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Honors Paper

Macalester College

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Title: Visible Civility

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Visible Civility
Maeve Kane

Native Americans and European colonists in the eighteenth century lived in a world without definite racial boundaries in which to define themselves or others.[1] However, cultural boundaries denoted through clothing, language, family and government structures were both strong and recognized by Natives and Europeans. While racial boundaries are now often understood as permanent, heritable, and unchangeable, cultural boundaries were seen as mutable and easy to change. Captives could be adopted and assimilated, Native populations civilized and Christianized, and often the first step toward inner conversion was visible, outer conversion. Because clothing was relatively easy to change and immediately visible, the clothes often did make the man in eighteenth century colonial and Native society. Native and European women and men alike used European cloth and clothing to show political and social allegiances, and European-made cloth became incorporated into almost every part of Native dress, mostly replacing earlier hide and leather garments. However, rather than converting Native communities, this incorporation of European cloth helped preserve Native culture. Visible in paintings, engravings, descriptions in travel and captivity narratives, and in preserved clothing, Natives used European cloth in ways very different than those intended by European traders, government officials and missionaries to build a distinct Native cultural identity. Women, often invisible both in portraits and in written accounts, created this distinct identity in their roles and the primary purchasers of cloth and producers of clothing in Native communities.

[1] For a general discussion of race in the eighteenth century, see Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*, (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1975); Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect Relations: Sex, Race and Resistance in Colonial North Carolina*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002); and A. Leon Higginbotham, "The Ancestry of Inferiority (1619-1662)," *How Did American Slavery Begin?*, Ed. Edward Countryman, (Boston, Mass.: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1999).

Of course, assimilation in dress within Native communities did not mean assimilation in political ideology, gender norms, labor patterns or anything else. European and Euro-American missionaries and politicians tried very hard to erase Native cultures, gender roles and labor patterns to make them better Christians and clear the way for white settlement, but even when Native communities did incorporate European clothing in their dress, it was often incomplete and even at times subversive. The study of clothing and purchase patterns within Native communities is essential because it challenges the narrative of the "disappearing Indian" written from the perspective of Euro-American missionaries and politicians. The study of clothing and purchase patterns challenges this narrative by looking at how Native communities essentially voted with their money—and preserved a distinct cultural identity in the process. Although there are few written sources which record how Native communities viewed Euro-American attempts to convert, civilize, settle, and relocate them, clothing choices reveal how individuals constructed a sense of their own personal and community identity on a daily, face-to-face basis.[2] Analysis of Native dress in portraits, written records and a few existing pieces of clothing challenges the dominate Euro-American narrative of Native assimilation and acceptance of colonialism.

From the earliest contact period, Europeans conflated clothing and civility. Without clear conceptions of biologically based race, Europeans and perhaps also Natives believed a change of clothes was enough to trigger a change of culture, and, as we would describe it, race. When John Cabot brought two Newfoundland men back to the court of Henry VII in the late fifteenth century, a change of clothes changed the men in English eyes.

[2] For further discussion on using material culture to write history in fields with few written records, see Lisa Norling. *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women and the Whale Fishery.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Nicole LaBouff, *The Nature of Embroidery: English Domestic Needlework and the Construction of the Natural World.* Fourteenth Annual Berks Women's History Conference. University of Minnesota; and Laurel Thatcher Ulrich. *The Age of Homespun.* (New York; Random House, 2001).

> These were clothed in beasts skins and did eate raw flesh, and spake such speech that no man could understand them, and in their demeanour like two bruite beastes, whom the King kept a time after. Of the which upon two yeeres after, I saw two appareled after the manner of Englishmen in Westminster palace, which that time I could not discerne from Englishmen, til I was learned what they were.[3]

Natives themselves may have conflated clothing and conversion, or European proselytizers may have done it for them. In the seventeenth century, Jesuits in Maryland reported that one of their earliest converts, the sachem Tayac, asked to be baptized at the same time as he "exchanged the skins, with which he was heretofore clothed, for a garment made in our fashion." Father Andrew White put it more explicitly: the Natives "exceedingly desire civill life and Christian apparel."[4] Because religious and political identity were so closely intertwined in the European consciousness at the time, religious conversion, political and social assimilation of the Natives all went hand in hand.

The relation between dress and civility was of particular importance for missionaries. Historian Nicholas Canny has shown that in the English colonizing mindset in both Ireland and North America, there was a direct relation between civility and Christianity. Although a people could be civilized but not Christian, a people could not be Christianized without first being civilized.[5] Enforcing standards of English civility was therefore the first step in evangelizing Natives. Such a project was not without its difficulties, though. French fur trader Chrestien LeClercq echoed the sentiment of many traders and missionaries who dealt with stubborn Indians, reporting "they are so infatuated with their manner of dressing, and with their own way

[3] Richard Hakluyt quoted in Karen Kupperman. *Indians and English: Facing off in Early America.* (Ithaca, NY; Cornell University Press, 2000): 71.

[4] Quoted in Kupperman: 72. "The English Province of the Society of Jesus, Annual Letter from Maryland, 1639" in Hall, *Narratives of Early Maryland*: 127; White, *Briefe Relation of the Voyage unto Maryland*: 44.

[5] Nicholas Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," *The William and Mary Quarterly*. (Vol. 30, No. 4, Oct 1973): 597.

of living, that they disdain ours, and cannot at all accustom themselves thereto."[6] The organizer of perhaps the largest organized effort to "civilize" native peoples, John Eliot declared that Natives in his New England Praying Towns had to "have visible civility before they can rightly enjoy visible sanctities in ecclesiastical communion."[7] Religious conversion and social assimilation were so important that missionaries were not above a certain amount of bribery to accomplish their ends. The Mohegan minister Samson Occom wrote in his memoirs that during his childhood, "once a Fortnight, in ye Summer Season, a Minister from New London used to come up, and the Indians to attend; not that they regarded the Christian Religion, but they had Blankets given to them every Fall of the Year and for these things they would attend."[8] Distributing blankets not only attracted Native listeners to hear the preacher, but it also encouraged conversion by beginning to clothe the Natives in "Christian apparel" because outward signs of acceptance of English norms were necessary for an inner, religious conversion.

Outward signs of conversion were also necessary for more secular incorporation of Native Americans into the United States body politic. In an address to the Choctaw Nation in 1803, Thomas Jefferson said

> I rejoice, brothers, to hear you propose to become cultivators of the earth for the maintenance of your families. Be assured you will support them better and with less labor, by raising stock and bread, and by spinning and weaving clothes, than by hunting. A little land cultivated, and a little labor, will procure more provisions than the most successful hunt; and a woman will clothe more by spinning and weaving, than a man by hunting. Compared with you, we are but as of yesterday in this land. Yet see how much more we have multiplied by industry, and the

[6] Chrestien LeClercq. *New Relation of Gaspesia with the Customs and Religion of the Gaspesian Indians.* Ed. and trans William F Ganong, 1910. Reprint. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968): 66-67.

[7] John Eliot to Jonathan Hammer, May 19 1652 in Rendel Harris ed "Three Letters of John Eliot and a Bill of Landing of the Mayflower." *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library V* (1918-20): 104.

[8] Samson Occom, "A Short Narrative of My Life" quoted in Colin G. Calloway, ed. *The World Turned Upside Down: Indian Voices from Early America.* (Boston and New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994): 55.

> exercise of that reason which you possess in common with us. Follow then our example, brethren, and we will aid you with great pleasure.[9]

In Jefferson's view, the depopulation and disenfranchisement caused by decades of disease and exploitation could be reversed with adoption of Euro-American values, culture, and gender norms, including clothing. Aid from the colonizers who caused the depopulation and disenfranchisement was also conditional on such outward conversion. The American government and missionaries like John Eliot used Native dress as a marker of submission to civilizing projects both religious and secular.

Although furs composed the majority of commodities sold by Natives for export, the majority of goods imported and sold to Natives in exchange were measures of cloth, not lead, powder, or guns. In one of the first recorded commodity exchanges between Natives and Europeans, Manhattan was sold "for and in consideration of twentie Coates, tweintie-four looking-glasses, twentie-four hoes, twentie-four hatchets, twenty-four knives, One hundred muges, allready Received by us the forenamed Sachems."[10] Statistically, cloth composed a larger expenditure for traders and for Native buyers. Table 1, a compilation of trader expenditures at three posts in the Great Lakes by historian Dean Anderson, shows that cloth and clothing composed by far the largest portion of trader expenses.

Table 1: European trade goods in the western Great Lakes, 1715-1760, complied from invoice data in the Montreal Merchants' Records (ranked by trader expenditure).[11]	
Detroit	
Ranking	% of all Invoices

[9] Thomas Jefferson, *To the Brothers of the Choctaw Nation*, Dec 17 1803 Yale University Avalon Project http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/jeffind3.htm

[10] "The Original Indian Deed for East Hampton." April 29 1648 *Montauk's Trustee Corporation* Montauk Tribe Township, NY http://www.montauk.com/legal/deeds/1648.htm

[11] Dean L Anderson, "The Flow of European Trade Goods into the Western Great Lakes Region, 1715-1760" in *The Fur Trade Revisited*, ed Jennifer SH Brown, WJ Eccles, and Donald P Heldman (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994): 107.

1. Clothing 2. Hunting 3. Alcohol 4. Adornment 5. Tobacco 6. Weapons	75.58 11.91 4.83 1.73 .50 --
Ouiatenon	
1. Clothing 2. Hunting 3. Alcohol 4. Adornment 5. Tobacco 6. Weapons	55.04 20.28 6.95 5.62 1.20 .02
Michilmackinac	
1. Clothing 2. Hunting 3. Alcohol 4. Adornment 5. Tobacco 6. Weapons	65.08 18.09 4.37 2.95 1.61 .19

Table 2: Martha's Vineyard Indian Credit Purchases in Colonial Stores 1730-1810[12]

Merchat (Years)	Cloth and Clothing	Money/Loans	Food	Tools	Domestic Items	Services
J Allen (1732-52)	16%	28%	25%	4%	3%	5%
J Sumner (1749-52)	63%	6%	4%	9%	12%	1%
P Norton (1759-65)	86%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%
B Norton (1768-69)	13%	23%	7%	6%	4%	43%
M Mayhew (1781-84)	13%	22%	26%	0%	3%	9%
W Mayhew (1793-1801)	22%	24%	10%	3%	18%	3%
D Look (1799-1804	46%	27%	9%	1%	1%	0%

[12] David J Silverman "The Impact of Indentured Servitude on the Society and Culture of Southern New England Indians, 1680-1810." *The New England Quarterly.* Vol. 74, No. 4 (Dec 2001): 627.

Table 2, a compilation of purchases and debts made by Natives in Martha's Vineyard with several merchants also shows that cloth and clothing composed the majority of expenses for Native buyers, more than food, cash loans, or any other expense. Cloth, not guns, bought furs from Native buyers.

In advising new traders and settlers about how best to trade with the Natives, German explorer John Lederer implicitly differentiated between fabric to be traded with Natives and that to be used by settlers. As he wrote in a pamphlet for new colonists, "your best Truck is a sort of course Trading Cloth, of which a yard and a half makes a Match-coat or mantle fit for their wear."[13] Traders generally acknowledged cloth sold to Natives to be sub-par compared to that sold in Europe or to colonists. In the letters of Samuel Storke and his colonial agents, the quality of goods sold to Natives was explicitly acknowledged to be lower than the quality of goods sold to colonists. Cloth destined to be sold to Natives could be of any quality so long as the color and style suited Native tastes. Fabrics of lower-quality weaves could be sold to Native Americans for the same price as much higher quality fabrics, making it much easier for merchants to dump lower quality fabrics in the colonial market. One of Storke's agents remarked that a stroud (a coarse woolen) bought for 55s in London could sell for the same price as one bought for 78s so long as the color and style of the

Figure 1. Baroness Anne-Marguerite-Henriette Hyde de Neuville "Oneida Family" 1807. Courtesy of the New York Historical Society 1953.215.

[13] Quoted in Marshall Joseph Becker, "Matchcoats: Cultural Conservatism and Change in One Aspect of Native American Clothing," *Ethnohistory.* (Vol. 52, No. 4, Fall 2005): 732.

selvage suited Indian tastes.[14] This twenty shilling difference in profit encouraged traders to sell lower quality goods to Natives. Eighteenth-century economist Arthur Young wrote that

> Witney is very famous for its woolen manufactory, which consists of what they call kersey-pieces, coarse bear-skins, and blankets. The two first they make for the North American market for clothing the Indians; vast quantities being sent up the river St. Lawrence, and likewise to New York. Their finest blankets . . . are exported to Spain and Portugal.[15]

Both kersey and bear skins were widely used in poor-houses and orphanages in Great Britain at the time because they were made with short-staple, low quality wool, the cheap leftovers from producing finer quality woolens.[16]

However, Native purchasers were not passive consumers of lower quality goods. French and British government agents and traders acknowledged Native buyers to be notoriously picky customers, often refusing to trade at all, even on more favorable terms, if the cloth did not meet their specifications.

> Trinkets or ornaments for dress, though ever so gaudy, or ever so neatly manufactured, they despise, unless somewhat similar in their kind to what they themselves are accustomed to wear, and fashioned exactly to their own taste, which has remain nearly the same since Europeans first came among them.[17]

Samuel Storke's agents, who sold lower quality cloth at the same price as much higher quality goods, said that they could not sell the strouds even at very reduced prices if the fabric was not "very dark, almost black, and had a small white cord stitched not too far from the selvage."[18] Natives in other areas demanded other fabrics, like vivid red strouds or white strouds with blue

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[14] Philip Livingston to Storke and Gainsborough, Nov 23 1736 and June 4 1737. Robert Livingston Jr. to Storke and Gainsborough, Oct 28 1737, Robert and Peter Livingston and Co to Storke and Gainsborough Oct 9 1736 and Oct 24 1737. Misc Mss vol 6 (NY State Library) quoted in William I. Roberts, III "Samuel Storke: An Eighteenth-Century London Merchant Trading to the American Colonies." *The Business History Review*, Vol. 39, No. 2. (Summer, 1965): 147-170.

[15] Quoted in Florence M. Montgomery, *Textiles in America 1650-1870.* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2007): 375.

[16] Montgomery: 480.

[17] Isaac Weld Jr. *Travels through the States of North America, and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, During the Years 1795-1797.* A. M. Kelly, ed. (New York: Baker and Taylor, 1970): 381.

[18] Roberts: 170.

borders, and traders and governments who did not conform to those demands were often at a disadvantage in diplomatic and trade agreements. Presents given to different Native groups by the same European government differed based on the Native group's preferences and what 'sold' best in the fabric trade—preferred colors were known to vary by tribe.[19] Storke's agents complained that without strouds of the proper color, they were unable to complete any transactions, because Natives would not trade for anything at all if the proper fabrics were unavailable.[20] Native demands largely shaped the cloth trade and gave them leverage in trade negotiations.

This leverage created major disadvantages for governments and traders without access to the proper fabrics. Before and during the French and Indian War, France lagged behind Britain in the competition for Native customers because French cloth centers could not produce goods up to the standards of Native consumers. Although French military officer Pierre Pouchot said blankets supplied by French traders were "made in Normandy of very fine wool [and] better than those supplied by the English, which are coarser,"[21] it seems that French blankets did not sell as well to Native consumers. While British traders merely had to make sure to purchase the right kind of fabric, French traders and sometimes even the French government itself had to buy the fabrics directly from their economic and political rivals, British traders and manufacturers.[22] The early French presence in North American and the more economic focus of French efforts (as opposed to the colonizing efforts in New England) gave them an early edge on the fur trade. However, the relative peace created by the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht simultaneously allowed

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[19] Becker: 749.
[20] Roberts: 147-170.
[21] Pierre Pouchot. *Memoir upon the Late War in North America Between the French and the English, 1755-1760.* Franklin Benjamin Hough, ed. (Roxbury, Mass: W. E. Woodward, 1866): vol II 187.
[22] Richard White. *The Middle Ground : Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991): 125.

Britain to focus on economic efforts abroad and prevented the French from interfering directly with British trade.

This new competition placed the French monopoly in jeopardy because Natives with access to both French and British goods tended to choose British strouds. Historian Richard White reports a 1725 estimate by two Albany traders that 80 percent of the beaver shipped from New York to England was obtained from French smugglers who could only trade with the Natives when they obtained British strouds. The problem of smuggling was sometimes so severe that the French government authorized direct purchases of British strouds to be marketed to Natives in an attempt to stem the smuggling problem, retain more of the profit and control of the trade.[23] New York's surveyor during the French and Indian War even predicted that the British domination of the textile trade and French traders' dependence on British goods would deprive France of allies and oblige the government to abandon the colony.[24] The French dependence on British goods and the struggle between France and Britain for control of the fur trade and the Indian allies the trade created was a direct result of strong Native preferences and refusal to be passive consumers.

Even as Native groups began to lose their political and military influence within the shifting balance of power between the French and the British, and later the Americans, some Native groups used conflicts between the European powers for their own benefit. When the Delawares entered into the Treaty of Fort Pitt with the newly formed United States in September 1778, Article V included a provision stating that although the United States recognized the Delawares as sovereign, the treaty rendered them "dependent . . . for all the articles of clothing,

[23] Ibid.: 125.
[24] Ibid.: 121.

utensils and implements of war."[25] In exchange, the Delawares promised to allow American troops free passage through their lands and to supply the troops when necessary. However, the United States failed to hold up their part of the treaty. On May 10 1779, several Delaware headmen who had been present at the Treaty of Fort Pitt voiced their displeasure to George Washington and the Congress. The Americans had

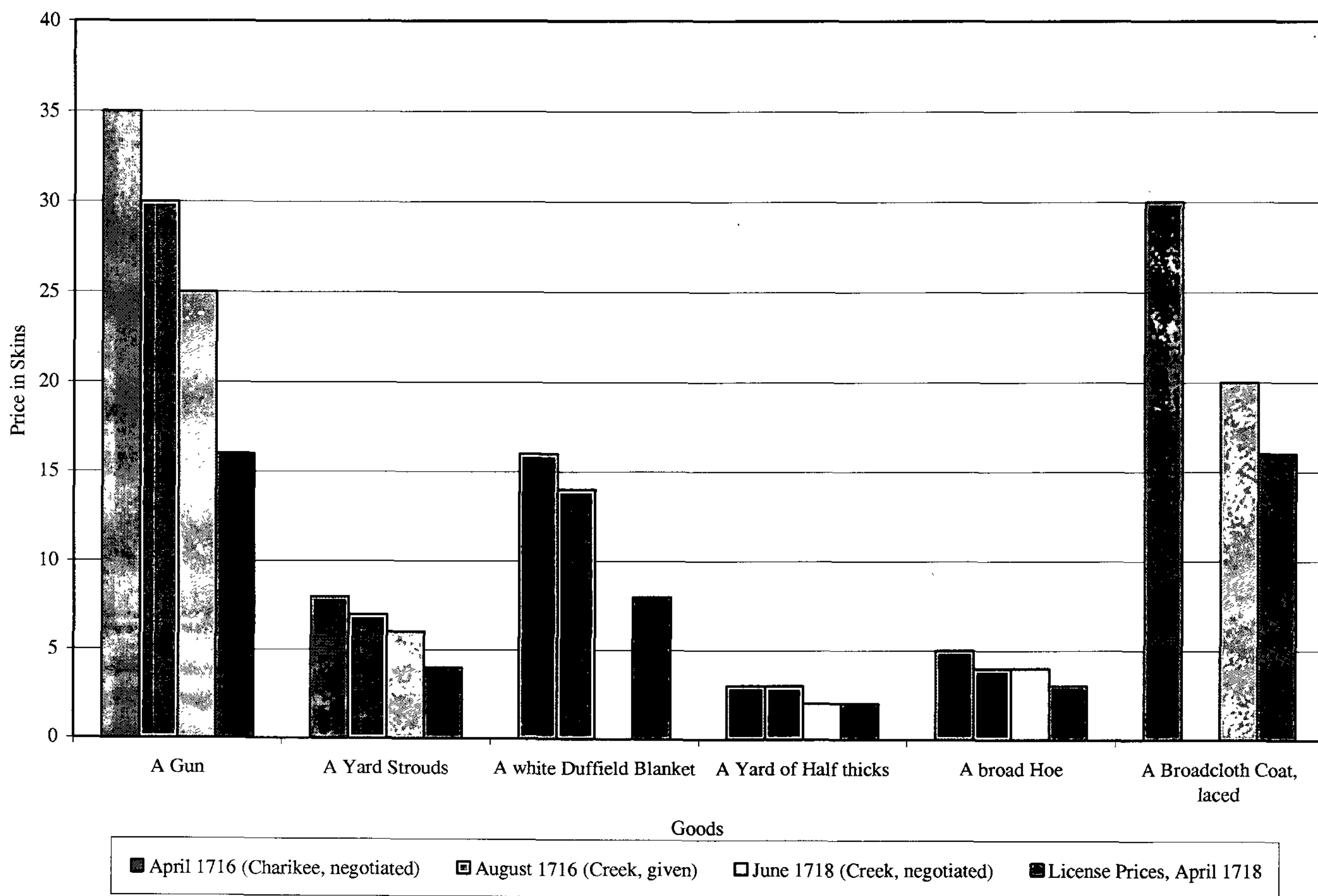
> promised & engaged to supply the [Delaware], in Exchange for their Peltries, with Clothing and other Goods; which from Custom have become absolutely necessary for the Subsistence of their Women and Children. This Engagement has been renewed on the party of Congress at four different Treaties successively, without ever having been complied with in any degree, whereby the said Delaware Nation have become poor and naked and are now reduced to such extremity as to induce them to send the undermentioned Chiefs and Councellors of their Nation to represent in person their Situation to Congress and to his Excellency General Washington that they may receive a certainty whether or not their Necessities can be relieved and their several Requests complied with, or whether they must look to the English alone for the supplies of all their wants.[26]

[25] "Articles of agreement and confederation, made and, entered; into by, Andrew and Thomas Lewis, Esquires, Commissioners for, and in Behalf of the United States of North-America of the one Part, and Capt. White Eyes, Capt. John Kill Buck, Junior, and Capt. Pipe, Deputies and Chief Men of the Delaware Nation of the other Part." September 17 1778 Yale Avalon Project *http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/ntreaty*

[26] "Speech of Delawares to Washington and Congress." 1H75-77 May 10 1779 quoted in Louise Phelps Kellogg. Frontier Advance on the Upper Ohio 1778-1779. Publications of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. (Madison: Cantwell Printing Company, 1916): 318.

On the same day, the Congress ordered a large shipment of goods to be sent to the Delawares, including "400 matchcoats . . . 1000 Shirts assorted, white ruffled, calico ruffled, plain white and checked . . . 1250 yds legging stuff . . . 60 pr shoes and Buckles 10 prs of them Silver . . . 4 doz black silk Handkerchiefs, 3 doz black silk Cravats . . . 30 Regimental Coats, Good . . . 60 pr Stockings . . . 20 pr White Linen Breeches" as well as window glass, door latches and bolts, carpenter's and cooper's tools, scythes, sickles, nails, and other things necessary for building

Figure 2. Prices of Goods from the Journals of the Commissioners of the South Carolina Indian Trade.



European-style homes and farms.[27] The Delawares used the war to get the United States to comply with the terms of the treaty, but Congress used the opportunity to encourage the Delawares to settle and civilize. Earlier in the century, the Creeks and the Cherokees used their position as the only suppliers of deerskins and the availability of French goods to negotiate better terms with the British. In April 1716 the "Charikees" negotiated what must have seemed like favorable prices to them,[28] but when the Creeks were given even lower prices in August 1716, they eventually became dissatisfied with the prices.[29] Charles Glover, the "Factor of Savano Town" where the Creeks traded for goods, told the Commissioners that "the Indians make frequent complaints of the Dearness of the Goods he sells them" although the prices for goods "differ but little from the Prices the same are at in the Charikees."[30] Because the Creeks had easier access to French goods and deer populations further from centers of European settlement, the Commissioners allowed them to negotiate for even lower prices.[31] The surprising lowness of the prices given in a trader's license issued in April 1718 are accountable because the traders were told that "you may use your discretion as to the Rates."[32] The prices given in the license were the prices the Commissioners expected to receive *from the traders* in exchange for goods supplied by the Commission, not the prices that the traders were to receive from the Natives. For example, the Hudson's Bay Company set Official Standards for the goods shipped to its trading posts and forts, but these Official Standards were base minimums from which the traders were supposed to raise prices. In a letter back to London, Hudson's Bay trader Andrew Graham wrote a list of the Factor Standards at his post, many of them twice as high as

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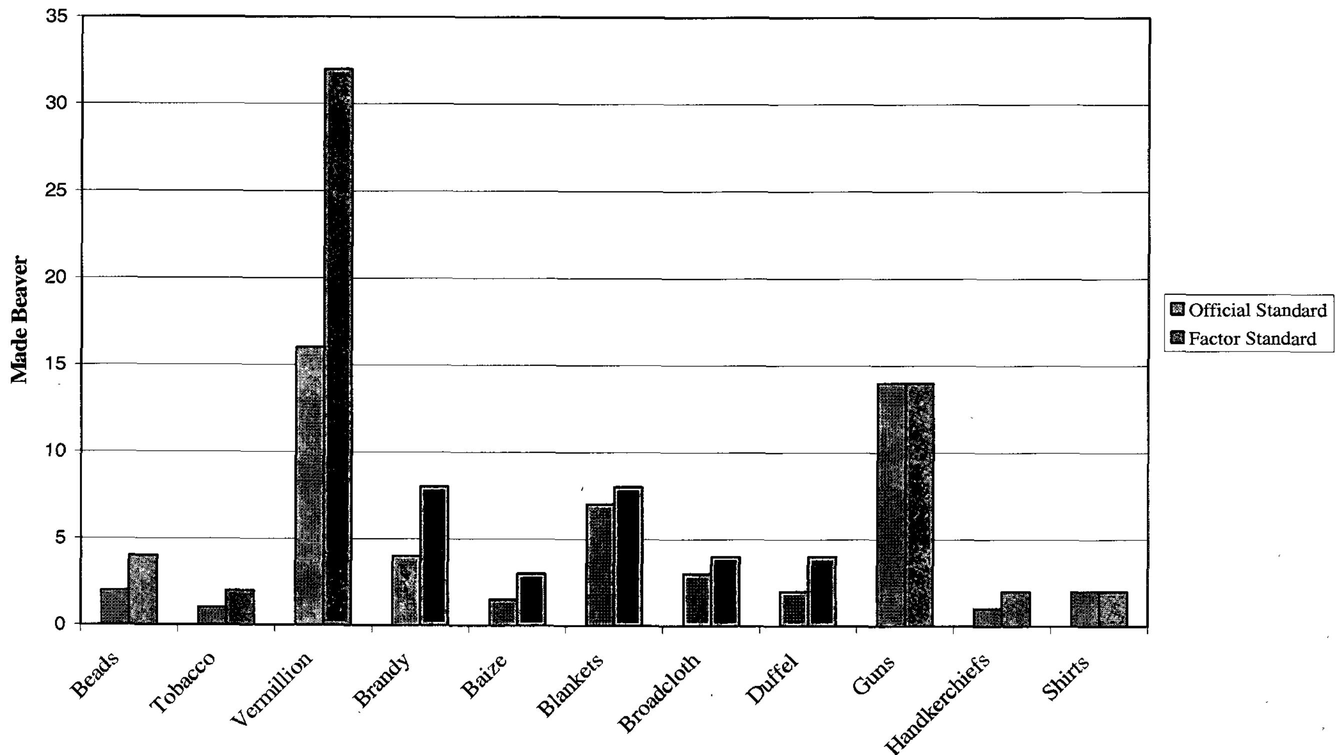
[27] "Goods for the Delawares." 1H68-71 May 10, 1779 quoted in Kellogg: 412-415.
[28] William L McDowell, ed. *Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade.* (Columbia : South Carolina Archives Dept, 1955): 89.
[29] Ibid.: 104.
[30] Ibid.: 205.
[31] Ibid.: 205.
[32] Ibid.: 269.

the Official Standard (Figure 3). Therefore the license prices probably represent the actual cost to the Commission of any of the goods—any price above the license price equals profit to the Commission, despite the Native's ability to negotiate lower prices.

Figure 3. Hudson's Bay Standards

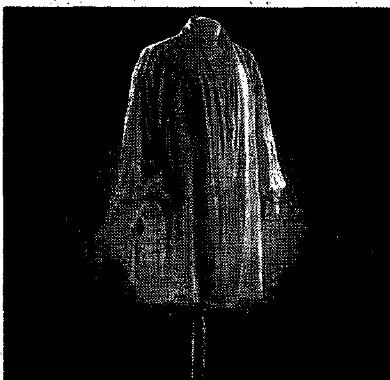


In making demands for clothing, Native Americans requested specific designs which differentiated their clothing from English clothing. In 1706, for example, trader John Bannister noted that although Native Americans bought and wore European clothing, they did not do so in the European fashion. "Those that wear coats after the English fashion, are very desirous of having them of divers colours, like that Jacob made for his son Joseph and therefore the traders have them cut partly from pale, gules and azures."[33] And after receiving blankets and clothing

[33] Quoted in Becker: 747.

which met their very exacting specifications, many Natives further modified them in a way that is very suggestive of ritual or traditional use. "After having carried [new blankets] white two or three days, they mark them in vermillion, at first with a red cross. Some days after, they cover them with red, which tends to make the skin red. When the maidens have some design of conquest, they paint their blankets anew."[34] The association of vermillion painting with new purchases and sexual liaisons (maidens' "conquests" were certainly not military) suggests a carry over from an earlier tradition of painting skin garments. Other garments were also modified for less obvious ends, but their Native owners changed them to suit their own tastes. "The better Sort have shirts of finest Linen they can get, and to those some wear Ruffles; but these they never put on till they have painted them of various Colors, which they get from the Pecone Root, and Bark of Trees, and they never pull them off to wash, but wear them, till they fall in pieces."[35]

Figure 4. Late 18th century trade shirt. Courtesy of the Bath Museum of Costume. II.02.3



These modifications of purchased goods preserved a distinct Native identity separate from the one Europeans thought they were trying to impose with imported clothing.

Besides just coloring purchased garments, Natives sometimes changed European clothing items completely, using one garment for a completely different purpose. In 1784, the French Marquis de Barbe-Mois described what the Oneida did with gift clothing. "The dance began. The dancers were young men, some dressed as warriors, others in cloths which they had received from the English or in those which we had given them. [. . .] We gave them several entire suits, without noticing that they did not ever use the third piece, so not knowing what to do with it, some of them cut it into two pieces and put half on their

[34] Pouchot: vol II 187-193.
[35] Peter Williamson. *French and Indian Cruelty*. 1754. (New York: Garland Pub., 1978): 24-25.

heads, the day of the masquerade."[36] Although Barbe-Mois brushes off these modifications as ignorance, it is just as likely that the Natives didn't care about European dress norms and used the garments as they saw fit. Reverend Oliver M. Spencer, writing at about the same time, was taken captive by Natives who saw how he used his European clothing, but used it in different ways when they took it from him. "My vest was of blue silk, double-breasted, with two rows of small, plated sugar-loaf buttons . . . the companion of Wawpawwawquaw, taking my vest, cut off both rows of buttons, including a strip of two inches of the silk on each side . . . when, just before entering the first Indian village, I saw him fasten the spoils of my vest around his legs, as garters, contrasting strangely with his greasy leathern leggings."[37] These modifications combined with unmodified garments worn in different ways created an outfit that Europeans sometimes found jarring.

> Imagine a shirt almost black, and powdered in red, a waistcoat laced or with tinsel glazing, a laced coat unbuttoned, a cap untied, sometimes a wig put on wrong side before, joined with a face to which a Venetian mask could not compare in singularity, and you will have an idea of the costume of an Indian. The men wear a belt about six inches wide, made of wool of different colors, which the Indian women make very neatly, with flaming designs.[38]

Figure 5. Mohawk Sash, 1765. Courtesy of the Musee McCord. M8486

Although all of the items described are European in origin, even the belt woven by Native women, the writer found it jarring and alien enough to describe in his memoirs.

[36] Francois de Barbe-Marbois. *Our Revolutionary Forefathers: The Letters of Francois, Marquis de Barbe-Marbois.* Eugene Parker Chase, ed. (New York: Duffield and Co, 1929): 195.
[37] Oliver M Spencer. *Indian Captivity.* Milo Milton Quaife, ed. (New York: Citadel Press, 1968): 85.
[38] Pouchot: vol II 187-193.

Although the reasons for these modifications and different uses of European clothing items is beyond the scope of this study, there are some hints that the modifications may have been for ritual or spiritual purposes, as suggested above with vermillion painting. The painted caribou hide coats worn in far northern Quebec seem very influenced by European clothing styles, but historian and clothing specialist Dorothy Burnham argues that there are some spiritually motivated decoration and construction differences. The silhouette the coats produce greatly resembles European coats of the period, but the coats were not meant to be replicas of European coats in leather. Instead, the coats were painted with locally produced pigments in motifs which came to the hunter in dreams, and which his wife interpreted and painted onto the coat to give it spiritual power for the season's caribou hunt, and according to Burnham's analysis, few if any of the motifs show European influence.[39] The construction also differs greatly, first in that the coats are less tailored than European garments of the same period, and second because of a triangular gusset inserted in the back panel. At first, this inserted gusset seems to be just another simplification of the European tailoring—European coats have an open vent for ease when riding a horse, which was less of a necessity for Natives in the period. Instead, the back of the caribou hide coats is always closed, with a triangular gusset inserted in the center back. As Burnham argues, "the obvious reason for its insertion is to add fullness, so that the wearer could tie the coat firmly around the waist and yet walk comfortably on snow shoes or kneel in a canoe, *but the inserted piece is not always wider than the piece that was cut out and whether it adds width or even takes away from it.* (original emphasis)"[40] Burnham goes

[39] Dorothy K Burham. *To Please the Caribou: Painted Caribou-skin Coats worn by the Naskapi, Montagnais, and Cree Hunters of the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula.* (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1992): 20.
[40] Burnham: 13.

on to argue that because of the coats' association with

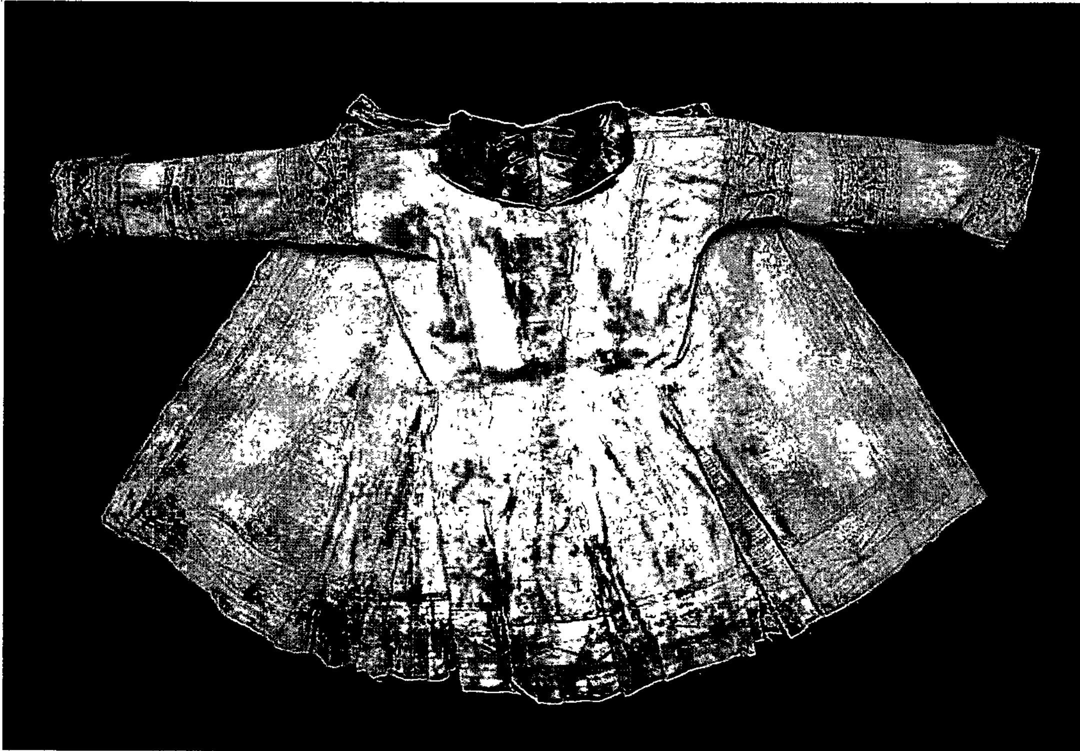


Figure 6. Eighteenth century Montagnais caribou hide coat. Courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum. 986.218.1

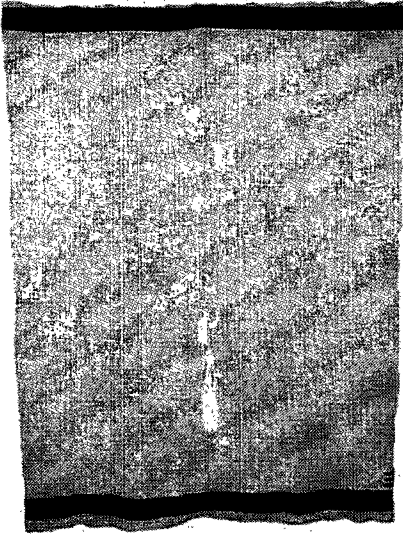
protection and success during the seasonal caribou hunts, the triangular gusset may have been added for its association with the mountain on which the caribou were supposed to have lived.

One of the most prevalent pieces of European cloth found in descriptions of Native dress in the period is the matchcoat, which could range from a tailored jacket to a piece of fabric wrapped around the body. The matchcoat shows up over and over in trade lists and travelogues as a feature of Native dress, and by the eighteenth century is almost always described as being made of cloth. Peter Kalm, a Dutch traveler in the northern colonies just before the American War for Independance, described the matchcoat as

> pieces of white cloth, or of a coarse uncut material. The Indians constantly wear such a cloth, wrapping it round their bodies. Sometimes they hang it over their shoulders; in warm weather they fasten the pieces round the middle; and in cold weather they put them over the head. Both their men and women wear these

pieces of cloth, which have commonly several blue or red stripes on the edge.[41]

Figure 7. Blanket or matchcoat, 1775. Courtesy of the Museum of the Fur Trade.



Cheap and easy to manufacture, the matchcoat became an almost universal garment ubiquitous with Indian-ness to the extent that runaway slaves in the period used it to try to pass for Indian and escape their masters. One runaway looked "much like unto an Indian and will endeavor to pass for such; had with him a strip'd Indian Match-coat, which I suppose he will make Use of for that Purpose."[42] Although the cloth used for matchcoats was of European manufacture, the matchcoat itself stemmed from an earlier indigenous garment,[43] and the cloth was used in such a distinctive manner that its use usually equaled Indian identity.

Although the use of matchcoats equaled Native identity, colonists at the time viewed any incorporation of European *clothing* by Native Americans as full acceptance of European culture. In the context of the civilizing effort, apparent conversion meant acceptance of the civilizing project. "When Europeans bestowed presents, they believed the goods symbolized the recipients' submission to and dependence on a crown or colonial government. The Indians, on their part, perceived these presents as evidence of mutual regard between treaty participants."[44] Even the earliest explorers believed that by changing clothing, they could change an individual's culture and allegiance. In an attempt to create interpreters, Jacques Cartier abducted two sons of

[41] Peter Kalm. *Peter Kalm's Travels in North America*; the English Version of 1770 Reprint (New York: Dover Publications, 1987): 519.
[42] *Virginia Gazette* (Hunter), Williamsburg , May 29, 1752.
[43] Becker: 737.
[44] Shannon: 42.

the local leader and took them back to France. "We wished to take two of his [the sachem's] sons away with us and afterwards would bring them back again to that harbor . . . We dressed up his two sons in shirts and ribbons and in red caps, and put a little brass chain round the neck of each, at which they were greatly pleased; and they proceeded to hand over their old rags to those who were going back to shore."[45] Although they had been dressed in the French manner and lived in France for a year, the two boys Taignoagny and Domagaya ran away as soon as they returned the next year. Not surprisingly, Cartier's forcible abduction and attempted conversion didn't take.

A century later, the French civilizing project was less explicit and forceful, but still present. Natives in closer proximity to convents were quicker to assimilate. The Swedish traveler Peter Kalm noted that in contrast to many of the other Natives he had encountered, the Huron near the Ursuline convent in Quebec were relatively more assimilated in their dress.

Figure 8. 1760 Model of a Huron canoe made at the Ursuline convent in Quebec and taken to Scotland by Lt. Alexander Farqharson. Published in Trading Identities.

"Lorette is a village, three French miles to the west of Quebec, inhabited chiefly by Indians of the Huron nation converted to the Roman Catholic religion . . . The Indians dress chiefly like the other adjacent Indian nations; the men, however, like to wear waistcoats, or jackets, like the French. The women keep exactly to the Indian dress."[46] The women's resistance to

[45] Jacques Cartier. *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier (1534-42).* Biggar, HP ed. (Ottawa: FA Acland, 1924): 66-67.
[46] Kalm: 462.

the new European clothing styles is interesting, given recent scholarship which argues that Catholic conversion offered Native women new forms of social power in a changing world.[47] Kalm as well as other travelers note the Native women's resistance to European clothing in the area around the Ursuline convent in Lorette.

Not much scholarship has examined the interaction of the Ursuline convent with the Natives near Quebec, and very few of its papers have been published, which is unfortunate because the convent was originally set up to educate Native girls and some Native women converted and joined the convent as sisters or worked for the convent as lay members. The convent also produced clothing for the Indian trade and representations of Native dress for donors back in France. British visitor John Ogden wrote "these women, wishing to preserve their sisterhood, and to perform the accustomed acts of charity to the sick and poor, supply the deficiency in their present incomes, by making up the articles of Indian dress, sent by the merchants among the western tribes."[48] For these women, some of whom were Natives themselves, making clothing for sale to Natives in the New World filled the same charitable

Figure 9. A late 18th century example of Quebec convent work, a birch bark reticule base worked in moose hair with pastoral images of Natives. Published in Trading Identities. Rijksmuseum voor Volkerkunde, Leiden B191.53

[47] On the impact of Christian conversion on Native women, see Nancy Shoemaker. "Kateri Tekakwitha's Tortuous Path to Sainthood." *Negotiators of Change.* Nancy Shoemaker, ed. (New York: Routledge, 1995); Sleeper-Smith, Susan. *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes.*(Amherst: University of Massachusets Press, 2001); Brown, Kathleen. *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); and Guitierrez, Ramon. *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

[48] John Ogden. *A Tour through Upper and Lower Canada, Containing a View of the Present State of Religion, Learning, Commerce, Agriculture, Colonization, Customs and Manners, Among the English, French and Indian Settlements.* 1799. (Tarrytown, NY: W. Abbatt, 1917): 12.

function as caring for the sick in the Old World. In order to solicit donations, the sisters also made representations of "genuine" Native clothing for dolls to be shown in France. Madame Hecquet, one of the convent's strongest supporters, wrote to the Mother Superior in 1750: "I have and I continue to hold my desire to have the figurines of savage families both to make them known to, and admired by, my own family and also by some friends."[49] Like the canoe model and dolls shown above, the dolls showed Native Americans in "authentic" clothing made almost entirely of imported European cloth.

The convent also appropriated Native art media to produce objects as gifts for donors. Beginning in the late 17th century all the way through the 19th century, the convent produced many birch bark items embroidered with moosehair using very European pastoral images. Although Natives during the same period produced many items of birch bark and used moosehair to decorate clothing and moccasins, the two were never used for the same object because moosehair embroidery punctured the bark, making the container useless for utilitarian purposes. The bark fancy work proved surprisingly popular. After one of the sisters "demonstrated before us the making of some boxes in the Indian style in order to teach us how to work in bark; this inspired in several of the sisters the desire to try to make them, and they perfected the art so well that, the next year, their works were sought after as examples of proper workmanship and good taste, of the type that, since that time, we have sold every year for

[49] Quoted in Ruth B. Phillips. *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art From the Northeast, 1700-1900.* (Seattle, London, Montreal and Kingston: University of Washington Press and McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998): 84.

Figure 10. Late 18th century Quebec convent tea caddy. Published in Trading Identities.

small sums, and that furnishes us also with things to give as presents to people to whom we are obliged."[50] The sisters probably learned the technique from Mere Sainte-Marie-Madeleine nee Anne du Bos, a sister born to a Huron mother and French father in 1678. Upon Mere Sainte-Marie-Madeleine's death early in the 18th century, the then current Mother Superior noted that "in her last years, she used her leisure to teach the young to embroider on silk, gold and bark."[51] The fact that the convent benefited so much from producing "Indian" crafts and included Native sisters makes it more surprising that the Native women living near the convent rejected European clothing. When Native Marie Negabamat's parents sent her to the convent school, she ran away

[50] Ibid.: 105.
[51] Ibid.: 106.

"four days later, after tearing a dress we had given her to pieces."[52] Not only did Marie reject the school, she destroyed the physical manifestation of its control over her, the dress.

Other Native women who lived near the convent had economic motives for rejecting European clothing. As several travelers noted, Native women in the 18th century were beginning to make what we would now call souveniers, or items for the tourist trade. "They also make shoes of moose hide which they embellish with painting and with porcupine quill embroidery in white or red; but they make these to sell to people who wish to procure them for display in their own land."[53] The Native women may have banked on their genuineness, in contrast to the fancy work produced in the nearby convent, to generate sales. "Trois Riviere is a respectable looking old French Town—here we saw Girls working those beautiful Boxes and Baskets of the bark of the Canadian Birch—with the hair of a Moose . . . but though both the Bark and the hair are furnished by the Indians, the articles are worked by the Girls of the Village and the Sisters in the Convents—It is the Mokasins and a coarser kind of baskets of hair and beads and reeds that the Indians fabricate themselves."[54] By differentiating their products from those produced in the convents, Native women could market similar but novel items to rich visitors to the convent.

The Native women near the Quebec convent had room to resist colonization and assimilation because European settlement was less dense, and the economic pressure to assimilate was less. In the English colonies further south, the pressure on Native communities to assimilate, adopt English clothing, labor and gender norms, and provide cheap labor was much more intense. To civilize the Natives, British colonists were not above trickery and deception.

[52] "Letter of Marie de L'Incarnation" in *Atlantic Lives*, Timothy J Shannon ed. (New York: Pearson and Longman, 2004).

[53] Sieur de Diereville. *Relation of the Voyage to Port Royal in Acadia or New France.* John Clarence Webster, ed. and Mrs. Clarence Webster, trans. (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1933): 167.

[54] "Journal to Lower Canada." National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh MS 5703. Begins Sept 1800. Quoted in Phillips: 10.

To procure cheap labor and greater control over Natives, colonists implicitly if not explicitly colluded to draw Natives into crippling, unpayable debt. As historian David Silverman points out, debt and credit created a vicious cycle for Native consumers in settled areas.

> First, a native family was pressed to rely on purchased food for a season or two; then, with creditors calling, adults went to work for Englishmen and neglected the subsistence activities of the traditional economy; the next cold season, they were back at the store to buy things they had been unable to provide for themselves during the previous year; and thus debts mounted and the pattern repeated itself.[55]

Although Silverman cites food purchases as the major cause of debt, clothing made up the majority of credit purchases for Native consumers on Martha's Vineyard, as we saw above in Tables 2. As the Native minister Gideon Hawley wrote to a friend in 1760, this debt caused a number of Native children to be indentured. "There is scarcely an Indian Boy among us not indetted to an English Master . . . their neighbors find means to involve the Indians so deeply in debt as they are obliged to make over yr boys, if they have any, for security till payment."[56] And even to engage in whaling, one of the few cash trades available to Native men during the period, many Natives were in debt before they even started, ending up in a vicious cycle of debt peonage to the whaling industry. When Native Caleb Pond prepared to sail on his first whaling voyage from New Bedford, he purchased sufficient clothing to last him for months or perhaps a year or more at sea in brutal conditions—and found himself in debt for 25 pounds before having even left shore.[57] Natives who were already indentured sometimes found themselves bound for a longer period than they intended because of debts incurred for clothing purchases. Aquinnah Native Abigail Joel originally contracted to work for Mary Clifton in Portsmouth, New Hampshire for one year, but found herself bound for much longer than that. Under the terms of

[55] Silverman: 628.
[56] Gideon Hawley. Gideon Hawley to Andrew Oliver, 9 December 1760, Hawley Journal and Letters, MHS. Quoted in Silverman: 643.
[57] Account of Caleb Pond, 3 April 1803. David Look Account Book, MVHS. Quoted in Silverman: 646.

the indenture, Clifton promised to pay for Joel's room and board, and to pay her seven pounds cash at the end of the year, while Joel was responsible for clothing herself with items purchased from Clifton. When she bought rough homespun and some linen for shifts and aprons, Joel found herself in debt to her mistress for more than thirty pounds at the end of the year, and was bound by the courts to serve until she paid her debt.[58]

The Rhode Island assembly attempted to prevent unfair Native indentures as a result of debt by ordering that "no Indian shall be bound as an Apprentice or Servant . . . in this Colony, without the Consent . . . of two Justices of the Peace, or Wardens of this Colony" because "evil minded persons in this Colony, of a greedy and covetous Design, often draw Indians into their Debt, by selling them Goods at extravagant Rates, and get the . . . Indians bound to them for longer Time than is just or reasonable."[59] Similar laws were put in place across the settled areas to prevent creditors from seizing the labor of Native debtors or their families, but in frontier areas, Europeans avoided giving credit to Native consumers at all. In 1716, Charles Glover was told by the South Carolina Commissioners of the Indian Trade that "you are not on any Pretence whatsoever to give any Credit, or trust any Indians whatsoever, even for the Value of one single skin."[60] Traders in settled areas actively attempted to draw Native consumers into debt they could not possibly pay off because the Natives could be seized and forced to work in a period of labor shortages and rising prices for free and bound labor, while on the frontier, indentured Natives could not hunt, or could easily slip away and avoid paying their debts altogether. Clothing purchase patterns therefore varied from areas like Martha's Vineyard, where merchants

[58] New Hampshire Provincial Court Records, Case #18462, New Hampshire State Archives, Concord NH. Quoted in Silverman: 647.
[59] *Acts and Laws of Rhode Island, 1730-1760*: Facsimile in Rhode Island Historical Society Library: 219. Quoted in John A Sainsbury "Indian labor in Early Rhode Island." *The New England Quarterly*. Vol 48 No 3 (Sept 1975): 384
[60] McDowell, ed: 104.

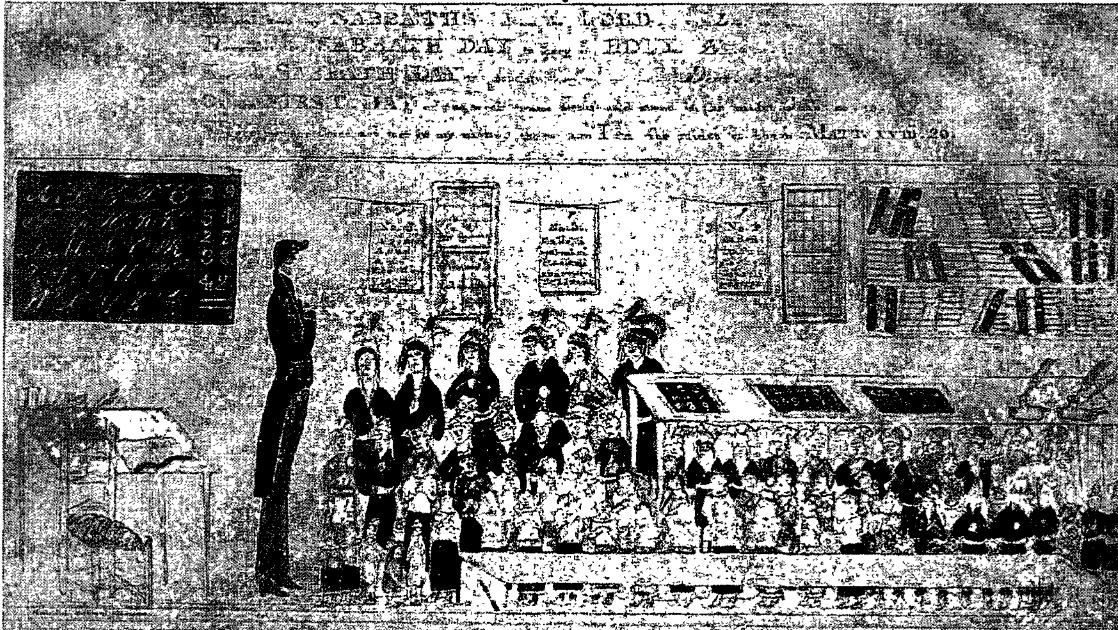
were more than happy to extend credit, and the Hudson's Bay posts, where merchants demanded furs in hand. This encouraged Natives in areas with credit-granting merchants to purchase more cloth and clothing, even many paid dearly for it with their or their children's freedom.

But despite all the laws attempting to prevent unfair indentures, most Natives in settled areas did end up bound to English families for some part of their lives. According to David Silverman's analysis of the 1774 census of Rhode Island, 35.5% of all Natives in the state lived with white families—but in 19 out of the 27 towns surveyed, more than 50% of the Natives lived with white families.[61] Earlier in the century, Cotton Mather observed that almost all Native children "are now generally in English families."[62] Silverman analyzes in depth the devastating effects the prevalence Native indenture had on the language, culture, and dress of the tribes in the area. As he notes, indenture to white families during childhood effectively destroyed Native children's grounding in the language and culture of their people, and gave Europeans strong influence over their foodways, language and socialization. Indenture also gave masters unprecedented control over Native bodies, and they used clothing to articulate the social and racial difference between white masters and indentured Natives, helping solidify nascent racism. William Apess, who became a prominent Methodist minister later in his life, was indentured as a child and later wrote about it in his autobiography. His indenture "was not so bad as I have seen—I mean my table fare and lodgeing—but when we came to the clothing part, it was mean enough, I can assure you. I was not fit to be seen anywhere among decent folks."[63] Apess was visually marked as separate and inferior to his white masters through the clothing they provided, although many colonists during the period argued that indentures were for Natives' own good.

[61] Silverman: 392-393.
[62] Cotton Mather to William Ashhurst, 5 January 1716, Cotton and Increase Mather Letters, MHS. Quoted in Silverman: 643.
[63] William Apess. *On Our Own Ground.* Barry O'Connell, ed. (Amherst, MA: University of Masachusetss Press, 1992): 124.

Other civilizing efforts which purported to be for the good of the Natives also marked Natives as inferior and separate through clothing. At Moor's Charity School for Indians, Eleazar Wheelock took donated clothing from other colonists to help keep costs low, but refused to dress Native students in donated clothing he felt was too elegant for them, and instead gave it to their English classmates.[64] Hezekiah Calvin, a Deleware boy who had attended the school, wrote to Wheelock complaining about the poor treatment. He wrote that Wheelock "Diot and Cloath them with that that's mean . . . That Mary [Secutor, a Narragansett] ask'd for a small piece of

Figure 11. Eleazar Wheelock's Indian School, by Dennis Cusick, Seneca Nation. 1811. In a private collection, published in *North American Indian Art* by Furst and Furst.

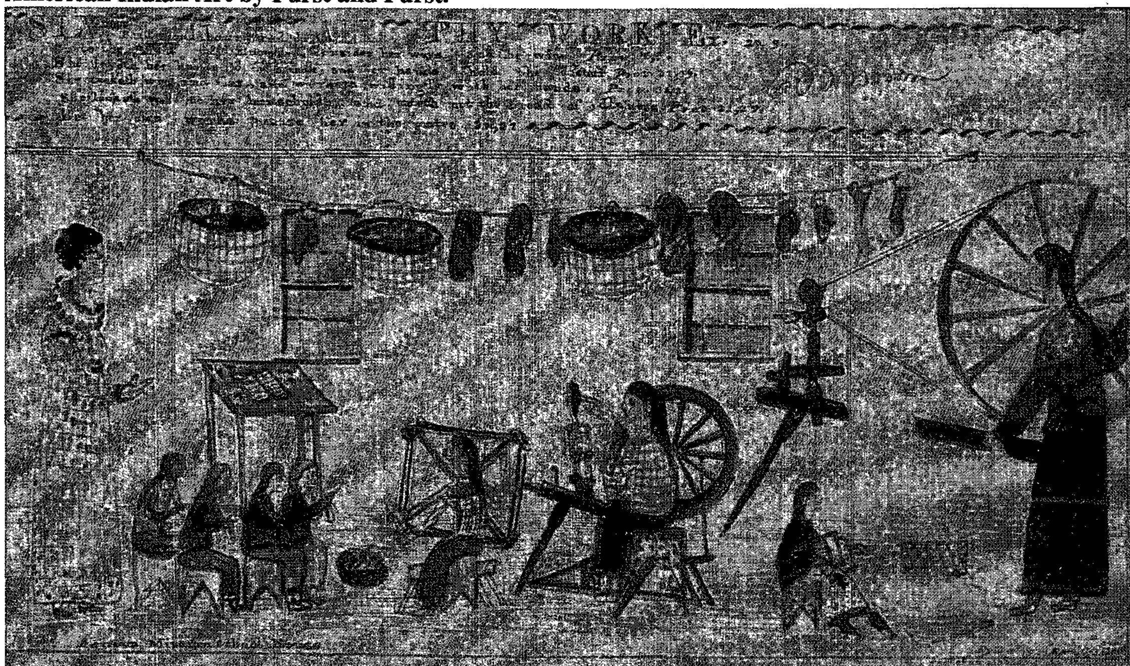


Cloth to make a pair of Slippers, which you would not allow her, [saying] twas too good for Indians."[65] Although the mission of the school was to produce Natives "brought up in a Christian manner," the point of Native education was not to integrate them into colonial society as equals with whites. Rather Wheelock argued that if they were "instructed in Agriculture, and taught to get their living by their Labour," they would no longer "make such Depradations on our

[64] Silverman: 654.
[65] James Axtell. *The European and the Indian.* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981): 101.

Frontiers."[66] The boys at Wheelock's school were instructed with the goal of making them into future missionaries and teachers to other Natives—because Wheelock argued that they were cheaper to maintain than an English missionary or school teacher.[67] For the boys, this meant instruction in Latin, Greek, English, mathematics, history, and literature. But for their female classmates and compatriots, civilized education meant training in how to be a proper English wife.

Figure 12. Girl's School, by Dennis Cusick, Seneca Nation. 1811. In a private collection, published in North American Indian Art by Furst and Furst.



The girls were not educated in the hopes that they would go out and convert other Natives as the boys would. Rather, they were educated "in order to accompany these [Native] Boys, when they shall have Occasion for such Assistance in the Business of their Mission."[68] While the boys lived in Wheelock's home and performed farm labor on his property when not engaged

[66] Wheelock to General Thomas Gage, 22 February 1264, file 764172.2, Dartmouth College Archives.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Eleazar Wheelock. *A plain and faithful narrative of the original design, rise, progress and present state of the Indian charity school at Lebanon, in Connecticut 1763.* (Rochester, NY: Rochester Reprints, 1909): 34.

in lessons, the girls were placed in several different homes with "women in this neighborhood to instruct [them] in all the arts of good House wifery."[69] They "were to be instructed in writing &c, till they should be fit for an Apprenticeship, to be taught Men's and Women's Apparel."[70] These girls were educated not because Wheelock believed it would benefit them, but because he and other New Englanders at the time believed that the Native boys would need someone to provide proper English clothing for them when they went on mission or to teach, lest they turn back to their Native ways. The boys' conversion depended on having a woman to perform the gendered labor of clothing production and housekeeping. Wheelock argued that girls should be added to the school "for the purpose that these Boy[s] may not be under absolute necessity to turn Savage in this manner of living for want of those who can do the female part for them when they shall be abroad on the business of their Missions and out of reach of the English."[71] Education of the Native boys not only required that they understand Latin, Greek, and math, but also that they assimilate proper European gender norms and styles of dress. Inclusion of the girls was possible because the expense for their education was "but Little more than their Cloathing" because they received only one half day of schoolroom education a week, to teach them how to read and write.[72]

However, "good House wifery" was not necessarily a benefit for the girls. As shown in the painting by Dennis Cusick, a Seneca student, the girl's education included spinning, carding, and knitting, when white women at the end of the 18th century were beginning move away from making their own clothing and purchase cheaper cottons and woolens produced abroad. As Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and Jack Larkin point out, white women at the end of the 18th and

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[69] Ibid.: 34.
[70] Ibid.: 34.
[71] Wheelock to Andrew Oliver [Treasurer of the Boston Board of the New England Company] 15 Oct 1760, file 760565, Dartmouth College Archives.
[72] Wheelock: 46.

beginning of the 19th centuries spun at historical celebrations to symbolize their frontier frugality and independence—not as a full time occupation. Indian women were being urged and sometimes forced to abandon two centuries of buying purchased cloth in favor of cruder homespun.[73] Many of the Native girls educated at Wheelock's school found themselves trapped in this dilemma, equipped with skills whites no longer found useful, but not trained in the traditional textile crafts Native communities still depended on.

One girl, Miriam Storr, arrived at Wheelock's school at age 11 illiterate and returned to her Delaware community at age 16 barely literate. Wheelock hired a "proper Gentelwoman" to teach Miriam and other female pupils "tending a Dary, Spining, the use of their needle,"[74] but when Miriam left the school five or six years later, she was unemployable. Wheelock and missionary John Brainerd, who worked in the Delaware community where Miriam's parents lived, hoped that her European skills would be a blessing to her family. When she returned, Brainerd tried to find her an apprenticeship with a tailor or seamstress, but was unable to find one. Unable to help her parents with making mats or gathering food, she eventually moved away from home and lived in several different New England towns trying to find work as a housekeeper, but no one would take a Native servant without an indenture. Miriam eventually died of tuberculosis at the age of 19, alone, in debt and unemployed. She could barely sign her own name.[75]

Another girl, Hannah Garrett, succeeded by Wheelock's standards, although she might have felt differently. Hannah arrived at Wheelock's school at the age of 14, and was one of the

[73] Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790-1840.* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); and Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun.* (New York: Random House, 2001).
[74] Wheelock to Sir William Johnson, 11 Dec 1761. file 761661, Dartmouth College Archives.
[75] Brainerd to Wheelock, 3 February 1769 in Brainerd, *Life of John Brainerd:* 382 and Brainerd to Wheelock, 22 June 1769 in Brainerd: 383. Quoted in Margaret Connell Szasz. "'Poor Richard' Meets the Native American: Schooling for Young Women in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut." *The Pacific Historical Review.* Vol 49, No 2. (May 1980): 227.

few girls from the school who actually did marry and accompany a boy from the school on mission. Many of the other girls grew sick and died or left, left school before their studies were complete, or, like Miriam, were unable to find work or husbands. Hannah was married less than a year after arriving at the school. A former pupil, David Fowler, had sought Wheelock's assistance in finding a bride from the school for two years before marrying Hannah. Two other girls turned him down during that time, although for what reason is not clear, and Fowler wrote to Wheelock often complaining bitterly about the loneliness and difficulty of living alone among the backwoods Natives as their schoolteacher. When the 31 year old Fowler finally married the 14 year old Hannah, he installed her in an isolated, one room cabin far from Hannah's Pequot family and happily wrote to Wheelock "I find very great Profit by having the other Rib join'd to my Body for it hath taken away all my House work from me."[76] Hannah married a man twice her age who valued her for her "good House wifery." His letters mention nothing about her company, and we have no idea how Hannah felt about the arrangement.

The combination of indenture and education accomplished its goal and increased Native assimilation in areas near dense European settlements. In 1702, when Samuel Sewall visited Gay Head, he wrote that although the head man of the area Natives still lived in a wigwam, its contents "demonstrate[ed] his Industry, viz, Two great Spinning Wheels, one small one for Linnen, and a Loom to weave it."[77] Of course, it is unlikely that the head man used the spinning wheels or the loom, because spinning was the province of women for both Natives and Europeans, and weaving was quickly becoming entirely so. The women of the head man's household produced European-style cloth in the home, whether for their own use or for sale, even though they still lived in a traditional style home. Another Native woman in the area, Mary

[76] Fowler to Wheelock, 2 December 1766 file 766652.2, Dartmouth College Archives.
[77] Samuel Sewall. *The Diary of Samuel Sewall.* Milton H Thomas, ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973): vol II, 749.

Paugenet owned a loom, weaver's tools, and copious amounts of wool when she died in 1757, and Esther Sooduck owned two spinning wheels and two looms even though her estate was described as "at best a mere shelter" and the land she lived on "wholly unfit."[78] The rhetoric used to describe her land may have been justification to channel it into European ownership for its improvement, but the fact that these Massachusett women died owning what appear to be the capital for small scale cloth production shows their integration with at least the production end of the European cloth trade.[79]

Another Massachusett woman who died at about the same time bequeathed a number of clothing items, specifically to other Native women. In her 1749 will (originally written in Massachusett), Naomai Omaush wrote:

> And also to his wife Butthiah Howwueit I bequeath one of my dresses—whichever one she pleases she shall choose when I have died. [. . .] I say that I bequeath to my kinswoman Jeanohumun one ohquohkoome kaskepessue and also one of my dresses. Also I bequeath to my kinsman Henry Amos some of that cloth of mine that I may then have; of the red he shall have one penchens because of how kind he has been to me. I bequeath to my kinswoman Ezther Henry one dress of mine of blue calico; I bought it from her late mother, and she shall have it. I bequeath to my kinswoman Marcy Noah one petticoat.[80]

These clothing items obviously held enough value within the Native community to be willed laterally and intergenerationally. Naomi Omaush's will also shows that she had enough dresses to allow her kin to choose among them, and very few of the items she bequeathed were of Native origin. With the exception of the untranslated "ohquohkoome kaskepessue," the items Naomai felt strongly enough to bequeath were European goods.

[78] Daniel R Mandell. *Behind the Frontier: Indians in Eighteenth Century Eastern Massachusets.* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996): 200.

[79] For more on Native producers within the colonial economy, see Claudio Saunt. "Pigs and Hunters—'Rights in the Woods' on the Trans-Appalachian Frontier." Andrew R L Cayton; Fredrika J Teute, eds. *Contact Point.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and Lucy Eldersveld Murphy. *A Gathering of Rivers : Indians, Métis, and Mining in the Western Great Lakes, 1737-1832* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).

[80] Calloway: 53.

The Europeans who inventoried Native estates also valued clothing, whether European or Native style, highly enough to list it in probate inventories. When the Delaware Colonel White Eyes died in Pittsburgh in 1779, most of the items listed in his estate were clothing items. Col. White Eyes was one of the most influential supporters of the Treaty of Fort Pitt described above, as a result of which the newly formed United States shipped a huge quantity of European clothing to the Delaware. Although Col White Eyes died only a few months after the signing of the treaty, his estate shows the influence alliance with the United States had on Native dress. At his death, White Eyes owned six coats, including one "Green Coat fac'd with Red," one "Printed Linen" and one "Scarlet Silk Jacket Trim'd with Gold Lace." However, he only owned one pair of breeches, listed as part of a set with one of the coats, and owned two breech clouts and three pairs of leggings. He also owned a matchcoat, despite the number of coats he owned. The dearth of breeches suggests that White Eyes was not fully assimilated, although his three pairs of shoes suggest otherwise (though these may have been moccasins—the inventory is unclear). And yet the all of the clothing listed except for two pairs of leggings were described as being of cloth, and clothing items made up the majority of his moveable estate (along with a few other small European items such as a pocket book and a pair of spectacles).[81] The goods that the Delaware requested and received at the Treaty of Fort Pitt obviously found their way into use.

The United States had a strong interest in assuring that these assimilated Natives stayed assimilated, for all of the reasons already mentioned. To ensure that government money was not spent on gifts which Natives would turn around and resell, and to encourage their assimilation, the United States passed legislation in 1796 making it illegal for Natives to sell goods "of the

[81] James F O'Neill, ed. *Their Bearing is Noble and Proud.* (Dayton, OH: J.T.G.S. Pub, 1995): 77.

kind usually obtained by the Indians, in their intercourse with white people."[82] In its expansion westward, the United States made promises to many Native nations to provided them with both initial gifts and annual payments in the form of "clothing, domestic animals, implements of husbandry and other utensils suited to their circumstances, and in compensating useful artificers,"[83] which encouraged them to assimilate to European settlement patterns. In a typical early treaty, in 1794 the United States promised the Six Nations gifts of clothing and domestic animals amounting to 4500 dollars a year[84] (about 88,000 dollars in 2007 currency).[85] To protect this investment and keep from twice enriching the Native groups with its gifts, the United States made it illegal for any white person to buy anything other than skins and furs from Natives. Although this effectively barred Natives from entering any trade besides hunter and trapper, the United States flatly acknowledged that the legislation was enacted "to promote civilization among the friendly Indian tribes"[86] and force them to keep the clothing and farming equipment the US gave them.

Figure 13. 1750 Mohawk-type shot pouch, donated by Rev. Williams to the Deerfield Museum. Courtesy of the Deerfield Museum. 1998.02.500.02

Cloth and clothing objects held a special place in securing friendships between Natives and between Natives and colonists. Many

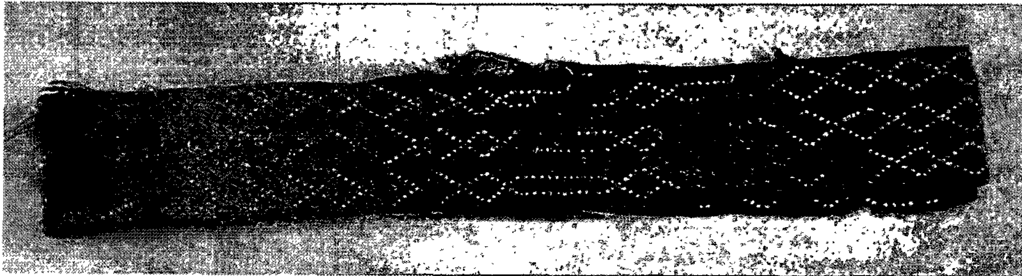
[82] "An Act to Regulate Trade and Intercourse with the Indian Tribes, and to Preserve Peace on the Frontiers." May 19, 1796 Yale Avalon Project http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/statutes/native
[83] "A Treaty between the United States of America, and the Tribes of Indians called the Six Nations." November 11 1794 Yale Avalon Project http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/ntreaty
[84] Ibid.
[85] According to measuringworth.com, which cites Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, "Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to 2007", MeasuringWorth.Com, 2008.
[86] "An Act to Regulate Trade" 1796.

historians have shown the central importance of gift giving and exchange in most Native communities, showing that exchange based on the attempt to create ties of mutual friendship and exchange formed the beginning of the fur trade. Foreign to Europeans at the time of contact, non-economic exchange of goods lay at the center of Native community ties, and trade goods like cloth and clothing were incorporated as exchange objects. Writing in 1738, trader Claude Lebeau described the exchange that took place when his native guides left their community.

> Each of their friends, wanting to have a token of their mutual friendship, implored them to exchange clothes, so that at the time of their departure they found themselves stripped in less than an hour more than twenty times of different items; blankets, leggings, shoes, hatchets, belts, etc. Because each one, in proportion to the height of esteem in which they held him, knew of no better way to show his consideration than by doing himself the honor of possessing something that had belonged to them.[87]

Lebeau commented on the exchange because it was so foreign and unusual to him, but almost every object exchanged was of European origin. The belts and shoes may have been wholly of Native manufacture, but the blankets, leggings, and hatchets were certainly European. However, their significance lay not in their manufacture or their origin, but in their use in the Native community.

Figure 14. 1750 Ojibwe-type sash donated to the Deerfield Museum by Rev. Williams. Courtesy of the Deerfield Museum. IR.A.24



Natives used exchanges of clothing to secure kin ties and friendships even across conflicted borders and ethnic lines. In 1704, eight year old colonist Eunice Williams was taken

[87] Claude Lebeau. *Avantures de Sr. C. LeBeau 1738.* (New York: Johnson Reprints, 1966): vol II: 87.

from Deerfield Massachusets during the joint French and Native raid on the town, along with her father and several other family members. Although her father and the rest of her family returned from their captivity, Eunice was placed in a Kanien'kehaka (Mohawk) family and grew up there. At sixteen she married Arosen, a member of the Kanien'kehaka, but did not sever her ties to her natal family. Williams family records indicate that she visited at least four times with her Native family, including her mixed-race children and Native husband, while her husband Arosen visited at least once alone. When he visited in 1750, Arosen brought his brother-in-law Reverend Sephen Williams (Eunice's older brother) a gift of a shell gorget, a sash, a bullet pouch and perhaps other clothing items.[88] Only the three items listed were donated to the Deerfield city museum later, and the original description is very indicative either of Reverend Williams' attitude towards his brother-in-law or the museum's attitude in the early nineteenth century. Although historian Suzanne Flynt was able to piece together the story above from other documents, the original description of the items states that "the Indian articles were presented Doctr Williams by the Indian who married his sister."[89] Although Eunice and Arosen made the trip to Massachusetts from their home somewhere in upstate New York several times, and attempted to integrate Rev. Williams with clothing gifts, Eunice was effectively shut out of the family by her anonymity in the listing, while Arosen is reduced to "the Indian." Whether this was done by Rev. Williams when he donated the items or by the museum staff who described the items is hard to say, but it is indicative of colonial attitudes towards the marriage and Native attempts to strengthen kin ties with whites in either case.[90]

[88] Suzanne Flynt. "Early Native American Collections in Deerfield." *American Indian Art Magazine*. (Vol 30 No 1. 2004): 52-59.

[89] Ibid.: 57.

[90] For more on European-Native intermarriage and colonial and Native attitudes towards it, see Sleeper-Smith, Susan. *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes.*(Amherst: University of Massachusets Press, 2001); Jennifer Spear, *Whiteness and the Purity of Blood : Race, Sexuality, and Social Order in Colonial Louisiana* (University of Minnesota dissertation,

Figure 15. Anon. Mohawk leader Hendrick, 1700. Reproduced in Becker: 739.

European traders and governments recognized the importance of clothing gifts in securing trade partners and alliances. French trader Chrestien LeClercq described the reasoning behind giving a clothing item.

> Sometimes the leaders and chiefs are invited for a meal in order to show all the Indians that they are esteemed and honored. Rather more frequently they are given something like a fine coat, in order to distinguish them from the commonalty. For such things as this they have a particular esteem, especially if the article has been in use by the commander of the French.[91]

French officials conformed to Native expectations by providing a personal exchange. Indian leaders were given clothing gifts more often because of their "particular esteem" for them, and also because clothing gifts served colonists' purposes as well. As LeClercq pointed out, clothing gifts "distinguish them from the commonality." While an invitation to a meal showed others that the leader was esteemed and honored, only those present for the occasion could witness it. A coat, on the other hand, went wherever the leader went, and visibly showed friends and enemies the leaders' connections to a colonial government. And while a meal was temporary, a coat served colonial aims to "civilize" and convert Natives.

Colonial officials and traders consciously and intentionally used clothing gifts to impose their understanding and desires for hierarchy within Native communities. Edward Umfreville, an official of the Hudson's Bay Company wrote in his 1790 report about how this visual

1999); and Richard Godbeer, *Sexual Revolution in Early America*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

[91] LeClerq: 75.

differentiation was usually accomplished. The native group first approached the fur trade post and announced their intention to trade with gunshots and yelling, and were escorted into the fort. The leaders, then, were set apart from the rest of the group with gifts of clothing.

> During this visit, the Chief is drest out at the expense of the Factory in the following manner: a coarse cloth coat, either red or blue, lined with baize and having regimental cuffs; and a waistcoat and breeches of baize. The suit is ornamented with orris lace. He is also presented with a white or check shirt; his stockings are of yarn, one of them red, the other blue, and tied below the knee with worsted garters; his Indian shoes are sometimes put on, but he frequently walks in his stocking feet; his hat is coarse and bedecked with three ostrich feathers of various colors and a worsted sash tied around the crown, a small silk handkerchief is tied round his neck and this compleats his dress. The Lieutenant is also presented with a coat but it has no lining; he is likewise provided with a shirt and cap, not unlike those worn by mariners.[92]

Not only did these gifts visually support and depend on European hegemony abroad—silk from the Orient trade and feathers from Africa—they perpetuated it in North America as well. For a minimal price, Hudson's Bay Company created a visible difference between the chief, his "Lieutenant," and the rest of the Natives accompanying them. The chief received the most clothing "at the expense of the Factory," showing his power to bring the Native's furs to the HBC and European goods to the Natives. His second's goodwill was cultivated in case the HBC agents needed another contact in the Native community or the chief died. All of this was accomplished at minimum cost. Baize was a coarse grade of cloth usually used for linings of soldiers' coats and lining cupboards, mirrors, and carpets, while "orris lace"

Figure 16. Payousak, Chief of the Great Osage by Charles Balthazar Julien Fevret de Saint-Memin. 1804. Courtesy of the New York Historical Society.

[92] Edward Umfreville, *The Present State of Hudson's Bay.* 1790 James Ford Bell Library, University of Minnesota.

was actually a type of heavy ribbon used to trim saddles, coaches and horse reins.[93] A coarse hat, mariner's cap and an unlined coat for the "Lieutenant" helped cut corners as well. Colonists wanted to enforce their ideas of dress and hierarchy on the Natives they encountered, but not at the expense of profits.

A trade coat found at the Fletcher Cemetery Site in northern Michigan shows exactly what lengths traders went to in order to cut expenses. Excavated in the late seventies after an Army Corps of Engineers levy project disturbed an unknown burial site, the site was composed of 56 individuals buried between 1750 and 1765. Although all of the individuals were presumably buried clothed, based on the positioning of beads and small scraps of partially decomposed cloth, only three graves contained enough surviving cloth for a trade coat to be identified. One trade coat, found in the grave of a woman between the ages of eighteen and twenty five, may have been decorated along the sleeves and hem with seed beads.[94] Another was found in the grave of a man between the ages of twenty five and forty, also possibly decorated with beads, several brooches, and tinkling cones.[95] However, both of these coats were too badly decomposed to be very well analyzed. (Although the presence of a trade coat in a young woman's grave suggests redistribution within the Native economy after the gifts were given). The last trade coat, in the grave of a man believed to be over forty, was sufficiently preserved for archaeologist Margaret Kimball Brown to analyze its construction. Draped over the body rather than worn, the coat strongly resembled military uniforms of the period, but was not actually military issue.[96] Although it resembled military uniforms in cut and silhouette, it differed from

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[93] Montgomery: 159 and 312.

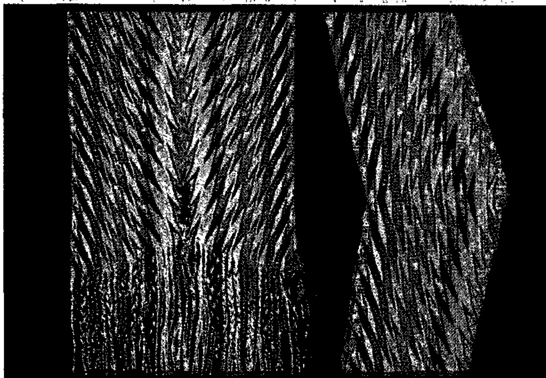
[94] Robert C Mainfort Jr. *Indian Social Dynamics in the Period of European Contact: Fletcher Site Cemetery, Bay County, Michigan.* Publications of the Museum. (East Lansing, Mich: Michigan State University, 1979): 322-323.

[95] Ibid.: 348.

[96] Margaret Kimball Brown. "An Eighteenth Century Trade Coat." *Plains Anthropologist.* (Vol 16 No 52, 1971): 131.

known military uniforms in a number of construction techniques. Perhaps most obviously, military coats of the period had a fold where the lower front edge of the coat was held back by a button to reveal the contrasting lining, whereas this coat had a simple strip of military braid where the fold should have been.[97] Although the coat was lined, the makers chose to represent the fold symbolically rather than waste the extra material. The braid itself, called lacing in period, was of lower quality than that found in European garments. As Brown notes, lacing on known European military uniforms is usually well preserved in archaeological excavations. However, "the metal on this lace [from the Fletcher Cemetery Site coat] must have been thin or of poor quality as it had oxidized almost completely."[98] Less visibly, the construction of the coat when new would have been shoddy at best. Although the coat had pocket flaps, it had no pockets, and the main purpose the garment's maker had in mind seems to have been thrift rather than quality of the garment. "A majority of the seams were formed by overcastting the raw edges and stitching them together with the edges abutting. This forms a flat, not strong seam, but saves cloth.."[99] Even if the coat had originally been a present, weak seams would have required frequent repair or a new garment, once the damage was irreparable.

Figure 17. A late-century example of "a party-colored sash." Courtesy of the Musee McCord. M5678



However shoddy the construction may have been, these gift coats to chiefs and important leaders helped create a very visual class hierarchy within Native communities. When Blue Jacket, a Shawnee chief who held a British commission as

[97] Ibid.: 131.
[98] Ibid.: 131.
[99] Ibid.: 131.

a brigadier general, received the chief of a neighboring Shawnee village and Simon Girty, the British liason to their Native allies, he "was dressed in a scarlet frock coat, richly laced with gold, and confined around his waist with a party-colored sash, and in red leggings and moccasins, ornamented in the highest style of Indian fashion. On his shoulders he wore a pair of gold epauletts, and on his arms broad silver bracelets; while from his neck hung a massive silver gorget, and a large medallion of his majesty George III."[100] To display both his loyalty and his importance, Blue Jacket wore many European-made markers of distinction, and clothing helped distinguish him from the commonality.

Figure 18. Grand Chef de Guerriers Iroquois by Jacques Grasset de Saint-Sauveur in Encyclopedia des Voyages 1796. Courtesy of the National Archives of Canada. R9266-3496

Figure 19. Sauvage Iroquois by Jacques Grasset de Saint-Sauveur in Encyclopedia des Voyages 1796. Courtesy of the National Archives of Canada. R9266-3492

[100] Spencer: 86.

Richard Smith, a Quaker attorney who would later serve in the first Continental Congress, observed a distinct class difference expressed in the clothing of Native Americans during his travels in the 1760s.

> Cloathing they use but little, sometimes a shirt or shift with a blanket or Coat, and sometimes the latter only without Linen. Woolen Boots and Leather Moccisons compleat the Dress of the common sort unless, which is rare, they possess a Hat or some other Covering for the Head. Some of the Chiefs, however, imitate the English mode and Joseph Brandt was dressed in a suit of Blue Broad Cloth as his Wife was in a Callicoe or Chintz gown.[101]

Although both chiefs and the more common sort wore quite a bit of European-made cloth and clothing, the European military style coat is associated with political and military power. In the two figures above, the "Grand Chef" (fig. 14) wears a highly decorated coat, along with other symbols of his association with Europeans, like the medal on his chest. The "Sauvage Iroquois," (fig. 15) on the other hand, wears European cloth as a breechclout and garters, but is bare chested.

Figure 20. Joseph Brant by George Romney, 1776. Courtesy of the National Archives of Canada.

Because Natives left so few of their own written records, it is difficult at best to determine whether Natives understood this visual sense of hierarchy the same way Europeans did.[102] It certainly seems that Native leaders understood how to use clothing to manipulate their own image in European eyes, so it is probable that they did the same within their own communities. Joseph Brandt (fig. 20, 21, and 22) most certainly understood from an early age what difference

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[101] Richard Smith. *A Tour of Four Great Rivers: The Hudson, Mohawk, Susquehanna, and Delaware in 1769.* Francis Halsey, ed. (Port Washington, NY: I.J. Friedman, 1964): 83.

[102] See Jane T Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic frontier, 1700-1763.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003) and Kupperman, *Indians and English:Facing off in Early America* for more on European attempts to impose an artificially created and hopefully compliant hierarchy within Native communities.

clothing could make. In his teens, Brandt studied at Moor's Charity School for Indians[103] run by Eleazar Wheelock, and arrived "considerably clothed" because he came from a "Family of Distinction," while his two traveling companions Negyes and Center arrived "nearly naked and very lousy" although they came from the same village and tribe.[104] Presumably they did not come from similarly distinguished families.

In his adult life, Brandt used his clothing to navigate his complex family, political and military roles. His stepfather, a Mohawk sachem in his own right, was the son of Sagayeath, who visited England in 1710, and a good friend of William Johnson, the British Superintendent for Northern Indian Affairs. Johnson later became a British general and Brandt's brother-in-law, while Brandt became a prominent political and military leader of the Six Nations during both the French and Indian War and the American War for Independance. He is described in many contemporary descriptions as being metis, although one of his recent biographers insists that both his parents were Christian Indians, but he certainly married a white woman, Peggie, who had been captured at an early age and never returned.[105]

Figure 21. Joseph Brandt by Gilbert Stuart, 1786. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

[103] Moor's Charity School was so named after a donor of the same name who funded the school's initial costs. So far as I can tell, only English and Native boys and girls enrolled. There does not appear to be any African students or an African connection, although Wheelock frequently refered to his students as "little black heathens," etc. See Axtell for further discussion.

[104] Axtell: 94.

[105] Isabel Thompson Kelsay. *Joseph Brant, 1743 - 1807, Man of Two Worlds.* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1984).

To navigate all of these roles in a world of increasingly complex political and racial definitions, Brandt used his clothing to portray himself in different ways. As we saw above, he sometimes "dressed in a suit of Blue Broad Cloth as his Wife was in a Callicoe or Chintz gown"[106] wearing a very European suit in contrast to the majority of Natives. During one of Brandt's frequent visits to British Lieutenant Governor John Simcoe of Upper Canada, Governor Simcoe's wife described him in her diary.

Figure 22. Joseph Brandt by William Berczy, 1807. Courtesy of the National Archives of Canada.

> Capt. Brant dined here. He has a countenance expressive of art or cunning. He wore an English Coat with a handsome Crimson Silk blanket lined with black and trimmed with gold fringe and wore a fur cap, round his neck he had a string of plaited sweet hay. It is a kind of grass which never loses its pleasant scent. The Indians are very fond of it. Its smell is like the Tonquin bean.[107]

Although he dressed in the English fashion among Natives to reinforce his political and economic connections to them, when he was with the British Lt. Governor and his wife, he dressed neither entirely British nor entirely Native. Although he wore an "English Coat," he also wore a distinctive (but also European-made) matchcoat, and Mrs. Simcoe found his plaited grass necklace exotic enough to describe in detail. However, in other contexts Brandt made an effort to visually associate himself more with Natives and less with Europeans. In three portraits painted at different points during his life, Brandt wears a matchcoat rather than an "English Coat" or

[106] Smith: 83.

[107] Elizabeth Posthuma Gwillim Simcoe. *Diary, 1791-1796.* Mary Quayle Innis, ed. (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1966): 82-83.

European suit of clothes.[108] In all three, he wears the gaudy silver and feathers commented on by many European travel writers, but only the 1807 portrait by William Berczy was actually painted in North American—the other two were painted at royal request during two of Brandt's visits to London as a loyal ally and salaried military officer. The painters and the royal request almost certainly had a deciding role in Brandt's dress in the portraits, but the fact that he had those clothes with him in London at all suggests that he anticipated a need to emphasize his Nativeness while in London. Although he ended his life reviled as a butcher by the Americans, his ability to successfully negotiate all of his complex political and social roles enabled him to get the British Crown to compensate the Mohawk for all of their losses incurred during the American War for Independence, and end his life comfortably with a royal pension in Canada.[109]

Figure 23. Sir William Johnson, by Benjamin West. 1776. Courtesy of the National Archives of Canada.

European men also used Native clothing to show their association and influence in Native communities. Two Irish baronets who served in the French and Indian War for the British, Sir William Johnson and Sir John Caldwell, had portraits painted in Native clothing. They, like Joseph Brandt, had portraits painted in London wearing Native dress to show their "Nativeness" by association and their influence over the Natives. Sir William Johnson served as the British Superintendent of Indian

[108] It is also interesting to note that Brandt's portrayed skin color changes in all three of the portraits. In the first, he is pale and almost blonde and blue eyed, while in the second he could be a dark-haired European man, but in the third, painted shortly before his death, he is stereotypically "red."

[109] Kelsay: 381.

Affairs for a number of years,[110] and his partially Native dress (leggings over breeches, moccasins and a matchcoat over jacket and waistcoat) reflect his intermediary status between the British and the Natives. The Native man waiting on him in the background, who wears Native clothing but is bare chested and less fully dressed that Johnson, also shows Johnson's benign power over the Natives under his supervision. Although historian Leslie Reinhart has identified the Native man in the background as Captain David Hill, a Mohawk chief and good friend of Joseph Brandt, based on a letter Hill wrote,[111] the painting's title, lighting and positioning of Hill relegates him to a subservient role. Hill was described at other times as wearing ruffled European shirts, the same as many other descriptions of Native men during the period, but West chose to portray him shirtless to emphasize his difference from Johnson. Johnson's blend of Native and European costumes, like Joseph Brandt's when at dinner with the Canadian governor, shows an attempt to portray himself between the two cultures, as a negotiator and gatekeeper.

Figure 24. Sir John Caldwell, by anonymous. 1780. Courtesy of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, Liverpool.

Sir John Caldwell's portrait suggests a much more complete integration, as did his experiences during the French and Indian War. Unlike Johnson, Caldwell is dressed head to toe in Native costume, befitting his role as an adopted

[110] Fintan O'Toole. *White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America.* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005)

[111] Leslie Reinhart. "British and Indian Identities in a Picture by Benjamin West." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31.3 (1998) 283-305.

Ojibwa chief. In fact, the inscription on the original version of the portrait reads: Sir John Caldwell, 5th Bart., An Officer of the 8th Regiment of Foot, elected chief of the Ojibboway Indians, N. America, and given the name A petto or 'The Runner' as he appeared at a grand War Council held by him at the Wakeetomike village January 17, 1780."[112] Although Caldwell dressed in Native clothing both at the war council and in this portrait to emphasize his association with, sympathy for, and influence with the Ojibwa, the portrait itself and the surviving pieces of Caldwell's outfit shows the integration of European clothing into Native life.

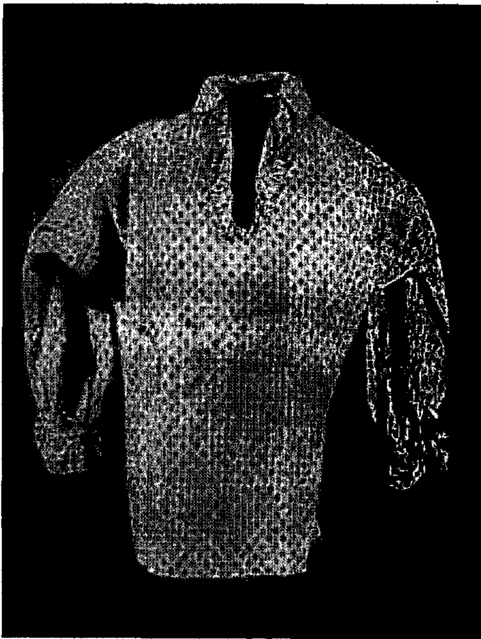


Figure 25. Sir John Caldwell's calico shirt, as pictured in his portrait. Courtesy of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. III-X-244

Much of Caldwell's costume is preserved in the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and when compared to portraits of Native men and descriptions, shows that although Caldwell dressed according to the norms prevalent for Native men at the time, almost all of his clothing was made of European cloth. And although Caldwell's dress is much more Native—he doesn't even wear breeches under his leggings as Johnson does—his leggings and breechclout, marks of masculinity within Native communities[113] which will be discussed below,

[112] David Boston, "The Three Caldwells," *White Horse and Fleur de Lys* (vol. 3 no. 6 June 1964): 316-17
[113] Ann M Little. *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007)

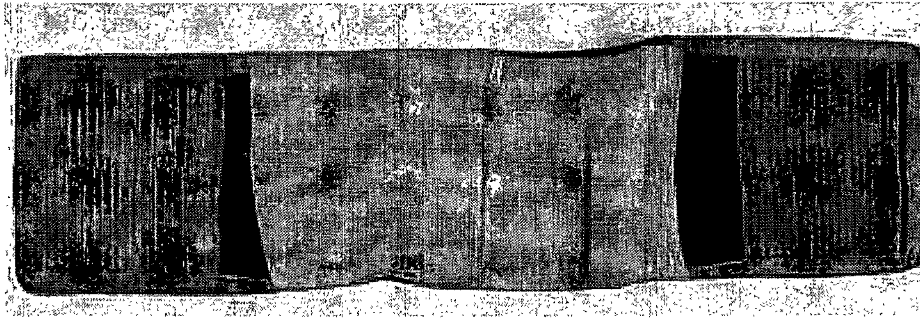


Figure 26. Sir John Caldwell's breechclout, pictured in his portrait. Blue stroud lined with undyed cotton and decorated with woven tapes. Courtesy of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. III-X-248

are of European cloth. The fact that a European was wearing these things didn't change what the clothing was made of—a doll produced at the same time in the same area wears almost exactly the same clothing, and many portraits portray Native men dressed the same. Caldwell wore Native clothing to war councils in North America to emphasize his sympathy and alliance with the Natives he spoke with—and by extension, emphasized Britain's sympathy with them as well—and back home in Britain, had his portrait painted wearing Native clothing to remind viewers of his role in the war and influence with Native allies.

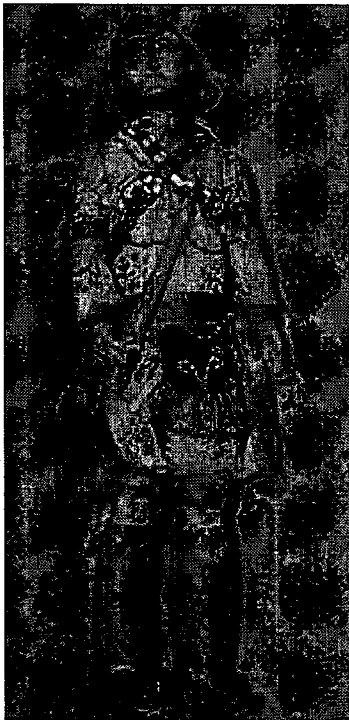


Figure 27. A Huron doll, possibly produced by the Quebec Ursuline convent. 1780. Courtesy of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. III-H-429

While Brandt and others used European clothing to assert their association with the British or French, other Natives deliberately rejected the use of European clothing for a variety of political, social, and practical reasons. In 1676, when the Native leader Cockacoeske asserted her unwillingness to submit to colonial rule at a treaty conference, she used clothing to assert her Native identity and separation from Anglo-Americans. Although she spoke English and usually dressed in European-style clothing, Cockacoeske brought an interpreter and was "cloathed in a mantle

of dress't deer skins with the hair outwards and the edge cut round 6 inches deep which made strings resembling twisted fringe [sic] from the shoulders to the feet."[114] Cockacoeske used outer, visible, and accessible signals like language and clothing were used as a deliberate assertion of her Native American identity.

During Pontiac's Rebellion in 1763, the Delaware Prophet preached revitalization of traditional Native values, a rejection of European ways, and a rejection of Europeans themselves.

> Do not drink more than once, or at the most twice in a day; have only one wife and do nott run after the girls; do not fight among yourselves; do not 'make medicine' but pray, because in 'making medicine' one talks with the evil spirit; drive off your lands those dogs clothed in red who will do you nothing but harm.[115]

Historian Charles Hunter suggests that the phrase 'dogs clothed in red' is a specifically political addition to restrict the rejection of Europeans to a rejection of the British only.[116] However, as European dress and clothing became increasingly associated with assimilation and accommodation, the Delaware Prophet's rejection of 'dogs clothed in red' could very well have been a call to drive off those Natives who wore European clothing and associated too much with the Europeans. There was certainly a deep divide within Native communities over traditionalism versus assimilation.[117] Samuel Sewall pointed out a divide between young and old when he wrote "though some of their aged men are tenacious enough of Indianisme, Others of them as earnestly wish that their people may be made English as fast as they can."[118] And just as much as elites like Joseph Brandt used different clothing in different contexts, non-elite Natives used European clothing when it suited them. "While they are amongst the English they keep on the

[114] Quoted in Becker: 733.
[115] M Agnes Burton, ed. Richard C Ford, trans. *Journal of Pontiac's Conspiracy, 1763*. (Detroit: Speaker-Hines Printing Company. 1912): 30.
[116] Charles E Hunter. "The Delaware Nativist Revival of the Mid-Eighteenth Century." *Ethnohisory*. Vol 18, No. 1 (Winter 1971): 46.
[117] See Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness* for further discussion.
[118] Sewall: vol I, 401.

English apparel, but pull off all, as soone as they come againe into their owne Houses and Company."[119] As European-made cloth and clothing worked its way into Native life and economy, it brought with it a whole host of political meanings.

The use of European cloth also created a number of issues internal to Native communities beyond its use as a marker of assimilation. These concerns exacerbated tensions with European powers. In 1723, the Natchez went to war against the French, ostensibly in revenge for the murder of one of their nation by a French trader, but the incident merely provided the excuse to rid the area of French traders. Antoine Simon Le Page du Pratz spent five years among the Natchez before and during this and other conflicts, and became a good friend of Stung Serpent, a Natchez leader. However, just before the Natchez went to war, Stung Serpent stopped speaking to du Pratz. When du Pratz asked why, Stung Serpent said:

> Why did the French come into our country? We did not go to seek them. [. . .] In what respect, then had we occasion for them? [. . .] Was it for their white, blue and red blankets? We can do well enough with buffalo skins which are warmer; our women wrought feather blankets for the winter, and mulberry mantles for the summer; which indeed were not so beautiful, but our women were more laborious and less vain than they are now.[120]

Figure 28. "Fair American Indian Man" by Baroness de Neuville, 1808. Courtesy of the New York Historical Society. 1953.219

Not only is there the overt tension between colonizer and colonized, but Stung Serpent also expresses a resentment of the French economic exploitation of the Natchez by bringing unnecessary goods. But Stung Serpent also cites the change European cloth caused in Native women's labor as a major concern. The

[119] Roger Williams. *A Key Into the Language of North America.* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1973): 86.
[120] Calloway 91.

introduction of European cloth and clothing to the Natchez changed their traditional gendered labor patterns, creating tension between traditional values and French influence.

Politically or practically, the way European cloth and clothing impacted women's lives had ramifications for Native buying patterns. Settler William Wood in New England recorded that his Natives friends only wanted "a good course blanket, through which they cannot see" or a piece of "broade cloth . . . they love not to be imprisoned in our English fashion." His Native friends told him that they rejected the use of European clothes

> because their women cannot wash them when they bee soyled, and their meanes will not reach to buy new when they have done with their old . . . therefore they had rather goe naked than be lousie and bring their bodies out of their old tune, making them more tender by a new acquired habit, which poverty would constraine them to leave.[121]

Since European clothing was so expensive and Native women lacked the technology or training to wash and maintain it properly, the use of too much European clothing proved prohibitively expensive. (There is also an implicit critique of the English, who were 'lousie' but not naked.) So while Stung Serpent resisted the introduction of European cloth because he believed it created less work for the women in his community, the women William Wood described resisted it because they believed it created more work for them, and perhaps they were both right.

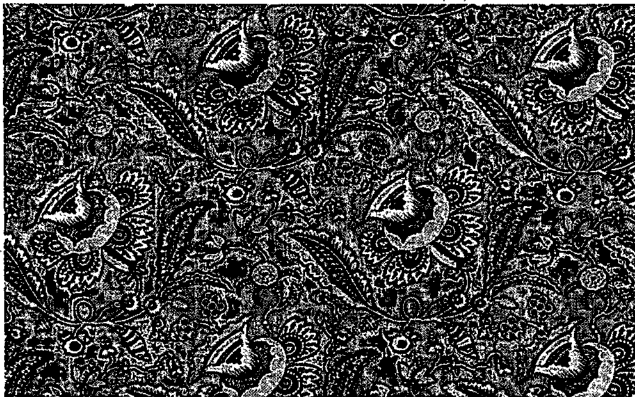
Those Natives who used European clothing more than the rest of their communities did so in the face of strong prejudice against European clothing. This prejudice may have been grounded in a realization of the political and social effects of assimilation and eventual conversion or perceptions of Europeans as weak or effeminate, as pointed out by historian Ann Little.[122] In the 1750s, French trader and traveler Louis Antoine de Bougainville "saw a Nipissing Indian, dishonored in the eyes of his brothers and of the Canadians because he wore

[121] William Wood, *New Englands Prospect.* Quoted in Kupperman: 53.
[122] Ann M Little. *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

breeches, covered his head, ate, dressed, and slept like a Frenchman."[123] This prejudice against European clothing extended even to Europeans who lived among Natives but continued to wear European clothing. James Adair observed a "German of thirty years standing, chiefly among the Chikkasak Indians who because he kept up his breeches with a narrow piece of cloth that reached across his shoulders, is distinguished by them, as are all his countrymen, by the despicable appellative, Kisk-Kish Tarakshe, or Tied Arse."[124] This strong aversion to European clothing was based wholly or partly in Native ideas of gender norms. James Adair also observed that "they have a great aversion to the wearing of breeches; for to that custom, they affix the idea of helplessness, and effeminancy." Although European clothing had evolved with European gender norms and gendered ideas of difference, Native clothing had evolved with Native ideas of gender difference, and the two did not necessarily mesh.

> The Indian women also discreetly observe, that, as all their men sit down to make water, the ugly breeches would exceedingly incommode them; and that, if they were allowed to wear breeches, it would portend no good to their country: however, they add, should they ever be so unlucky as to have that pinching custom introduced among them, the English breeches would best suit their own female posture on that occasion, but that it would be exceedingly troublesome either way.[125]

Figure 29. A mid 18th century printed Calico produced in France. Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago. 1972.399



The fact that European women didn't wear breeches at the time apparently didn't change Native perceptions of them as a

[123] Louis Antoine de Bougainville. *Adventures in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville, 1755-1760.* (Norman : Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1964): 123.

[124] James Adair. *The History of the American Indians, Particularly Those Nations Adjoining to the Mississippi, East and West Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia, 1775.* (New York, Johnson Reprint Corp, 1968): 8.

[125] Adair: 9.

feminine garment.

Europeans had their own prejudices against Natives wearing European clothing, at least when worn in the "Native fashion." As we have already seen, Natives used the newly introduced objects in ways that fit with their own cultural traditions and norms. Reverend John Heckewelder, a Moravian missionary, recounted a story he was told by Natives about the arrival of the Dutch a century before. "The whites laughed at them (the Indians,) seeing they knew not the use of the axes, hoes, etc they had given them, they having had these hanging to their breasts as ornaments; and the stockings they had made use of as tobacco pouches."[126] European reactions to Native use of their clothing ranged from laughter, as above, to patronizing and dismissive, all the way to outright disgust. Isaac Weld, writing in the 1790s, observed that "when they dress themselves to visit their friends, they put on a short shirt, loose at the neck and wrists, generally made of coarse figured cotton or calico of some gaudy pattern, not unlike what would be used for window or bed curtains at a common inn in England."[127] Weld's description is hardly positive in the way it links Native clothing to gaudy curtains, and cheap ones at that. The French Marquis François Barbe-Marbois was even less complimentary, however. "The strange dress which their warriors wear does not improve their appearance, but its strangeness is not so disagreeable to an European as the sight of an Indian clothed in European fashion, in a coat and a braided waistcoat, having long dirty sleeves, wearing a hat with turned up edges, and almost naked from the belt to the legs."[128] Most travel writers of the period reacted similarly, to a greater or lesser degree.

What is very interesting, however, is that some of the few surviving travel descriptions written by *female* Europeans are actually complimentary of Native dress. While in Buffalo, New

[126] Quoted in Calloway: 37.
[127] Weld: 193.
[128] Barbe-Marbois: 197.

York in 1785, Ann Powell wrote to a friend describing the Mohawk chief Captain David Hill (pictured above with William Johnson in fig. 20):

> As he was not only the handsomest but the best drest man I saw, I will endeavor to describe him. [. . .] His hair was shaved off, except a little on the top of his head, to which his ornaments were fastened; and his head and ears were painted a glowing red. [. . .] A pair of immense earrings, which hung below his shoulders, completed his headdress, which I assure you was not unbecoming, though, I must confess, somewhat fantastical. His dress was a shirt of colored calico--the neck and shoulders covered so thick with silver brooches as to have the appearance of a net--and his sleeves were much like those the ladies wore when I left England [. . .] and around his waist a large scarf of very dark colored stuff, lined with scarlet, which hung to his feet. One part of this scarf he generally drew over his left arm, which had a very graceful effect when he moved. And his legs were covered with blue cloth, made to fit neatly, with an ornamental garter bound below the knee. [. . .] Altogether Captain David made the finest appearance I ever saw in my life[129]

Although Miss Powell is very interested in all of the strange ways in which Captain David's dress is different from European men's, it doesn't prevent her from finding his dress graceful (although she seems less certain about the earrings). In another 1785 letter, written from Montreal to a friend in Detroit, Miss Powell was more than a little amused with the clothing of one Native she saw, but still did not display the kind of aversion Isaac Weld did. "One old man diverted me extremely; he was dressed in a scarlet coat richly embroidered, which must have been made at least half a century ago, with a waistcoat of the same which reached half way down his thighs. He wore blue cloth stockings, and as he strutted about more than the rest, I concluded he was particularly pleased with his dress, and with himself. They told us he was a chief of distinction."[130] Elizabeth Simcoe, who complimented Joseph Brandt's "English Coat" above, described a Native man she saw at a dance in glowing terms. "Jacob the Mohawk was there. He danced Scotch Reels with more ease and grace than any person I ever saw, and had the air of a

[129] William Ketchum. *An Authentic and Comprehensive History of Buffalo.* (Rockwell, Baker and Hill: Buffalo, 1865): vol II, 96-97.

[130] Ibid.: vol II, 97.

Prince. The picturesque way in which he wore and held a black blanket, gave it the air of a Spanish Cloak, his leggings were scarlet, on his Head and arms silver bands. I never saw so handsome a figure."[131] Although he wore a matchcoat rather than tailored European clothing, Jacob met with the approval of the high-born Mrs. Simcoe, and even mastered the European dances. It's hard to say if most European women would have reacted similarly, but from the small sample we have, it appears that European men and women reacted in very different ways to Native uses of European cloth and clothing.

Europeans' desires to create a visible sense of hierarchy and conversion among Natives found expression in painting of Native Americans during the period. While there fewer portraits

Figure 30. Etow-oh-koam after Verelst, 1710. Courtesy of the New York Public Library Digital Images Collection.

Figure 31. Ho-ne-eye-ath-taw-no-row after Verelst, 1710. Courtesy of the New York Public Library Digital Images Collection.

of Natives from the eighteenth century remain than of colonists and Europeans of all social classes, many portraits show prominent, named figures and a few genre scenes of anonymous,

[131] Simcoe: 174.

non-elite individuals. Political cartoons and allegorical scenes were the most unreliable in

Figure 32. Sa-ga-ye-ath. Jan Verelst, 1710. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada.

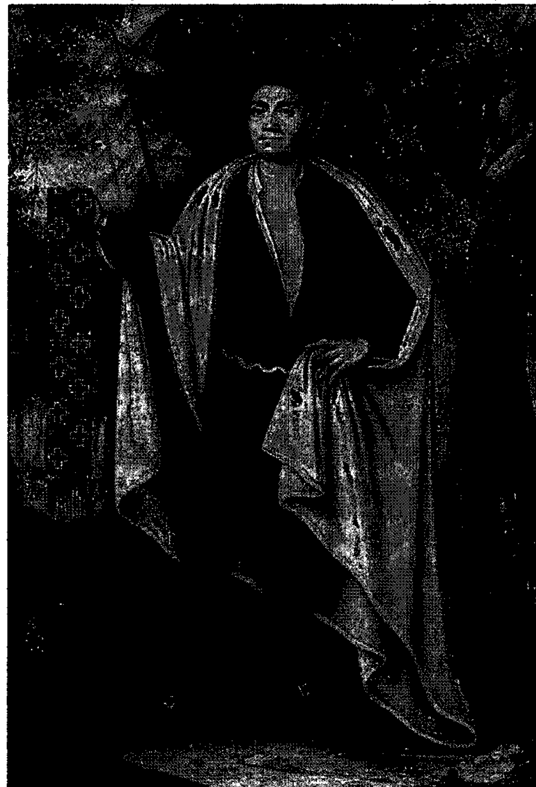


Figure 33. Emperor Tiyanoga. Jan Verelst, 1710. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada.

accurately depicting Native dress, as space, time, money in political cartoons and distance from actual Natives and a need for an easily recognizable, universal symbol in both cases precluded the kind of close study necessary to accurately reproduce another culture's dress.[132] Therefore, neither political cartoons nor explicitly allegorical paintings were considered in this study. Of course, neither formal portraits nor genre scenes are without their problems in analysis. The problems in analyzing formal portraits usually lie in who painted it, who sponsored it, and why. The artist had to contend with the sponsor's wishes, how to communicate the sitter's status to European viewers, their own interpretation of their subject, and of course, the Native sitter. The intersection of these competing viewpoints and the competing desires of colonizers described

[132] Stephanie Pratt. *American Indians in British Art.* (Norman : University Of Oklahoma Press, 2005): 57.

above produced portraits that are, while not necessarily devoid of accurate portrayals of clothing, highly charged with meaning.

The first documented Native delegation to London produced several such portraits. In 1710, four Mohawk "kings"—actually young war leaders sent as representatives and diplomats—were sent to London to meet with Queen Anne and present Mohawk concerns on trade and make requests for missionaries.[133] While in London, the four Mohawks—Ho-ne-eye-ath-taw-no-row, Etow-oh-koam, Sa-ga-ye-ath, and the leader of the delegation "Emperor" Tiyanoga—had their portraits painted by Dutch painter Jan Verelst at the cost of the British government. Later circulated as engravings, the four portraits are strongly rooted in European portraiture conventions. Although posed for and painted in London, the portraits show all four men against a woodland background, with the animal symbol of their clan at their feet. In this way, they are visually equated with the landed nobility of the time although their dress is foreign, bringing the exotic into a more familiar format, analogous with, for example, the portrait of Queen Elizabeth astride a world map—her domain—holding a rose—the symbol of her family. However, every aspect of the portrait is just as staged as the setting. For their audience with Queen Anne, the "dressers of the playhouse" were ordered to outfit the men appropriately, and this is the dress their portraits were painted in.[134] In outfitting the men and in their portraits, the British government and Verelst imposed their ideas of savagery, civilization, submission and hierarchy on the men in a way that may not have reflected their actual dress or ideas of themselves.

The most striking contrast in delegation is between the portraits of Sa-ga-ye-ath (fig. 32) and Tiyanoga, the "Emperor." (fig. 33) The portrait of Tiyanoga shows a man much more

[133] Ibid.: 35.
[134] Ibid.: 37.

acculturated to European dress—he wears breeches, buckled shoes, and a jacket, his hair is plainly dressed, and his facial and chest tattoos are barely visible. Except for the wampum belt he holds, which shows his diplomatic intent, and his matchcoat, Tiyanoga could be any European posing for a portrait. His compatriot Sa-ga-ye-ath, on the other hand, is shown much more distant from civilization and European mores. Significantly, close examination shows that both men and the other two men are shown wearing the same belt and the same matchcoat, suggesting that their general dress and appearance were sketched from life, while later details like the design of the belt or moccasins were added later from stock items. This recycling of items in the portraits shows that when combined differently, clothing items could communicate different messages of civilization and savagery. Sa-ga-ye-ath is nearly bare-chested, wears no breeches or even leggings, and prominently displays both his musket and dark facial and chest tattoos. Sa-ga-ye-ath's musket and the club and bow the other two men hold in their portraits show a much heavier reliance on war than diplomacy. Taken as a group, the portraits show an acculturated leader who can negotiate on European terms and in European clothes, but who relies on uncivilized, unassimilated, warlike people.[135] The power in the group is clearly associated with an ability to negotiate diplomatically in a European context, while military prowess and savagery are rooted in their Native context.

Figure 34. Isaac Basire, 1730. Courtesty of the British Museum.

Another group of portraits created to show the 1730 delegation of seven Cherokee representatives also clearly shows the way in which portraiture reflected conflicting

desires. Contemporary newspapers described a delegation of half naked savages, exotic and distant from contemporary British mores. "The King [Tomochichi Mico] had a Scarlet Jacket on, but all the rest Were naked, except an Apron about their Middles, and a Horse's Tail hung down behind; their Faces, Shoulders, etc were painted and spotted with red, blue, and green etc. They had Bows in their Hands, and painted Feathers on Their Heads."[136] However, two separate images of the delegation appear in their portraits. They are both group portraits rather than individual portraits, and no longer construct a hierarchy within the delegation. Rather, they place the Native delegation in contrast to their European contemporaries. The first (fig 34) produced during the delegation's 1730 visit and circulated as engravings, shows tattooed, exotic men in poses somewhat reminiscent of Verelst's 1710 portraits. The entire delegation is dressed completely in European clothing, in contrast to their reported court attire, suggesting a complicity in Britain's civilizing endeavors.[137] However, the facial tattoos, weapons, and hairstyles of the men show an underlying tension between their European clothing and their basic perceived difference from Europeans. The portrait strikes an uneasy balance between the savage setting and subjects and the veneer of imperial domination created by dressing the men in European clothing.

Figure 35. The Trustees of Georgia, by William Verelst. 1734. Courtesv of the Winterthur Museum.

In a later painting, by Willem Verelst (fig. 35), the

[136] *London Daily Journal* June 18 1730. Quoted in Pratt: 40.
[137] Ibid.: 40.

portrayal of the delegation takes an almost completely opposite direction—the men are shown in what appear to be leather breechclouts and fur matchcoats, speaking to the well-dressed and fashionable Trustees of Georgia about their trade concerns. Interestingly, the only member of the delegation wearing any European clothing in this painting is the only one not shown in the previous group portrait—Tomochichi's wife, who wears a short gown and petticoats that could be seen on any European or colonial white woman of the time. While some of the poses of the Indian men mirror the poses of the Trustees and earlier portraits, there is no indication of the "noble savages" from earlier portraits. Rather, these men are approaching in supplication. Their portrayals in both portraits and the conflicting desires behind the production of each make it difficult to tell how much they actually had assimilated to European cultural norms, how aware they were of the impression they made with their dress, and what they actually wore at home or in London.

Figure 36. Anon, The Three Cherokees. 1762. Courtesy of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Another Cherokee delegation in 1762, this time of three men, also produced several portraits which show a delicate balance between the personality of the sitter, the wishes of the artist, and the image imposed by the government through gifts. A London newspaper reported on the delegation's underdressed appearance when they arrived in London. They arrived "dressed in there own country fashion. With only a shirt, trowsers, and mantle round them; their faces are painted of a copper colour, and their heads adorned with feathers, earrings, and other trifling ornaments." To

meet with the king, they received new, expensive clothes. "The head chief's dress was a very rich blue mantle covered with lace, and his head richly ornamented. On his breast a silver gorget with his majesty's arms engraved. The other two chiefs were in scarlet richly adorned with gold lace, and gorgets of plate on their breasts."[138] The portraits of the delegation appear to have been painted after these gifts were made.

Figure 37. Scyacust Ukah. Joshua Reynolds, 1762. Courtesy of the Gilcrease Museum.

Figure 38. Cunne Shotte. Francis Parsons, 1762. Courtesy of the Gilcrease Museum.

The least reliable of the images made of the 1762 delegation is an anonymous engraving circulated in the popular press which may or may not actually reflect the 1762 delegation (fig. 36). The far left figure is very reminiscent of Verelst's Emperor Tiyanoga in his pose and the wolf at his feet, suggesting that all or some of the elements of the engraving are copied from earlier engravings like those after Verelst. Other than their gorgets, the figures in the engraving actually show very little evidence that they are the same men as those shown in other portraits of

[138] *London Chronicle* 11 (19 June-22 June 1762) 588 and *London Magazine* July 1762 394. Quoted in Nancy Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness: Becoming Red and White in Eighteenth-Century North America.* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2004): 55.

the delegation. The facial and chest tattoos are very prominent in the engraving, while in the two surviving portraits, of Syacust Ukah by Joshua Reynolds (fig. 37) and Cunne Shotte by Francis Parsons (fig. 38) (the other two chiefs dressed in scarlet) show no tattoos of any kind. Nor are the ears of the two men in the portraits distended like they are shown in the engraving.

However, despite the engraving's unreliability, it and the two portraits show very clearly the extent to which European clothing had been incorporated into Native dress. The three men are shown as exotic and different, but they are dressed almost entirely in items of European manufacture. The portraits show two men dressed exclusively in European goods, from their linen shirts to their metal armbands to Cunne Shotte's feather—imported from Africa by Europeans. Compared to European and colonial portraits of the period, their dress is very distinct and Native. Both the men wear a coat over one shoulder, rather than buttoned up properly, and multiple medals and necklaces, and Cunne Shotte's earlobe is distended in the native fashion, but not a single item of Native manufacture can be seen in either portrait. Despite the implicit threat presented by Cunne Shotte's direct gaze and his raised knife, the portraits show a balance between the civilizing impetus of the British government and the men's agency in expressing their culture through how they wore their clothing. The portraits must have been a pretty good likeness, because at least Cunne Shotte was so pleased with his portrait that he wanted to give it to his family to remember him while he was away.[139]

Figure 39. Squaw with Her Papoose at Seneca Falls. Baroness de Neuville, 1808. Courtesy of the New York Historical Society. 1953.209

[139] Pratt: 58.

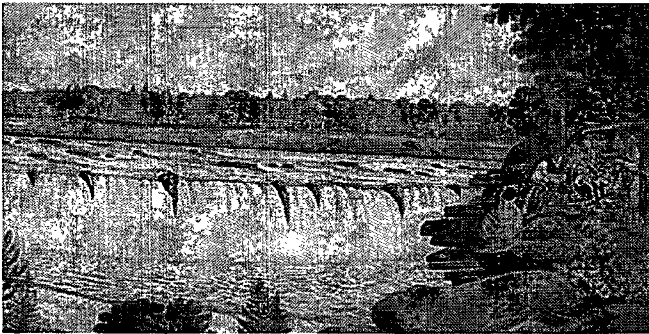
However, what is most striking about all of these portraits is that there are almost no women. Tomochichi's wife appears as a background figure in the Trustees of Georgia portrait, but not a single woman is shown alone in her own portrait.[140] Women mostly appear in the work of amateur and traveling artists in the American colonies, not in the work of trained European painters. Although these less formal paintings are less staged, and offer more details on daily life, they are often anonymous, offer less close up detail, and can be just as staged and artificial as formal portraiture. The works of other artists who verifiably traveled in the American colonies are more reliable in portraying the everyday dress of Native women and men. Thomas Davies, a British born amateur artist who traveled French Canada after the French and Indian war, Elizabeth Posthuma Gwillim Simcoe, the wife of Canada's first British governor, and Baroness Anne-Marguerite-Henriette Hyde de Neuville, a British tourist, all left a few images of Native women in their work consistent with one another and with contemporary descriptions. By mid to late part of the century, captive Nicholas Cresswell, trader Alexander Henry, traveler Peter Kalm and others all noted that they usual dress of the Native women they encountered was a linen or calico shirt belted over a stroud petticoat and leggings, with moccasins and a matchcoat. Although the two surviving works of Baroness de Neuville showing women and the one work by Elizabeth Simcoe show the women either from the back or almost

Figure 40. Elizabeth Simcoe, 1790-1800. Courtesy of Musee McCord. M2125

[140] This is probably due to the very narrow European perception of Native women as little more than slaves and drudges. See Fischer, Kirsten. "The Imperial Gaze: Native American, African American, and Colonial Women in European Eyes." in *A Companion to American Women's History*, ed. Nancy. A Hewitt. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

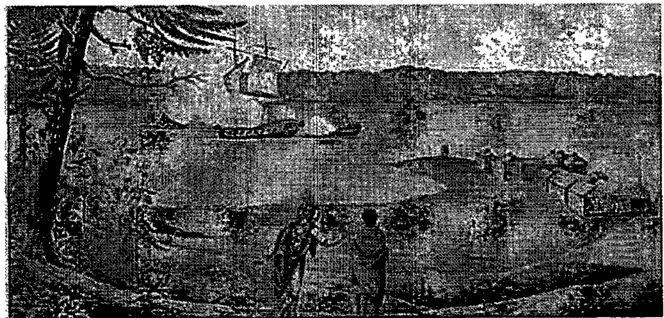
completely wrapped in their matchcoats, it is possible to see how completely European cloth has replaced leather garments. Baroness de Neuville's "Squaw at Seneca Falls with her Papoose" (fig. 39) is completely covered with a white and blue matchcoat and a blue petticoat, and the women of her "Oneida Family" (fig. 1) despite looking tired and rather ragged, are wearing the same matchcoat with brightly colored leggings and garters, and the man and children with them are also wearing what looks like completely European manufactured clothing.

Figure 42. Great Falls of the Ottawa River. Thomas Davies, 1790. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada.



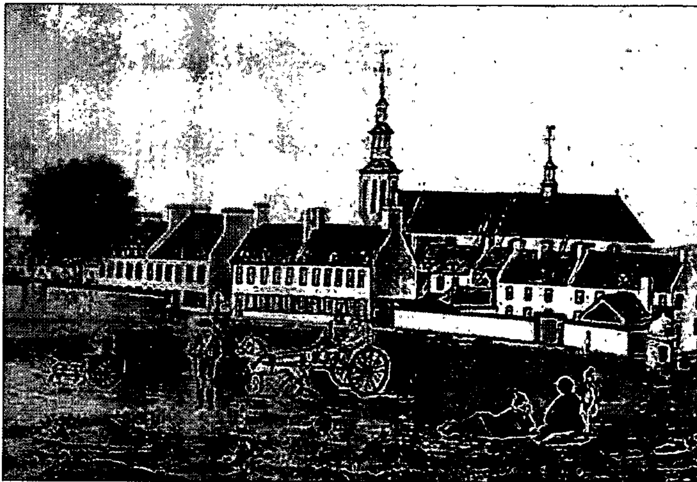
Several of Thomas Davies' works show Native women and men, although many of them show the women from behind. Almost all of the Native figures in Davies' work, both male and female, appear to be wearing mostly European clothing. Some of the men, such as those in "Great Falls of the Ottawa River" (fig. 42) and "Fort La Galette at the St. Lawrence River" (fig. 43) seem to be wearing leather leggings, judging from the color. The women with them are wearing matchcoats of the same color, which are more likely made of cloth given the drape of the material, and colored cloth garters, petticoat and shirt can be seen on the woman in "Fort La Galette." (fig. 43) The women and men in these paintings are anonymous and unnamed, resting at a portage (which can be seen in the background of "Great Falls of the Ottawa River") or outside a town. Davies'

Figure 43. Fort La Galette. Thomas Davies, 1760. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada.



charming painting "Chateau Gate of Quebec" (fig. 44) shows a group of two Native women and a child resting outside the city, clothed completely in European made items. Both of the women are wearing red petticoats, and one appears to be wearing a blue shortgown and the other a matchcoat, while the child's breechclout appears to be the same color material. The small group stands in almost direct contrast to the British soldier standing nearby—the women and child rest in clothing made from loosely cut and wrapped cloth, while the soldier stands watch in his tailored uniform. However, the Native group and the soldier all wear European made cloth, despite their very different appearance and social standing.

Figure 44. Chateau Gate of Quebec. Thomas Davies, 1789. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada.



Perhaps the best visual evidence of the complete incorporation of European cloth into Native life is Davies' work "A View Near Point Levy." (fig. 45) A view of a native encampment, the painting shows men, women and children all completely clothed in European-made cloth, while more matchcoats hang from the shelters. "A View Near Point Levy" offers a portrait of Native men and women away from the courts of Europe, in an otherwise very Native setting. The encampment itself shows no evidence of European assimilation, except for the metal pot hanging outside the birch shelter. Really the only sign of European influence in this painting besides the kettle is the brightly colored clothing worn by every single person in the painting. The woman in the foreground to the right wears a printed cotton shirt, imported from Europe or India, while the man next to her

and a woman in the near background to the left appear to be wearing a matchcoat and petticoat decorated with silk ribbons, the wool for which came from Europe and the silk from China. Although every single person in the encampment shown is completely clothed in European clothing, there is no suggestion in this painting that these people are Anglicized or even Christianized. Despite their European-made clothing, the Native women and men in Davies' work retain their distinct Native identity.

Women's absence from the visual record belies their role in the fur trade. Women maintained canoes, supplied traders with food, tanned skins for export, and married traders to create mutually beneficial lines of exchange.[141] Historian Bruce White has shown that of twenty-one named individuals in fur trader Michel Curot's account books, eleven were women, and suggests that many of the unnamed individuals may have been women based on the items traded and the habit of other traders to not name women at all.[142] Curot's account of his interactions with a Native woman named La Petite Riviere, or Little River, in spring 1804 fills in the gaps left by many other

Figure 45. A View Near Point Levy. Thomas Davies, 1788. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Canada.

[141] For more on Native American women's roles in the 18th century economy, see Theda Perdue, *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) and Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes.*(Amherst: University of Massachusets Press, 2001).

[142] Bruce M. White. "The Woman Who Married a Beaver: Trade Patterns and Gender Roles in the Ojibwa Fur Trade." *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 46, No. 1. (Winter, 1999): 586.

traders and officials in their descriptions of the fur trade. When his canoes were in need of repair, Curot sent some of his men in search of women to repair them, giving them rum and cloth to trade for supplies. Little River stands out in Curot's narrative because his need for supplies gave her power to negotiate favorable terms—after Curot and his men searched for a month for someone to repair their canoes, Curot paid Little River a three-point blanket for gum to make repairs. Such a blanket was usually worth three or four beaver skins. Little River also supplied panels of bark and roots to tie the panels, as well as several tanned deerskins in exchange for jewelry and a pair of leggings, together worth well over four beaver skins.

Figure 46. 1750 Anonymous German watercolor of the Natives of New France. Courtesy of the Royal Ontarion Museum. 969.37.2

Another, unnamed woman traded Curot a canoe in exchange for two capots (large, heavy jackets), a two-and-a-half-point blanket, and two pots of rum—worth more than ten beaver skins. Because of Curot's "absolutely need, since we cannot make use of any of our canoes without it filling immediately,"[143] these women were able to negotiate very favorable terms to purchase otherwise expensive imported goods. Another woman took advantage of Curot's hunger in February 1804 to trade a measure of rice for a blanket worth three beaver skins, a price Curot was obliged to pay, "having only a single fawn of rice for provisions."[144] These interactions shed light on gaps left in the accounts of other traders, who were perhaps too embarrassed to record similar trades and admit their dependence on Native women—Curot was certainly

[143] Ibid.: 125.
[144] Ibid.: 126.

embarrassed, berating his men at length for their failure to catch enough fish to feed them.[145] This at a time when Native men were paid "one Yard and a Half of Blew Duffields for Match-coats, and a quarter yard Strouds, for Flaps" for carrying several 90 pound bales of beaver overland several miles.[146]

Figure 47. 1776 Anonymous German watercolor. A Huron man and an Abenaki woman. Courtesy of the Braunschweigisches Landesmuseum.

Women may have been directly or indirectly responsible for the widespread introduction of European cloth and clothing in many areas because of this buying power. The Reverend John Heckewelder, describing the Ohio and Delaware in 1788, said that the Native women were responsible for exchanging not only products of their own labor, but also the products of their husbands' labor.

> While his wife is bartering the skins and peltry he has taken in his hunt, he will seat himself at some distance, to observe her choice, and how she and the traders agree together. When she finds an article which she thinks will suit or please her husband, she never fails to purchase it for him; she tells him that it is her choice, and he is never dissatisfied.[147]

Although Heckewelder says that the women purchased things they thought would please their husbands, ultimately the women made the choice of what to buy. The documentary sources are scanty at best, but there are hints that Native women may have purchased more European cloth than Native men because of ingrained gender norms. In describing the moccasins of the people he saw on his travels, Isaac Weld said: "the flap is edged with tin or copper tags filled with

[145] Ibid.: 124.
[146] McDowell: 2.
[147] John Heckewelder. *History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States*. 1788. (New York: Arno Press, 1971): 159.

Figure 48. Late 18th century Iroquois woman, anonymous French or English watercolor. Courtesy of the University of Kentucky.

scarlet hair, if the moccasin be intended for a man, and with ribbands if for a woman."[148] In many contemporary images, such as the painting of the Trustees of Georgia and the anonymous German watercolor of New France above (fig. 46), Native women are shown wearing relatively more European clothing than Native men. This may reflect the painters' ideas of modesty and proper gender norms, but it may also reflect reality, given the other images which show Native women wearing about the same amount of European cloth as Native men.

Although it seems that women received gifts from traders with less frequency than men did, the value of the presents given to women was almost always greater than the value of presents given to men, and included more clothing items and sewing materials. A 1790 trade memo in the Wisconsin Historical Collections lists guidelines for presents to be given to Natives before trade. It states that a "Common Indian" should receive not only a gun, but also a blanket, one and a half yards of fabric for a breech clout and leggings, and two and a half yards of linen for a shirt, while his wife was to receive two blankets, five and a half yards of fabric for a petticoat and leggings, as well as a hat and two and a half yards of linen for a shirt. The extra blankets were not given in consideration of the woman's children, because each child was supposed to be given a blanket of their own and enough fabric for a shirt. And while a chief was to be given about the same amount of fabric as a "Common Indian" except in better quality fabric, a "Chief's Lady" received a yard more fabric than her common sister, as well as silk

[148] Weld: vol II, 230.

handkerchiefs and thirty-six yards of silk ribbon.[149] Women were given these presents for a variety of reasons. Some were given presents as a prelude to trade, as above, and some were indirect compensation for services provided. In January 1716, the Deputy Governor of South Carolina ordered that nine Cherokee women be given a little under a yard of stroud each because they "promised his Honor to follow their Warrior's Camp, to the War against the Yamasees."[150] The men were unpaid, fulfilling terms of their nation's alliance with South Carolina. In redeeming war captives, Native women also got a better deal than did Native men. In November of 1716, the "Cojuror of the Charikees" brought a French captive to the South Carolina Commissioners of the Indian Trade, and received a coat and a hat in exchange, probably worth 28 to 38 buckskins (depending on the kind of coat) according to the April 1716 prices the Conjuror himself negotiated. A few days before, "Indian Peggy" brought in a French man whom her brother bought for "a Gun, a white Duffield matchcoat, two broad Cloth Matchcoats, a Cutlash, and some Powder and Paints,"[151] goods well in excess of 80 buckskins value, according to the same price lists. The Commissioners ultimately paid Peggy for the Frenchman in clothing worth total about 60 buckskins, almost twice what the Conjuror received.[152] Reverend Heckewelder gave gifts to fewer women than men, but the value of presents to women was half again as much as the value of presents given to men. "Some of the grown persons received a new suit of clothes, consisting of a blanket, shirt, breech-cloth and leggings, of the value in the whole of about eight dollars; and the women (I mean those who had rendered essential services) a blanket, ruffled shirts, stroud and leggings, the whole worth from ten to twelve dollars."[153] Because John Heckewelder was a minister, it is unlikely (although not impossible) that the

[149] Wisconsin Historical Collections XII:102-104.
[150] McDowell: 155.
[151] Ibid.: 127.
[152] Ibid.: 128.
[153] Heckewelder, 274

essential services rendered were for sexual services. Many historians have noted the exchange of goods either directly for sexual liaisons, or indirectly through kinship networks. More than one fur trader complained of the expense of maintaining a "country wife,"[154] because Native communities expected that formal or informal relationships between Native women and European traders would result in economic benefits not only for the woman, but also for her kin. "One squaw is more expensive than three or four white women, for you are sure to have the whole family maintained, and they are very expensive in their dress here."[155] As shown above, Native women expected and received quite a bit of cloth, clothing and ribbons from other sources, and many of the more detailed images of Native women show them wearing a good deal of ribbon.

Figure 49. Therese Rankin's wedding outfit, 1803. Courtesy of the Neville Public Museum.

One of the few surviving Native women's outfits is held at the Neville Public Museum in Wisconsin. The outfit survived because of its association with the marriage of Louis Grignon, a

[154] For more on attitudes towards intermarriage and the custom of taking a Native "country wife" in addition to a legal union with a European woman, see Susan Sleeper-Smith. *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes.* (Amherst: University of Massachusets Press, 2001); Brown, Kathleen. *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect Relations: Sex, Race and Resistance in Colonial North Carolina.* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2002); and Richard Godbeer, *Sexual Revolution in Early America.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

[155] Hunter, 111

French-Canadian fur trader and judge, to Therese Rankin, a Menominee woman, in 1803. Rankin's dress is distinctly Native, with the exception of her bodice, which is the same as any white woman's short gown of the period. The entire outfit, with the exception of the moccasins, is made of fabric imported from Europe, most of it covered with ribbon imported from the far east through Europe. Rankin's husband-to-be, Louis Grignon, was quite affluent and may have paid for the wedding outfit, and paid more than usual for ribbons to decorate it because of the special occasion, but many other images of Native women, such as the anonymous Iroquois woman above (fig. 48), and written sources, show Native women wearing large amounts of silk ribbons. Although the women near the Ursuline convent may have rejected European clothing in order to better market their goods, other Native women embraced European goods as a marker of affluence.

> As near as I can remember, the young ones wear a kind of English riding hat, ornamented with feathers and ribbons of different colors, a blanket over their shoulders, which is covered with spangles and different colored silk—so many blue ribbons curiously sewed upon it halfway down their back, and so many red ones to the rest of the blanket, which reaches to the calf of their leg. They wear a petticoat down to their knees of a yellow color, and leggings perhaps of another, so as to have as much variety in their dress as possible.[156]

Just as Native leaders advertised their political power and economic connections with Europeans by wearing European clothing, Native women showed their affluence to potential marriage partners by wearing European clothing and ribbons. Isaac Weld wrote in 1799 that "in full dress [women] likewise fasten pieces of ribands of various colours to their hair behind, which are sufferend to hand down to their very heels. I have seen a young squaw that has been a favorite with the men come forth at a dance with upwards of five gunieas worth of ribands streaming from her hair."[157] Although more study is needed to determine if this ornamentation is as a result

[156] Hunter: 111.
[157] Weld: vol II, 381.

of the consumer culture introduced to Natives as a result of the fur trade or a result of pre-contact gender roles, but many traders expressed their amazement that Native men would spend so many skins on "trinkets or ornaments for dress"[158] instead of presumably more useful things. But Native men may just have been exercising the same kind of status-oriented purchasing patterns that produced the well-dressed housewife in Europe, because some writers noted that "an Indian loves to see his wife well clothed, which is a proof that his is fond of her."[159] Although Native purchases of clothing and "trinkets" did not facilitate either market-oriented hunting the way purchases of traps, guns and powder did, or civilization, the way European household goods, furniture, and agricultural equipment, clothing purchases fit neatly into Native patterns of showing status and affection.

Women were responsible for modifying the cloth and clothing obtained through the fur trade. Antoine Denis Raudot, a trader in the early part of the century, described women making and decorating leather clothing. "The women work at painting their dresses and at sewing, which they do with the sinews of moose or with nettle thread spun on their thighs very delicately. They also make things of bark ornamented with porcupine quills tinted different colors and sewed with roots."[160] After the widespread introduction of European cloth and clothing items, women continued to take primary responsibility for making and modifying clothing in Native communities. Traders recognized this and gave gifts accordingly. Alexander Henry, a Northwest Company trader near the end of the century, gave leaders linen shirts, dyed feathers, laced hats, tailored coats, flags, breechclouts and leggings, and he gave other men in the community "an assortment of small articles gratis, such as one Scalper, two folders, and four Flints." While the men were given items for hunting and war, the women were given items

[158] Weld: vol II, 99.
[159] Heckewelder: 159.
[160] Raudot: 351.

primarily intended for clothing production. Henry gave the women each "two awls, three needles, one seine of net Thread, one fi[r]e steel, a little Vermilion, and a half f[atho]m of Tobacco."[161] Although the women were usually absent from portraits of the period, each of the men wears evidence of women's work and their role in shaping their men's visual identity in the portraits. Without women's labor in changing the European cloth received in trade, none of the Native men would have worn their distinct clothing.

All of this effort was for the very specific purpose of creating a distinct Native identity through clothing. Although the fur trade brought overwhelming amounts of cloth to Native consumers, so much so that European-manufactured cloth totally replaced Native-manufactured garments, European dress did not totally subsume Native identity. Rather, Native women used cloth in new ways to preserve and create a Native identity distinct from colonists. In this way Native communities also resisted attempts at conversion from missionaries and colonial governments by accepting their gifts but decorating and wearing them in very distinctive ways. Although racial boundaries were not yet fully formed, cultural boundaries were very strong, and used to differentiate Natives, Europeans and Africans. Native women used this to their advantage and created an identity through clothing so strong that it showed through European attempts to impose notions of savagery, civilization, and identity.

[161] White: 123.