

Brown, Dona. "Vermont as a Way of Life." Vermont History Vol. 85, No. 1 (Winter/Spring 2017): 43-64

This article traces the emergence of a unique Vermont identity, rooted in centuries as a harsh and bitter place to escape from, full of "rigid and joyless people" and how the Great Depression changed that narrative to one of self-sufficiency, rugged individualism, "self-reliant, sure of his world, unfrightened by the future." Further, the article explores how the social structures of rural Vermont, tight-knit communities reliant on practical skills, frugality and thrift, actually fared far better during the Depression than the rest of the country, for Vermonters had, for generations, "placed the highest value on personal and household self-sufficiency." Vermonters had not been impacted by the 1920s pressure to live beyond one's means; come hard times they had far less to lose than most Americans.

In a 1932 article *Survey Graphic*, author Margaret Hard assured that Vermont provided "security, serenity, and peace." In the climate of the Great Depression, this attracted Americans seeking those very qualities of life.

The Great Depression also led to the establishment of the CCC, a New Deal program that transformed the VT landscape, created job opportunities, and embraced conservation and recreation as economic stimuli. It also put Vermont on the map of national recognition because of skiing. Dorothy Canfield Fisher noted in her writing that "Vermont seemed like a place that you could wear ski pants." Perhaps skiing becomes an antidote to the disillusionment that the GD had created in the hearts of so many Americans. Vermont offered a different reality. The Depression turned people to Vermont, its Yankee farmers and mountains, instead of away from it.

George Aiken, Governor in 1938 wrote "the folks in these hills don't have all the modern conveniences that those along the main highways do...yet we do have those things that money can never buy, for anybody. We have a pretty large degree of happiness in our hillside make-up." Yes, perhaps this is over-romanticized, as writers DCF and Samuel Ogden acknowledged that life would be very difficult for the elderly, sick and immigrants.

DCF argues that the "right kind" of people to move to Vermont would be those who shared anti-materialistic, self-sufficient values of rural Vermont.

Evancie, Angela. "Brave Little State." Audio blog post. How Has The Geology of Vermont Affected Its Character? Vermont Public Radio, September 8, 2017. Web. January 29, 2019

This podcast looks at the relationship between the bedrock of Vermont, its lack of coastline, and the importance of farming in how the state developed its unique character. Would like to interview the farmer interviewed in part two, who lives near White River Junction.

Higgins, Lucy. "Return to the Roots." Backcountry Magazine. 2018: 62-85. Print.

3,000 feet of vertical relief and a spine that runs over 200 miles from the Canadian border to Massachusetts. Vermont is often regarded as the birthplace of skiing in the US, as the natural mountainous landscape, covered with birches and maples is ideally situated for outdoor recreation.

But it wasn't always that way. From early settlers in the 1700s who were largely French trappers, Vermont was The term Green Mountains was actually given to us by our French Canadian neighbors to the north. The term Green Mountains first appearing in written form on a map of New York in 1799.

Trails, for the purpose of outdoor recreation, weren't developed in earnest until the 1930s. Coinciding with the Great Depression, around 1,500 farms went under in the 1930s, and the federal government, under the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt, initiated the Civilian Conservation Corps, a cornerstone New Deal recovery program. The CCC focused on forestry and rural development. Nationwide over 3 million men were given jobs, but in Vermont, many of those jobs took the form of clearing ski trails. I was elated to learn that Perry Merrill, forester and Head of the CCC in Vermont, was trained at the Royal College of Forestry in Stockholm, Sweden. Apparently, he "acquired the scandinavian passion for skiing" and today his name graces the trail signs on Stowe Mountain resort's crown jewel ski run.

By the end of the 1930s, residents of Stowe yearned for the revival of good-natured sport, and thus created the first Winter Carnival, where tobogganing, ski racing, and ski jumping took off as spectator sports. In 1934 the first rope tow was erected in Woodstock, Vermont, powered by a Model T engine.

Ski culture in Vermont was understandably interrupted by the second world war, but as men and women of the service returned home, more and more took to Vermont's hillsides and found solace in her wooded mountainsides. Glade cutting became a common trend, backyard rope-tows sprung up around the state, and a desire to re-forest previously clearcut hillsides became an agenda item in many localities.

And so, state regulation of recreational land began in earnest. Today only 10% of Vermont lands are publicly owned, while the remaining is largely private. Much of the land that I recreate on in Vermont is leased from the State: downhill ski areas, cross country ski centers and small networks of huts are possible through land-use agreements. This creates a situation where the state profits from use and the government is able to balance economic value with conservation.

The 1980s saw an increase in guidebooks and a proliferation of hiking and skiing gear. Access to the mountains was becoming easier than ever and the subculture of backcountry skiing emerged. This led to illegal glading, that is, trimming and manicuring hillsides in the summer for the purpose of creating better ski runs. Highly illegal as it is-- Lucy Higgins of Backcountry

Magazine cautions “illegal glading on private land is trespassing at best and a fast dash from a shotgun at worst,” the practice endured, creating a serious need to protect ecosystems, balance landowner rights and recreational interests.

Today, outdoor recreation is completely dependent on the Green Mountains themselves and responsible, *legal*, access to land.

The last ten years has brought exciting success stories of skiers and hikers coming together as coalitions to build trusting relationships centered on stewardship, create jobs and stimulate local economies-- much like the New Deal programs did almost 100 years ago. Like Perry Merrill, that Swedish-trained forester of the 30s, today's Commissioner for Vermont Foresters is not only a forester, but an avid skier. There is promise in outdoor recreation as the cultural and economic underpinning of our state: a recent study of backcountry (not ski resort, but FREE trail access) users found that one managed site saw 171 visitors on a Saturday, generating an estimated \$200,000 of positive impact from that one trailhead, on that one day.

Morse, Cheryl and Geller, Wendy, May 2015, The Vermont Roots Migration Project. No. 1.
https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Center-for-Research-on-VT/vt_migration_final.pdf

This report, conducted by researchers at the University of Vermont, used social media to survey Vermonters who have left the state and those who have chosen to stay. While those who have left the state perceive the ability to get better and higher paying jobs in other New England towns and cities, “those who had returned to Vermont [after living elsewhere] placed a high value on landscape, family connections, Vermont’s culture, and the small size of communities.” 70% of “returners” selected “I enjoy Vermont’s landscape” as a reason for returning.

What a ‘leaver’ misses about Vermont: *“The intense year round color of the sky, the smell of the woods, the intellectual stimulation, outdoor habits, environmental stewardship...cold streams, clear water, Fall, Spring, Winter, Summer, dark earth, dirt roads, good water, and of course, Vermonters, oh and covered bridges, riding bicycles, sugaring, sharing potlucks with real pies, cemeteries with headstones, and all of my friends and and and and.”*

**“Private Land and Public Access.” *Private Land and Public Access | Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department*,
vtfishandwildlife.com/learn-more/landowner-resources/private-land-and-public-access.**

This website outlines landowner rights in the State of Vermont, including public access guidelines for posted or non-posted land.

“Protecting the Long Trail.” *Green Mountain Club*, 14 Mar. 2019,
www.greenmountainclub.org/conservation/protecting-long-trail/.

1980s it was formalized as a formal handshake with landowners would no longer do. One goal of the club is to manage landowner easements. 445 miles largely managed by a small staff and relies on volunteer hours for trail work. They work in collaboration with state and local governments, US Forest Service, and VT Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation.

**“Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative.” *Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative* | *Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation*,
fpr.vermont.gov/VOREC.**

In 2017 the Governor signed into law a new collaborative that aims to marry the interests of outdoor recreation and economic opportunity. The group aims to “grow the outdoor recreation related business opportunities by increasing participation in outdoor recreation activities, strengthening the quality and extent of outdoor recreation resources and increasing stewardship of outdoor recreation resources.” This winter the group received over a million dollars in funding requests, and the winning projects will be announced later this spring.

***What Common Values Do Vermonters Share?*,**
www.vtrural.org/programs/policy-councils/future-of-vermont/question-2.

This website collects quotes on what Vermonters love most about the state, and the values that Vermonters share. Love of the land or landscape comes up the most. “Rural landscape, love of mountains, small government and schools, independence, guaranteed health care and affordable living.” “Do unto others, protect the landscape, balance the forces of capitalism with common sense.” “Vermonters share a sense of place and love of this land. A desire to maintain close ties with family, and a willingness to accept newcomers who respect the traditions and ways of this place. A strong work ethic, honesty and integrity. We mean what we say and we stand by our word.” “I think we all share a love of this land, these rolling mountains and valleys of Vermont, and we all want to see it stay relatively the same.” “A love of the landscape, open spaces, green spaces and plenty of trees and relatively undisturbed habitats. Participatory democracy is important to us. We like to have feedback and the opportunity to talk to department heads and elected representatives at every level.”

