

VIVE L'ACADIE ÉDUQUÉ!

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ABSTRACT

In 1968 – 9, Acadian students reimagined *acadianité*, the essence of Acadian identity, to disrupt and redefine popularly-held beliefs, ideas, and narratives concerning French-English relations in New Brunswick. It was the students' recognition of themselves as an oppressed people group that allowed them to mobilize against inequities in New Brunswick's governance and education system. This research project analyzes the historical progression of *acadianité* and its connection with New Brunswick's French-Canadian education system. This research project also examines the Université de Moncton's role in the student demonstrations as a 'community' institution, demonstrating its importance to Acadian society.

APPROACH

To answer my research questions, I contextualized the student demonstrations by examining *Acadia?! Acadia?!* (1971) by Michel Brault & Pierre Perrault, a documentary of the events. I also accessed York University's library database and Google Scholar to review literature regarding Acadian nationalism and society to examine the motives for these demonstrations. Finally, I drew upon Andersen's (2006) concept of 'imagined communities,' which I found through the university's library database, as an analytical framework.

L'ÉVANGÉLINE

A l'Université de Moncton,
Occupation du pavillon
des Sciences par un
groupe d'étudiants



Photos from *Acadia?! Acadia?!* (1971) by Michel Brault & Pierre Perrault

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Specific: How did the Acadian students through the 1968 – 9 demonstrations reconceptualize Acadian nationalism and fight for equal rights through New Brunswick's education system?
- General: What is the relationship between education and nationalism?

CONCLUSIONS

- These students reconceptualized the Acadian 'imagined community' by recognizing themselves as a colonized or oppressed people hindered by Catholicism, the English, and their traditions.
- An isolationist approach was historically useless in improving the Acadians' socio-economic status, while an integrationist approach silently erased Acadian identity within Canadian society
- The solution was to rely on a 'community' institution and advocate for a separate French-Canadian education system within the New Brunswick government that could efficiently and equitably service its intended community

IMPLICATIONS

- Education infused with nationalism can provide an imagined community the means to resist colonialism and imperialism
- Indigenous activism may employ a similar approach to reclaim education and allow for their communities and identities to flourish in Canada