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French 290

Web Assignment #2

Nationalism and patriotism, while similar, are subtly different. Being a patriot means to support one's country or state and those ideals a country holds. Culture is overlooked or irrelevant when speaking about patriotism. Thus, there is a sense of toleration towards other cultures. In the United States, there are many cultures, but each person still holds patriotism for the country and the ideals that it is grounded in. Nationalism takes culture very seriously and often other cultures are seen as a threat. Quebec City in the documentary was intolerant of the Anglophones and their culture. Most francophones in the Quebec region saw the English as a threat to the rich culture and is why they tried everything to become independent, to keep that culture from being wiped out entirely.

Anglophones in the Quebec region after 1976 when the Parti Quebecois won majority for the government, faced discrimination, culture shock, and worried many of the English-speaking citizens. The French Language Charter Bill, which was passed in 1977, mandated French to be the spoken language in government, school, court, and businesses. This kind of radical change in the government naturally forced English speakers to move to another region in Canada.

Many francophones base their feelings of patriotism on the fact that they are Quebecers or Quebecois. Throughout the whole documentary there was no mention of what it is to be Canadian in the region of Quebec. It is clear that their culture is not aligned with rest of Canada who might identify their patriotism for the Maple Leaf. However, it is also clear that Canada is

still developing its own culture, after aligning itself with the United Kingdom for quite a long time until their official patriation in 1982. Today, there is much more defined Canadian culture in which some Quebecois people might have started to embrace.

John Walker described his relationship with Quebec as confusing. He was born in Montreal, and his family has Irish roots. Whenever he would visit Quebec City as a child he was seen as different and even got teased for being an English native speaker. Walker moved out of Montreal and Quebec because his work led him to Toronto. In part this can be because it was more difficult to get hired if you had an English name or spoke English as your native language.

I am very patriotic because I love America and what it stands for. There are certain language bills such as the French Charter Bill that would never get passed here in the United States because of the First Amendment. Forcing Americans to speak a language goes against the very nature of the creation of the Bill of Rights. That being said, it is still difficult to have any succession being a citizen in the U.S. without speaking at least some English. This is why naturalized citizens take a test of basic language and writing skills. Culture is ingrained into every city and it can be drastically different from one another. St. Louis is very different from Oklahoma City, but there is still love for what the country stands for which is freedom. Freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of culture, is the basic understanding of what it means to be American. Inspiration of my patriotism comes from core principal that anyone can make it here, given the right mindset and hard work.