University of Alberta

Blanketing a Nation: *Tracing the Social Life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point Blanket Through Canadian Visual Culture*

by

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ABSTRACT

The interest and popularity of the Hudson's Bay Company and their Point blankets across centuries and within Aboriginal, Métis, European, and Euro-Canadian cultures are evident in visual materials such as paintings, photographs, and advertisements produced in Canada. This thesis looks at possible associations that result from the continual presence of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket in creating a visual emblem of Canada. By highlighting what Arjun Appadurai has called the "social life" of an object, this project foregrounds the *social lives* of the Point blanket in Canada through three trajectories. All of these readings use Cornelius Krieghoff's *The Trader*, c.1850, as the central visual reference, and archival documents as primary support. The three trajectories explored in this thesis include reading the Point blanket as a sign in the visual language of the fur trade, as a commodity as well as "material link"—a qualifying term suggested by Harold Tichenor—in what Mary Louise Pratt calls a "contact zone," and finally, as an object that acts as a marker of Canadian identity.

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INTRODUCTION

FIG 1. "It all started with a blanket" March 5, 2004. *The Globe and Mail*, E3. 57.6 x 34 cm.

INTRODUCTION

"It all started with a blanket"[1]: in the late-seventeenth century, Point blankets, woven in English textile mills, were shipped overseas to be used in the Canadian fur trade industry. Since then, Point blankets have been visually woven into both the historic and cultural fabrics of Canada. The interest in and popularity of the Hudson's Bay Company and its Point blankets across centuries and within Aboriginal, Métis, European, and Euro-Canadian cultures are evident in visual materials such as the numerous paintings, drawings, etchings, and photographs produced in Canada.[2] The image in FIGURE 1 from the *Globe and Mail* of 5 March 2004 introduces this inquiry into the multi-faceted "social life" of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket in that it highlights both historic and contemporary visual and sentimental interest in this material object.[3]

In *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective,* Arjun Appadurai explores the possibility that, "[c]ommodities, like persons, have social lives."[4] The social life of an object relates to the idea that an object, like individuals who interact with other goods and people, has a history that has enabled those who engage with it to bestow meaning(s) onto it. As humans, we endow objects with social and cultural

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[1] FIGURE 1 shows a Hudson's Bay Company advertisement in the *Globe and Mail* (March 5, 2004) celebrating the *Globe and Mail's* 160th Anniversary. This advertisement employs the company's current branding and logo. According to a training video provided courtesy of a local department store, the current logo was introduced to accommodate the new image of the company including its retail banners: The Bay, Home Outfitters, Zellers, and Hbc.com. See FIGURE 23 (pages 85 and 86) for the changing logos and crests of the company. The image in advertisement is 'Women's Blanket Coat (1930s)' Hudson's Bay Company Archives/Archives of Manitoba HBCA 1987.363-W-117/33 (Negative 15189).

[2] For historical accuracy, an uppercase on "Points" corresponds to its historical use in letters, ledgers, and other official documents. These documents were addressed to or either written by officials of the Hudson's Bay Company.

[3] Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: commodities and the politics of value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective,* ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3-63.

[4] Ibid, 3.

meanings, hence Point blankets, like many other objects used in the Canadian fur trade industry, have been endowed with value(s) by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. This thesis explores the intricate connection between the cultural significance of the Point blanket in visual materials and the social life of the Point blanket over the past three centuries in Canada.

The wealth of images that contain representations and re-appropriations of Point blankets draws attention to the historical use and history of this object in Canada. Seeing Point blankets as having social lives provides a framework for reading images of trade interactions produced at distinct historical moments. One may say that looking at an object's social life is analogous to Igor Kopytoff's investigations of an object's "cultural biography." As Arjun Appadurai clarifies:

> [t]he social life of things and their cultural biography are not entirely separate matters, for it is the social history of things, over large periods of time and at large social levels, that constrains the form, meaning, and structure or more short-term, specific, and intimate trajectories.[5]

This project, however, does not take the form of a narrative that summarizes the blanket's cultural biography, dealing with specific owners and their uses of the blanket. Rather, it places Point blankets within a broader historical analysis that highlights their situational use as documented in visual materials such as paintings, photographs, advertisements, and home décor. Although each blanket has its own cultural biography, this thesis looks more broadly at the notion that Point blankets have social lives by examining three specific trajectories: the semiotic meaning of the Point blanket, the blanket as a "material link," and the role of the blanket as a visual emblem of Canada. Historical evidence and

[5] Ibid, 36.

archival documents demonstrate support for these trajectories. Moreover, this work, when positioned in relation to the research of Harold Tichenor and Anne Bagan, opens doors for future analyses dealing with specific biographic inquiries into the blankets, most of which are found in museums and private collections or are re-worked by artists and designers.

Appadurai suggests that an appropriate methodology for identifying the social life of an object is to explore how different cultural groups circulate an object. Moreover, Appadurai recommends searching for the meanings of an object not only by identifying its social history but also by elaborating on details of the object that contribute to its cultural and contextual meanings. Meanings, he argues, are:

> inscribed in their forms, their uses, and their trajectories. It is only through the analysis of these trajectories that we can interpret the human transactions and calculations that enliven things. Thus, even though from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a *methodological* point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context.[6]

The social life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets, as objects used in discrete historical moments, is approached through a contextual analysis of the Point Blanket in Canadian visual culture. Popular histories that describe the uses of the blankets mask the theoretical and critical "trajectories" that illuminate the meaning(s) and social life of the Point blanket. When engaging in an analysis concerning the use of the blanket, or any object for that matter, Appadurai cautions:

> Even if our own approach to things is conditioned necessarily by the view that things have no meanings apart from those that human transaction, attribution, and motivations endow them with, the anthropological

[6] Ibid, 5.

> problem is that this formal truth does not illuminate the concrete, historical circulation of things.[7]

Thus, the multiple uses of the blanket by various cultures have resulted in this study which analyses the contextual use of the blanket in visual materials. For example, contemporary artists use narratives and visual imagery of the Canadian fur trade to inform their work. These artists, while situating our historical moment, are instrumental in contributing to a belief that the Point blanket is a visual emblem of Canada. For example, contemporary artists such as Irene Klar, Marianne Corless, Jolene Rickard, Susan McLeod, Carol Zuckerman, and Bob Boyer have stretched the blanket across the canvas and re-presented histories associated with the Point blanket from a contemporary, twenty-first century perspective. These artists further situate our historical moment by revitalizing, reworking, and reinterpreting the use of the Point blanket in Canadian visual culture and its meaning(s) to Canadians today.

Contemporary Perspectives

Irene Klar's etchings deal with peoples and textile production. The connection she presents between people and textiles as objects is evident in *Fort Wall* (FIGURE 2)—a work that presents the blanket as a textile worn by Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Klar uses the repetitive bands from the multi-striped Point blanket to draw together seven women swaddled in Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets. [8] Klar contextualizes her piece by placing these women against the backdrop of Fort Edmonton—a setting that appears as a generic fort. Klar's use of the blanket highlights not only the interest in this object by her patrons but also shows the connection of the blanket to its historical social

[7] Ibid, 5
[8] Irene Klar, telephone conversation, January 2003.

life as a commodity in the Canadian fur trade. As well, this image shows the blanket as an article of exterior clothing and as a marker of Aboriginal cultures. Importantly, Klar's etching is available as a limited edition print, as a bookmark, and as a greeting card. The availability of this image allows consumers with varying degrees of disposable incomes to access representations of Point blankets at numerous tourist locations. Furthermore, the many reproductions of her work draw attention not only to the consumption of fine art but also to how representations of the blankets become commodities for the tourist industry.

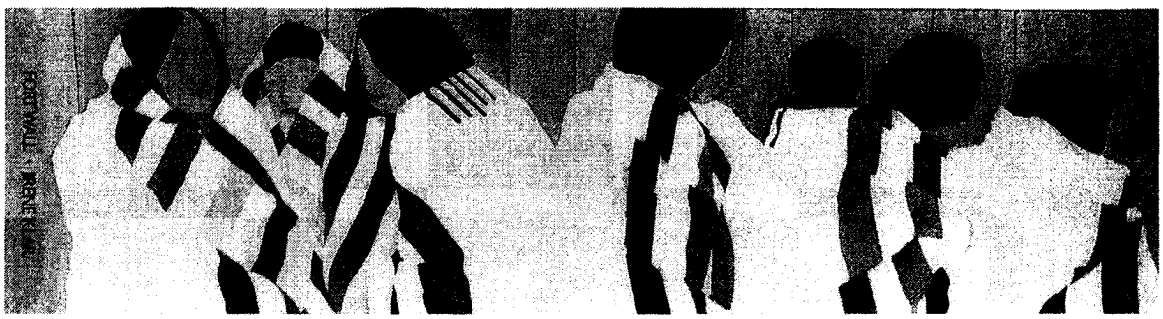

FIG 2. "Fort Wall" Irene Klar.

When contrasted with Klar's work in terms of style, medium, and social commentary, Marianne Corless's *Blanket I* (FIGURE 3) reworks furs into two so-called "national fabrics"[9]—the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket and the Canadian flag. Noted for recycling furs to use as the medium for her wall hangings, Corless frequently merges objects associated as emblems of Canada.[10] In this work, Corless addresses

[9] Chantal Nadeau, *Fur Nation: From Beaver to Brigitte Bardot* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).
[10] Corless uses fur as a medium because "it is laden with people's concerns of fur history." Corless's web page: http://www.corless.ca/ . Corless's use of furs is also historically specific and relates to work by Chantal Nadeau and Julia Emberley who have explored extensively the divergent uses of fur in the history of Canada. These inquiries into fur also explore a semiotic analysis of the fur at a time when animal activist organizations such as PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) are issuing highly politicized advertisement campaigns that address fashion and animal cruelty.

contested histories of genocide and disease transmission by staining the furs with acrylic paint to represent smallpox. This representation connects *Blanket I* to a history of disease transmission that swept through Aboriginal and European communities and settlements.

FIG 3. "Blanket I" Marianne Corless. 2002. Wool, beaver fur, human hair, acrylic paint. 180 x 90cm.

Through their art, several contemporary Canadian artists address a history of disease transmission and blankets. Bob Boyer's series of paintings known as "Blanket Statements" incorporate the blanket into highly politicized pieces. Nathalie Ayotte writes that:

> [t]hese politically charged paintings are a subtle form of anti-colonial criticism: during the XVIIth century, European settlers distributed blankets infected with smallpox to Aboriginal people in order to contaminate and exterminate them. Boyer had the courage to highlight that chapter in Canadian history and to stress it in several of his works.[11]

With the blanket as the subject of his canvas, Boyer, too, foregrounds contested histories of genocide and colonial warfare associated with this object. Although this thesis does not explore narratives of smallpox epidemics—which might substantiate the history that Ayotte alludes to with specific historical evidence—the fact that artists are opening up a dialogue on this aspect of history speaks volumes about the numerous interpretations of history and narratives of Canadian fur trade industry. How the aforementioned artists represent this history is crucial in identifying how contemporary interpretations of the social life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket has continued over the previous 335 years in Canada.

While many artists use the blanket to engage in historical debates and narratives, others such as Jolene Rickard and Susan MacLeod have incorporated the multi-striped Point blanket in images that are easily read as self-representations. In *I See Red in '92* (FIGURE 4), Rickard divides a photographic montage into repetitive registers containing the multi-striped Point Blanket, bark, and Canadian geese, as well as herself. Taking a different approach, McLeod uses the blanket to create an abstracted outline of a seated woman who stands as a cipher of Aboriginal people (FIGURE 5).

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[11] Nathalie Ayotte, "Aboriginal art from Métis artist Boy Boyer." Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade home page <http://www.defait-maeci.gc.ca/arts/ss_boyer-en.asp > (Accessed June 9, 2005).

FIG 4. Jolene Rickard, "I see red in '92" Jolene Rickard. 1992, ektacolor/silver prints, 60 x 90cm.

FIG 5. "Untitled" Susan McLeod. 2003.

The Point Blanket, in particular the multi-striped Point Blanket, was also featured on the cover of *Architectural Digest*'s issue commemorating "Great Designs" of the twentieth century (FIGURE 6). The incorporation of the blanket in this issue foregrounds a third popular use of the Point blanket in Canada as a staple in the interior design of cottages and cabins.[12] This interpretation of the blanket is echoed in the work of Carol Zuckerman, who re-conceptualized the blanket for a design competition themed to suit such Canadian rural settings. Zuckerman's *Hudson's Bay Lamp* (FIGURE 7) appeals to the theme of rustic décor by using the bands of the blanket to serve as the primary design for a lamp; again, reiterating the importance of this object to Canadians.

These images as a whole, together with didactic summaries of Canadian history—found in the Hudson's Bay Company's advertisements (see FIGURE 8 on page 13) and coffee table books—address the notion of the social life of the Point Blanket that falls within the parameters of popular narratives. These narratives repeat highly accessible information and consequently oversimplify the history of the blanket by naturalizing this knowledge. References throughout the thesis to didactic panels from museums and the Hudson's Bay Company department stores characterize popular narratives that surround Point blankets. These narratives tend to lead to the overgeneralization of the social life of the Point blanket. Therefore, such sources are included in this project to address how the social life of the Point blanket has been popularized.

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[12] An article titled "Hudson's Bay Point Blankets" from 1963 notes that "When houses began to replace cabins and settlements became cities, the Company added new colours—pastel shades—to the collection so that the blankets would fit in with the appearance of modern homes. All the excellence of the original blankets was brought into the modern colour schemes of the day and the blankets rapidly became the pride of housewives and the symbol of comfortable living." *Moccasin Telegraph* (Spring 1963): 10. (HBCA Blanket Search File #4).

FIG 6. "The Great Design Issue" ***Architectural Digest.*** **May 2004 (Cover Page).**

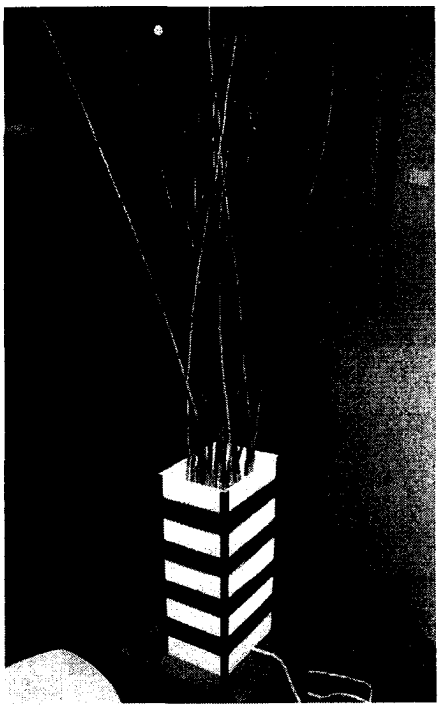
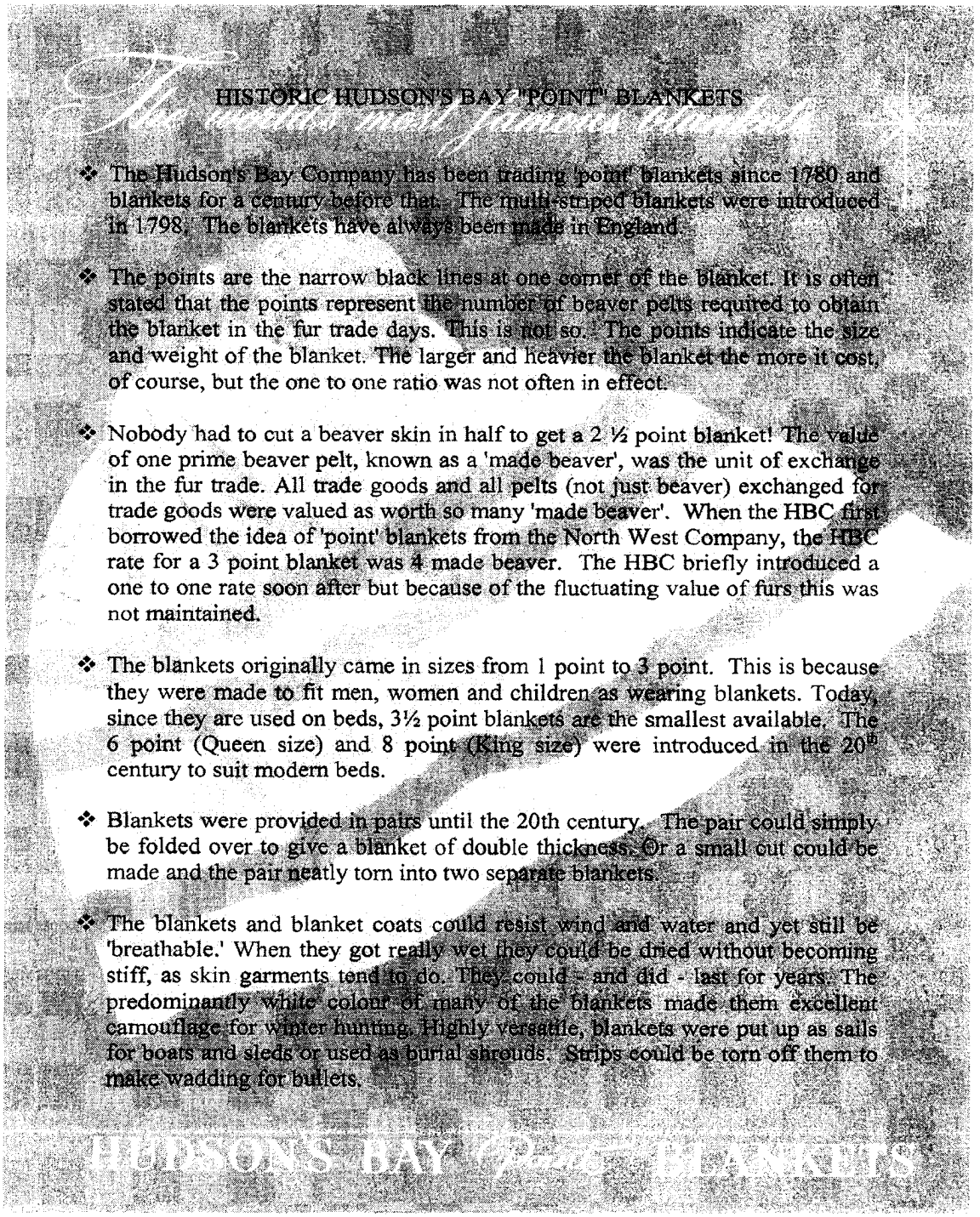


FIG 7. "HBC Lamp" Carol Zuckerman. 2004, PVC and Willows.
(Photograph taken with permission of the artist by Fiona McDonald)



HISTORIC HUDSON'S BAY "POINT" BLANKETS

- The Hudson's Bay Company has been trading 'point' blankets since 1780 and blankets for a century before that. The multi-striped blankets were introduced in 1798. The blankets have always been made in England.
- The points are the narrow black lines at one corner of the blanket. It is often stated that the points represent the number of beaver pelts required to obtain the blanket in the fur trade days. This is not so. The points indicate the size and weight of the blanket. The larger and heavier the blanket the more it cost, of course, but the one to one ratio was not often in effect.
- Nobody had to cut a beaver skin in half to get a 2 ½ point blanket! The value of one prime beaver pelt, known as a 'made beaver', was the unit of exchange in the fur trade. All trade goods and all pelts (not just beaver) exchanged for trade goods were valued as worth so many 'made beaver'. When the HBC first borrowed the idea of 'point' blankets from the North West Company, the HBC rate for a 3 point blanket was 4 made beaver. The HBC briefly introduced a one to one rate soon after but because of the fluctuating value of furs this was not maintained.
- The blankets originally came in sizes from 1 point to 3 point. This is because they were made to fit men, women and children as wearing blankets. Today, since they are used on beds, 3½ point blankets are the smallest available. The 6 point (Queen size) and 8 point (King size) were introduced in the 20th century to suit modern beds.
- Blankets were provided in pairs until the 20th century. The pair could simply be folded over to give a blanket of double thickness. Or a small cut could be made and the pair neatly torn into two separate blankets.
- The blankets and blanket coats could resist wind and water and yet still be 'breathable.' When they got really wet they could be dried without becoming stiff, as skin garments tend to do. They could - and did - last for years. The predominantly white colour of many of the blankets made them excellent camouflage for winter hunting. Highly versatile, blankets were put up as sails for boats and sleds or used as burial shrouds. Strips could be torn off them to make wadding for bullets.

HUDSON'S BAY [illegible] BLANKETS

FIG 8. "Hudson's Bay Point Blankets" Leaflet. 19 December 2004. Hudson's Bay Company Archives/Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Each chapter in this thesis presents an alternative trajectory relating to the social life of Hudson Bay Company Point blankets. The analyses presented in these trajectories are developed by looking beyond the popular history of the Point Blanket and examining crucial historical facts that contribute to its social life. Furthermore, it is important to note that all three chapters stand as independent analyses rather than forming a linear narrative as they trace distinct trajectories. Each chapter looks at Cornelius Krieghoff's *The Trader* of 1850 (see FIGURE 9 on page 15) as the central work that represents an interpretation of a trade interaction in which Point blankets appear. This image is used because of its widespread visibility in materials dealing with the Canadian fur trade. Readings of *The Trader* are buttressed by other widely circulated visual and textual materials that elaborate on the complexity of the social life of the Point blanket. Overall, these readings address the social life of the Point blanket as a concept of civilization and Canadian-ness.[13]

Although the overarching focus of this thesis concerns the notion of the social life of the Point blanket, this project also emphasizes prominent repetitive features that facilitate a semiotic inquiry into the visual language of the Canadian fur trade. Visual elements in images presenting trade interactions, material objects produced by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures, and the social and historical functions of these materials become crucial points of reference against which the Point blankets are compared. Furthermore, this information informs interpretations and inquiries that, as trajectories,

[13] According to the Grove Dictionary of Art, postcolonial criticism aims to "heighten awareness of both historic and contemporary forms of representation and their complicity with issues of stereotyping and associating practices of marginalization" (*Grove Dictionary of Art*, (Grove, 1996), s.v. "colonialism"). Therefore, this thesis works within the parameters of postcolonial discourse by using theories and methodological approaches associated with this discourse.

contribute to presenting the social life of the Point blanket.

FIG 9. "The Trader" 1850. Cornelius Krieghoff. Oil on canvas, 45.5 x 60.6 cm. Art Gallery of Hamilton, gift of Mrs. C.H. Stearn, 1957 (1966.75.0).

By following three significant trajectories in the social life of the Point blanket, this project looks at the history of British traders in the Canadian fur trade industry and the use of Point blankets at various social levels within and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. When traders in the Canadian fur trade industry circulated the Point Blanket variously as an object of either exchange or barter, or as a gift, its historical meanings changed. These meanings are in turn reflected in ideas about the blanket, the classification of the blanket as a commodity, product, or gift, and how this object has been—and continues to be—visually represented as a sign within the visual language of

the Canadian fur trade. When popular history positions the Point blanket as an object with associations constantly shifting between fashion and function, its social life, meanings, and histories become confused. When one examines the social actions in which the blanket has been and continues to be employed, however, the placement of this object in visual materials becomes a portal through which we can understand human connections to this object and notion of the Point blanket as a concept.

Chapter One

Based on interpretations resulting from what Nicholas Mirzoeff calls the "visual event"[14]—whereby the blanket is the "visual sign"—I maintain that Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets are polysemic. Depending on the viewer and the viewing context, the blanket can connote functionality, trade, treaties, colonialism, civility, potlatching, wealth, and rustic décor. This chapter explores which of these meanings, participants immediately associate with the Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets during a hypothetical visual event between a viewer, a canvas, and a representation of the Point blanket.[15] Within a visual event, participants and stages of an event—both within the image itself and in the process of viewing of the image—will be approached using

[14] The visual event, according to Nicholas Mirzoeff, is "an interaction of the visual sign, the technology that enables and sustains the sign, and the viewer." Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Introduction: What Is Visual Culture?" in *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 13.

[15] Before engaging in interpretations of specific examples of visual materials, the current communicative event in which readings for this thesis are situated must be addressed. The present context of viewing and analysis relates to Nicholas Mirzoeff description of a "visual event." According to Mirzoeff, a "visual event" requires the viewer to interact with a visual sign: in this case the Point blanket. Therefore, viewers become participants in a second communicative event that takes place outside the image, but requires that the image substitute as a participant. Mirzoeff comments that the sign is conveyed through a "technology that sustains and enables the visual sign" (Mirzoeff, 13). The visual event, according to Nicholas Mirzoeff, is "an interaction of the visual sign, the technology that enables and sustains the sign, and the viewer" (Mirzoeff, 13).The technologies that document the social life of the Point blanket include paintings, photographs, and drawings. By understanding the event of viewing as a triangular form, viewers are capable of placing themselves within the context of analyzing the scene and extracting the significance of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket as signified Canadian-ness.

Dell Hymes's synopsis of a communicative event as a theoretical tool.[16] By identifying the features that define the boundaries of a communicative event, this trajectory illustrates how the Hudson's Bay Company Point Blanket, as a sign, has become a signifier of Canadian-ness.

Chapter Two

In addition to the use of *The Trader* as the central image in all three chapters, other visual materials chosen for this project demonstrate the use of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets at specific historical moments.[17] The purpose of the geo-temporal focus on visual materials in this thesis is twofold: first, to take into consideration the westward movement of the Hudson's Bay Company trading posts inland across Canada; and second, to analyze the emergence of new techniques—such as photography—that aided in documenting the European presence in Canada. Images included in this thesis are from Fort Edmonton, the Provincial Archives of Alberta and Manitoba, as well as the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in Winnipeg. These works represent visual interpretations of trade interactions produced along specific fur trade routes from Hudson Bay westward into central Alberta and south along the Rocky Mountains.

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[16] Although Dell Hymes' "SPEAKING" model reflects linguistic communicative events, his framework is useful as a tool for looking at communicative events represented in visual materials. This framework allows the visual language of the fur trade and the participants involved to be outlined. In addition, employing this approach further demonstrates the interconnectedness between language-based and visual models of analysis. The *SPEAKING* model is particularly useful because vocabulary introduced in Chapter One from Dell Hymes' *SPEAKING* model is carried throughout Chapters Two and Three in a consistent manner. Using consistent vocabulary enables clarity when addressing the location (scene/setting) and the individuals (participants) represented in visual materials. SPEAKING Model: *S*cene/*S*etting; *P*articipants; *E*nds; *A*cts; *K*ey; *I*nstrumentalities; *N*orms; *G*enre.

[17] See Appendices I-III for maps of Canada at distinct historical periods.

At times, these routes connected with American fur trade routes that moved northward from Oregon and through Montana, where they crossed the forty-ninth parallel into the Northwest Territories of the Dominion of Canada. Visual materials from this southern fur trade route highlight the role of the Pendleton Woolen Mills of Oregon. The Pendleton Woolen Mills mock multi-striped Point blanket, known as the "Glacier Park" blanket, is crucial to the discussion of the fur trade participants in North America. The numerous histories presented in this chapter bring forth issues of "trade marking:" the marking of trade boundaries, the actual trademark on the Point blanket, and the marking of Aboriginals as trade partners by branding them with the trademarked blanket in marked trade territory.[18]

To contextualize further the use of blankets in the Canadian fur trade, this thesis looks not only within but also beyond the frame of Krieghoff's canvas by using the journals of the factors and traders to address the origins of the blankets' histories and the incorporation of this object as a commodity of trade in Canada. The Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets, when employed as a commodity, were among the most popular European goods in the Canadian fur trade industry. Due to the quality of the weave and their all-natural wool fibers, Point blankets were durable and therefore suitable for the Canadian climate. As a result, the blankets became vital elements in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clothing and bedding.[19]

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[18] Trade boundaries fluctuated between the Dominion of Canada and the United States. Chapter Two looks at the role of the multi-colored striped blankets in border disputes.
The Pendleton Woolen Mills: www.nwpendelton.com; www.pendelton-usa.com/index/cfm?action=intor&cat=900&prid=over-pendeltonblanket; www.theoregonstore.com/pendleton.fs.html.

[19] Adolf Hungry Wolf writes that "[b]lankets became very popular after their introduction by traders, because they are lighter and less bulky than robes. Blue wool blankets with white, undyed edges were most

Throughout the history of the Canadian fur trade industry, artists have constructed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures as competitors rather than as equal participants in a "third space."[20] From coast to coast in Canada, the fur trade dominated as a "contact zone" between European colonizers and Aboriginals.[21] In Chapter Two, Mary Louise Pratt's theory of the "contact zone" from *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992) is the central concept through which the social life of the blanket is examined. Showing how the theory of a "contact zone" is visually represented in images of Aboriginals wrapped in Point blankets and capotés provides a context for an historical discussion of the markings found on blankets. These markings relate to the cultural behavior and standards of trade interactions.[22] Further to this inquiry into the blanket in trade interactions, the blanket is considered as a commodity, and a Marxist analysis of the "Commodity Fetish" and "Exchange-Value" is applied to elaborate on the social life of the blanket either as a gift, as a commodity, or as a product.

A series of images depicting European interpretations of trade interactions and trade ceremonies—and to what extent this co-dependency was presented visually—are used to foreground the role of the blanket as a "material link" in trade-related interactions. In *The Blanket: An Illustrated History of the Hudson's Bay Point Blanket*,

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common among the central and southern tribes. In the North the Point Blankets from the Hudson's Bay Company were and are a favorite with all outdoor People. In the Northwest and Plateau areas the many-colored Pendleton-made blankets and shawls have long been favorites." Adolf Hungry Wolf, *Traditional Dress: Knowledge and Methods of Old-Time Clothing* (Skookumchuck, British Columbia: Good Medicine Books, 1990), 22; Harold Tichenor, *The Blanket: An Illustrated History of the Hudson's Bay Point Blankets* (Toronto: Madison Press Books, 2002), 12.

[20] "Interview with Homi K. Bhabha," 'The Third Space,' *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 207-21.

[21] Mary Louise Pratt, "Introduction: Criticisms in the Contact Zone," in *Imperial Eyes: Travel, Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 4.

[22] Attention to details on the blankets in visual materials will determine whether the visual representation of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals parallels colonial literature and popular narratives about the fur trade.

Harold Tichenor suggests that the "[p]oint blankets were a material link between two cultures in transition: the product of the industrializing textile manufacturing villages in England and a practical cultural 'tool' for the peoples of a variety of North American First Nations cultures."[23] Although Tichenor does not explore further the idea of the blanket as a "tool," the alternative reading presented in this trajectory develops the idea of the Point blanket not only as a visual, economic, and social tool, but also as a concept.[24]

Chapter Three

Examples of eighteenth and nineteenth-century paintings and drawings, as well as twentieth-century photography and cartoon drawings, of trade interactions reveal the prominent use and the placement of blankets in these images. A predominant practice on the part of both European and Aboriginal painters and photographers in Canada has been the showcasing of objects, such as clothing, that originates from both Aboriginal and European cultures. This trajectory demonstrates how the role of Point blankets in visual materials such as *The Trader* contributed to constructing representational images of Aboriginal cultures in Canada in both commissioned and non-commissioned works. The presence of Point blankets in paintings, photographs, and cartoon drawings communicates not only the visual commodification and assimilation of Aboriginals into colonial cultural practices but also illustrates how this object became one of the ubiquitous visual emblems of identifying Canada—both the past and present.

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[23] Harold Tichenor, *The Blanket: An Illustrated History of the Hudson's Bay Point Blanket* (Toronto: Madison Press Books, 2002), 7.

[24] Tichenor's comment illuminates the need to explore the co-dependency between Aboriginals and Europeans during the fur trade, and the blanket as a tool allows this inquiry to happen.

Paintings and photographs also present an assimilation of European and Aboriginal garb into the clothing of the opposite culture. This borrowing is indicative of bilateral cultural integration and is represented in a work by Krieghoff's contemporary Paul Kane. Kane's *Scene in the Northwest,* c. 1845-46 (FIGURE 10), illustrates the use of Aboriginal moccasins and snowshoes by Europeans. Blankets appear in many images as essential utilitarian clothing for Aboriginals. As an article of clothing, the blanket has been reconstituted as capoté—a European style jacket made from a Point blanket (of any value) and fastened with buttons that would also have been acquired through trade. Addressing clothing and cultural epithets, Gillian Poulter comments that "European visual representations dating from the sixteenth century had established particular attributes by which to signify [Aboriginal] people: feather adornments, partial nakedness, leather clothing, moccasins [...]."[25] One could add to this list the Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets in post-European contact representations of Aboriginals in Canada. From these representations, this thesis argues that paintings and photographs of this era reinforce colonial literature because they present specific interpretations of the fur trade. The images often simplify the complexity of the cultural interaction and mutual reliance between Aboriginals and Europeans (as well as the goods both cultural groups bring to trade interactions).

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[25] Gillian Poulter, "Representation as Colonial Rhetoric: The image of 'the Native' and '*the habitant*' in the formation of colonial identities in early nineteenth-century Lower Canada," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* 16 (1994): 19.

FIG 10. Paul Kane "Scene in the Northwest" c. 1845-46. Oil on Canvas.[26]

The methodological and theoretical foundations in Chapter Three are supported by texts that give voice to Aboriginal perspectives that address issues of ethnography and Eurocentrism. Considering alternative perspectives provides the framework for a critical assessment of European practices that create, interpret, and disassemble stereotyping images. Furthermore, such sources articulate the roles played by the discourses of fine art, photography, and ethnography in the colonization of Canada, and draw attention to how these facets of expression aided in the construction of stereotyping images.

Chapter Three addresses categories of classification in which Aboriginals have been characterized as either the Noble and Romantic Savage or the Wild and Naïve

[26] The *Globe and Mail* reports that, "The principle figure is Captain John Henry Lefroy, a soldier and scientist." *The Globe and Mail*, 24 December 2003, A1.

Savage. Returning to images of trade interactions used in Chapters One and Two, this chapter extrapolates a third interpretation of how the Point blanket was socialized as a "tool" of civility. This trajectory again utilizes the post-colonial approach of Mary Louise Pratt to address stereotypes. Pratt's argument situates stereotyping images as the direct result of an imperialist mindset whereby "the imagined is the known and the unimagined is the unknown."[27]

CONCLUSION

Although each trajectory stands independently as a case study with divergent theoretical models, collectively this thesis attempts to expose a historically and visually informed social life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket. This project intends to clarify the use of Point blankets and their meanings in visual culture as a visual emblem of Canada. Although W.J.T. Mitchell argues that "images, works of art, media, figures and metaphors have lives of their own, and cannot be explained as theoretical, communicative instruments or epistemological windows onto reality,"[28] images nonetheless are valuable for the information represented within them and about the producing culture. Visual materials, such as the advertisement in the *Globe and Mail* (FIGURE 1), are valuable in documenting how the social life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket is imagined, represented, reflected upon, and repeated through both popular histories and Canadian visual culture.

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[27] Ibid.
[28] W.J.T. Mitchell, "Showing Seeing: A Critique of Visual Culture," in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 175.

CHAPTER ONE:
The Point Blanket as Sign

"The Trader" 1850. Cornelius Krieghoff. Oil on canvas, 45.5 x 60.6 cm. Art Gallery of Hamilton, gift of Mrs. C.H. Stearn, 1957 (1966.75.0).

INTRODUCTION

Arjun Appadurai suggests that in the social life of objects, "[t]he commodity perspective on things represents a valuable point of entry to the revived, semiotically oriented interests in material culture [...]."[29] This chapter works through a semiotic analysis of the Point blanket as a sign by exploring how visual representations of the Point blanket fulfill the semiotic criterion in such an analysis. Referred to by Chantal Nadeau as a "national fabric" and "corporate skin" of Canada,[30] the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket is interpreted as a sign of its referent, the actual object, through a signifier—the canvas. Using Cornelius Krieghoff's *The Trader* (FIGURE 9) as the central visual signifier, this chapter begins by posing the question: how is the Point blanket a "sign" in the visual language of the Canadian fur trade?[31] Historical facts presented in this chapter illustrate the signified meaning(s) of Point blankets. Factors such as the social and historical significance of the wool, the blanket's color, popular social histories, as well as the many practical uses of the blanket contribute to reading the Point blanket as a sign in the visual language of the Canadian fur trade.

"SPEAKING" MODEL

As a methodological approach to this semiotic analysis, Dell Hymes's linguistic *SPEAKING* model provides a framework to accommodate a visual analysis of *The Trader*.

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[29] Appadurai, 5.

[30] Chantal Nadeau comments how "[d]espite the importance of the beaver in the history of Canada, and its long-standing public acceptance as a national symbol, it was only in 1975 that the beaver was formally adopted as Canada's official animal by Parliament (Bill C-373)." Nadeau, 195.

[31] Murielle Saville-Troike points out that "[a]ny attempt to understand communication patterns in a community must begin with data on the historical background of the community, including settlement history, sources of population, history of contact with other groups, and notable events affecting [visual] language [...] or ethnic relations" (Murielle Saville-Troike, *Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 92-93).

This methodology is employed to highlight the situational use and, consequently, the social life of the Point blanket. Due to the formulaic nature of Hymes's model, which defines linguistic communicative events, this approach is applied as a methodological tool and framework for drawing attention to fundamental visual elements that comprise the visual language of the Canadian fur trade. Hymes' model is unique in that it allows each visual representation of a referent—for example, the Point blanket—to present itself as both part of and independent of the communicative event of a trade interaction.[32] In this chapter, Hymes's model is first introduced as a means to identify the role of the blanket in a visual representation of a communicative event. While this model allows the fundamental visual elements within *The Trader* to be addressed, the positioning of one methodological model over another tends to negate other means and methodologies through which the blanket can be read as a sign. In order to avoid such reductionism, Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis will be used to further develop the idea of the blanket as a sign in relation to the blanket as a concept of Canadian-ness.

In a communicative event, messages are conveyed through various media such as, but not limited to, tactile, verbal, non-tactile, or non-verbal codes. Looked at in relation to Hymes's model, this chapter explores a trajectory that deals with how the sign of the Point blanket is conveyed through non-verbal code. While this reading is limited to the use of the blanket in visual materials, Hymes's linguistic model allows certain elements such as Scene, Participants, Events, Acts, Ends, and Keys to operate as a framework for a

[32] For this analysis of the visual representation of a communicative event, Hymes' SPEAKING model is employed as a guideline rather than as a steadfast rule in establishing the fundamental boundaries of the event. Therefore, when employed as a guideline in this chapter Hymes' model is useful in identifying key features of communicative events and is not used to look at visual interpretations of the social act of trade specifically which is the intention of Chapter Two.

visual analysis that contextualizes the blanket as a sign. In relation to reading the code transmitted through either vocal or non-vocal lines of communication, however, Hymes's model is useful for looking at interpretations of both signs and communicative behaviors in trade interactions.[33]

Murielle Saville-Troike, in *Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction*, identifies visuals—which include "paintings and cartoons"—as influential sources of non-verbal/non-vocal communication.[34] Therefore, reading images of fur trade interactions and identifying the signs for referents is a practical means of addressing repetitive elements used in constructing the visual language of the Canadian fur trade. Therefore, when the Point blanket is considered as a sign in this trajectory, the signified meaning of the referent becomes a relevant point to consider. Bill Nichols states in "The Analysis of Representational Images" that "[t]he signifier arrives at our attention first via sensory receptors [and] then we associate it with the appropriate signified from our memory banks[,] therefore, [enabling us to] recognizing the familiar in the new [...]."[35] Familiarity with signs requires the viewers to draw on their 'memory banks' to interpret the signified meaning(s) of the referent. Therefore, the viewers' memory banks dictate their own individual "cultural competence" when, in a Canadian context, decoding the

[33] In assessing the validity of using a linguistic model to deconstruct the visual, Murielle Saville-Troike argues that the visual is an effective means of defining a communicative event. Saville-Troike uses Hymes's model in defining a communicative event and builds on other elements she deems crucial in such an analysis. See Saville-Troike for her categories of 'Analyzing a Communicative Event' (Saville-Troike, 88-143).

[34] Saville-Troike, 115-116. In analyzing a communicative event of a visual representation, Saville-Troike notes that "[o]ne problem which must be faced in recording the communicative behavior other than spoken and written language codes is the complexity it adds to transcription. In describing such nonverbal/non-vocal behavior as kinesics and facial expression, for instance, it is important to identify: (1) the part of the body (i.e. what is moving or in a marked position), (2) the directionality of the movement, or how it differs from an unmarked state and (3) the scope of movement, if any" (p. 119).

[35] Bill Nichols, "The Analysis of Representational Images," in *Ideology and the Image: Social Representation in the Cinema and Other Media* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 44.

visual language of the fur trade and differentiating between the meanings of, and popular histories associated with, the social life of the Point blanket.[36]

In both the context of trade and the broader examination of visual culture, *The Trader* is representative of a widely circulated and popularized representation of the social life of the Point blanket. In this image, the viewer is presented with a forested landscape (setting/scene) framed by the borders of the canvas.[37] Krieghoff has composed a genre scene that occurs in a locale with geography specific to Canada. Genre painting by the mid-nineteenth century had become Krieghoff's signature subject matter. Originally introduced to genre painting in Germany, Krieghoff continued to paint in a narrative style designed to be accessible to a diverse audience, targeted mainly, however, at his Victorian patrons.[38] J. Russell Harper presents Krieghoff's canvases as having "a measure of international significance, for they parallel[ed] widespread trends on both sides of the Atlantic."[39] The trends Harper describes are epitomized in the dramatic landscapes and small figures included in numerous commissioned works that Krieghoff

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[36] "Communicative competence within the ethnography of communication usually refers to the communicative knowledge and skills shared by [the] [...] community, but these (like all aspects of culture) reside variably in its individual members" (Saville-Troike, 21). Saville-Troike argues that "[t]he concept of communicative competence must be embedded in the notion of cultural competence, or the total set of knowledge and skills which [viewers] bring into a situation. This view is consonant with a semiotic approach which defines culture as meaning, and views all ethnographers (not just ethnographers of communication) as dealing with symbols (e.g. Douglas 1970; Gertz 1973). The systems of culture are patterns of symbols, and language is only one of the symbolic systems in this network" (Saville-Troike, 18-19). Communicative competence, then, is at the heart of reading and interpreting the visual language of the fur trade and foregrounding the social life of the Point blanket. Saville-Troike further points out that "[o]ne of the advantages of studying one's own culture, and attempting to make explicit the systems of understanding which are implicit, is that ethnographers are able to use themselves as sources of information and interpretation" (Saville-Troike, 92-93).

[37] According to Hymes, a communicative situation begins with the establishment and identification of the *scene/setting*. Within this *setting*, one must identify the "location, time of day, season of year, and physical aspects of the situation" (Hymes, 111).

[38] According to Barry Lord, Krieghoff "learned a narrative way of painting—an art that told little stories—that was then popular in Düsseldorf and other German cities" ("Painting in Quebec: French and British Regimes" in The History of Painting in Canada (University of Toronto Press, 1979), 45).

[39] J. Russell Harper, *Krieghoff* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), xi.

produced. According to Dennis Reid in *Krieghoff: Images of Canada* (1999), "by the late fifties and early sixties [Krieghoff's] work shows [...] [a] sense of stage. [...] The richly orchestrated landscape dominates with its shifting permeable background."[40] Krieghoff, like his contemporaries such as Paul Kane and George Catlin, constructs landscapes that portray the dramatic, wild, and untamed geography known as Rupert's Land.[41] In *The Trader*, representations of the mysterious darkness and breadth of a Canadian landscape, features that tended not to appear in works depicting the native countries of colonial artists and explorers, came to characterize the New World.

Particularly illustrative of Krieghoff's genre style is his attention to detail. In *The Trader*, details such as the changing colors of the leaves reflect a peak time in the trading industry. Judging by the changing leaves on the trees in the upper right hand corner of the painting, this hypothetical and imagined scene is set within the Fall, the crucial period in the annual cycle of trade. In this image, the Fall season, often the last chance before major waterways froze and traveling became too treacherous to venture out to barter and trade furs, contextualizes the scene while adding drama to accentuate the landscape. While trapping continued over the winter months, the Fall was often the last window to acquire goods before a long Canadian winter. Details such as these, while used by Krieghoff for dramatic effect, add to the context in which artists constructed for their audience the setting in which blankets were traded.

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[40] Dennis Reid, "Cornelius Krieghoff: The Development of a Canadian Artist" in *Krieghoff: Images of Canada*, ed. Dennis Reid (Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1999), 83.

[41] This scene/setting tends to be stereotypic of Krieghoff's genre style canvases. This relates to the demand for Krieghoff's work by collectors and tourists who sought a certain memory of Canada and its inhabitants who lived and worked beyond the urban sprawl.

Through the careful placement of participants in *The Trader*, Krieghoff has constructed a trade scene imagined within a theatrical landscape.[42] This construction, like numerous others produced in this genre, attempted to contextualize for Victorian viewers the social and economic event of trade. The participants in this scene can be generically identified as either a *coureur des bois* or Hudson's Bay Company trader of European descent and an Aboriginal family unit consisting of five members. The engagement between all participants in the trade event is suggested by their physical arrangement in a circle and is complemented by the broad gestures known to characterize figures in Krieghoff's canvases. The composed arrangement of figures allows the viewer to become involved in the scene through a small opening unoccupied between the *coureur des bois* and the small girl. [43] By using this compositional technique, Krieghoff directs the viewers' eyes from the path that emerges in the darkness of the woods into the event by strategically placing objects of trade. The objects that Krieghoff depicted—also found in the canvases of his contemporaries—tended to be of European origin. Pots, linens,

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[42] Identifying *participants*, those located in the *scene/setting*, is a second identifiable and defining element in a communicative event. The physical organization of *participants* within the event is crucial to interpreting the power dynamics within the communicative event of trade. Saville-Troike notes that "[a]n adequate description of the participants includes not only observable traits, but background information on the composition and role relationships within the family and other social institutions, distinguishing features in the life cycle, and differentiation within the group according to sex and social status. An analysis of how participants are organized in an event is essential to understanding what roles they are taking in relation to one another, and how they are actively involved in the construction and performance of communication (cf. *participant*, Philips 1983b)" (Saville-Troike, 114).

[43] Participants engage in a series of *acts*; each *act* has an *expectation/end* that defines the *norms* of a communicative event. *Norms*, in this analysis, are the conventions used by colonial artists to maintain a visual message. For example, Laurier Lacroix states that: "[D]uring the period of 1820-1850, the visual arts provided a 'breeding ground for common practices' through which French-Canadian and British colonists could communicate. According to this theory, painting and drawing were activities by which the social élite of each community could 'establish a local culture. [...] Furthermore, [...] visual images did indeed participate in the creation of British colonial identity. These images aided in codifying and legitimizing the social order by proposing and confirming a hierarchy; thereby visually establishing the respective place of Natives [...] and the social élite in this new colonial society" (Laurier Lacroix, "Yesterday's Standard, Today's Fragment: Element of Esthetics in Quebec, 1820-1850," *Painting in Quebec 1820-1850*, ed. M. Béland (Quebec: Musée du Québec, 1992), 60-75).

buttons, ammunition, and other industrial products such as Point blankets were incorporated. In addition to this list, objects produced by Aboriginal cultures often were crucial visual tools. Objects such as baskets and moccasins became as familiar as industrial goods to Victorian patrons through the visibility of these objects in museum displays and traveling exhibitions, in addition to their availability for purchase through collectors. The inclusion of these objects added to the legibility of trade images by contributing to the larger repertoire of visual signs that artists could work with and patrons could interpret. The Point blanket in particular was a prominent sign that artists included in their canvases. The popularity of and familiarity with the sign of the Point blanket were in part due to the production of its referent in England.

Make and Model

In a literal sense, wool—the fiber of the blankets' being—marks the birth of the social life of the blanket. Collected from various settler colonies across the British Empire from India to New Zealand and elsewhere in the British Isles, wool was processed in the heart of Britain's weaving community.[44] A history on Witney weavers notes that:

> By the late 1670's the Witney blanket makers were acknowledged the best in England. At least 150 looms were working, employing nearly 3,000 people of all ages. The master weaver would buy and blend the wool, and then he would take it by pack-horse (as the tracks [of old roads from the

[44] Douglas MacKay addresses the history of the blanket examined from the perspective of the Hudson's Bay Company. He comments that "'Point' blankets are made from selected wools from England, Wales, New Zealand and India, each bringing a definite quality which contributes to the water resistance, the warmth, the softness, and the strength of the final article" ("Blanket Coverage," *The Beaver*, June 1935: 45-49). This summary on wool corresponds with a letter dated July 4th, 1923 from C.V. Sale to C.W. Veysey (General Manager, Hudson's Bay Company, Winnipeg), however, it is noted that "Australia is not one of the sources from which the particular type of wool used in these blankets originated" (p.1). Kay Rex also notes in her article, "The Weavers of Witney," that South America and South Africa also supplied wool used in the blankets (*Canadian Geographical Journal*, July 1958: 33).

> Roman Empire] were too small for wagons) up to farms and cottages around Witney. He would leave it there to be carded by men and spun into yarn on spinning wheels by the women and children [...]. When the blankets had been home-woven from this yarn by the master weaver and his family [...] they still looked like pieces of sacking. [The] process of finishing was left to the tuckers, and involved, washing, shrinking, tentering to the correct size on outside racks, and finally raising the blankets by pulling up the nap to make them fluffy.[45]

Witney blankets, now commonly referred to as Hudson's Bay Blankets, were the product of several weaving mills in Witney, England.[46] To ensure that a consistently high standard of quality was maintained for all blankets produced in the Witney region, all weavers in the area were "united in the Company of Blanket Weavers, a guild formed in 1711 which set the standards and generally regulated the industry."[47] By 1712, the standard of each blanket was well recognized, and all blanket weavers were incorporated under a Royal Charter instituted by Queen Anne.

Prior to the production of the Point blankets, and still in accordance with standards set by the guild, Witney weavers:

> [W]ere already producing 'Duffields'—thick blankets for export, also called shags or trucking cloth. The name Duffield [originates] from a town in Brabant, where their manufacturing began, spreading to Colchester, Braintree, and finally to Witney. Traditionally they were made of 'pieces' thirty yards long, one yard and three quarters broad and dyed red or blue to please the Indians of Virginia and New England.[48]

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[45] Charles E. Hanson, ed., "Noted Blanket Manufacturer Visits Museum" *The Museum of the Fur Trade Quarterly* 9, No., 2 (Summer 1973): 3.
[46] See "The Manufacturing Process of HBC Point Blankets," in *Moccasin Telegraph* (Spring 1963): 10-13.
[47] HBCA—Blanket Search File#4: "Point" Blankets, Summary of Blankets at Fort William. It is also important to note that a standard was set on the quality of blankets prior to the Hudson's Bay Company involvement with Witney weavers, and therefore it was not the HBC that established a base line quality but rather it was a standard that they had to work with.
[48] Hanson, "Noted Blanket Manufacturer Visits Museum," 3.

References to Duffields—the "heavy blanket-type cloth with a close, thick nap"[49]—are frequent in reports and journals from the Canadian fur trade. Research that addresses the history of Duffields and other blankets produced in Witney mills tends to focus on the date of 1779. This historical moment is the central date in didactic summaries of the blanket and overshadows the use of other blankets and Duffields in the Canadian fur trade industry prior to this date. This central focus on 1779 has consequently eclipsed literature dealing with the prior use of blankets in the trade industry. Therefore, the introduction of Duffields and later blankets into the Canadian fur trade industry prior to 1779 is a crucial point at which the social life of the Point blanket *in Canada* begins.[50]

Journal entries, ledgers, and minutes scribed by employees and associates of the Hudson's Bay Company suggest that expatriate French trader Germain Maugenest, acting as a consultant to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1779, and provided recommendations for the first order of blankets.[51] Historians credit Maugenest with introducing not only Point blankets but also copper kettles as commodities of trade. He is believed also to have

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[49] HBCA Empson Search File#5—"Notes on Suppliers of Blankets to the Hudson's Bay Company," (p.1).

[50] For example, notes on Fort William located at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, document an order placed in 1805—twenty-six years after the first official order was placed—which separates the order into "Blankettings" and "Duffels." The order is as follows:

	(4 Ps.	Red striped
	(20 "	Green do
Blankettings	(339 "	Red &Green do
	(12 "	Red striped, Broader, nearly as broad as two stripes of the above.
	(2 Ps.	White [ps. = pairs]
Duffels	(11 "	White, Red & Blue Striped
	(11 "	" " " & Yellow do

[51] See Appendix IV for a transcription of original references to Germain Maugenest cited in a letter from P.E.H. Sewell on behalf of the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company to J.C. Atkins, the manager for the Wholesale department of the Hudson's Bay Company, Montreal (HBCA Beaver Search File#4 – HBC 'Point' Blankets).

been responsible for taking the first order of Point blankets across the Atlantic.[52] However, according to minutes from a committee meeting held in London on 25 January 1682, it was first:

> Ordered that Mr Letton and Mr Hayward be desired to write to France to their correspondents for Samples of Blanketts that so the like might be made here for the Compa. use to send to Hudson Bay the next shiping [*sic*].[53]

It is this original reference to blankets—dated prior to Maugenest's recommendation for Point blankets—that suggests an early interest in blankets for trade in Rupert's Land.[54]

In fact, P.E.H. Sewell points out in a letter dated 23 December 1926:

> It appears likely that the Canadian Pedlers were already using the pointed Blanket for inland trade with the Indians, thus rendering it necessary for the Company to provide a similar article.[55]

While this memo suggests that other traders used blankets, it is officially documented that William Redknap, Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, placed the first order for Point blankets for international trade on 23 December 1779 in a memo to Thomas Empson. Exhaustive documentation of correspondence exists between the Hudson's Bay

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[52] Germain Maugenest's participation in the ordering of the blankets is based on memos located in HBCA Blanket Search File#2. According to a memo dated 19 November 1968, from "The Archivist" Joan Craig, to "The Secretary," Maugenest made his recommendation for trade in blankets after he "journeyed from Hudson Bay in 1779 to London." In a separate memo (HBCA Blanket Search File#4), Maugenest's name appears again, this time A.M. Johnson, past HBC archivist, notes a reference to Maugenest as "[a] Frenchman [who] was responsible for several innovations in the HBC fur trade, including the celebrated 'Point' blankets and copper kettles, and even perhaps the use of inland boats." The reference to "inland boats" could mean York boats that were used to portage into the interior of the Rupert's Land.

[53] HBCA A.1/5, fo.10d. This excerpt from the minutes of the HBC committee was transcribed and placed in the memo of 19 November 1968 (HBCA Blanket Search File#2). Secondly, in a committee meeting held in London on 3 March 1682 it was "Ordered that the secretary buy some Oxfordshire Blanketts as 15 paire of large / 15 Paire of middle sorte / 15 paire of the course streaked in the ends – [to be sent to Chychewan] and for the other three factories as Hayes Island, Rupert River and Porte Nellson a third parte [sic] of each for each Factory of the above said Blanketts and soe equally sorted" (HBCA A.1/5, fo.15).

[54] "Blankets, according to officials, were undoubtedly an article of trade before the first (1779) recorded order." ("Hudson's Bay Company: Its 'point' blankets have survived the rigid test of 159 frigid northern winters," *Textile Age* (Oct 1938): 26).

[55] HBCA Beaver Search File#4 – HBC 'Point' Blankets.

Company and Thomas Empson of Witney—the original supplier of Point blankets—regarding samples of blankets. A memo for the first official order requested that:

> The whole Quantity will be Five hundred pieces of Blankets, that is of 1 Point, 1 ½ Point, 2 Point 2 ½ Point, and 3 Point, One hundred pairs of Blankets of each sort.[56]

Letters and ledger documents indicate that Maugenest would have been responsible for transporting the blankets from London to Fort Albany, and not York Factory in Hudson Bay, in the spring of 1780.[57] With well-established transport routes and known windows of passage across the Atlantic Ocean and into Hudson Bay, the social life of the blanket coordinates with the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company's in the New World.

In 1668, the *Nonsuch*, a ship owned and operated by the Hudson's Bay Company, sailed from London, England, across the Atlantic Ocean and into Hudson Bay.[58] This voyage was one of many colonial adventures to expose the territory, identified by British colonists as Rupert's Land, as a fruitful land for Imperial exploration and appropriation.[59] On 2 May 1670, King Charles II signed the charter of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson Bay, and the official trade boundaries of the British trading company were established. The charter specified that territory inland of Hudson Bay was to be preserved for British traders of the 'Honorable Company.' The

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[56] HBCA A.5/2, fo.48. From a memo dated 20 March 1941 from A.M. Johnson to "The Secretary" (HBCA Blanket Search File#1).

[57] Maugenest's suggestion of using blankets was not the first time this article was used for trade in the New World. The Governor and Committee address in a letter to Thomas Hutchins, or the Chief Factor at Albany Fort, on 4 May 1780, that "five hundred pair of pointed Blankets of different sizes of which three hundred pair are to be delivered to him [Germain Maugenest], as he may want them this year, and the remainder are to be supplied to him next Year" (HBCA A6/20—transcribed from HBCA Blanket Search File#1; HBCA Beaver Search File#4 – HBC 'Point' Blankets).

[58] For an intricate history of the *Nonsuch* and particulars of the vessel, refer to The Manitoba Museum for a replica of the ship. Also, see the Hudson's Bay Company Archives for images and journals from the vessels log.

[59] It is important to consider previous colonial states who "visited" Canada – particularly Holland and France.

British-controlled territory was strategic, in that the bay acted as the main portal into the interior of Rupert's Land. Until the signing of the British North America Act in 1867, this vast area of marked land remained as the holdings of the Hudson's Bay Company. Between these two landmark signings, further acts and treaties, such as the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, continued to maintain this territory—and its occupants—under English control.

By the end of the seventeenth century, British traders controlled Rupert's Land through British trading posts, standards of trade, and trade boundaries. It is crucial to consider, however, that the Honorable Company—referred to today by those who reminisce about its history—positioned its own presence in Canada through various means.[60] These included the use of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket in visual materials, through the writings by employees and those closely associated with the Company, and beginning in 1922, through the Hudson's Bay Company's in-house publication, *The Beaver.*

Such extensive visibility through various media has overshadowed the participation of numerous other trading companies intimately involved in the Canadian fur trade throughout the last three centuries. For example, the North West Company, with its home base in Montréal, competed with the Hudson's Bay Company for access through Hudson Bay. However, because of holding all territorial land-claims and trading rights

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[60] This alternative title for the Hudson's Bay Company appears in writings by Peter C. Newman and John J. Seagrave. Seagrave recounts his experience as a former 'Hudson's Bay Boy' and notes how the Honourable Company "had made [him] a better man." This fraternal comment encapsulates the masculine image that this company used to establish itself, while predominantly structuring its commodity image on a textile. Textiles, so often associated with the domestic and consequently the feminine, indirectly counters the masculine image of the Hudson's Bay Company.

declared in the charter, the Hudson's Bay Company was a dominant force in the early era of the Canadian fur trade. In 1821, after merging with the North West Trading Company, the Hudson's Bay Company in Rupert's Land dominated as it now held the monopoly on the fur trade industry.

Prior to the merger, however, European traders employed by both the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company acted as middlemen, or intermediary traders, pitted against one another. As well as competing with each other, individuals trading in Rupert's Land worked against American fur traders who crossed the border with imitation goods.[61] Providing their loyalty and trading services for these companies, individuals known as either British fur traders or French *coureurs des bois* often carried out the bartering and trading with Aboriginals across the continent.[62] According to Gordon M. Sayre in *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (1997):

> French fur traders or *coureurs* [*des*] ***bois*** were often renegades from the colony's authorities but soon became breadwinners and leading explorers. These men learned native languages, customs, and travel routes. They traded for pelts, hired native guides, made alliances, and traveled even farther in search of more furs.[63]

Jennifer S.H. Brown comments in "Children of the Fur Trade," that the "early days of both the French and the British traders [were] characterized by trader bachelorhood [...] Most early recruits were bachelors, many being young apprentices who signed for seven-

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[61] See Chapter Two for an examination of replica trade goods.
[62] Jennifer S.H. Brown notes that a *coureur de bois* is an "outlaw trader [...] – [a freeman] who made an independent living by supplying the trade and subsisting on country resources." See "Children of the Fur Trade," in *Reappraisals in Canadian History: Pre-Confederation*, 3rd ed. (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Allyn and Bacon Canada, 1999), 513.
[63] Gordon M. Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 7.

year terms."[64] Visual representations of *coureurs des bois* and Hudson's Bay Company traders in their customary clothing, along with trade goods, such as the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket, illustrate the professional engagement between participants in a trade interaction. Along with adventure and exploration, visual representations suggest that economic and social relationships developed between Aboriginal, French, and British traders. The visual representations of each group was quite distinct when seen in contrast with one another within a single canvas. These representations are reflected in the signs and commodities incorporated into visual images of trade interactions.

Both the garb of the participants in *The Trader* and the commodities included are signs that are crucial to interpreting the visual language of the fur trade, the activity of a trade interaction, and the meaning of the Point blanket in the mid-nineteenth century. The activity of trade, overtly apparent through the placement of numerous objects such as fur, pots, cloth, buttons, and blankets in *The Trader* identifies the process of trade and the assimilation of trade goods by both cultures. These objects contextualize the use of Point blankets and enable the social life of the blanket within the context of trade to be discussed.

Items such as the travel bag and walking stick, situated behind and to the right of the non-Aboriginal trader, suggest the entrepreneurial nature and mobility of these men in search of beaver pelts. The beaver skin top hat worn by this same individual is similar in

[64] Brown, 510 and 520.

fashion to the "D'Orsay" (FIGURE 11), a popular model worn from the late 1820s onward until trends changed in the late 1880s and silk hats came into fashion.[65]

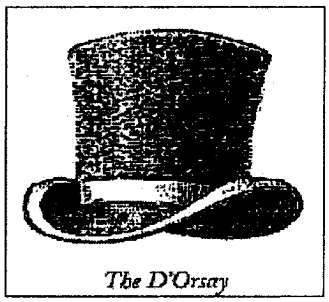

FIG 11. "The D'Orsay" Top Hat (From: Town, 13).

The beaver was trapped for its fur and casteoreum for centuries.[66] It could be argued that the top hat was one of the main reasons beaver pelts were sought by European traders. A beaver pelt worn as an article of clothing by Aboriginals was considered a valuable item by European traders and was labeled by Europeans as "Made."[67] Having already had its outer hairs removed, a Made beaver pelt was coveted as it reduced the effort required to transform a pelt into felt at factories in England. According to a didactic panel on "Feltmaking" at The Manitoba Museum:

> [t]he soft inner hairs with their irregular edges were easily matted together to make cloth. Because the removal of the long, outer guard hairs meant extra work, the fur-traders prized the 'Made-Beaver,' furs which had been sewn together as a robe and worn by Indians over the winter—a process which removed the guard hairs and left on the desired inner hairs.[68]

The quality of Made beaver pelts determined how many were required to trade for a blanket. For example, the cost of a blanket was dependant on factors such as the

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[65] Florida Town, *The North West Company Frontier Merchants* (Toronto: Umbrella Press, 1999), 13. Both the Manitoba Museum and the HBCA have images of this and other styles of top hats.
[66] These two by-products of the beaver were crucial commodities in beaver/blanket trade interactions. Aboriginals used castoreum for medicinal purposes.
[67] Beavers grow a thicker coat during the winter months for insulation. A beaver pelt acquired during the winter months, therefore, was of particularly high value due to the insulating layer of hair.
[68] The Manitoba Museum, didactic panel (2004).

thickness of the nap, whereas today the size of the bed it must cover determines its price. The monetary value of the Point blanket in the early days of the fur trade was relative to the availability of beavers and the demand for furs in European markets. This monetary system will be explained in more detail in Chapter Two through a discussion of monetary tokens used in the Canadian fur trade industry.

While the trade of the blanket is a central issue in this thesis, how those who owned the blanket used the Point blanket is a relevant point to explore. One prominent use of the blanket was for exterior clothing such as coats. The blanket coat has a rather expansive history in the social life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket. According to a didactic marketing panel—one of the many examples of popular history that oversimplifies the social life of the Point blanket:

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[69] This didactic panel is an example of a popular history commonly associated with blankets and capotés. Although this thesis is not directly concerned within the history of capotés, the history of this garment foregrounds an alternative use of the Point blanket. (Photocopy of in-store advertising signage on display in Hudson's Bay Company Department stores in 2004-2005. Photocopy of image courtesy HBC—West Edmonton Mall location)

Still sold in Hudson's Bay Company department stores today, a coat made from a Point blanket has been known as a Mackinaw Coat,[70] St. Joseph coat,[71] Kersey or Kersey Cloth,[72] Red River Coat,[73] or capoté.[74] The capoté is made of Point blankets of various sizes and colors, and has become an article of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal clothing.

H.J.L. Wooley summarizes the history of the Mackinaw Coat by noting that:

> A despatch runner requested that his coat be made short, not below the knee, as the snow was deep between Mackinaw and Montreal. So the Mackinaw coat was designed, a short, thick, double-breasted coat of blue design at first but plaid soon became the most popular color. It was found to be just the thing of the Northern trails and orders came in from as far North as Fort William and as far East as Penetanguishene, and throughout the vast region it was known as the Mackinaw coat. [...] [I]t was thus created,—a child of grim necessity.[75]

The name for Mackinaw coats originates from Fort Michilimackinac, a British fort built in 1761 on Mackinac Island.[76] According to Linda Richardson, both Mackinaw and St. Joseph coats are "short coats made of a thick, blanket-like, commonly plaid, woolen material." Richardson explores the history of this coat back to St. Joseph Island at Fort St.

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[70] Linda Richardson "Mackinaws Came from St. Joes's," in *The Sault Daily Star* (April 5, 1980), and H.J.L. Wooley, "The Origin of the Mackinaw Coat" in *The Canadian Magazine* (January, 1928): 28, in the HBCA Blanket Search File #3—Coats). See also, W.R. Swagerty, "Indian Trade Blankets in the Pacific Northwest: History and Symbolism of a unique North American Tradition," Columbia: The Magazine of Northwest History (Summer 2002, vol.16, No.2): 6. Apparently, woolen mills in Buffalo, New York, made Mackinaw coats (From Leaky Letter: HBCA Blanket Search File#1).

[71] I first came across a reference to this style of coat in an article by Linda Richardson in *The Sault Daily Star*, "Mackinaws came from St.Joe's," (5 April, 1980). (HBCA Beaver Search File—Blankets).

[72] W.R. Swagerty, in "Indian Trade Blankets in the Pacific Northwest," from *Columbia 16*, no.2 (Summer 2002).

[73] "Red River Coat" is one of the many styles of a capoté ("Hudson's Bay Company: Its 'point' blankets have survived the rigid test of 159 frigid northern winters," *Textile Age* (Oct 1938): 30). I have not found historical references for this name or its specific social use at the Red River Settlement.

[74] The capotés have also played a role in the Canadian fashion industry (See Appendix V for a survey of capoté designs published in the Beaver).

[75]. Wooley, 30. (HBCA Blanket Search File #3—Coats) Often associated with Point blankets, editorial notes throughout search files on 'Blanket Coats and Leisure Wear' at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives note that the Mackinaw coats were not made from HBC Point Blankets for soldiers.

[76] Richardson, (HBCA Beaver Search File—Blankets).

Joseph where it first appeared in 1811. This style of coat emerged when Captain Charles Roberts, apparently unable to attain greatcoats for his forty men from the headquarters in Québec, ordered blankets from the post manned by the Indian Department. Upon the arrival of the blankets, they were to be sewn into greatcoats for his men. Richardson notes that:

> The difficulty of converting the blankets into passable coats was solved by John Askin, keeper of the King's store, who put a group of Indian women to work making coats. When the women had finished they had produced a makeshift coat that many of the soldiers felt was better than the regular army issue. The coats, made of 3 ½ -point Hudson's Bay blankets, were not only warmer but were finer looking. Askin had them decorated with brass buttons, shoulder straps and fancy pockets.[77]

Capotés, while functional for survival through grim winters, have played a prominent role in the Canadian fashion industry. Popular in advertisements from the 1930s through to the 1950s, the Hudson's Bay Company has designed gender specific styles adapted from the original capoté design.[78] Alfred Sung designed his own capoté (now in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum), and models for Ralph Lauren and Maidenform have been draped in the capoté to epitomize advertising and national identity in Canada. The capoté was the signature 'robe' in the 1950s for Queen Muk-Luk and her

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[77] Richardson, "Mackinaws came from St.Joe's." Although I have yet to find any definitive information on Kersey or Kersey cloth used in coats, I would like to propose that this connection is linked with textile production in the town of Kersey in Suffolk, England. According to Swagerty, it was "[d]uring the 18th century, with mechanization of the wool industry, England took full advantage of the expansive Indian trade market and built upon an established reputation of producing the finest woolens Europe had to offer. The towns of Witney in Oxfordshire, Stroud in Gloucester, Kersey in Suffolk, and much of Yorkshire—especially Halifax and Leeds—specialized in three types of woolens shipped overseas" (*Columbia 16*, no.2 (Summer 2002): p.5). Swagerty comments that Kersey or Kersey Cloth was "a common staple cloth of Yorkshire that was used for military uniforms and garments for the poorer classes. He also notes that "according to the late Charles Hanson, who researched the Point blanket thoroughly, these blankets originated with the French for trade with their Indian allies, probably during the period of the Fox Wars. A 1715 French account book lists ten two-Point Blankets as expense for Indian services" (p.6).

[78] This garment is still available in stores today. See Appendix V for a survey of designs first published in *The Beaver.*

attendants,[79] in addition to being the uniform for the Queen of Le Pas/Le Festival du Voyageur in Winnipeg.[80]

A prominent feature used in association with capotés is the ceinture fléchée or a L'Assomption sash. Taking its name from Assomption, Québec, the sash is woven on a loom with an arrow pattern.[81] Used functionally to hold together a coat, this object, worn by the *coureur des bois* in *The Trader*, is yet another sign that often appears in conjunction with blankets. The sash serves more as a functional object in clothing but was also traded by French traders with Aboriginals as a tool to build trading relationships.

While numerous written documents suggest that the blankets were first fashioned into coats for military personnel, popular histories elaborate on a narrative that tells how Aboriginals reconstituted their trade blankets into coats and other functional articles of clothing prior to their military use in 1811. In terms of military coats, blue and white blanket coats have been used as part of winter dress.[82] These two colors are also indicative of British and American troops during the American Revolution in the uniforms of Sentry soldiers.[83] However, the colors of capotés represented by Krieghoff warrants an examination of color in the social life of the Point blankets.

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[79] HBCA 1987/363-W-117-68.
[80] HBCA 1987/363-W115/57.
[81] Adolf Hungry Wolf suggests a popular narrative about this object. Wolf states that "Hudson's Bay Assumption [sic] sash belt was basically red, with many colors interwoven [;] it was worn by Natives and trappers alike [...]" (Hungry Wolf, 30).
[82] John Mollo notes "winter dress of the inhabitants of Canada [...] was adopted by the participants on both sides" in *Uniforms of the American Revolution* (Dorset: United Kingdom, 1975), 196.
[83] According to Mollo's historical research, a member of the sentry would commonly wear a white blanket coat with a blue band (ibid, 196). McGregor comments that "[t]here are many descriptions of this special winter clothing issued to the troops in America. It consisted of long blue cloth [...] a 'capacious under-jacket, the sleeves being made of strong white corduory', [*sic*] and a Canadian overcoat, or *capot*, made of

Color is perhaps the most complex aspects of the Point blankets' social life. Depending on the cultural moment, location, and producers of the blanket, the color of the blanket takes on a life of its own. Journals and ledger books contain an almost overwhelming number of references that provide a glimpse at the spectrum of colors supplied to traders in the Canadian fur trade industry. Colors used for Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets tended to come in and out of popularity. This popularity is a reflection of significant historical events associated with both the Crown and the Hudson's Bay Company itself. For example, blankets with a purple field and white band and points commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II (FIGURE 12), and the white blankets sold in department stores with a grey band and points are millennium memorabilia.

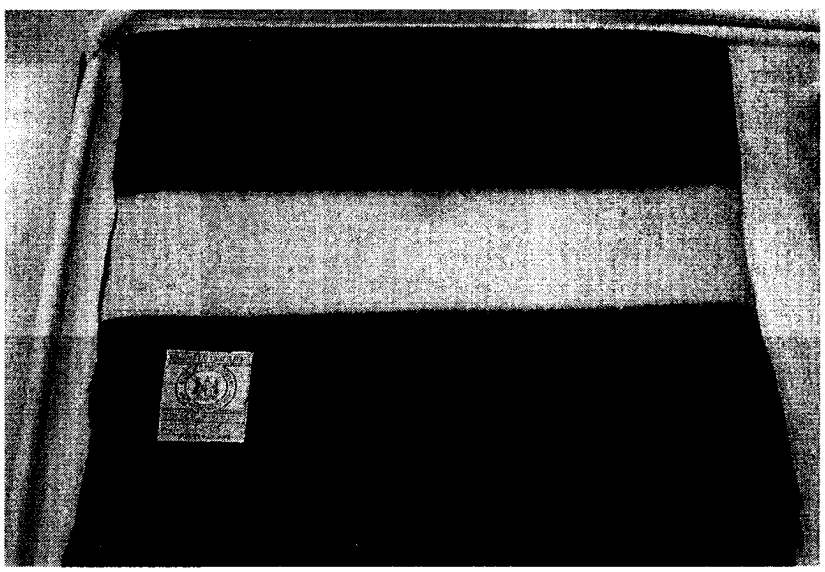

FIG 12. Royal Alberta Museum—H89.220.169 (Ethnology Collection).
(Photograph taken with permission by Fiona McDonald)

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white melton, lined with sheepskin" (p. 190). The corduroy is also mentioned in the 1928 letter between Lecky and Adney, when Adney writes that "'Corduroy' was not only a common breeches or trousers material but regularly used for 'jackets' by the North West voyageurs" (p.5: HBCA Blanket Search File#1).

Although each blanket has a history of its own and presents itself as a complex issue, a brief summary of colors used in *The Trader* will further demonstrate how color contributes to the social life of the blanket as a sign.[84] In *The Trader*, Krieghoff incorporated four different colored blankets. There is a white blanket with no distinct band in the capoté of the *coureur des bois*, as well as a white blanket that this man holds out between himself and the Aboriginal trader.[85] The older Aboriginal man wears a capoté made of a red blanket with a black/indigo band, and the Aboriginal woman wears a white blanket with a red band.[86] Finally, the younger Aboriginal male wears a blue capoté, which appears to have no bands or points at all.[87] It is important to note that the signifier—the painting containing the blanket—is a representation and, therefore, one can only speculate about Krieghoff's knowledge of the colors he used. The colors Krieghoff uses for blankets, however, are dependant on factors such as the visibility of certain blanket colors during Krieghoff's lifetime and the areas he visited.

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[84] This discussion will be further developed through an analysis of each image presented.

[85] Hungry Wolf, p. 30.

[86] Krieghoff tended to use blankets that had a white field with either red or blue bands, as well as blankets with a red field and indigo points and band. The consistency with these color combinations suggest the contact he had with these blankets in particular.

[87] A popular history associated with the origin of the capoté notes that a light blue hue was probably the first color worn by British soldiers. In written correspondence between W.S. Lecky, of the Hudson's Bay Company, Winnipeg, and E.T. Adney, of 1220 Drummond Street, Montreal, in June of 1928, Adney notes that "[a] French historian [whose name is never mentioned in their correspondence] has given us the fact of certain colors for dress of both men and women varying in different sections of French Canada. Blue was the favorite color for the Montreal section, red for Quebec, and white for that of Three Rivers (p.2). Adney also writes that "Alexander Henry, Senior, of Montreal, the first English trade in the west after Session, describes the voyageur costume in 1801 as including a 'molten or blanket coat, [...]', etc. At Lake Superior in 1766-67 he mentions a stroud blanket (valued at) 10 beaver. [And] a white blanket – 8 beaver" (p.3: HBCA Blanket Search File#1).

It has been suggested that the colors used in blankets are a reflection of regional preference and the availability of blankets at trading posts.[88] For example, an 1875 report from Fort Edmonton indicates that a white blanket was quite popular.[89] A second report from Fort Vancouver notes that pale green blankets were favored. In "'Making Sense Out/Of the Visual': Aboriginal Presentations and Representations in Nineteenth-Century Canada," Ruth B. Phillips comments that "throughout the fur trade era, red woolen cloth was preferred because of its analogic relationship to red ochre and indigenous scarlet dyes."[90] The red color that Phillips mentions is "Turke Red." According to "Textiles from the Fur Trade: A Textiles Glossary for the York Factory Indents, 1801 to 1860" turke red was:

> a bright durable red dye for cotton and wool cloth originally made from madder and later from alizarian in connection with an aluminum mordant and fatty matter. The earliest date cited in the OED was 1784. The 1830 York Factory indent listed "1032 yds. Turked red and Blue stripe cotton Druggets.[91]

It is important to note, however, that the colors represented in visual materials may not be accurate historic representations as color is also the tool of the artist in the composition of the representation (the keys). Nonetheless, the incorporation of certain

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[88] *Traditional Dress*, a popular narrative on Aboriginal dress, Wolf suggests, "blue wool blankets with white, undyed edges were most common among the central and southern tribes" (Hungry Wolf, p.22).
[89] (HBCA B.60/e/11) – Transcribed from original – "One thing detrimental to our trade is the poor quality of some of our goods, and the dull patterns of our Prints and Shawls. [...] Great Complaints have been made from all of the OutPosts [sic] of the 3 pt. white Blankets from 'Tradesman 8H'. An Indian cannot attempt to tighten his blanket around him, without its going in threads. Shawls and Prints are not fancy enough to take well with the natives. Shawls sent up this last Outfit, have all been of a dark gray color, and have proved unsaleable.—Prints have been the same, a good pattern for civilized folks, bit too neat and sober for the people we deal with. Bright guady [sic] colors for the Shawls (and not all of one pattern,). And navy blue and pink prints, are the best suited for the trade."
[90] Ruth B. Phillips, "'Making Sense Out/Of the Visual': Aboriginal Presentations and Representations in Nineteenth-Century Canada," *Art History* 27, no.4 (September 2004): 606.
[91] "Textiles From the Fur Trade: A Textiles Glossary for the York Factory Indents, 1801 to 1860," found at the Royal Alberta Museum Archives Search File: Fur Trade Textiles.

colors may be a reflection of the artist's knowledge of the spectrum of colors offered by Witney weavers to the Hudson's Bay Company.[92] Consequently, these factors are in turn dependant upon early orders placed by the company to Thomas Empson of Witney in 1779 for 'Pointed Blankets.'

In a letter from the Hudson's Bay Company to Thomas Empson dated 9 November 1786, the request was submitted that blue blankets be replaced as "the gentlemen [were] desirous they should be red this year [...]."[93] By January 1798 this same weaving family would supply "Thirty pair of Blankets of 3 points to be stripd [*sic*] with four Colors, Red, blue, Green, Yellow [...]."[94] Perhaps the more popular blanket today, the multi-striped blanket, often called candy-striped, has at times been associated with the reign of Queen Anne (1702-1714). Set against a white field, the bands on this blanket—starting at the edge of the blanket and moving inwards—are indigo blue, yellow, red, and green.[95] The choice to use this color combination could be in recognition of Queen Anne's efforts to establish a charter that would protect both the weavers and the quality of their blankets. It is interesting to note, however, that these colors also tend to appear in the Queen Anne style of Victorian architecture. It is suggested that "deep greens, golden ochres and dark reds" are popular colors associated with Queen Anne;

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[92] *Keys* are part of Hymes' model. In the case of visual materials, *keys* are the accentuated elements such as the tonal differences in color, the brush strokes, and the painterly features. *Instrumentalities*, then, are the medium, and ultimately that which conveys the visual language of the Canadian fur trade.
[93] HBCA A.5/2, fo.151 (HBCA Blanket Search File#4)
[94] HBCA, A.5/4, fo.26 (HBCA Blanket Search File#4)
[95] According to an extract from Dr. Plot's History of Oxfordshire, 1677, found in a search file on the Early Weavers at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, "[i]n 1712 Queen Anne incorporated the Blanket Weavers by Royal Charter, and Thomas Early was the Master in that year [...]." Transcription of original found in HBCA Early Search File#6.

colors similar to those in the multi-striped Point blankets.[96] Historically linked to Queen Anne, arguably this model of blanket has become an emblem today due to the placement and social life of this object as an emblem of a corporation rather than for its association to the Queen.

Certain colors may also have been popular because of their significance to Aboriginal traditions. From an Aboriginal cultural perspective—an "alter*Native*"[97] reading—some tribes used color to mark the directions of the wind while others associated color with the medicine wheel. This color association is dependent on each Nation, tribe, and band and is not to be mistaken as a generic statement for all Aboriginal cultures of North America.[98]

CONCLUSION

Interpreting the Point blanket as a sign in the visual language of the Canadian fur trade reveals the complexity of the blanket's social life in trade relations. Historical facts such as the blankets' colors and the contextual uses of this object relate to alternate receptions and perceptions of the Point blanket in the fur trade. Visual representations and interpretations from which this trajectory is derived places the blanket as an underlying structural pattern in images of trade interactions. This placement by artists has

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[96] Website "The Richmond Hill Historic Society" www.richmondhillhistory.org/queenanne.html [accessed 16 August 2005).

[97] "alter*Natives*" is a play by Drew Hayden Taylor (2000) referred to in *Border Crossings: Thomas King's Cultural Inversions* (University of Toronto Press, 2003).

[98] For example, in the Navajo origin myth, black, white, blue, and yellow are colors that symbolize the four corners of the First World. These same colors are present in the second and third world. The symbolic use of color by the Navaho coordinates with the direction the sun travels. In *Navaho Legends*, Washington Mathews notes that the Navaho "symboliz[e] [...] color [by] the four cardinal points [...]." Mathews notes that yellow represents the West and the onset of evening; blue is delegated to the South and the daytime light; white is associated with the East; and black is used to represent the nightfall of the North (Matthews, 65-66).

consequently resulted in the blanket becoming a sign in Canadian visual culture. When interpreted using Roland Barthes's analysis of signs, representations of the blanket can be seen as signs in the visual language of the Canadian fur trade when they become prominent features or are underlying repetitive patterns in visual materials.[99] Following this trajectory has allowed the historic, social, economic, and cultural meanings given to the blanket in their totality to reveal the social life of the Point blanket when read as a sign. While Hymes' model provides a formulaic method and framework that allows the communicative event of trade to be brought to the foreground, it is Roland Barthes' analysis of signs that is crucial to concluding this analysis. Engaging with Barthes and Hymes has allowed the social life of the Point blanket to become visible through seeing it as one of the numerous signs used to convey the visual language of the Canadian fur trade

Visual representations of the Point blanket and the continual reference to this object as a concept contribute to interpreting the blanket as a sign. The blanket, as a concept, is imbedded in the signified meaning of the Point blanket as a sign.[100] Although the signified meanings of the blanket in the first level of interpretation may be numerous, a basic semiotic reading suggests that the meaning is "blanket-ness." Each visual image, however, is unique at the second level of meaning—the connotative level—when the blanket transforms from the sign into the signifier and its form becomes evident. The morphing of classifications and meanings between the denotative and connotative levels

[99] This idea of repetitive underlying patterns is explored in Chapter Three in relation to Gillian Poulter's arguments.
[100] In "Myth Today" (1957), Roland Barthes provides a visualization of the denotative and connotative meaning of a sign. See Appendix VI for chart.

of Barthes's analysis contributes to the social life of the Point blanket when interpreted by a viewer. Images that document the social use of this object become essential to achieving the second level of semiotic interpretation where the blanket is placed in the position of a signifier. At this point, the blanket is attached with a signified meaning. This meaning relates to the idea of the Point blanket as a concept of "Canadian-ness."

Identifying the signified meaning as "Canadian-ness" attracts attention to the polysemic nature of the Point blanket and the numerous meanings of its social life. Although I cannot identify the second level sign, this in itself indicates that to constrain the sign to *one* interpretation of the signified meaning is to constrain the divergent meanings of this object and, consequently, perpetuate a monochromatic history of the Point blanket. Exploring the forms, meanings, and history of the Point blanket has allowed reading of the blanket as a sign from sources outside of the popular histories; narratives that place meanings such as a "national fabric" or "corporate skin" of Canada onto the blanket. These meanings draw on the history of the blanket as a commodity but are used to fuel the notion of the Point blanket as a concept of Canadian-ness.

CHAPTER TWO:
The Point Blanket as a Commodity in a "Contact Zone"

"The Trader" 1850. Cornelius Krieghoff. Oil on canvas, 45.5 x 60.6 cm. Art Gallery of Hamilton, gift of Mrs. C.H. Stearn, 1957 (1966.75.0).

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the social life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket in paintings and photographs of trade interactions is examined in relation to Mary Louise Pratt's notion of a "contact zone." Pratt's definition of a contact zone provides a theoretical basis for understanding the Point blanket as a commodity, as well as the relationships between those who endow this object with meaning. This chapter demonstrates how social events and visual markers that define a contact zone have affected and mediated interpretations of power relations within this space. Beyond these two central issues, factors affecting historical representations of Point blankets, such as the Made Beaver token system and the socialization of the Point blanket from an object to a commodity, are addressed.

Investigation into the social life of the Point blanket from a commodity perspective relates to Karl Marx's analysis of the "Commodity Fetish" and is central to Arjun Appadurai's overall inquiry into objects and their social lives. An examination of the commodity fetish is considered in relation to arguments presented by Dean Neu and Richard Therrien dealing with the implementation and implications of accounting practices employed by traders and trading companies. This discussion stems from a presentation of how the Point blanket was used as a "material link"—a qualifying term suggested by Harold Tichenor—visually and socially within the contact zone. Introduced in relation to the idea of the blanket as a material link are other compositional features that define a contact zone.[101] The presentation of these elements further highlights how contact zones in Canada were visually constructed on the canvas in relation to, and yet

[101] Tichenor, 7.

differing from, historical facts and contemporary critiques of these spaces. Therefore, this chapter looks at Cornelius Krieghoff's *The Trader* (FIGURE 9) as a barter scene within a contact zone.

"CONTACT ZONE"

In *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), Mary Louise Pratt defines a "contact zone" as:

> social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—like colonialism, or their aftermaths as they are lived across the globe today.[102]

According to this definition, in a literal sense, a contact zone existed in which there was an exchange of Point blankets from one cultural group to another. Within this space, exchange was negotiated by dynamic and complex systems of barter for furs between two "disparate cultures." Pratt's concept in this chapter contextualizes a post-European contact space of interaction.

In Pratt's definition, scenes/settings of a trade interaction are identified as "social spaces." With no specific identification of a location, any place where individuals gathered or met during the fur trade in Canada is a contact zone. Extrapolating from her definition, any social space depicted by artists, photographers, and travel writers (for the sake of representing the Canadian fur trade) can also be referred to as a contact zone. One space, specific to the fur trade as a centre of commerce and trade, was the Hudson's Bay Company trading posts or forts. According to Pat McCormack,

> [t]rading posts provided a *place* [in] which all the people of the region could interact and jointly create a kind of *intersubjectivity*. This term

[102] Mary Louise Pratt, 4.

> refers to a shared, mutual space, analogous to Richard White's "middle ground," produced through a process of dialogue and communication and characterized by a set of meanings which properly belonged to none of the interacting cultures (Fabian 1991: 92; McCormack and Sciorra 1998; Salisbury 1976: 42; White 1997: 93).[103]

Borrowing from McCormack's assessment of this social space, this thesis then poses the question as to whether or not this *intersubjectivity*—while it contrasts with Pratt's notion of a contact zone—is visually evident in images or omitted for the sake of aesthetics in the visual narrative of the fur trade. This analysis requires the spaces where these images depict (or were produced at) to be considered as contact zones.

A contact zone in Rupert's Land was established when British colonizers first set up shop. Following the organization of Hudson's Bay Company forts and outposts, visual materials and journal entries produced by artists and traders represent these areas as a primary contact zone. This zone was strategically mapped out through international trade agreements and treaties that defined its political and territorial borders. For example, the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht issued to the British total control of Hudson Bay and the area inland of the bay. While the treaty was well recognized, the boundary of this zone between Rupert's Land and the United States of America remained officially established until 1776. As trade boundaries fluctuated, 15 June 1846 saw the signing of the Oregon treaty and the settlement of the border between Rupert's Land and the United States. The Treaty states:

> Treaty between Her Majesty and the United States of America, for the Settlement of the Oregon Boundary. [...] HER [sic] Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and The United States of America, deeming it to be desirable for the future welfare of both

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[103] Patricia McCormack, "Chapter Two" in *On Parle le Rababou: Building a Plural Society—Fort Chipewyan and the Fur Trade Mode of Production.* (Manuscript in Progress)

> countries, that the state of doubt and uncertainty which has hitherto prevailed respecting the Sovereignty and Government of the Territory on the North-west Coast of America, lying westward of the Rocky or Stony Mountains, should be finally terminated by an amicable compromise of the rights mutually asserted by the two Parties over the said Territory [...].[104]

Divided into five articles, *Article I* establishes the forty-ninth parallel as the central geographical boundary from which all territory discussed in the treaty is referenced. Relating to trade relations, *Article II* clearly states that:

> From the point at which the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude shall be found to intersect the great northern branch of the Columbia River, the navigation of the said branch shall be free and open to the Hudson's Bay Company, and to all British subjects trading with the same, to the point where the said branch meets the main stream of the Columbia, and thence down the said main stream to the ocean, with free access into and through the said river or rivers; it being understood, that all the usual portages along the line thus described, shall in like manner be free and open. In navigating the said river or rivers, British subjects, with their goods and produce shall be treated on the same footing as citizens of the United States ...[105]

The trade boundaries defined in this treaty not only dealt with territorial ownership of geographical features but also charted the exact line of contact along which British subjects and American citizens would "meet, clash, and, grapple with each other."[106]

Northward movement across the forty-ninth parallel meant the entry of American fur traders and American trade goods into British controlled land. On occasion, these

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[104] Article *II* from the *Treaty between Her Majesty and the United States of America for the settlement of the Oregon boundary* signed at Washington, June 15, 1846 [last accessed July 27, 2005]. Available at http://www/canadiana.org.

[105] Article *II* from the *Treaty between Her Majesty and the United States of America for the settlement of the Oregon boundary* signed at Washington, June 15, 1846 [last accessed July 27, 2005]. Available at http://www/canadiana.org.

[106] Pratt, 4. Prior to the Treaty of Oregon, the Hudson's Bay Company controlled the territories of what are today the states of Oregon and Washington. Fort Vancouver, built in the 1820s, was the largest of the Hudson's Bay Company forts and was situated outside of modern day Portland, Oregon (not that far from Pendleton, Oregon). *Visions from the Wilderness: The Art of Paul Kane*, prod. and dir. John Bessal, 48 min., CineFocus Canada , 2001, videocassette.

goods mimicked products traded by the Hudson's Bay Company. One object replicated was the multi-striped woolen blanket. While British subjects traded Point blankets across Rupert's Land, American fur traders employed trade blankets produced by the Pendleton Woolen Mills. In 1863, the Pendleton Woolen Mills in Oregon began producing blankets specifically for the fur trade industry. Imitating the design of the Point blanket, their multi-striped blanket was easily mistaken for a Hudson's Bay Point blanket. The Mill flourished as American traders secured trading relations by producing blankets with designs created by Aboriginals. One of the designs favored was the mock multi-striped blanket known south of the forty-ninth parallel as the Glacier Park blanket of Pendleton Woolen Mills.[107]Although the Pendleton design does not incorporate the points, the multi-colored bands were easily identifiable elements in the design of Point blankets associated with British traders. In the Pendleton catalogue, which offers an accessible popular history of the Glacier Park blanket, it is noted that:

> One of the first blankets, and probably the most famous, is the Glacier Park. Its historic markings and colors date back to the frontier trading posts. Traders would indicate the weight of the blanket offered in exchange for furs by holding up one finger for each pound. The original blankets incorporated three, four or five black stripes in the design, which indicated the value of the blanket for fur trade.[108]

The historical use of this blanket in trade tells how American traders used imitation British trade-goods and relates to the justification for treaty agreements on territorial trade boundaries and the need to mediate relations between two nations attempting to colonize North America.

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[107] Since 1904, this blanket has been used to commemorate Glacier National Park in the United States of America.
[108] *Pendleton Blankets Catalogue* (12 January 2004), 7.

Given the use of the Glacier Park blanket in the Canadian fur trade industry, images of multi-striped Point blankets produced in social spaces where British and American traders both worked may not be representations of Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets. In the case of *The Trader*, however, the concentration of Krieghoff's work in Quebec makes it likely that representations of blankets in his paintings are of a British trade good.

The Trader, while set outside of a fort, represents an intersubjective engagement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures and attempts to contextualize a social space within a contact zone where trade and/or interactions occurred. In *The Trader*, there is no identifiable marker, such as the forty-ninth parallel, to demarcate the scene. Rather, this setting appears to be a random spot in the depths of a forest. In this image, then, the interaction between the individuals is what defines a contact zone more than the locale does. The close arrangement of the participants suggests that Krieghoff did not see trade interactions as hostile affairs but rather as familiar meetings between two cultures—an intersubjective relationship.

This same representation of neutral interactions appears in several other images that over-generalize the social relationships within trade events. An impressionable image of first contact is represented in a color brochure by the Weavers of Witney—producers of Point blankets for the Hudson's Bay Company (FIGURES 13 and 14). Proud to be corporate affiliates of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Weavers of Witney include images in their brochure that commemorate the historic use of their blankets by associating them with a nostalgic image of a peaceful contact zone.

The first image (FIGURE 13) in the brochure illustrates contact between an Aboriginal and a European trader. Representing colonial Europe, a white male wearing fashionable linens stands opposite an Aboriginal man who is wrapped in a multi-striped blanket (with no distinguishable points) and wearing a feathered head dress. The artist uses a map of North America as the backdrop to situate the location for this hypothetical interaction. Highlighting areas such as Virginia, New England, and Canada, the locale is further identifiable through bodies of water such as the Great Lakes and the Gulf of the St. Lawrence River. Other subtle markers include the compass below the pelt held by the colonial trader and the small ship—his mode of transportation—above his left shoulder. Signs such as these suggest the means by which the Witney blanket came to the Dominion of Canada and how the Aboriginal male figure came to be wearing the multi-striped blanket. There is nothing indicating the tools the Aboriginal male used to navigate his way to this trade interaction, thus leaving the viewer to infer that he has always been here. This image also suggests an exchange of goods, but does not indicate specifically whether this occurred through barter or through gift-exchange. What the viewer can infer, however, is that one pelt was traded for one blanket.

The narrative started on the cover continues inside the brochure where a second image (FIGURE 14) clarifies the trade interaction by narrowing in on the specifics of this event. One of the distinguishing features used by the artist is the inclusion of the coastline to demarcate the area where contact occurred. This coastline is a geographical reference that the artist used as a visual reference of a contact zone. The coastline is not the only

indicator of a contact zone in this image; other compositional elements have been used to frame and define the setting.

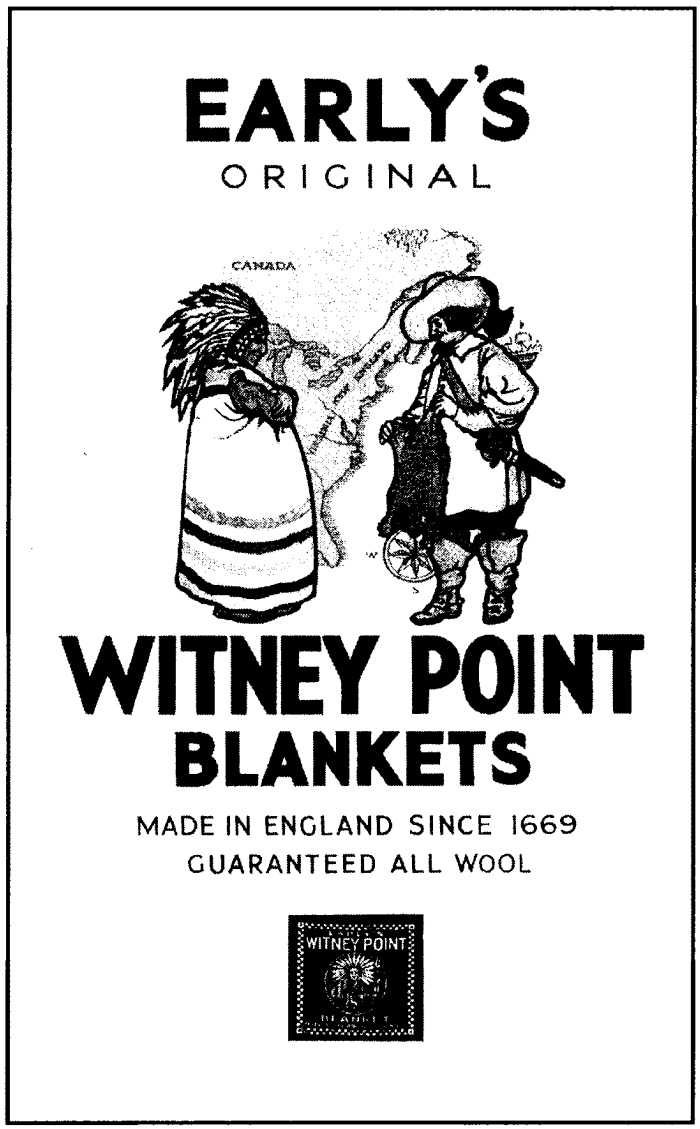

FIG 13. "Early's Original Witney Point Blankets"—Inside First Page of Brochure. (In HBC correspondence file: Blankets—HBC Point—Legal, January 1948-November 1956. Hudson's Bay Company Archives/Archives of Manitoba HBCA A.102/305)

FIG 14. "Early's Original Witney Point Blankets"—Inside First Page of Brochure. (In HBC correspondence file: Blankets—HBC Point—Legal, January 1948-November 1956. Hudson's Bay Company Archives/Archives of Manitoba HBCA A.102/305)

The placement of participants in this image is a compositional technique used to frame the scene. The participants are three colonial traders and two Aboriginal traders in the foreground, and two figures in the background anchoring a small rowboat. The Aboriginal traders are represented in the act of examining a multi-striped blanket. This image does not clearly represent the exact moment of trade, but rather is an artistic snapshot of a trade process—a representation around which narratives are constructed. Read as a narrative of trade, then, this image suggests that the quality of the blanket is of keen interest.

When both images (FIGURES 13 and 14) from this brochure are compared, the placement of the multi-striped blanket between the two central participants becomes

prominent. While the coastline marks the boundary of the contact zone, the Point blanket marks what Harold Tichenor calls the "material link between two cultures."[109] The social life of the Point blanket as a material link foregrounds how this object acquired both a monetary value and culturally specific meaning(s) through trade interactions. Therefore, the circulation of Point blankets and their representations inform the economic side of the Point blankets' social life.

"MATERIAL LINK"

The economic history of Canada is a narrative woven with fact and fiction about intercultural contact and trade relations. Visual representations of trade relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal traders often over-generalize the various social customs of the fur trade. In representations of trade interactions, the blanket is often placed between the two main participants engaged in the trade event. Tichenor's idea of looking at blankets as a "material link," in a literal sense, is a keen insight that draws attention to the use of the blankets by two different cultural groups. In visual representations of the fur trade, Tichenor's interpretation of the Point blanket is reflected in how artists used the blanket as a central material object placed between participants from different cultures. In the drawings from the Witney Weavers brochure, the blanket as a material link is epitomized. In *The Trader*, the blanket is used to complete the visual arrangement in that the viewers' eyes are led from one cultural group to another through the placement of the blanket. Amongst other meanings, the use of blankets in the clothing of all participants suggests that the blanket has linked these individuals together on previous occasions. As a "material link," however, the Point blanket is a crucial element

[109] Tichenor, 7.

that requires social spaces to exist, or perhaps it is the reason that such spaces exists. While the blanket visually anchors a trade interaction in most visual representations, its placement alongside other physical features of a social space, such as coastlines and trade counters, is crucial to interpreting further social spaces and the relations between those involved. To look at these issues, this thesis looks to images that use the trading post as the social space.

THE *COUNTER* ARGUMENT

One of the recurring motifs used in images of trade interactions located at trading posts is the trade counter. The counter establishes a barrier between the "two disparate cultures" as it delineates a space between traders.[110] As a distinguishable feature in interior design of Hudson's Bay Company forts and posts, the trade counter divides the social space into two areas, one side occupied by British traders who own the counter and the other by those who come to the counter to trade. When the counter is included in visual representations, the placement of participants around the counter defines the interaction – buyer-trader/trader-buyer.

Across Canada, the counter became a common feature in all forts where money was exchanged for goods or services. Even today, the counter is ingrained in Western

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[110] In this thesis, word choice for 'trader' and 'trapper' is a very intricate area worth a brief discussion. When talking about the fur trade as a profession and means of subsistence, fur traders and fur trade historians tended to give Europeans professional titles such as 'Fur Trader' or 'Trader.' In contrast to these titles, Aboriginals are noted only for their procurement of furs and given titles such as 'Trapper' or 'Hunter,' and not recognized for their trading skills. In reality, both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals *traded* goods—blankets and pelts. European traders, however, did not weave the blankets but rather were representatives of a company who purchased the blankets for trade, and they were therefore, by profession, traders. Aboriginals who traded were not only traders in the capitalist sense of this term; they traded in order to maintain inter-tribal relations and foster new ones. Trapping animals for furs was not only a means to acquiring European goods but also a means of subsistence as the food and other by-products of the animals were both traded and consumed.

culture as the area where trade and economic transactions occur on a daily basis. At the Manitoba Museum (FIGURE 15), patrons have the opportunity to experience a traditional trade counter where blankets, capotés, furs, trade cloth, and ammunition are displayed.

FIG 15. Trade Counter Display, Manitoba Museum
(Photograph taken with Permission by Fiona McDonald, 17 December 2004).

As a patron at the museum, one is automatically located in a position on the consumer side of the counter—the space most often occupied by Aboriginal traders. The space behind the counter, where employees of the Hudson's Bay Company worked, remains inaccessible. To contextualize the use of the blanket and the trade counter beyond the museum to other historical representations, the following images demonstrate how the counter becomes central in anchoring the event as it separates participants.

FIG 16. "Trade with Indians" 1880. (From: Bettmann Archive F5217)

While the trade counter is the focal point of this discussion, relevant too is the perspective from which the viewer observes the event. In "Trade with Indians" (FIGURE 16), the viewer is situated on the consumer side of the counter at a distance from the central trade event. Consequently, taking on a voyeuristic position, the viewer bears witness from a distance to the act of barter between the central Aboriginal trader and, possibly, the fort's factor. The two central figures situated opposite one another at the counter appear to be discussing the product held by the fort's employee. Of interest to this thesis in this image is the apparel of the Aboriginal trader. Already wearing a Point blanket fashioned into a capoté, this individual has apparently at some point prior to this representation negotiated in a similar capitalist space.

FIG 17. "Indian Trading Furs." C.W. Jefferys.
(From: National Archives of Canada C-73431)

A similar scene is represented in "Indian Trading furs" (FIGURE 17). This time, however, the goods—a musket and the pelt—are examined, respectively, by the Aboriginal trader and the fort's employee. Again, the viewer is on the consumer side of the counter. This image appears more open than "Trade with Indians" as the counter space is more visible. Such openness allows the numerous acts of trade to be clearly depicted. Acts such as examining the quality of each product—a trend also found in the Witney brochure—tend to be the central focus of this image. In "Indian barters furs," indicators such as the

capotés worn by the Aboriginal trader and the figure behind him, as well as the bails of pelts in foreground of the image, suggest previous exchanges of trade and barter.

The perspective of the viewer, however, changes when the medium of photography in this image documents the trade event over the counter. In "Indians Trading" (FIGURE 18) the scene is captured from the employee side of the counter. In this image, the central Aboriginal trader challenges the gaze of the viewer, thus engaging the viewer as an active participant in the trade event.

FIG 18. "Indians Trading." (From: HBCA-Wholesale-HBC-1987-363-I-115-1)

Arguably, the counter is more than a physical feature of the fort; rather, it is a feature that divides the social space into occupied spaces. In these images, the counter is the space upon which both cultures lay their goods down but never cross themselves. It is only as viewers and through different media that both perspectives are presented.

The roles of both participants and the meanings given to their goods were clearly understood during these trade events situated around the space of the counter. The counter is then the place within the social space where the two 'disparate cultures' clash and grapple with one another over the price and the value of material objects, such as the Point blanket. At this point in the trade interaction, the blanket becomes an object with the potential of being a commodity if money or trade tokens exchange hands and the object becomes saleable.

"COMMODITY FETISH"

In Volume I of *Capital*, Marx introduces the idea of the "Form of Value" or "Exchange-Value" of an object. This categorization suggests, at a basic level, an understanding of the value that the Point blanket has as an object in its rudimentary form as woven textile.[111] For this reason, the Exchange-Value is intricately connected to the value placed on intercultural relationships between those who trade, barter, and otherwise exchange the Point blanket.

Marx states that:

> Commodities come into the world in the shape of use-values, articles or goods, such as iron, linen, corn etc. This is their plain, homely, bodily form. They are, however, commodities, only because they are something two-fold, both objects of utility, and, at the same time, depositories of value. They manifest themselves therefore as commodities, or have the form of commodities, only in so far as they have two forms, a physical or natural form, and a value form.[112]

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[111] Going beyond this primary level in determining the Exchange-Value is where Barthes's second level meaning comes into play as the value of the blanket and its meanings are acquired through its use as a trade commodity in the contact zone.

[112] Karl Marx, *Capital: An Abridged Edition*. Translated by David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press, 1999), 22.

In this way, the Point blanket as a commodity enters the Canadian fur trade industry as an "article" with "use-value." The interpretation of use-value by the two "disparate cultures," however, complicates a discussion of cultural reception and the intention of both the Point blanket and visual representations of this object. Throughout Chapter One, histories dealing with the physical form of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket from the wool used in the weaving process through to its reconstitution into a coat were considered. When the Point blanket is reflected upon from a Marxist perspective, the blanket moves beyond being a utilitarian object, necessary for survival in a harsh environment, and becomes a depository of value. Therefore, monetary value(s) and meaning(s) of the blanket are dependent primarily on two factors: first, the point system, and second, the Made Beaver token system. While points are a feature in the design of the blanket and the tokens are objects onto themselves, the social processes that bring these two objects into the trade interaction relate to the establishment of the standards of trade and value.[113]

THE MADE BEAVER

The monetary value of a Point blanket is an historically dependant and highly contested subject worthy of a brief summary. In a note from the Governor and Committee to either Thomas Hutchins or the Chief factor "for the time being at Fort Albany" dated 4 May 1780—one year after the first official order was placed—it was written and directed that:

The one Pointed Blankets are to be charged at	1	Beaver each
one and half pointed	2	do.
Two pointed	2 ½	do.

[113] Marx states that "the very polarity of these forms makes them mutually exclusive" (Marx, 24).

Two and half	3	do.
Three pointed	3 ½	do.[114]

Five years later, the value of a blanket continued to be an issue and one beaver was intended to correspond to one point. P. Turmor states in a letter on 20 September 1785 regarding "Trade at Waratowca Lake" that:

> ...our Point Blankets do not seem to answer well very few Indians will go to the price of them but say the makes of them are the number of Beaver which should be paid for them but now 1 ½ Point are 2 beaver, the 2 Point 2 ½ - the 2 ½ Point 3 And the 3 Point 4 Beaver each [...].[115]

As the uncertainty between the value of a beaver in relation to a point continued for several years, a letter from the Governor and Company in London to E. Jarwis [?] and Council (Albany) clarified that they—the chief factors, employees, and traders associated with the honorable company—:

> Be directed that pointed Blankets be traded in future at one Beaver for one Point, & half a Beaver for half a point, & and so in proportion for the Others.[116]

At this time, a beaver pelt was directly exchanged for a blanket. A visual representation of the value of beaver pelts and a Point blanket is found in a drawing from *Textile Age.*

This image (FIGURE 19) illustrates four beaver walking in line behind an Aboriginal man clad in nothing more than a leather loincloth and feathered headdress. This man walks towards the second participant, a European man, wearing a raccoon fur hat (a style worn by frontier woodsman Davy Crockett in the early-nineteenth century and re-popularized by Disney's appropriation of Crockett in the 1950s). The second

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[114] HBCA Blanket search file #1 (HBCA A6/20).
[115] HBCA Blanket Search file #4 (HBCA 11/45, FO.31-3d)—Transcribed from excerpt found in Search File.
[116] HBCA Blanket Search file #4 (HBCA A6/13, fo.149)—Transcribed from excerpt found in Search File.

participant wears Western clothing and carries the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket. The register below implies that a trade interaction has occurred—apparently peacefully—as both walk away with the goods in hand, the Aboriginal with the blanket and the European trader with the luxurious—although still living—beaver. The text below this image states:

> At the bottom, the 'deal' has been consummated—the trader leaves with his beavers, the Indian with his (4-point) blanket.[117]

FIG 19. Cartoon of Trade (From: *Textile Age* (Oct 1938): 31—HBCA Beaver Search File HBC 'point' blankets # 1)

One hundred years later, in the 1880s, the Made Beaver token system (see FIGURES 20 and 21 for tokens) was instituted as a monetary equivalent to a beaver pelt, thus transforming numerous objects, including the Point blanket, into a commodity. According to a Marxist analysis of goods, once monies are exchanged, the object

[117] *Textile Age*, October 1938:31 (HBCA Beaver Search File HBC 'Point' Blankets#1).

becomes a commodity. In the case of the Point blanket in a commodity state, the points and the tokens determine the monetary value of the blanket.

FIG 20. "Made Beaver" Token.[118]

FIG 21. "Tokens issued by the Northwest Company. The head of King George IV is on the one side of the token."

According to Marx, it is the mutual exclusivity of these two objects—the point markings on the blankets and the tokens—that make the value of the blanket reliant on

[118] The Made Beaver token replaced the Point blanket as the new "colonial trading token" (Nadeau, 52-53). James Zagon notes that, "[b]efore metal tokens came into use, locally produced tokens of ivory, stone, bone and wood were used at some Hudson's Bay Company posts. The brass token is the size of a Canadian 25-cent piece and is one of a set of four denominations valued at 1, ½ and 1/8 made beaver. These tokens which were used in the East Main District east and south of Hudson's Bay, do not bear a date but were struck sometime after 1857. The letters on the token have the following meanings: Hudson's Bay Company (Hudson Bay), EM (East Main), NB (made beaver)—the N is a die-cutter's error for M." See James Zagon, "Hudson's Bay Company: One-quarter Made Beaver Token" Web page, [last accessed 27July 2005]. Available at www.collections.ic.gc.ca.

these two factors. In *Indians of the Fur Trade*, Arthur J. Ray's explanation of monetary systems relates to a discussion of the economic sphere of a "contact zone." Ray notes that:

> Since the Indians lacked any concept of money, the Hudson's Bay company was forced to devise a scheme which would allow them to keep records of their barter trade. To achieve this end, the company employed the *made beaver* (MB) as its standard unit of evaluation. It was equivalent to the value of a prime beaver skin and the prices of all trade goods, other furs, and country produce were expressed in terms of MB [...]. [T]rade goods coming from Europe were assigned these values according to the *official standard of trade*, while the furs received from the Indians were evaluated according to the *comparative standard of trade*.[119]

How the standards—official and comparative—were determined relates to accounting practices that were not determined in the social space of the trade interaction but rather in the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company.

ACCOUNTING IN THE CONTACT ZONE

The practice of accounting has a rather important history with respect to the social life of the Point blanket. Dean Neu and Richard Therrien's examination of accounting as a colonial practice brings to light the hegemonic dynamics prevalent in Pratt's definition of a contact zone. Neu and Therrien suggest that "[a]ccounting, along with other administrative sciences, provides the tools for planning, motivating, and controlling actions."[120] Therefore, the implementation of a monetary token system was a powerful

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[119] Arthur J. Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role As Trappers, Hunters, and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 61.

[120] Dean Neu and Richard Therrien, *Accounting for Genocide: Canada's Bureaucratic Assault on Aboriginal People* (Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2003), 15. In Neu and Therrien's analysis, accounting "refers to the system of numerical techniques, funding mechanisms and accountability relations that mediate relations between individuals, groups, and institutions. Implicit in this definition, is [the fact] [...] that numerical techniques encourage action-at-a-distance and bring home distant knowledges to the centres of calculation" (19). This approach relates to determining the standard and comparative values of objects in a commodity state.

means of controlling trade, including actions such as interpreting the cost of Point blankets in relation to beaver pelts in prime condition.

In the implementation of a monetary token system objects were transformed into commodities through the following process:

Beaver Pelt(s)→Token(s) Token(s)→Point blanket[121]

According to Igor Kopytoff, "anything that can be bought for money is at that point a commodity."[122] Therefore, in the token system, Point blankets were no longer objects whose social lives were defined by the social events of barter and gift giving, but rather depositories of value where their social lives reflected this change. In this change, Neu and Therrien comment that, "[t]hrough the force of literate culture over oral culture and economic symbolism over bartering and gift-giving traditions, [colonial forces] overpowered the Natives economically."[123] However, for centuries before and after European establishment of territorial political borders, Aboriginal trade flourished between bands, tribes, and nations across the continent. Although no written documents exist, oral histories on tribal relations provide a wealth of information on pre-European contact and Aboriginal trade relations. For example, tribes on the West coast of Canada traded Eulachon (fish sauce), amongst other goods, with Plains tribes for deer meat and hide. Trade allowed for external tribal relations, alliances, and patterns of exogamy to

[121] This analysis is based on a Marxist assessment of goods and monies. Marx's two distinct models for calculating the circulation of commodities are as follows: (A) Commodities—Money—Commodities and (B) Money—Commodities—Money.
[122] Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process" in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 69.
[123] Dean Neu and Richard Therrien, *Accounting for Genocide: Canada's Bureaucratic Assault on Aboriginal People* (Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishers, 2003), 21.

exist between bands and tribes.[124] The introduction of accounting as a form of colonialism in the contact zone required a transition from barter and gift giving to commodity exchange that would inevitably redefine the roles of participants within the social space of trade. In doing so, the social lives of the objects involved were also affected.

Caroline Humphrey and Stephen Hugh-Jones look at the notion of objects as depositories of value by comparing commodity and barter exchange. They note that in monetary exchange:

> the value of one exchange object (money) has no direct use, but is merely a claim on other definite values. [...] In barter, [...] the transactors are on their own: if they decide that one object is worth another that is all that matters. In other words, the objects are not measured against one another by some external criterion, but substituted for one another by an internal balance.[125]

Therefore, in relation to Arjun Appadurai's assessment that "human transactions and calculations [...] enliven things," it is the calculations for the *official* standard of trade and the *comparative* standard of trade that contribute to the social life of the Point blanket. When one examines the human transactions that make the Point blanket a depository of value, the use-value of the object epitomizes the social life of the Point blanket in a commodity state. While the human transactions and calculations are rooted in

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[124] Aboriginal oral traditions trace the history of Aboriginal perspectives on the Canadian fur trade industry. Unfortunately, these sources have taken a secondary role in documenting the history of the Canadian fur trade as they are less accessible. These sources are extremely valuable for presenting Aboriginal voices in a post-colonial effort, and I regret that this analysis, too, lacks an equal number of oral histories as it does written documents by the Hudson's Bay Company and European fur traders. Further oral history projects are needed to document and give diversity of voice and perspective to studies that attempt to present an encompassing history of objects.

[125] Caroline Humphrey and Stephen Hugh-Jones, "Introduction: Barter, Exchange, and Value" in *Exchange and Value: An Anthropological Approach* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Sydney, Port Chester: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 8.

colonial rhetoric, their use within the contact zone is the central force in creating social spaces dictated by power struggles over price determination.

CONCLUSION

In Cornelius Krieghoff's *The Trader*, the event of trade, while overtly stated in the title, simplifies for the viewer a representation of a hypothetical trade event. Here, the scene represents a social space in which the blanket appears to be an object of barter-exchange. Placement of the Point blanket in this scene as an object not bought or sold through the exchange of money does not make this object a commodity, but rather endows it with social and cultural meanings independent of its exchange-value. The values and meanings of Point blankets, however, are determined by the institutions and trading ceremonies introduced by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. The monetary and cultural values of commodities are therefore dictated primarily through supply and demand and the human transactions and calculations that bring them into this state. Images that represent the trade of Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets highlight the social life of the blanket when it is circulated within the "contact zone" and reflect the meanings ascribed to the blankets by Europeans through visual materials. Pratt's assessment of contact zones as hostile places relates directly to Neu and Therrien's discussion of the economic engagements and the power of accounting practices contributed to mediating power relations. Visual representations, however, while they reflect the *intersubjectivity* between participants, omit the tensions and hegemonic relationships that were often present between "two disparate cultures." These spaces are

mediated not only by cultural traditions, but also by the structural features found in the space and the capitalist accounting practices introduced.

A visual representation of a contact zone in the Canadian fur trade industry is therefore representative of colonialism and the process of "civilization." It is in light of postcolonial criticism and analysis of texts and visual materials that ideas about trade relations are broken apart to present a more encompassing history of colonial occupation and issues of identity. Acknowledging European practices of producing images and constructing narratives through texts to accompany these images demonstrates the role played by ethnographic studies in the colonization of Canada. Analysis of these practices shed light on the popular narratives that emerge from the Canadian fur trade industry that situate the social life of the Point blanket as a material link.

CHAPTER THREE:
The Point Blanket and Those Who Wear it

"The Trader" 1850. Cornelius Krieghoff. Oil on canvas, 45.5 x 60.6 cm. Art Gallery of Hamilton, gift of Mrs. C.H. Stearn, 1957 (1966.75.0).

INTRODUCTION

This chapter continues to explore the social life of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket by focusing on social attitudes associated with juxtaposing representations of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in relation to the visual placement and use of Point blankets. Chapter Three begins with an inquiry into the Point blanket as both an article of exterior clothing and a visual emblem of Canada and evolves into a discussion of representational images that address both the cultural and ideological values associated with Point blankets. Images in this chapter are considered as ideological representations rather than as factual documents. Such a methodology avoids a strictly image-based analysis that neglects "the questions of perspective and social positioning" of artists, photographers, viewers, and sitters by focusing on the importance of context and content-based viewing that highlight the Point blanket.[126] Repetitive elements within images, such as representations of the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket are examined in order to build an argument that situates the Point blanket as a symbol of civility. Civility, in the context of this discussion, refers to an individual's status of being a civilized citizen of a new settler colony.

This chapter interprets Cornelius Krieghoff's *The Trader* (FIGURE 9) as a painting that reinforces stereotypes of cultural groups. Furthermore, this chapter demonstrates how this and others images containing representations of blankets have situated the Point blanket as a visual tool that contributes to its placement as a visual emblem of Canada. Central to this reading are the arguments of Gillian Poulter, Gretchen M. Bataille, James

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[126] Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 205.

Axtell, François Marc Gagnon, and Ruth B. Phillips when discussing fashion, and the theories of Homi K. Bhabha, Gordon M. Sayre, Louis Owens, Thomas King, Marie Batiste and James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson, as well as Ella Shohat and Robert Stam. The arguments put forward by these scholars address issues of Otherness and the construction of dichotomous images that result from a Eurocentric mindset. Furthermore, Krieghoff's *The Trader*, when read in the context of a stereotyping image, discloses European ideas that Aboriginals inhabited not only the lower economic classes but also the wilds of the forest.[127] While still a representation and not a formal truth, the Aboriginals in this image are represented visually as dwelling in small groups or nuclear family units and were often presumed to be closely associated with nature. Gillian Poulter argues that, "representations of small Indian camps and their indolent occupants reinforce the concept of Aboriginals as a dying and degenerate race."[128] James Axtell notes that "so important was European cloth as a badge of 'civility' that an Indian's degree of acculturation could almost be read in his appearance."[129] More importantly, the visual documentation of clothing is telling of the rate of acculturation, assimilation, demonization, and civilization of Aboriginals that took place in Canada. Reading the Point blanket as a badge of civility is an effective means of reading how visual representations of fur trade interactions were transformed into documents of the civilizing process.

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[127] According to Gordon M. Sayre, "[s]everal scholars have suggested that European colonists expected the Indians to live as the poorest did in Europe and were shocked by ways in which their behaviour instead resembled that of European nobility." Sayre continues by discussing Hayden White's theory of the Noble Savage by noting that "the trope can be seen as the reaction to the failure to accommodate representations of the Indians to images of the poor and lower classes in Europe." (Sayre, 231.)

[128] Poulter, 16.

[129] James Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 59.

This chapter begins by taking up questions posed by Mieke Bal in *The Practice of Cultural Analysis: Exposing Interdisciplinary Interpretation.* Bal asks, "[...] what features are emphasized or muted in order to articulate a people or national imagery? And how might this construction accommodate or affront the burgeoning nationalism of [the artists'] moment and environment?"[130] This reading illustrates how the Point blanket is emphasized in visual materials to articulate the notion of civility and brings forth hypotheses on how the Point blanket has "accommodated burgeoning nationalism."

CLOTHING

The Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket is often represented in images as an article of exterior clothing worn not only as a capoté but also as a wrap. On wraps owned by Aboriginals, blanket decorations, also known as blanket stripes or rosettes, were popular. In Norman Feder's article "Crow Blanket Strip Rosettes," the decorative patterns he explores tended to be popular on the plains at the turn of the twentieth century.[131] On display at the Royal Alberta Museum, a blanket strip decoration attributed to the Blackfoot is part of a life-size diorama. The blanket decoration in this scene is contextualized as part of the traditional ceremonial garb for Sundance rituals on the plains (FIGURE 22).[132] Here, the assimilation of non-Aboriginal garb into Aboriginal cultures on the plains becomes apparent.

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[130] Mieke Bal, *The Practice of Cultural Analysis: Exposing Interdisciplinary Interpretation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 108.
[131] Norman Feder, "Crow Blanket Strip Rosettes," *American Indian Art* 6, no.1 (Winter 1980): 40-45.
[132] This object, while it contributes greatly to the overall social life of Point blankets, is a prime example of an object having a cultural biography. The blanket and the beaded blanket decoration have different accession numbers, although both are displayed together as an article of clothing in the Syncrude Gallery at the Royal Alberta Museum (RAM).

FIG 22. Blanket Decoration. Blackfoot. (Royal Alberta Museum H68.19.1. ***Note: Blanket in display is H66.100.2*****)** (Photograph taken with Permission by Fiona McDonald)

In *Les Sauvages Américains*, Gordon M. Sayer posits that:

> All cultures represent identity through clothing, for it serves as an instant visual sign of belonging in a society, even if it is also divided into more specific codes for class, gender, occupation, and other identities. [...] Rather than status determining dress, dress effectively represents status, so that in practice it was true that 'the clothes make the man.'[133]

Examining visual images that document in minute detail the Point blanket costuming of participants is a critical means of looking at the use of the Point blanket to connote an individual's status or occupation. Arjun Appadurai notes that "cloth [has] long been, at

[133] Sayre, 146.

the local level, an instrument for the sending of finely tuned social messages."[134] This method of inquiry relates to an identification of Point blankets as "visual marks of cultural identity" and informs this reading of the social life of the Point blanket.[135]

The idea that Point blankets are "visual marks of cultural identity" relates to Eileen Stack's work "'Very Picturesque and Very Canadian': The Blanket Coat and Anglo-Canadian Identity in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century" in *Fashion: A Canadian Perspective*.[136] Stack's inquiry into the Point blanket as a coat suggests the importance of this object to Anglo-Canadian culture. Stack notes that "[i]n certain respects, Anglo-Canadian use of the blanket coat," which she studies in relation to the Montréal Snow Shoe Club uniform, "was symptomatic of 'going native.'"[137] This assessment of the blanket coat is fundamentally an inquiry that reflects upon the use of the Point blanket by upper class Anglo-citizens in the Dominion of Canada. Stack states that:

> While Anglo-Canadians were seeking to establish their right to Canadian territory, they were not trying to attain this through absolute mimicry of Native cultures. Rather, Anglo-Canadians were adopting and modifying aspects of First Nations and French-Canadian culture in an attempt to construct a uniquely Canadian identity distinct from that of the United States and Great Britain.[138]

Stack's assessment suggests that by the late-nineteenth century, the Point blanket had become an object many associated with Aboriginal and French-Canadian cultures rather than with the British trading company that had introduced the blanket as a commodity of

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[134] Appadurai, 33.
[135] Ibid, 147.
[136] Eileen Stack, "Very Picturesque and Very Canadian: The Blanket Coat and Anglo-Canadian Identity in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century" in *Fashion: A Canadian Perspective*, ed. Alexandra Palmer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 17-40.
[137] Ibid, 33.
[138] Ibid.

barter and exchange. Stack also notes that "Native artifacts and practices were reworked, restructured, and redefined [by Anglo-Canadians] to meet British standards of 'civilized' taste and ideology."[139] British re-appropriation of this object, for the sake of positioning an identity, suggests that the Point blanket was more than a tool used by artists; this object encapsulated the process of building an identity for a new burgeoning nation. According to Laurier Lacroix:

> [D]uring the period of 1820-1850, the visual arts provided a 'breeding ground for common practices' through which French-Canadian and British colonists could communicate. According to this theory, painting and drawing were activities by which the social élite of each community could 'establish a local culture. [...] Furthermore, [...] visual images did indeed participate in the creation of British colonial identity. They aided in codifying and legitimizing the social order by proposing and confirming a hierarchy, thereby visually establishing the respective place of Natives [...] and the social élite in this new colonial society.[140]

The Point blanket has been used as part of the uniforms of nineteenth-century outdoor clubs, twentieth-century Olympic teams, and by members of middle-class society from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first century to mark or brand and ultimately identify themselves as Canadians. [141] While Stack notes that Anglo-Canadians were using the blankets to characterize themselves as a new cultural group—still closely associated with the British Empire—the blanket was used aggressively to mark those wearing it as subjects of the Crown and, consequently, as civilized subjects. By marking individuals in

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[139] Stack, 33.
[140] Lacroix, 60-75.
[141] The Canadian Olympic Team wore Hudson's Bay Company capotés at the 1936, 1960, 1964, and 1968 Winter Olympics. The Hudson's Bay Company team has won the bid to clothe the Canadian Olympic team for the next eight years—2005-2013. This includes the Winter Olympics in Vancouver in 2010. The slogan is "wear the colors."

this manner, the blanket was used to identify trade partners, particularly Aboriginal trapper-traders, for decades prior to the establishment of urban areas.

TRADEMARK

A trademark by definition is a "word, symbol, or device registered and protected by law, to distinguish [...] goods."[142] The Point blanket was not officially trade marked by the Hudson's Bay Company as the "Hudson's Bay Point Blanket" until 8 April 1914. On 13 September 1924, the Hudson's Bay Company trademarked the Point blanket as the "Hudson's Bay Point."[143] The blanket's pure color field and indigo bands were its two most prominent feature in the early days after its introduction. These features also became associated with British traders. This distinct design became recognized globally as a symbol of Canada. Since the design of the blanket was often replicated, a label with the crest of the Company was sewn onto the bottom left hand corner of the blanket below the points and the bands to guarantee its genuineness (see FIGURE 23 for changing crests of the Hudson's Bay Company). This feature guarantees for consumers the quality of wool, the authenticity of origin, and the distributor of this object. These attributes further mark the blanket and those wearing it.

1748

1756

1921

[142] *The Scribner-Bantam English Dictionary* (Toronto, London, and New York: Bantam Books, 1991), s.v. "Trade mark."

[143] Correspondence between Alex Ross (Head Twentieth-Century Records at the HBCA) to Mr. A Rolph Huband (vice-president and secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, Toronto) dated November 7, 1986. (HBCA Blanket Search File #4).

FIG 23. "Hudson's Bay Company Crest and Logo."
(From: Hudson's Bay Company Training Material, *One Mission Brochure* (2 May 2002): 7-8)

The distinct design of the blanket branded with the label of the company also suggests how the Point blankets were used as a "tool" in visual materials to identify trade territory. When looked at within the context of *The Trader*, and other prominent images of trade interactions, the Point blanket marks the trading territory of the Hudson's Bay Company—later the Dominion of Canada—through its inclusion in images that portray a distinctly Canadian landscape (the Canadian Shield). When used in this context, representations of Aboriginals wrapped in blankets marked the land around them, in the eye of the Victorian viewer, as under British control. Numerous images produced from across Canada have shown the blanket in scenes with geographical terrains specific to Canada. This practice continues today in museum displays that use site-specific geographical murals to contextualize the event beyond the human interaction represented.[144] The narratives enliven the images and dioramas that they accompany. By using Point blankets in these scenes, these narratives also reinforce the validity of British ownership of the land and its inhabitants. The inclusion of the blanket contributes to

[144] For example, the Syncrude gallery on Aboriginal history at the RAM uses a specific Sundance location from southern Alberta.

achieving this end by being used as a repetitive pattern that establishes the blanket as a visual emblem of a nation.

IDENTITY & CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS

Gillian Poulter addresses the trend of bi-cultural integration of fashion represented in paintings and photographs produced in Canada through her examination of clothing. In "Representation as Colonial Rhetoric: The image of 'the Native' and '*the habitant*' in the formation of colonial identities in early nineteenth-century Lower Canada," Poulter comments that:

> repetitive underlying structural patterns become apparent. [...] These images appear to codify and naturalize the positions of Native people within the colonial hierarchy, thereby providing a basis for the creation of colonial identity.[145]

From this observation, it is seen that it is the placement of Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets in visual materials that acts *as* a structural pattern. The use of the blanket as a pattern becomes apparent when viewed alongside other images found in archives and historical texts.

As a structural pattern, the blanket appears in images as an article of clothing for not only bourgeois men and women, but also for trappers and traders. When the Point blanket is wrapped around Aboriginal mannequins in museum displays (see FIGURE 24), it makes a certain social comment, but when it is viewed in photographic images warming the lap of the Queen during the Royal visit in 1951 (see FIGURE 25) quite another

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[145] Gillian Poulter, "Representation as Colonial Rhetoric: The image of 'the Native' and '*the habitant*' in the formation of colonial identities in early nineteenth-century Lower Canada," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* 16 (1994): 12.

meaning is presented. The juxtaposition of the Point blanket in both images suggests diverse readings of the social life of the blanket as a signifier of civility when placed in

FIG 24. Display at Six Nations Buffalo Museum, Banff, Alberta.
(Photograph taken with Permission by Fiona McDonald, 4 June 2005).

FIG 25. "The Royal Tour in Pictures" *The Star Weekly, Toronto* (10 November 1951): 6.[146]

[146] Caption below image reads: "A Miniature stampede was a highlight in Calgary's welcome of the royal visitors. Bundled in blankets that are frost proof, they watch the cowboys perform. The frozen ground was broken up by harrows. The Duke wears a gift 10-gallon hat."

relation to or capturing British identity. One image celebrates a hypothetical scene in the Rocky Mountains of Canada, and the other commemorates the Royal Tour of Canada photographed for posterity.

These two divergent images on the one hand relate to and on the other counter Eileen Stack's suggestion that the Point blanket was "redefined to meet British standards of 'civilized' taste and ideology."[147] While this is a pivotal point in addressing an attitude towards the blanket, Stack also comments that the blanket was a "Native artifact." This latter assessment simplifies the placement of the Point blanket in visual material and museum exhibits as it undermines the former idea that suggests this object met the civilized taste of Victorian patrons. A more persuasive argument, then, is to view the Point blanket not as a Native artifact, but rather as an object used to brand Aboriginals as artifacts of a 'vanishing' race. When the blanket was wrapped around Aboriginals, it was no longer the blanket that was the artifact but rather it was the Aboriginal under the blanket who became an artifact of a Romantic belief about Aboriginal cultures. Images of Aboriginals wearing or situated in relation to blankets were numerous and their export outside of Rupert's Land, and later the Dominion of Canada, suggested to audiences that Aboriginals had been introduced to and had acquired civilized tastes and ideologies though the appropriation of British industrial goods.

The notion of being civilized must be considered beyond the canvas in order to look at representations of different cultures on the canvas. An increasing number of

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[147] Eileen Stack, "'Very Picturesque and Very Canadian': The Blanket Coat and Anglo-Canadian Identity in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century" in *Fashion: A Canadian Perspective*. Edited by Alexandra Palmer (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2004): 33.

scholars are engaged in post-colonial discussions of cultural representations. [148] In this dialogue, notions of the "Noble" and "Romantic Savage" contrast with concepts of the "Wild" and "Naïve Savage."[149] Post-colonial theorists challenge notions of Otherness that resulted from colonialism by foregrounding how such ideas become instilled through the circulation of racist images. Mary Louise Pratt contends that "knowledge [about stereotypes] works through living change."[150] By disseminating new knowledge through a process of decolonization, these scholars expose the roots and issues surrounding disparaging representations of cultural groups. Pratt also argues that through post-colonial inquiry there is "a revolution of knowledge," a breakdown of historical stereotypes found in painting, photographs, and literature.[151] Stereotypes and constructions of and from the past are the direct result of a colonial mindset whereby "the imagined is the known and the unimagined is the imaginary."[152] In this sense, European imaginations fostered an idea of Aboriginals as "Savages" through the wealth of images that construct Aboriginals as the Other. Furthermore, when images of Aboriginals and

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[148] Mieke Bal critiques post-colonialism, arguing that there is a "need to acknowledge the specificity of differently located discourses. Unfortunately, this is a lesson postcolonial criticism often neglects, for postcolonial theory contains a curious concept of space that stands in stark contrast to that specificity: it constructs the postcolonial condition as a global, transnational space that can be analyzed without reference to the localities in which it is rooted [...]"(Bal, 204).

[149] In dealing with the definition of the 'Noble Savage,' Christopher Thacker, in *The Wildness Pleases: The Origins of Romanticism*, notes that many Pacific voyageurs were determined to seek out the 'North-West Passage.' In particular reference to Captain Cook's voyage, Thacker summarizes the concept of the 'noble savage' as "not simple, but complex; not a creature of instinct, of kindness and peace, but occasionally scheming, treacherous, ferocious and cruel" (170). Therefore, it can be inferred from this interpretation of the 'Noble Savage' that such a 'man' was a figment of the creative imagination and only to be found in romanticized interpretations of Aboriginals. However, for this project a Marxist perspective is employed when analyzing stereotypes and their origins. According to Francis Abraham and John H. Morgan in Sociological *Thought: From Comte to Sorokin*, "[Marx] believed that the ideologies prevailing at any particular point in time reflect the worldview of the dominant class. In other words, ideas depend on the social positions—particularly on the class positions of their proponents" (33).

[150] Mary Louise Pratt, "Vital Signs: The Work of Humanistic Inquiry Today." University of Alberta: *Department of English.* 26 February 2004.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

non-Aboriginals are placed in opposition to one another, these images tended to validate for Victorian viewers the concept of a so-called Aboriginal primitive existence. Building on Pratt's point, the unknown became the under-discussed, and the highly coveted images that circulated through the British Empire indulged a sense of European cultural superiority while denying the dependency between two "disparate cultures." In this sense, the imagined (and, consequently, the imaginary) became the believed.

Arjun Appadurai comments that the "image, the imagined and the imaginary... are all terms which direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes: *the imagination as a social practice.*"[153] Homi K. Bhabha, in *The Location of Culture*, concludes that stereotypes are based on the notion of "otherness"; they are fundamentally rooted in what is unknown but what was or is believed and is "anxiously" repeated. The repetition of Point blankets in visual materials therefore aided in instilling a belief in Otherness and national identity through the sheer visibility of this object and its juxtaposing placement within images that present Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. Relating to this assessment, Bhabha argues that opposing colonial identity against the Other becomes a "secure point of identification" for the dominant culture.[154] Therefore, constructing stereotypes through Othering and the placement of repetitive elements, such as the Point blanket, was a social practice—the practice of social positioning.

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[153] Arjun Appadurai (1990: 5) cited by Nicholas Mirzoeff in "An Introduction to Visual Culture," The Visual Culture Reader. Edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff (New York: Routledge, 2002), 28-29.
[154] Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question," in *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 69. Bhabha comments in an interview that the "postcolonial perspective...insists that cultural and political identity is constructed through a process of othering." Jonathan Rutherford and Homi K. Bhabha, "The Third Space," *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 219.

Bhabha states that:

> [S]ubjects of the discourses are constructed within an apparatus of power which contains, in both senses of the word, an 'other' knowledge—a knowledge that is arrested and fetishistic and circulates through colonial discourses as that limited form of otherness [...] called the stereotype."[155]

This definition considers the context from which stereotypes surfaced in the face of European exploration in North America. [156]

In 1867, two centuries after signing the charter that established the Hudson's Bay Trading Company, the Dominion of Canada—comprised of land purchased by the Crown from the Hudson's Bay Company—became a confederation with the signing of the British North America Act. This Act, a crucial document that created a nation under the British Empire, also legislated the assimilation of Aboriginals into Euro-Canadian society. Acts that framed this moment in Canadian history such as the "Gradual Civilization Act" of 1857 and the "Indian Act" of 1876 perpetuated a belief that Aboriginals were "uncivilized" and in need of naming, taming, and claiming.[157] This

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[155] Bhabha, "The Other Question," 69.

[156] As a methodology for this chapter, the polyphony of perspectives from which arguments surrounding stereotypes and issues of representation emerge is presented. This approach—greatly influenced and encouraged by Bhabha's work—is presented by Laura E. Donaldson through the notion of "graf (ph) ting." In *Decolonizing Feminisms: Race, Gender and Empire Building* (1992), Donaldson argues that "[g]raf (ph)ting both affirms the insertion of multiple perspectives into the viewing/reading experience and preserves the material particularly for each interpreter. The reader/spectator [then] [does not] absorb the text in an unchecked free passage," but rather acknowledges the shifting contexts from which stereotypes—and the discourses that engage in this issue—emerge. This methodology informs not only this chapter but also defines my approach to interdisciplinary studies. Many of the scholars whose writing I reference do not come from the same disciplines; therefore, I use this chapter to bring together discussion on stereotypes. Laura E. Donaldson, *Decolonizing Feminisms: Race, Gender and Empire Building* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 59.

[157] According to Katherine Pettipas' comments on the Indian Act of 1876 (including its amendments), "[t]hese regulations were developed to transform 'Indians' into 'Canadians' through colonial relationships characterized by wardship and tutelage." Pettipas also notes that "[t]he vision of the Canadian nation-state in the 1870s was not based on a concept of political, economic, or cultural pluralism. Rather, it was assumed that, as in eastern Canada (and in other white settlement colonies throughout the British Empire), indigenous populations would disappear as they conformed to the Christian Capitalist state." Katherine

attitude is prevalent in the daily programs of public exhibitions such as the 1886 *Colonial and Indian Exhibition.*

Held in London, England, the *Colonial and Indian Exhibition* epitomized the global political dominance of Britain. This exhibition displayed cultural and biological specimens from lands held by or closely associated with the Crown. Amongst the vast territories presented at this forum was "The Dominion of Canada." Showcased as a land of wealth and prosperity, the Dominion of Canada appeared to be Europeanized—a vast expanse of land ideal for raising a family and initiating new capitalist ventures.

The three pages used to summarize the Dominion of Canada pertain to demographics and population. The catalogue states that:

> The population of the Dominion approximates 5,000,000, which is augmenting at a rapid rate, and which, not withstanding the diversity of origin, has, under the force of circumstance, been welded into a homogenous whole. About one-half are English, Scotch, and Irish extraction; one-fourth are of direct French descent; Germany is well represented; and every nation in Europe has contributed to its quota to swell the population. Of Indians there is an estimated population of 100,000. About one-third of these live in the older provinces, and have been long since gathered into settlements under the care of officers of the Indian Department, in some cases having industrial schools and other organizations to aid them in their progress toward higher civilization; and it is only necessary to glance at the products of Indian industry in the Exhibition in order to learn how marked that progress has been.[158]

This summary reveals the more favorable attitude towards new settlers to the Dominion of Canada than to the Aboriginal and Métis populations already residing here. This excerpt from the *Colonial and Indian Exhibition* program also highlights the industrial

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Pettipas, *Severing the Tie that Binds: Government Repression of Indigenous Religious Ceremonies on the Prairies* (Winnipeg: University of Winnipeg Press, 1994), 17.

[158] See Appendix VII for daily program of "The Dominion of Canada," *Colonial and Indian Exhibition (London, England)* 1886: 91.

expansion that was happening across the Dominion and the resulting establishment of reserves and residential schools and the construction of cities and villages. Moreover, this excerpt also preserved a European perspective that embodies colonial beliefs about Aboriginal cultures.

As with the *Colonial and Indian Exhibition*, numerous other exhibitions and touring spectacles typical of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries reinforced the commonly held belief in Otherness. Katherine Pettipas notes that touring shows more often than not:

> dramatized the military subjugation of 'Plains Indians' by the whites—visually reaffirming for White audiences the belief in the inferiority of indigenous peoples and the inevitable triumph of 'civilization' over 'barbarism.'[159]

Performances and museum-like exhibitions presented Aboriginals as taxidermic specimens.[160] This observation reconnects to the idea that what was recreated, posed, painted, and photographed was the believed, and thus, in the words of Daniel Francis, the "Imaginary Indian" lived on.

In *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (1994), Ella Shohat and Robert Stam focus on the roots of Eurocentrism while addressing the social, political, and cultural implications of such thinking, as well as suggesting core rationalizations

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[159] Pettipas also notes that "These popularized stereotyped treatments of Plains Indian cultures confirmed the validity of the concept of the social theory of the day that labeled Indian cultures 'primitive' and contributed to public support for government's assimilation programs" (Pettipas, 100).

[160] For an exploration of the semiotics of taxidermy of animals and people through film and museums in Banff National Park see Pauline Wakeham, "Second Skins: Semiotic Readings in Taxidermic Reconstruction" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta, 2004), chapter 1 passim.

behind hegemonic relationships.[161] Shohat and Stam summarize that "Eurocentrism, like Renaissance perspectives in painting, envisions the world from a single privileged point"[162]—the Western European (male) point of view. In the case of Krieghoff's *The Trader*, the single privileged point-of-view bespeaks a trend common amongst his European-born contemporaries who also later lived and worked abroad. The single-point perspective of *The Trader* was intended to be viewed by those who held a social position that affected her/his interpretation of this image.

Images that represent hegemonic relations through juxtaposing cultural behaviors often negate any authority or contextualization for either those represented or the event. Thomas King, in *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*, addresses how nineteenth-century thinkers constructed Aboriginals. King surmises that the Romantics envisaged "their Indian as dying. But in that dying, in that passing away, in that disappearing from the stage of human progress, there was also a sense of nobility."[163] With the idea that nobility comes with death—an archetypal trope—the Aboriginal becomes stately, resulting in a nostalgic image of what King calls the "Post Card Indian."[164]

In the following discussion, the notions of the Noble and the Wild Savage are presented through the arguments of various scholars working with these two concepts.

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[161] Shohat and Stam argue that Eurocentrism "normalizes the hierarchical power relations generated by colonialism and imperialism, without necessarily even thematizing those issues of identity." (Shohat and Stam,219.)

[162] Shohat and Stam, 219.

[163] Thomas King, *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative* (Toronto: Anansi Press Inc., 2003), 33. Ruth B. Phillips also notes that "[t]he 'noble savage' is in its essence an oxymoron, an unstable mixture of elements that require periodic redefinition as European ideologies shifted from late-Renaissance Christian cosmology to Enlightenment rationalism, romanticism, and the Victorian dogmas of progress and cultural evolutionism. The contradictions to which the trope of the noble savage gave rise in each of its new manifestations had also to be continually renegotiated by Aboriginal people." Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast, 1700-1900* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1998), 13.

[164] King, 36.

These arguments frame contemporary discussions around stereotypes, and allow the visual representations in this chapter to be addressed in relation to these interpretations. For example, Gordon M. Sayre notes in *Les Sauvages Américains*,

> [T]hat the most sensitive accounts of American Indians thematize the very problem of such a good/bad opposition, and that the Noble Savage transcends it through a capacity to be both savage and humane, both foreign and familiar to European culture. More useful for understanding the exploration-ethnography text than the Noble/Ignoble dichotomy is the manner in which American Indians were either set apart from Judeo-Christian history or bound into it.[165]

Sayre's assessment addresses the sentiments of Europeans and Euro-Canadians that resonated in the Dominion of Canada and throughout the British Empire at the turn of the twentieth century. In *Aboriginal Peoples and Colonizers of Western Canada to 1900*, Sarah Carter notes that Aboriginals "were altered to become savages—their violent capabilities were dramatized."[166] Gretchen M. Bataille points out in her Introduction to *Native American Representations: First Encounters, Distorted Images, And Literary Appropriations*, that:

> Woodcuts, paintings, explorers' journals, and missionary accounts provided early images to Europeans, and movies, and photographs, western novels, and cartoons have perpetuated the myth and stereotypes.[167]

This conclusion reiterates Homi Bhabha's main point that stereotypes result from Othering. Arguably, numerous visual materials, including those chosen for this project, are instrumental in what Bhabha called the "process of Othering."

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[165] Sayre, 81.
[166] Sarah Carter, *Aboriginal People and Colonizers of Western Canada to 1900* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 46.
[167] Gretchen M. Bataille, "Introduction," in *Native American Representations: First encounters, Distorted images, and Literary appropriations* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 4.

In "The Only Good Indian: The Image of the Indian in American Vernacular Culture," Rayna Diane Green divides the representation of Aboriginals into a tripartite image of the Other: "The Savage Indian," "The Noble Indian," and "The Exotic Indian." Green argues that the so-called savagery of this individual is "measured most heavily in terms of his actions towards whites [and] then in terms of abstract theorizing about his nature versus the 'civilized' nature of white man in their world." [168] Green also comments that not being white meant not being civilized, an argument that Gillian Poulter, too, puts forward. Poulter asserts that the stereotypes of both the Noble and the Wild Savage "were posited as 'primitive' in opposition to the 'civilized' European."[169] This positioning was often achieved through the inclusion of material goods and the mannerisms of those represented using or wearing these goods.

Looking at defining characteristics used to identify the concept of the Noble Savage, Green summarizes that:

> In his nobility, the Indian acts as a friend to white man, offering [him] aid, rescue, and spiritual and physical comfort even at the cost of his own life or status and comfort in his own tribe to do so.[170]

Beyond the criterion of nobility, Thomas King comments that rather than the stereotyped vanishing Indian, those of European origin sought the Aboriginal who was the:

> wild, free, powerful, noble, handsome, philosophical, eloquent, solitary Indian—pardon me, solitary male Indian—that Europeans went looking to find. A particular Indian. An Indian who could be a cultural treasure, a

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[168] Rayna Diane Green, "The Only Good Indian: The Image of the Indian in American Vernacular Culture" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1973), 381.
[169] Poulter, 13.
[170] Green, 382.

> piece of North American Antiquity. A mythic figure who could reflect the strength and freedom of an emerging continent.[171]

Although the descriptions of a Noble or Wild Savage are many, one last statement by Ruth B. Phillips connects this discussion to the role anthropology has played in the construction of stereotyping images, labels, and classificatory systems. In *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast, 1700-1900*, Phillips states that:

> As the construct of noble savagery was gradually joined to the theory of cultural evolution, [...] Aboriginal peoples came increasingly to occupy a site of paradox and contradiction. The nostalgic aura constructed around Indians by the touristic discourse of the second half of the nineteenth century depended on the idea of their imminent and inevitable disappearance.[172]

The socio-cultural theory of evolution mentioned by Phillips alludes to Lewis Henry Morgan's theory of social evolution, a theory that dominated anthropological thought in the late-nineteenth century.[173] Morgan surmised that human evolution could be associated with one's subsistence strategy and association with the industrial world. Based on this theory, Europeans thought that Aboriginal hunter-gatherers were living in a so-called state of "Savagery." Those individuals who engaged in animal husbandry and agriculture transitioned from Savagery to "Barbarism."[174] Finally, with the complete adoption of—and assimilation into—the industrial world, not to mention the implementation of a

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[171] King, 79. A similar assessment appears in *The Wildness Pleases: The Origins of Romanticism* (London and Canbera, Croom Helm, 1983).
[172] Phillips, 14.
[173] Katherine Pettipas also references Morgan's 'Theory of Evolution,' however by stating, "Marxians favored the evolutionary scheme propounded by the materialist-oriented American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan" (Pettipas, 25).
[174] Pettipas comments extensively on representations of Plains Indians in particular, noting that being "barbaric" and consequently "unprogressive" had "become part of the consciousness of Canadians" (Ibid, 100).

written language taught in residential schools, came the state of "Civilization." Morgan's theory was widely applied to Aboriginal cultures by those living in both the British Empire and North America. During his time, Morgan's work fed the idea that acculturation meant the imminent disappearance of a nomadic hunter-gatherer way of life, and that his theory signified an ideology assuming that the complete absorption and disappearance of Aboriginal culture into white, industrial, capitalist society was inevitable.

Articulating the role of ethnography moves the focus of this discussion from Romantic paintings of the mid-to-late nineteenth century to the role of photography in the early twentieth century. The mechanical process of photography enabled the ethnographic practice of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries to document an alternative—yet still subjective—interpretation of Indigenous cultures across the globe. When interpreting these images and the practice from which they emerged, Marie Battiste and James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson in *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge* (2000) present an Aboriginal perspective. Together, Battiste and Henderson have methodically deconstructed both "Eurocentrism" and "ethnographic practices" in which constructions of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals can be found.[175] Understanding European practices of interpreting images is crucial not only to assessing the making of these images, but also to demonstrating the role the discourse of ethnography had in the colonization of Canada as well as in the construction of the Point blanket as a visual emblem of a civilized Canada. For example, in the image

[175] Marie Battiste and James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge* (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing Ltd., 2000).

of *Ethnologist measuring and photographing Indian* (FIGURE 26), there is an abundance of information on Euro-Canadian ethnographic practice but very little information on Plains culture in the McLeod district of Southern Alberta.[176]

In this image, the framing documents the ethnographer, his professional practice, as well as three Aboriginal men. Carefully constructed and posed, the apparently remote setting, along with the absence of industrial signs of civilization—except for the Point blanket in the possession of the Aboriginal male figure at the centre of the image—provides testimony for a small Aboriginal population found on the plains. The focal point of this image is the act of a white man studying the Other. Three Aboriginal men, two seated off to the right side of the image and one posed as an ethnographic 'specimen' being measured, are crucial to the social process of Othering articulated by Bhabha. William E. McRae notes in "Images of Native Americans in Still Photography" how "[p]hotographs are influenced by the photographer's expectations."[177] Elaborating on this powerful aspect of photography, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam comment that photographers "might record their own subjective visions, but in doing so they also drew clear boundaries between the subject looking and the object being looked at, between

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[176] "The added value of context dispels the notions of an isolated 'outside' reality or a simple record of facts made by the photographer: 'context' defines both the eternal physical world and the components of our perceptions of this world" (Steve Yates cited by Edward Hall in *Poetics of Space: A critical Photographic Anthology* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 115. Noting this, the absence of crucial information about the individuals, the location, and the historical, political, and social moment affects both interpretations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures at the turn of the twentieth century.

[177] William E. McRae, "Images of Native Americans in Still Photography," *History of Photography* 13 (October-December 1989): 328). Gordon M. Sayre notes that "anthropology professionalized the production of ethnographies of the cultural Other." (Sayre, 25.)

traveler and 'traveled upon'." [178] In this case, the traveler is the ethnographer and the traveled upon are the three Aboriginal men.

FIG 26. "Ethnologist measuring and photographing Indian" Unknown Photographer. 1910s. MacLeod District, Southern Alberta.
(From: MacLeod Historical Association FMP.80.104; Provincial Archives of Alberta neg.A.20746)

To assess this image as having a Eurocentric perspective encoded in it, Battiste and Henderson's definition of Eurocentrism is crucial. Battiste and Henderson suggest that "Eurocentrism":

> [A]s a theory [...] postulates the superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans. It is built on a set of assumptions and beliefs that educated and

[178] Shohat and Stam, 104.

> usually un-prejudiced Europeans and North Americans habitually accept as true, as supported by 'the facts,' or as 'reality.'[179]

The "facts" that contribute to constructing this "reality" are prejudiced to some degree by photographic images produced for ethnographic study during the late-nineteenth century. In *Ethnologist Measuring and Photographing Indian*, we see the scientific act of measuring and the mechanical process of photography. Images such as this generalize Indigenous cultures by showing the select few individuals who were living on reserves and who appeared to have been visually civilized—the blanket being the visual mark of cultural identity and sign of status within Euro-Canadian society.

A few cultural crafts are visible, such as the moccasins the young man wears and a small choker around his neck; however, the most visible sign of Aboriginal culture are the teepees. These dwellings set the backdrop of the scene as their triangular form—strategically placed to balance the image—contrasts with the flat horizon of the prairies. While the teepee is quite visible, the other articles are somewhat indiscernible due to the distance between the camera and the scene, as well as the grainy nature of the photographic process, and the deterioration of this image over time. The lack of focus on these elements in general is cogent in documenting the practice of ethnography rather than the cultures the ethnographer was studying. The presence of Aboriginal culture is downplayed in favor of the ethnographic process of measuring and photographing the central Aboriginal male. Also evident is the placement of the blanket around the Aboriginal male figure being measured and another across the door of the teepee.[180]

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[179] Battiste and Henderson, 21.

[180] The use of the blanket across the door relates to a comment made by Louis Owens when talking about a photograph of his great-grandfather and the lack of Aboriginal signifiers. Owens suggest that there was

Ultimately, this particular photograph illustrates how Aboriginals had acquired some goods—in particular the blanket—that reflected bourgeois taste indicative of civilization. Culture, therefore, is epitomized in *Ethnologist Measuring and Photographing Indian* through both the ethnographer and the mechanical process of photography. Here, however, the ethnographer takes center stage as a cipher of civilization, and the blanket acts as an indicator of civility for the Aboriginal male figure.

CONCLUSION

The repetition of the Point blanket in paintings and photographs is an "underlying structural pattern" that acts as a visual tool.[181] While the technique of repetition is present in works produced in Rupert's Land and later the Dominion of Canada, this practice was not unique to Canada. In New Zealand, for example, Leonard Bell argues that art produced with the Maoris as subjects presents the common trend of art itself being used as a "tool" of colonialization. Bell notes that clothing in paintings of Indigenous peoples added an exotic element to paintings, even though Aboriginals were often painted as expressing themselves through Western mannerisms.[182] In a Canadian context, the vast number of images containing representations of Point blankets exacerbates contradictions within images. Point blankets were not included as an exotic element but rather as a familiar element—a familiar object of civility that defined the Other as colonized. In Krieghoff's *The Trader*, the blanket is the one object fashioned into an article of clothing worn by "two disparate cultures." The use of the blanket in the clothing of the Aboriginal

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possibility that the "blanket nailed across the door" acting as a signifier of "Indianness" "if [his] great-grandfather had perversely wrapped the blanket around himself for this picture[.]" (Louis Owens, I Hear the Train: Reflections, Inventions, Refractions (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 91.)

[181] Poulter, 12.

[182] Ibid, 78.

family, suggests that perhaps the wilds of Rupert's Land were not as isolated as they were originally imagined. The capoté of the *coureur des bois* branded this man as an affiliate of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company, but was a precursor to how Canadians would use the blanket to identify themselves with a distinct Canadian identity.

Returning to Mieke Bal's question regarding the construction of a burgeoning nationalism, it is apparent that Point blankets were used in visual representations of trade interactions to articulate an image of Canada and its peoples. By using the Point blanket in visual materials, European and Euro-Canadian artists, photographers, and ethnographers constructed a visual narrative for their audiences that clearly spoke to the colonialist mindset of their day. The placement of Point blankets in visual materials also addresses the burgeoning nationalism of Rupert's Land and later Canada in that these same images themselves were used to tell a narrative of the conquering and civilizing of Aboriginals. In *The Practice of Cultural Analysis,* Mieke Bal notes that:

> [P]hotographs have become tokens of nostalgic sentiment, as well as texts of mourning and loss. But as a documentary narrative of nation or image or a people, they are troubling markers of difference. Cultural identity is standardized as spiritual magic or misery and reinforced as stereotype.[183]

Images containing representations of Point blankets read like a narrative of this nation, a narrative that positions "disparate cultures" as diametrically opposed even when placed in relation to a single object. Today, the continued presence of the blanket in visual materials and museum exhibits commemorating the history of Canada reinforces and re-addresses the role that the Point blanket has as a "visual mark of Canadian identity."[184] From Krieghoff's *The Trader* to *Ethnologist Measuring and Photographing Indian*, the

[183] Bal, 120-121.
[184] Ibid, 108.

blanket is part of a "rhetorical tradition"—a tradition that uses the Point blanket in images to encapsulate ideas about those wearing the blanket. [185] Its wearer, however, influences a viewer's social interpretation and the meaning given to the blanket as a "visual mark of cultural identity." Such Interpretations see the role of the blanket in the images as either epitomizing civility or merely nodding in the general direction of achieving it.

[185] Sayre, 30.

CONCLUSION

The Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket has become a visual emblem of Canada, due in large part to its presence in visual materials over almost three centuries. The continued appearance of this object from archival sources to popular culture is striking. Throughout this thesis, the notion of the social life of the Point blanket has been considered in relation to three possible trajectories. These readings have taken Arjun Appadurai's analyses of objects and their social lives and contextualized, through visual documentation, the social life of the Point blanket. Supported by historical facts and archival documents, each trajectory, as a chapter, illuminates the numerous narratives and contested histories that inform the social life of, and the meanings ascribed to, the Point blanket. These include reading the Point blanket as a sign of Canadian-ness in a semiotic analysis, as a "material link" between two cultures in a contact zone, and as a "visual mark of cultural identity" that contributes to constructing generalized cultural representations through the social practice of Othering. Cornelius Krieghoff's painting *The Trader* (FIGURE 9 page 19) facilitated these three perspectives as a visual reference. Further to this, the work of Harold Tichenor, as well as primary archival materials, provided the historical foundation upon which theoretical readings and interpretations of the Point blanket were developed.

The Point blanket was first examined as a sign. In this semiotic reading of the blanket, Dell Hymes's *SPEAKING* model was employed as an analytical tool to identify specific elements or codes in the visual language of the Canadian fur trade. This model showed how the Point blanket is a sign in relation to its signified meaning—Canadian-ness. This exercise was useful in determining that the Point blanket is a sign in

Krieghoff's *The Trader*. Although neither a definitive conclusion nor any defining characteristics of Canadian-ness—apart from the blanket—are explored in this project, the multiple uses and forms of the Point blanket permit one to interpret representations of blankets as signs. Reading images informed by Hymes's didactic model enables consideration of a more complex history of the Point blanket and adds meaning(s) to the Point blanket's social life.

The Point blanket was then examined, through an analysis based on Mary Louise Pratt's notion of a "contact zone," as an article that links cultures together. Taking up Harold Tichenor's description of the blanket as a "tool" as well as a "material link," this chapter explored how Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets have been, and still are, used by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures in culturally and historically diverse ways. One way, in particular, is the use of the blanket for barter and commodity exchange. In a contact zone, the exchange of the blanket under unique trading circumstances directly affects which meaning(s) and value(s) are ascribed to the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket. Ultimately, the "exchange-value" of this object is represented through the Made Beaver token system, and the blanket then becomes a commodity in a Marxist analysis. When there is a direct exchange of blankets and furs between participants, however, the blanket remains a blanket and is not an object with "exchange-value" but rather an object with "use-value."[186] Although not explored in this chapter, the exchange of the blanket as a gift gives the Point blankets a third value—a cultural value. This value relates to building intercultural trade relations. In all transactions, however, the Point blanket remains a "material link" between two

[186] Marx, 22.

cultures—literally as well as aesthetically. Whether the exchange of the blanket occurs over trade counters or along treaty borders, visual representations of the blanket tend to illustrate "disparate cultures" coming together. Through this union, the presence of the blanket has become ingrained in the history of colonial Canada. This results in the blanket acting as a visual tool to create "intersubjectivity" between cultures.[187] While such intersubjectivity is evident, it is mediated by contesting visual and literary constructions. These constructions portray cultures as "disparate" yet "intersubjective" for the sake of exchange.

In this light, visual representations of the Point blanket continue to be produced, though they are not necessarily the central focus of the image, but rather embedded markers that underpin ideas of nationalism, nationhood, and Canadian identity. Used to mark those wearing it, the blanket itself was branded with the trademark of the Hudson's Bay Company. The inclusion of these markings served three purposes: first, to mark the Point blanket as a British commodity; second, in visual materials to identify the territory of Canada as British; and third, to identify individuals as trade partners of the Hudson's Bay Company. The repetition of this latter function in visual images was a means of branding—a term now associated with advertising, but one that takes on a more violent connotation when considered in the context of colonialism—individuals as property of Imperial rule. The use of the blanket in trademark wars in the early-twentieth century is evidenced in the mock multi-striped blanket produced by the Pendleton Woolen Mills of Oregon, the Glacier Park blanket. The trade of these mock blankets by American fur traders demonstrates the dominant force of the Hudson's Bay Company and their Point

[187] McCormack (Manuscript in Progress).

blanket played in creating trade relations and the identity of those who wear and associate with the blanket.

Finally, this thesis examined how images made since the emergence of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company on 2 May 1671 have presented more than just the presence of Europeans in vast landscapes and uncharted territory. The Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets have been used in imagery to propagate profoundly biased representations of Aboriginals that instill a sense of Otherness. The presence of blankets in paintings, photographs, and cartoon drawings demonstrates how Point blankets were used to simultaneously position Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals with contrasting identities—the latter representing the epitome of civility. Krieghoff's *The Trader* facilitates the notion of the Other when considered in its historical context. Colonialist motifs found in paintings of the nineteenth century informed twentieth-century ethnographic photography. These photographs made by European and Euro-Canadian amateur anthropologists presented Aboriginals as objects of ethnographic study according to traditional painting conventions. Contemporary artists building upon historical documentation and narratives of the fur trade reiterated the use of the Point blanket as a "metonym" of Canada.[188]

Attention given to the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket in contemporary visual culture is a direct result of its overt presence in historic paintings and photographs of images with Aboriginals and—to a much lesser degree—of Euro-Canadians as subjects. Furthermore, the numerous uses of this item have allowed Canadians to project

[188] "[T]he discriminatory identities constructed across traditional cultural norms and classifications [...] – all these are *'metonymies'* of the presence. They are strategies of desire." Homi Bhabha, *Locations*, 90; quoted in Owens, 21.

it internationally as a visual emblem of Canada. The Point blanket has become a object that perpetuates feelings of warmth, comfort, and nostalgia, thereby constructing a belief that the past is woven into the blanket. The placement of the blanket in images suggested not only the colonial expansion in Rupert's Land, and later the Dominion of Canada (through the poignant cultural information contained in the blanket) but also provided a visual reference by which civility could be measured.

The possibility of the Point blanket having a social life is overshadowed by the reality that it has numerous *social lives*. These lives are enlivened and realized through the narratives and visual representations that contextualize how meaning is given to the Point blanket. Looked at in relation to its use over three hundred years or within a more short-term and definite time frame, the aspect of the blanket's social life that prevails is dependant upon the narrative that informs the trajectory. Moreover, it is the narratives and contested histories of the blanket that disclose the role of the Point blanket in Canadian history and consequently fuels the continuance of the blanket's social lives. How artists and writers preserve these narratives through the reinterpretation of the Point blanket's historical use(s) reveals why the social life of the Point blanket as a visual emblem of a nation exists today.

With respect to interpreting images, such as those containing representations of Hudson's Bay Company Point blankets, Ruth B. Phillips notes that:

> Impressionistic images entail a huge loss of cultural information. They participate in the reductive process by which stereotypes are constructed, and they illustrate the tight connection between nineteenth-century

> technologies of mechanical reproduction and the fixing of a particular late-Victorian and racist colonial imagery.[189]

Impressionistic images tend to be those circulated and re-circulated from generation to generation (as they seem to capture the sentiments of a nation). Furthermore, they are representations that contain cultural information pertaining to the social lives of the Point blanket. Images such as Krieghoff's *The Trader*, while they lack a significant amount of information about Aboriginal cultures, overflow with information about the producing culture. Information omitted, altered, edited, and constructed to fit a historical moment is information that indirectly affects how one reads the social lives of objects in the image. Whether the object is the canvas itself or a representation of a material object within the image, the details on and about the object proves that divergent readings are legitimate in understanding the producing culture and the social lives of their material goods.

Consistent in images produced during the fur trade, and more recently *about* the fur trade, is the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket. The numerous narratives of Canada's past continue to inspire visual representations of the blanket by artists and designers. Artists and scholars who explore the Point blanket in new ways and through diverse media present alternative interpretations on its social lives. Artists such as Jim Logan, for example, have satirized the blanket as a means of social comment through the strategic placement of the blanket in his painting the "Olympian" (FIGURE 27). From his *Classical Aboriginal Series,* Logan reworks Edward Manet's painting "Olympia" into "Olympian" by placing himself as the object of desire who challenges the viewer's gaze. Logan paints himself reclining on a buffalo robe and the multi-striped Point blanket in a

[189] Ruth B. Phillips, "'Making Sense Out/Of the Visual': Aboriginal Presentations and Representations in Nineteenth-Century Canada," *Art History* 27, no.4 (September 2004): 603.

teepee—highlighting two objects of the Canadian fur trade. The Point blanket was a cultural artifact of the British Empire, a manufactured article imbedded in narratives about Canadian history. The teepee was the domestic and traditional dwellings of Aboriginals prior to the signing of treaties in Canada. Logan questions the meaning of masterpieces, the role of the artist, and the voyeuristic nature of the viewer through the racial and sexual role reversal of the two central figures in Manet's original, as well as using objects from the Canadian fur trade—objects that have narratives and meanings originating from various cultures. While overtly satirical, Logan's work is laced with political commentary intended to bring social awareness through visual signs and signifiers familiar in a Canadian context. By satirizing the use of the blanket, artists such as Logan challenge and address the social life of the Point blanket by re-presenting it and making visible that which is recognizable.

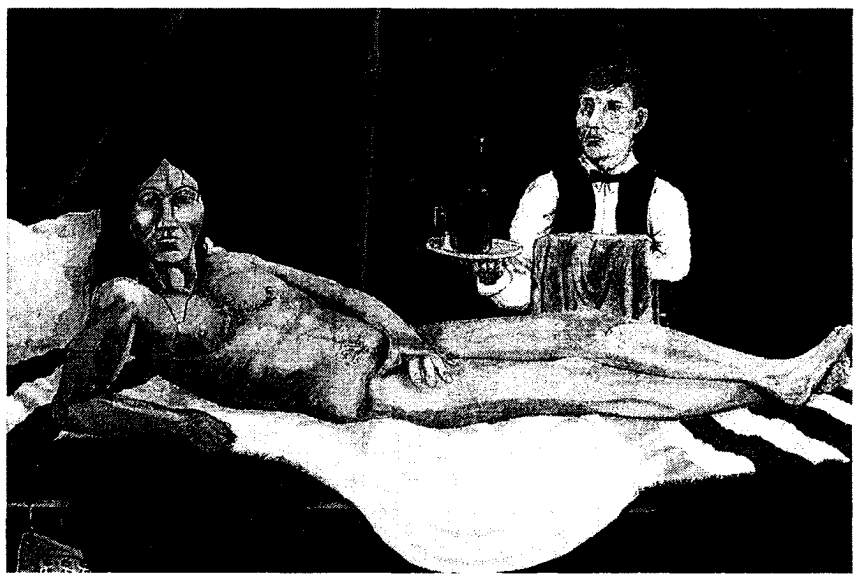

FIG 27. "Olympian" Jim Logan. 1991. Acrylic on Canvas. 107 x 137 cm.[190]

[190] From: *Transitions: Contemporary Canadian Indian and Inuit Art.* Traveling Exhibition Catalogue (1997), 39.

Another satirical work about the Point blanket also draws upon the role of the blanket as a sign. This time, however, a caricature of Paul Wells by Aislin (FIGURE 30) based on Daniel Ross's painting *Black Road Disappearing* (FIGURE 29) foregrounds the importance of the blanket to Canadians.[191] Aislin's image reflects how three Canadians have made meaning of the blanket in a Canadian context. Ross uses the blanket on a white male figure standing on a paved road, and Wells interprets this image of a white male wearing the blanket as epitomizing Canadian art.[192] Aislin, in turn, satirizes Ross's painting and Wells' fetishizing of this canvas by placing on the tundra a caricature of Well's who has tired of the blanket but now inquires after the Canadian designed, hand-held, wireless communication device—the BLACKBERRY. Aislin's satirical representation suggests that individuals continue to seek out material objects as emblems of Canada—objects that epitomize Canadian industry and trade. These artists have mobilized the blanket as a code and re-addressed its meaning in a Canadian context.

These three visual interpretations of the Point blanket exemplify how Canadians, and those looking to identify Canada, continue to socialize the blanket. Beyond Canada, for example, the Point blanket has appeared as inspiration for Alfred Sung's capoté trimmed in gold bias tape and warming the lap of Jerry Seinfeld's arch nemesis "Newman."[193] These two examples show the polysemic nature of this object as it moves beyond the two-dimensional canvas to become a metonym of Canada. In the visual

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[191] "Black Road Disappearing" is owned by Paul Wells.
[192] Paul Wells' back page article talks about how after "prowling the best galleries in Charlottetown, Winnipeg and Calgary, [he] found a painting at a gallery four blocks from [his] house." He found the ultimate work of Canadian art that satisfied his tastes in Daniel Ross's canvas. (Paul Wells, "My New Year's Resolution," *MacLean's* (December 29 2003): 92.)
[193] Sung's capoté is in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM 982.49.1).

history of Canada, a selection of such images demonstrates how blankets construct dichotomous images of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures in Canada. Visual materials, such as *The Trader*, are utilized, circulated, and themselves become commodities that convey ideas about Canada. These paintings, with their representations of Point blankets, continue *their* social life as a commodity once purchased. Consumers, however, are now purchasing not only the Point blanket but also the narratives attached to this object.[194]

FIG 28. "Black Road Disappearing" Daniel Ross. 100 x 80cm. Oil on Canvas.

[194] Today, points measure the different bed sizes (twin, double, queen, and king) as opposed to the monetary value in Made Beavers.

FIG 29. "Untitled" Aislin. 2003.
From: Paul Wells, "My New Year's Resolution," *MacLean's,* December 29, 2003, 92.

Final Remarks

Interpreting the Point blanket in Canadian visual culture requires one to analyze their individual knowledge, biases, perspectives, and historical moment. Therefore, as the viewer changes so, too, does the understanding of the social lives and the meaning(s) attached to the Hudson's Bay Company Point blanket. Each chapter has proposed alternative readings that have "reformulated knowledge" about the blanket's social life. [195] Arjun Appadurai notes that classes of things, such as blankets and textiles, "have a larger historical ebb and flow, in the course of which [their] meaning may shift significantly."[196] Such meanings derived from the narratives that surface and are

[195] Irit Rogoff, "Studying Visual Culture." In *The Visual Culture Reader.* 2nd ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 23.
[196] Appadurai, 34.

circulated through popular culture. This thesis argues for a more complex analysis and understanding of the Point blanket through theoretical readings that highlight its multiple uses and visual representations of its social lives. These readings suggest the conclusion that like many other objects traded, bartered, or given as gifts in the Canadian fur trade, the blanket is an object whose social lives consistently fluctuate while being caught in contested histories.

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HBCA—Blanket Search File 4. Source: Robert Oleson, HBC to National Heritage Limited (1973). Appendix on the standardization of blanket sizes form 1868 to 1882.

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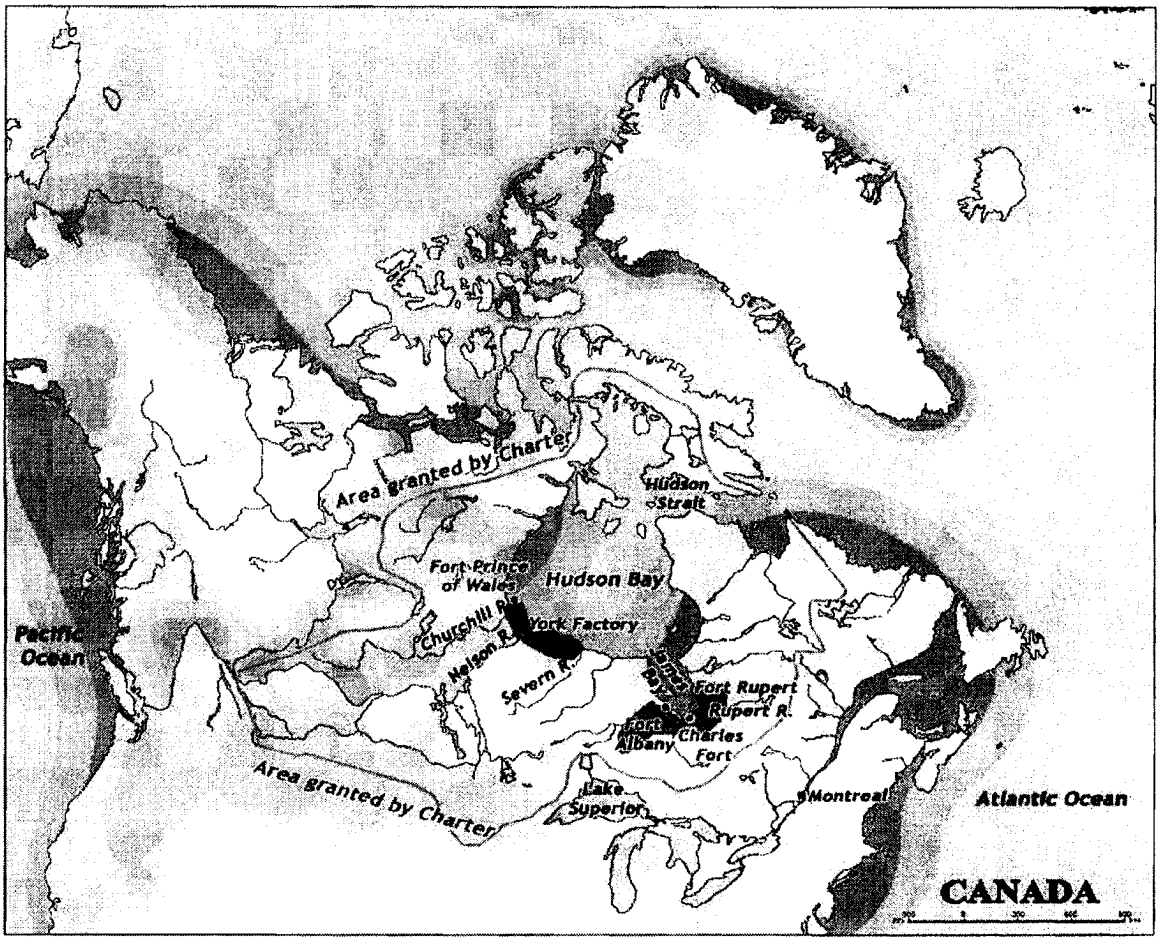
APPENDICES

APPENDIX I



Hudson's Bay Company territory 1670 to 1763
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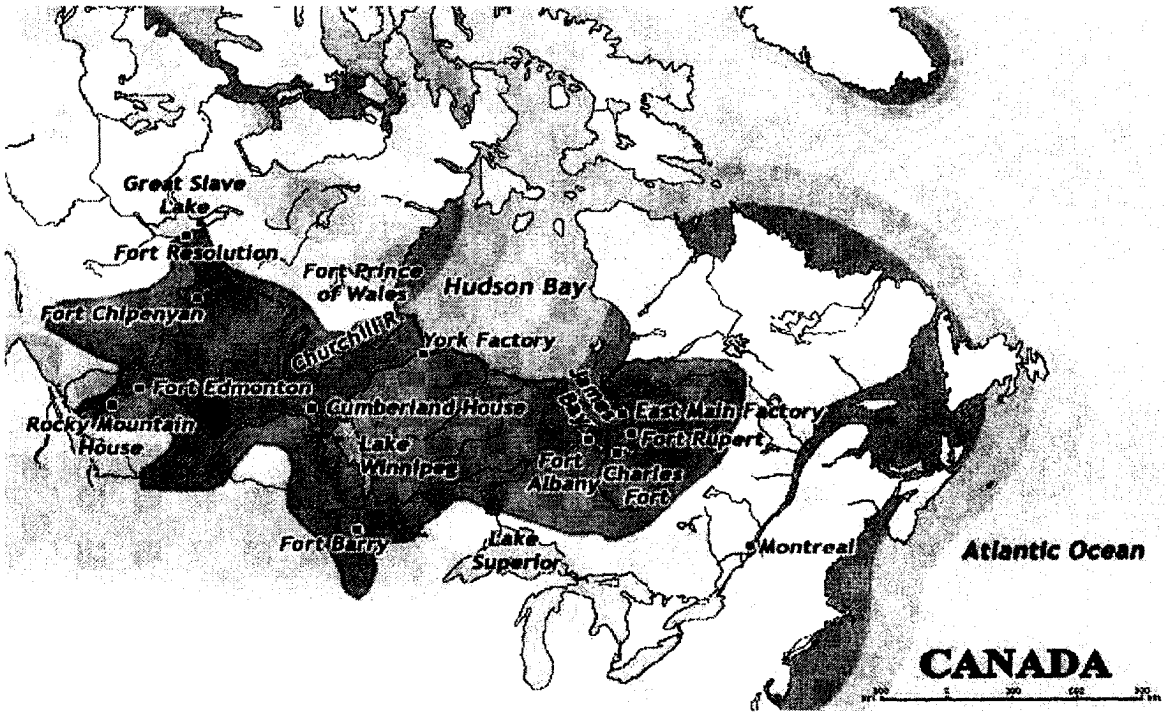
APPENDIX II



Hudson's Bay Company territory 1764 to 1820
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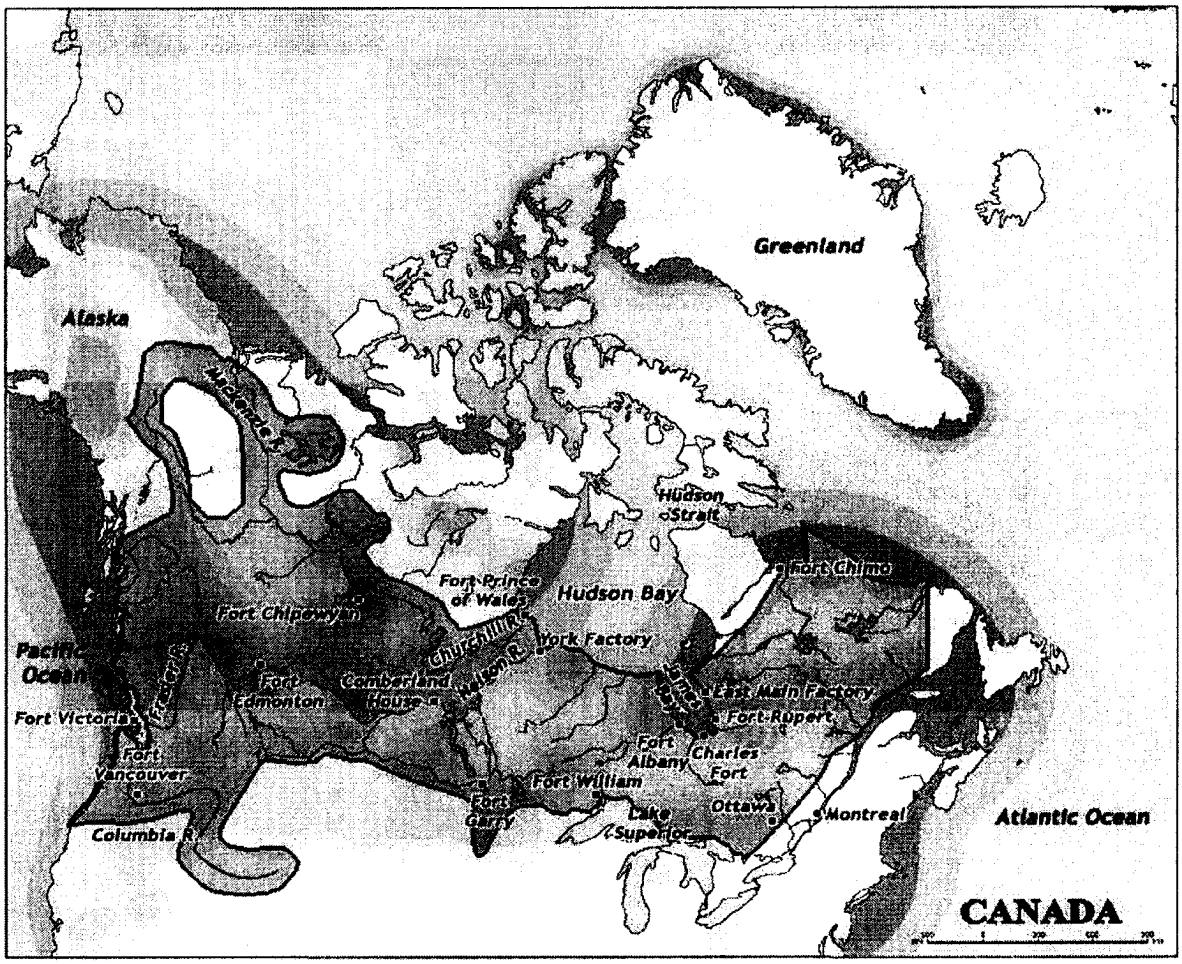
APPENDIX III



Hudson's Bay Company territory 1821 to 1870
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APPENDIX IV

Transcription of original references to Germain Maugenest cited in a letter from P.E.H. Sewell on behalf of the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company to J.C. Atkins, the manager for the Wholesale department of the Hudson's Bay Company, Montreal (HBCA Beaver Search File#4 – HBC 'Point' Blankets).

C O P Y. AL.

EXTRACT from HBC. Minute Book (Rough) No. 259A (April 1778/May 1780) Page 118.

Wednesday, 24th November, 1779.

Mons^{rs}. Germain Maugenest, a Canadian from Montreal, who has this year been sent to England by Mr. Thomas Hutchins, Chief at Albany Fort, on board the Company's ship PRINCE RUPERT, Capt. Joseph Richards, attending, he was called in, and discoursed with relative to the extension of the Company's Trade - And Mr. Maugenest was desired to deliver to the Committee his Proposals of the Terms on which he is inclined to enter into the Company's service.

C O P Y. AL.

EXTRACT from letter from The Governor and Committee, to Mr. Thomas Hutchins or the Chief for the time being at Albany Fort. Dated - Hudson's Bay House, London, 4th May, 1780.

Paragraph 4.

"We now send you five hundred pair of pointed Blankets of different sizes of which three hundred pair are to be delivered to him (Monsieur Maugenest), as he may want them this year, and the remainder are to be supplied to him next Year.

The one pointed Blankets are to be charged at	1	Beaver each
One and half pointed	2	do.
Two pointed	2½	do.
Two and half	3	do.
Three Pointed	4	do.

And as occasion may serve something higher, but we leave the Standard to be settled by the returns he shall make. We likewise send you five pieces of our usual sort of Blankets which are intended for Monsieur Maugenest's Trade at Our Standard of Six Beaver for each Blanket of the usual size, you will take care to insert in your Account Book the several Trading Goods which shall be delivered to him from time to time and send his Furs home in separate parcels distinct from the rest of the Cargo, and marked GM with their amount in Made Beaver on which your Bounty will also be allowed.

(HBC. Letter Book (Private or HB) No. 612 (May 1774/May 1780. Pages 309 and 310).

C O P Y. AL.

EXTRACT from letter from The Governor and Committee to Messrs. Thomas Hutchins and Council at Albany Fort. Dated Hudson's Bay House, London, 16th May, 1781.

Paragraph 7.

"We now send the remainder of the Pointed Blankets which were kept back last year, and confide that you will every exertion promote our Views in employing Mr. Maugenest as it will be disgracefull to our Servants that the Pedlers should proceed Inland and procure that Trade which the Sloth of the Servants of this Company leave for them."

(HBC. Letter Book (Private or HB) No. 613 (May, 1781/June, 1786, Page 2.)

C O P Y. AL.

EXTRACT from Abstract of Albany Journal (1780/1781 - Thos. Hutchins.

May, 1781. "By your fixing the large striped Blankets at the usual price of 6 Beaver for Mr. Maugenest, I inferred that your Intention was to appoint him Albany Standard of Trade; I have valued his goods accordingly and given him a copy both of the Standard of Trade and comparative of Furrs: but by his Conversation I found that he could not pretend to Trade according to it, for he said, if he was confined to that Standard, the Canadians (who would have houses all round him) would carry off all the Trade by outselling him, he was unable to make his accounts so regular and exact as they are at Albany, and your other Settlements, he would get the most he could for the goods intrusted to him, wished to be tied to no Standard but act discretionally, he hoped at length to make the Canadians sick of coming into the petite Nord (so he calls these parts) and then he said the Company might establish their own Standard when they had no competitors to fear. He told me your Honours had misunderstood him about the price of the pointed Blankets, as the points are known to every Indian to be the price to be paid for each as 2½ points, 2½ beaver, 3 points, 3 beaver etc. whereas your Honours have charged them higher. Not being possitive what are your Intentions, and being unacquainted with the Canadian method of Traffick, I was fearful of putting obstacles in the way, and therefore formed Mr. Maugenest's instructions as simple as possible, untill more fully informed what is your pleasure in that head."

Albany Inward Letters (1775/1791) (No. 137)

APPENDIX V

Douglas MacKay "Blanket Coverage," *The Beaver* (June1935): 50-52.
Used with Permission from *The Beaver*.

June 1935

And These Are the Blanket Garments

PREFERRED position on this page is given to two new women's coats. Upper left are two pictures of The Garry and one of The Swagger. They are, of course, made from the "Point" blankets and are available in Standard colours and Pastel shades. **The Garry** is peculiarly our own, having been designed and made with the co-operation of the Winnipeg retail store. Neither the Wholesale Department nor *The Beaver* has the capacity to describe The Garry in the ecstatic vocabulary of *Vogue* or *Harper's Bazaar*, but our enthusiasm is undimmed. We believe it is so good that we present, in our best manner, two pictures of it. It sells for $20.00 from Fort William to Victoria.

Between the two Garry models is another 1935 coat—**The Swagger**. This has more general utility selling appeal than any blanket garment since the Indians used the blanket for coat, bedding, tent and saddle. The Swagger has a fine loose, easy flare, with pockets just where they ought to be and it quickly suggests roadsters, motor boats and the cool of summer evenings. We prefer it in the natural camel's hair shade—but don't let us influence you. In

the west it costs only $12.00. (All the prices quoted here are for Western Canada —the unfortunate Easterners may have to pay a spot more, but that is just their bad luck in living too far away from the merchandising advantages of the Hudson's Bay Company.) It's a *very* smart coat and you'll like it.

The pleasing young person with the dogs, and again seen at the fire-place, was photographed at the Seigniory Club last winter by Gray-O'Reilly for *Town and Country*, and she wears a coat made by a Montreal shop from the same celebrated blanket. We give you these pictures by way of indicating the flexibility of the garments in the hands of others. There is a model of our own closely corresponding to this one which sells for $15.00.

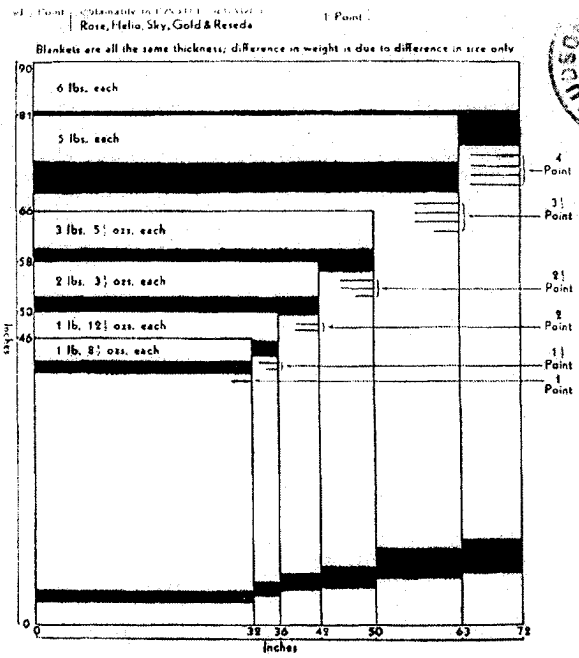
The New Yorker and **The Lady's Hooded** coats are further instances of the diversity of women's blanket coats. The New Yorker has had wide success in the Pastel shades, and here again we decline to go into lyrics about it in the hope that the picture will tell the story well enough to compel you to ask for it. The Hooded Coat is a variation of the original Hudson's Bay Mackinaw coat, and it continues to sell for winter resort wear and in those places where ski-ing has not displaced snowshoeing. Twenty dollars for these.

In the range of men's blanket garments, **The Hudson's Bay Parka** is new in 1935. It incorporates the best features of the northern dog driver's parka with requirements of Canadian winter sports. Note deep zipper front, large open pockets and small closed pockets, belt for snug fit. Note particularly the flat lying collar which can be zippered into a hood, as shown at the bottom of the page. This parka, while probably too warm for active ski-ing, will have a real place wherever weather is cold; spectators and officials at winter sports meets will want it. A splendid, stout, warm garment, it can be procured in any of the blanket colours. Twenty dollars.

The Man's Hooded Coat is a general utility coat which has been popular ever since the troops of George III made their own from our blankets. Hunting, fishing, lumbering, mining, are a few Canadian activities where this coat is found. Fifteen dollars.

The Windbreaker, with zipper or buttons, makes fine snug cold-weather protection. An inner knitted wristband and a knitted waistband give good fit. For work or play out of doors it does its job and continues to be in constant demand. Ten dollars and a big money's worth.

The American Jumper is also a new design for men's sport's wear. It is styled somewhat and fits into cold weather golf, spring and fall garden work and that not entirely forgotten pleasure of winter walking. Colours as usual, and price unusual at $10.00.



THE BEAVER

And in Conclusion

ALL our advertising technique is now exhausted and our sales talking has left us hoarse, and if you are not yet convinced about the merits and desirability of these blankets, then you are not nearly as intelligent as we are convinced most *Beaver* readers are.

But, sold or unsold, convinced or skeptical, we offer you this final page containing:

1. A chart showing weight, dimensions and colours of the blanket range. (Of course the 3½ and 4 "point" are the popular ones.)

2. Three pictures at random (there are plenty more in the file where these came from) from *Saturday Evening Post*, *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* during 1934. The pictures themselves indicate the "universal acceptance" of blanket garments.

3. Two cartons, one by d'Egville, whose pictures you have seen in *Punch*; the other from somewhere by someone—it's an amusing picture found in a file and we hope to escape a law-suit for publication without permission.

This is the point: When merchandise is "taken up" by magazine illustrators, world-celebrated pilots, cosmetic companies and cartoonists, without any promotion from the manufacturers, you can feel some confidence in its standard. In the blanket business the Hudson's Bay "Point" blanket has set a Standard for the World.

Vogue

ying boo
ow, you see what inspired Clarepotter to the
new and very amusing garment on page 61. The loo
jacket-shirts worn by Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh
trip have becor hands, the stunt of
for ol

Two ages . . . with the same complexion beauty

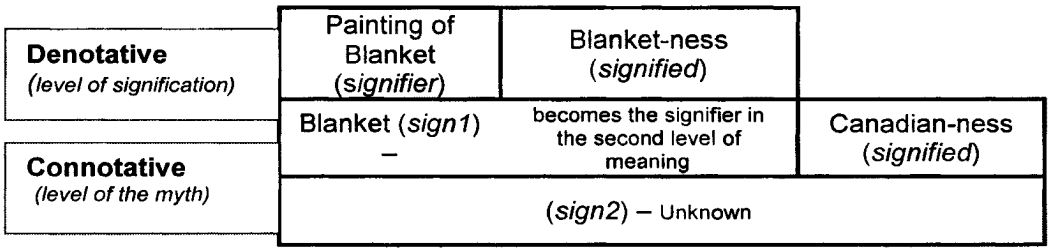
The cartoons on the left:

Left: "The man who said his Hudson's Bay "Point" Blanket wasn't warm enough."

Right: "The shoulders fit fine want a cuff on the bottom?"

APPENDIX VI

The role of the blanket as a sign, and its referent being—the actual Hudson's Bay Company Point Blanket—is best summarized in the following chart:



(Format of chart based on diagram from Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*. Translated by Annette Lavers (London: Paladin Grafton Books, c. 1973): 115)

APPENDIX VII

THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

The Dominion of Canada occupies the northern half of the North American continent. It covers an area of 3,500,000 square miles, and is territorially about equal in extent to the continent of Europe. Reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, the western half has a southern frontier which, if extended across the Atlantic Ocean, would strike the latitude of Paris, while the southernmost point of the eastern section of the country is in the latitude of Rome. Canada is thus the physical equivalent on the continent of North America of the great empires and kingdoms of Germany, France, Italy, Russia in Europe, Sweden and Norway, Belgium, and the British Islands; it is, above all, an integral portion of the British Empire, containing natural resources as varied and as great as of those countries.

Nineteen short years ago Her Majesty's possessions in North America entered upon a corporate existence, and the change that has since taken place in the general development and the prosperity of Canada cannot but be accepted as a remarkable proof of the sagacity of the imperial and colonial statesmen who directed the movement. The confederation grew out of the natural desire of the people of the disconnected provinces to unite for their mutual benefit. To the petition for the privilege of confederating, the British Parliament responded, in 1867, by passing the "British North American Act," providing for the voluntary union of the various provinces in North America under the name of the "Dominion of Canada," and for the cession to the Dominion of all the vast unsettled area of British America formerly dominated by the Hudson's Bay Company, with power to create new provinces and admit them into the union when sufficiently populated. The Act came into operation on the 1st of July, 1867—the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick uniting with Upper and Lower Canada, henceforth Ontario and Quebec. This union of the inland and maritime provinces gave to Canada an importance she had never before possessed. In 1870, the Province of Manitoba was created, having been carved out of that portion of the territory lying on both sides of the Red River of the North, embracing the city of Winnipeg and the old Red River settlements of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1871, the large and prosperous Province of British Columbia was added, comprising all that region lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, including the numerous large islands fringing the coast, and extending from the United States to and beyond the southern limit of Alaska; and in 1873 Prince Edward Island joined the confederation.

This political bond has been strengthened by the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the great national undertaking which has now been brought to a successful termination, and by means of which the extreme eastern and western portion of the Dominion are brought into close relationship with each other and with the hitherto scarcely known prairie regions of the North-West Territory. The completion of the new line must largely stimulate travel, immigration, settlement, and commerce, and draw the attention of the people of every nation to the enormous area of the Dominion, its large population, and the great variety and magnitude of its natural resources.

The population of the Dominion approximates 5,000,000, which is augmenting at a rapid rate, and which, notwithstanding the diversity of origin, has, under the force of circumstances, been welded into a homogeneous whole. About one-half are of English, Scotch, and Irish extraction; one-fourth are of direct French descent; Germany is well represented; and every nation in Europe has contributed its quota to swell the population. Of Indians there is an estimated pupulation of 100,000. About one-third of these live in the older provinces, and have been long since gathered into settlements under the care of officers of the Indian Department, in some cases having industrial schools and other organisations to aid them in their progress toward a higher civilisation; and it is only necessary to glance at the products of Indian industry in the Exhibition in order to learn how marked that progress has been.

The Government of Canada, as at present constituted, is a representative one, the executive authority being vested in the Sovereign of Great Britain, and carried on in the name of the Crown by a Governor-General, assisted by a Privy Council. These form the chief Government of the whole Dominion. The legislative branch consists of a Dominion Parliament, composed of two houses. The Upper House, or Senate, consists of members who are appointed for life by the Governor-General in Council. The House of Commons is a purely representative body, elected by the people, the representation being apportioned to the various provinces in the ratio of their population. Each province enjoys local self-government, having a provincial legislature elected by the people, and a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the chief or Federal Government. There is also a very perfect system of municipal government throughout the Dominion. Both the counties and townships have local governments or councils which regulate their local taxation for roads, taxes for schools and other purposes, so that every man directly votes for the taxes which he pays. This system of responsibility, from the municipalities up to the General Government, causes everywhere a feeling of contentment and satisfaction, the people believing that no other form of government can give them greater freedom.

The utmost religious liberty everywhere prevails in Canada. Persons coming to the Dominion from Europe, of different persuasion, will find places of worship and abundant facilities for the practice of their faith among neighbours who will sympathise with their views.

Before school boards were established in England the Dominion had a well-organised system of public or common schools in operation, in which instruction is not merely confined to the rudiments of education. In many cases the higher branches are taught, and the children receive a sound practical education, fitting them for any ordinary position in life. Both in the country districts and in the towns, boards of trustees, elected by the people, manage the affairs of the public schools. Provision is also made for the establishment of separate schools in districts where the inhabitants are divided in their religious opinions, and mixed schools are not possible. The public schools are absolutely free, and are supported partly by a local tax and partly by a grant from the Provincial Treasury. In addition, there are grammar schools in all parts of the country, managed like the public schools, at which, as well as at the many excellent private schools, pupils receive a good classical and modern education. Above these again are the high schools, collegiate institutes, and universities, the latter liberally endowed with scholarships, where the cost of attendance is comparatively so small as to place the facilities for education they offer within the reach of all. There are also schools of surgery and medicine in the larger cities, and the religious denominations also have colleges at which young men are prepared for the ministry. The higher education of girls is also met in the fullest manner by numerous high schools, generally denominational in character. In fact, means of education, from the highest to the lowest, everywhere abound in the Dominion.

The variations of the Canadian climate are less than in many countries of much smaller extent. But throughout nearly its whole area Canada is characterised by a greater heat in summer, and a lower temperature in winter than in corresponding European latitudes. The climate of the eastern and especially of the western provinces is moderated by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans respectively, while the great water system of rivers and lakes, which extends throughout the Dominion, helps to preserve an equable climate in the interior provinces. The degrees of latitude, therefore, are a very imperfect guide to the character of the Canadian climate as compared with that of the British Isles, and any statement of the mean temperature of the two is deceptive. The severity of the winter, as tested by the thermometer, leads to a very exaggerated impression of Canadian experiences. Owing to the dry, clear, bracing atmosphere which generally prevails, raw easterly winds and damp fogs are rarely experienced in a Canadian winter. There are, indeed, every winter some days of intense cold, as in the summer there are brief periods of equally intense heat, when the thermometer ascends, or descends very much. But throughout the greater part of the winter season in Canada the sky is bright and clear, and the weather thoroughly enjoyable. Everywhere the appearance of the snow is hailed as seasonable and beneficial. It protects the wheat sown in autumn from the frost, affords facilities to the farmer for bringing his produce to market, aids the lumberman in collecting the fruits of his labour in the forest at suitable points for transport, and so contributes alike to business and pleasure. In short, the Canadian climate is marked by the striking contrast of two seasons—summer and winter—bringing with them alternations of fruitful labour and of repose, intermingled with

profitable industry and pleasure. This characteristic prevails, with slight variations, throughout the greater part of the Dominion.

While it is impossible, within the limits of this introduction, to speak in detail of the agricultural capabilities of Canada, it may be stated generally that its soil and climate are such that the country produces a greater variety of grains, grasses, vegetables, and fruits than is usually grown in Great Britain and Ireland. It possesses the largest extent of cultivable land yet opened for settlement, adapted to the growth of productions of the temperate climates, not only on the American Continent, but in the world. Canada is pre-eminently a country of yeoman farmers. The land is held in possession and tilled by the settler on his own account; and with every addition to the numbers of its industrious population, fresh acres are recovered from the wilderness and added to the productive resources and the wealth of the Dominion. By patient industry and frugality it is in the power of every Canadian to become owner of a house and proprietor of whatever amount of land he can turn to profitable account. The majority of the farms are small, tilled by the proprietor with his own hands, with the help of his sons and occasional hired labour in the busy season of harvesting. But capital is also successfully applied to farming, and large stock farms in the eastern provinces, and latterly in the ranching country at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, are now carried on with great success.

The forests of Canada abound in fine timber, adapted to almost every variety of useful or ornamental work, and furnishing one main element of wealth. Their value is becoming more apparent every year. At present the produce of the forests exceeds in value any other yield of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the Dominion. The total value of the annual exports of timber products approximates £6,000,000, for which Great Britain and the United States are the principal markets.

The mineral resources are represented by coal fields of immense extent, both on its Atlantic and Pacific coasts; and there are large deposits beneath the surface of its prairie lands east of the Rocky Mountains. It has iron, gold, silver, copper, lead, and other mines of great richness, and almost every description of the most valuable building materials; also petroleum, salt, and phosphates.

Looking to the native fauna of Canada from an economic point of view, it is abundantly evident that the animal life of its seas and rivers is one of its great and inexhaustible sources of wealth. Alike on the sea coasts, in the estuaries, and throughout its great inland lakes and rivers, the most valuable fish abound. Canada has been esteemed from its earliest discovery for its valuable fur-bearing animals, and has been the trapping and hunting ground for two centuries for the Hudson's Bay Company and other organisations. For sportsmen the country offers unusual attractions, both in the abundance and variety of its game—which is well distributed over the backwoods of the eastern provinces, the districts immediately west of Lake Superior, the prairie region, and in British Columbia. The northern sections of Canada are the breeding grounds of an immense variety of the feathered tribe.

Thus, with an advantageous geographical position, with resources not widely dissimilar to those of England, and institutions calculated to secure law and order, civil and religious liberty, and the best traditions of the mother country, Canada may, in the no distant future, become the home of one of the most populous and powerful peoples of the earth.