The Rogues of 'Quoddy: Smuggling in the Maine New Brunswick Borderlands 1783-1820

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Abstract
Smuggling has been an important problem in American-Canadian relations. Yet the nature of smuggling is little understood; it is by definition an elusive, secretive, and subtle practice. This dissertation explores smuggling as a social force within a border community on the United States-Canada boundary. Smuggling almost always involved the illicit crossing of political boundaries, and as such can be used as a means of studying popular attitudes toward the creation of national borders. Moreover, because smuggling is directly related to the transition to modern capitalism, this study sheds light on the roots of both American and Canadian economic development. The Passamaquoddy region that straddles the border between Maine in the United States and New Brunswick in what is now Canada offers an ideal example of borderlands smuggling in the years following the American Revolution to the end of the War of 1812. During this period, the international border running through Passamaquoddy was extremely ill-defined and subject to periodic military action and diplomatic correction. By 1783, two oppositional groups settled Passamaquoddy. Loyalist adherents to the British Crown settled the New Brunswick side of Passamaquoddy Bay, while republican Americans settled the Maine side. Despite the ideological differences of these two groups, and various laws that often prohibited trade between them, Passamaquoddy residents engaged in a lively smuggling trade even when the United States and Great Britain were fighting the War of 1812. The accommodation between Loyalists and Americans at Passamaquoddy provides an opportunity to compare the historical experience of Canada and the United States, both of which have developed extensive frontier mythologies. The theoretical basis for this study is "borderlands theory," which emphasizes modes of accommodation rather than conflict on the North American frontier. Smuggling thus provides a means to analyze the creation of the border between the United States and Canada, to compare the American and Canadian frontier experience, and to understand the transition to capitalism.

Recommended Citation
Passamaquoddy Bay is an inlet of the Bay of Fundy, between the U.S. state of Maine and the Canadian province of New Brunswick, at the mouth of the St. Croix River. Most of the bay lies within Canada, with its western shore bounded by Washington County, Maine. The southernmost point is formed by West Quoddy Head on the U.S. mainland in Lubec, Maine; and runs northeasterly through Campobello Island, New Brunswick, engulfing Deer Island, New Brunswick, to the New Brunswick mainland head at L'Etete, New