oriented but also heavily influenced by religion, Griffiths states “On the one hand, there were those who saw the event as part of a religious progress of a God-fearing, Protestant, English Empire working for the good of civilization and morality. The Acadians, whether represented as simple, devout, honest rustics or conniving, sly, treacherous peasantry, were uniformly pictured by both sides as manipulated puppets caught up into the disputes of the real people fighting the great battles between England and France.4”2.

“Those who migrated to Acadia were not driven by any particular so called or religious vision but were seeking, quite simply, improved social and economic conditions for themselves and their children”3. As I believe thousands did from all over the world for the same reason. I found a passage in the text book that I believe supports this…”The period from 1713 to 1748 has been described by historian Naomi Griffiths as a “golden age,” one in which family sizes grew and average life expectancies improved and were better than in France, Canada, or New England”4.

The Acadians believed that they had a right to live on the land they had settled on. They welcomed the settlers and traders but requested to be consulted and respected on issues involving their lives, customs, and the land they had lived on for years before the arrival of the “new comers”. As a result, the British strived to remove any more threats the Acadians posed and to permanently stop the supply deals they had with neighboring nations by removing them from the area. The deportation was taking full swing. Griffiths states “Then comes the observation of a third attribute but this one varies: it is the observation of a person’s affiliation to a larger group and it is an observation that says as much about the person commenting as about the stranger”5. I may very well be reading this passage wrong, but to me it sounds as though Griffiths is saying that the deportation of Acadians was just as much influenced by the Acadians as it was the British? This could be believable/understandable… but I believe the Acadians where not prepared or equip enough to handle or fight against the British.