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RIBBONWORK OF THE GREAT LAKES INDIANS: THE MATERIAL OF ACCULTURATION

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RIBBONWORK OF THE GREAT LAKES INDIANS:
THE MATERIAL OF ACCULTURATION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

Rachel K. Pannabecker, B.A.

****

The Ohio State University
1986

Dissertation Committee:
Lois E. Dickey
Esther Meacham
John C. Messenger
Lucy R. Sibley

Approved by
Adviser
Department of Textiles and Clothing
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VITA
Rachel K. Pannabecker

Education

B.A.  Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio, 1971, Spanish.
------  Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio,
       Continuing education: history, French, Spanish.
------  Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, Home Economics.
Ph.D.  The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1986, Textiles 
       and Clothing.

University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, Field School of 
Anthropology, 1983.
Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, courses in 
history and statistics, 1983.

Employment

Graduate Teaching Associate, 1980-1982, The Ohio State 
University, Department of Textiles and Clothing.
Instructor, 1983-present, McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas, 
Department of Home Economics.
Collections Manager, 1984-present, Kauffman Museum, North Newton, 
Kansas.

Honors and Awards

Presidential Fellowship, 1985, The Ohio State University, 
Columbus, Ohio.
Doctoral Fellowship, 1985-1986, Association of College Professors 
of Textiles and Clothing, Central Region.

Fields of Study

Major Field: Textiles and Clothing; Professors Lois E. Dickey, 
Mary Lapitsky, Esther Meacham, Mary Millican, Nancy A. Rudd.
Minor Field: Cultural Anthropology; Professors John C. 
Messenger, Erika Bourguignon, John Moore (University of 
Oklahoma).
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 CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Contact between cultures results in change. This change, called acculturation, may take place in any aspect of culture: material life, social organization, or religious belief. Acculturation can be a macro-level phenomenon, affecting many cultural institutions, or an individual experience.

Ribbonwork, a decorative art applied to clothing and personal accessories, exemplifies acculturative change in material life. Emerging in the eighteenth century among North American Indians in the Great Lakes area, ribbonwork relied on imported textile goods (silk ribbon, thread, and garment cloth) and European needlework techniques (sewing with needle and thread, and a construction technique akin to applique). In an era of economic and political change due to the expansion of the fur trade and Euro-American military conflicts, ribbonwork flowered as a unique regional expression of Indian aesthetics. Removal of Great Lakes tribes to the plains or reservations and a century of economic impoverishment did not eliminate ribbonwork. Today, ribbonwork garments signify tradition or "Indianness" to native Americans with a ribbonworking heritage. (See Appendix for detailed discussion and examples of ribbonwork.)
As an ethnic marker, aesthetic creation in clothing, and evidence of culture change, ribbonwork is a rich focus for study. However, in-depth investigations have not been conducted and the historical and cultural contexts of ribbonwork have not been systematically considered. Assumptions and hypotheses regarding ribbonwork have been repeated and have become accepted as fact without publication of corroborating evidence. My personal fieldwork, consisting of interviews with ribbonworkers in Oklahoma, did not reveal a substantial oral tradition regarding the decorative art.

The Purpose

The purpose of this research on ribbonwork, therefore, was to investigate the cultural dynamics of ribbonwork through an examination of its origin, diffusion, and persistence. The framework of acculturation was chosen to provide concepts for investigating the context of ribbonwork and for ordering the research. A broad range of resources (written, visual, and material) were utilized through the ethnohistorical method, and served to document the final conclusions.

The Research Questions

Questions formulated to guide the research were organized around the three central themes of the study.

1. **Origin.** When and how did ribbons become available to Indian tribes of the Great Lakes area? Since only women did ribbonwork, how did they gain possession of the ribbons? What was the role of women in cultural innovation and change? What is the relation of ribbonwork to aboriginal art forms? Is there any indication of ritual or status
significance in ribbonwork?

2. **Diffusion.** How did the practice of ribbonwork diffuse to other tribes? What were the political or sociological dynamics of its adoption? Is there a relation between ribbons and ribbonwork to ritual gift-giving? Was there a geographical direction to ribbonwork diffusion?

3. **Persistence.** How has ribbonwork been able to persist? In light of the common assumption of Indian economic dependence on and financial indebtedness to the fur trade system, how has a nonutilitarian expensive art form practiced by women been able to survive? How was ribbonwork, a recent innovative art based on European material goods and techniques, able to endure in the face of nativistic movements emphasizing a rejection of Euro-American culture and a return to the purity of pre-contact life? How has ribbonwork been able to persist despite the forced removal of Indians to the west of the Mississippi River or onto reservations and the pressures to adopt Euro-American modes of dress? How has ribbonwork, a syncretistic form which is neither aboriginal nor Euro-American, been able to persist to the point that ribbonwork garments now signify tradition?

**The Justification**

The study of ribbonwork was conceived as an investigation of the innovation, diffusion, and persistence of a clothing art in relation to the cultural context fostering change. This effort can be justified in terms of the lack of in-depth investigation, the need for contextual analysis, and the relevance of the findings for multiple
areas of inquiry.

**Lack of In-Depth Investigation**

A retrospective search of materials published during the twentieth century demonstrated that a variety of resources are available on the topic of ribbonwork. The majority of references appear in works concerning museum exhibitions or holdings, as museums have actively collected ribbonwork items. Photographs of ribbonwork appear in numerous volumes on native American art (Brasser 1976, 1982; Coe 1977; Conn 1979; Dockstader 1961; Douglas and d'Harnoncourt 1941; Feder 1971; Flint Institute of Arts 1973; Gilman 1982; Osage Exhibition 1978; Phillips 1984; Walker Art Center 1972; and Whiteford 1976). In addition to pictorial evidence, these volumes contain descriptions of form and style as well as general information on the development of ribbonwork. However, except for a three-page essay by Leech, Polyak and Ritzenthaler (1973 in the Flint Institute of Arts catalogue) which synthesized previously published material, these works do not provide contextual information nor present primary research.

Studies on the clothing ways of Great Lakes Indians are another source of basic information on ribbonwork. Cyr (1978) utilized primary historical literature and museum artifacts to investigate change in the dress of the Chippewa across three centuries. Danker (1973) described clothing for Winnebago men, women, and children, and demonstrated style changes from pre-contact to the fur trading period, to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Miller (1979) categorized Potawatomi costume by gender, and established how form, meaning, and
function of clothing change with culture contact. While all three authors featured items with ribbonwork, the focus on descriptions of style changes circumvented specific investigation of the introduction, spread, and continuation of ribbonwork.

Detailed descriptions and information on construction techniques can be found in a third group of sources. Feder (1956), Krumroy (1962), Stewart (1973) and Wood (1981) were oriented toward the description and replication of ribbonwork and all included construction patterns. Contextual information was minimal and derived from secondary sources.

Feder (1956) attempted a typology of ribbonwork styles. This interest has been revived recently. The sole doctoral dissertation on ribbonwork (Abbass 1979) provided a typology of contemporary Oklahoma ribbonwork, an explanation of construction techniques, and the creation of an etic (or non-native) system of notation for the description of ribbonwork styles. Her focus was on contemporary ribbonwork and museum specimens; therefore, an investigation of primary historical and ethnographic sources was precluded. The Abbass structural typology was presented at a symposium held at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming (Abbass 1980) along with alternate typologies by Conn (1980) and Marriott and Rachlin (1980). Conn utilized museum specimens and nineteenth century paintings in support of his type categories, although the number of documentary sources was extremely restricted. Marriott and Rachlin organized their typology from information gathered in personal fieldwork with Plains tribes.
Cultural anthropology provides another source of information on ribbonwork. Early twentieth century anthropologists with interest in material culture frequently related descriptions of ribbonwork (Skinner 1910, 1921, 1925, 1926; Speck 1914, 1927). In that same tradition, Lyford (1943) presented an overview of the history and construction of ribbonwork along with sample curvilinear and geometric designs in her study of Ojibwa crafts. Underhill (1953) briefly treated ribbonwork in a general history of North American Indians. More recently, Ritzenthaler and Ritzenthaler ([1970]1983) included descriptive information about ribbonwork in their ethnographic study of the material culture of woodlands Indians. In an article on the ceremonial dress of the Delaware man, Howard (1976) presented drawings and photographs of contemporary ribbonwork.

Two anthropological studies considered ribbonwork in the context of acculturation. Keesing (1939) utilized ethnographic and museum data in his study of culture contact and change among the Wisconsin Menomini. Keesing referred to ribbonwork as a manifestation of the efflorescence of art among the Menomini in which European materials were substituted for native decorative media. Haynes (1985) conducted an ethnohistorical study of alterations in the personal appearance of the Delaware as an indication of acculturation. Two eighteenth century documents were noted as sources on ribbon-decorated garments and the adoption of European clothing elements by the Delaware. Both Keesing and Haynes presented ribbonwork as resulting from culture contact, but did not attempt to investigate the cultural dynamics of
its development.

Marriott's paper (1958) continues to be the most frequently cited source on ribbonwork. Entitled "Part I," Marriott briefly covered the geographical distribution and historical development of ribbonwork, with longer sections comparing ribbonwork to precontact decorative arts (quillwork, moosehair embroidery, and birchbark decoration) and European decorative arts. The proposed "Part II" was never published, although a reiteration of the original essay can be found in Marriott and Rachlin (1980).

Despite the wide variety of references to ribbonwork, the resources are uniformly short, descriptive treatments of ribbonwork. Marriott (1958), Marriott and Rachlin (1980), and Conn (1980) are the only authors to delve into an investigation of the historical development of ribbonwork, and their bibliographies indicate a limited examination of primary documentary sources. Feather and Sibley (1979) noted that clothing forms which synthesize European and American Indian elements (including ribbonwork) have been overlooked. This absence of in-depth investigation serves to support concentrated research into the historical and cultural background and development of ribbonwork.

The lack of in-depth study on ribbonwork stems from several factors. First, Indian tribes from the Great Lakes region were scattered or assimilated into Euro-American culture earlier than tribes from the Great Plains or the Northwest coast. Therefore, ribbonworking tribes have received less attention from ethnographers
seeking to study aboriginal cultures uncontaminated by western or large-scale societies. Second, until the rise of social history and the ethnohistorical method in the 1970s, historians generally studied the North American frontier and the fur trade from the European perspective and, therefore, ignored changes in Indian culture arising from the contact between native Americans and Europeans. Third, art historians have primarily been interested in the form and structure of Indian decorative arts and have not pursued in-depth historical research. Art objects have been evaluated according to aesthetic criteria and contextual information has been omitted frequently (Rubin 1980). Fourth, studies of material culture fell from anthropological fashion in the early part of the twentieth century. Research on material life of North American Indian cultures generally has been neglected or left to museum staffs concerned with object interpretation (King 1978). Although these four factors explain the lack of in-depth research on ribbonwork, they do not negate its potential for investigation.

Need for Contextual Analysis

Descriptive information on ribbonwork has dominated all recent studies, as noted in the previous section. Ribbonwork is commonly depicted as appearing in the eighteenth century among Great Lakes Indians without consideration of the cultural and historical dynamics of its origin, diffusion, and persistence. Beyond the uniform assertion that ribbon became available to native Americans through the fur trade, contextual information remains vague or unexamined. Hypotheses...
regarding the development of ribbonwork, such as the dumping of ribbons in the New World after the French revolution, or native women's instruction in the textile arts by French nuns, are not supported by references to historical documents or oral tradition. These hypotheses are repeated in subsequent publications and take on an aura of fact.

Interest in the visual aspects of ribbon work has kept the decorative art from total scholarly neglect. However, only Abbass has carried the visual analysis to its logical conclusion through a tabulation of the structural aspects of extant specimens. This work is still in progress and is scheduled to be published as a museum monograph (Abbass 1985 personal communication).

Abbass maintained that the development of ribbonwork could be hypothesized from museum specimens and contemporary craftsmen (1979:5, 107). She did not pursue the study of historical or ethnographic resources. Despite the promise of her effort, the desirability of research probing ribbonwork in the context of culture change is supported by three fields: textiles and clothing, cultural anthropology, and museum studies. First, researchers in textiles and clothing have been challenged to go beyond typologies of clothing forms and beyond descriptions of the dress of western elites to an interpretation of clothing ways (Jasper and Higgins 1985). As part of an effort to identify researchable problems for the field of textiles and clothing, Ritchey (1978) noted the need for studying clothing in terms of social and material contexts and as a changing medium. Second, the
long-accepted anthropological tenet of holism in cultural research has been recapitulated by Wolf (1982). In a major volume examining the economic and political interrelationships among large-scale and primitive societies, Wolf criticized those who study culture in isolation while ignoring the nature of culture contact and change. Third, proponents of modern museum philosophy recommend that, in order to be fully understood, material objects must be presented as part of a cultural system, rather than be displayed as a collection of individual items without regard for use, meaning, and history (Belcher 1984; Burcaw 1975; Pannabecker Field Notes).

The absence of research into the cultural and historical background of ribbonwork points to a need for contextual study and analysis. This effort is justified by a concern for the context of material life expressed by researchers in several academic fields.

Relevance of the Study

The interdisciplinary organization of this research on ribbonwork renders the study relevant to multiple areas of inquiry. In addition to secondary levels of significance (the social history of a minority group, creativity and aesthetics in ethnic art, women as innovators), the study contributes directly to acculturation studies, extends research on acculturation and dress, and provides documentation for the interpretation of ribbonwork artifacts in museums.

The overall goal of the study of ribbonwork is to probe and clarify the role of the material aspect in the whole of culture, especially in relation to acculturation (change resulting from...
prolonged contact of differing cultures). The adoption of material goods is often the first sign of culture change following contact between two differing cultures. Yet certain material items resist change and become external symbols that signify tradition. An investigation of ribbonwork provides information to elucidate the role of material items in patterns of acculturation.

More specifically, the research contributes to the growing number of studies that focus on clothing in the context of culture contact and change (Cyr 1978; Miller 1979; Wass 1979; Hoffman 1983; Winslow 1983; Roberts 1984; Haynes 1985). Ribbonwork research adds to these studies by considering American Indian clothing arts and by demonstrating the utility of the ethnohistorical method in examining acculturation through dress. In addition, the research tests the concept of cultural authentication developed by Eicher and Erekosima (1980; Erekosima and Eicher 1981) to distinguish levels of acculturation in dress.

Furthermore, the study will provide historical and cultural documentation for museums which hold ribbonwork specimens. Museum personnel are limited in their ability to interpret ribbonwork and to communicate a history of the objects because of the lack of contextual information. In this research, currently available information was examined and evaluated; in addition, in-depth cultural and historical data were compiled to provide a context for the interpretation of ribbonwork holdings in museums.
The relevance of the research for multiple areas of study demonstrates the richness of the subject and the utility of ribbonwork as a focus for in-depth investigation.

Organization of the Dissertation

The research on ribbonwork is presented in the following order. Chapter 2 is a presentation of the concept of acculturation which is the foundation of the study. The development of the acculturation framework is reviewed, followed by a summary of selected acculturation studies on North American Indians. In Chapter 3, the ethnohistorical method utilized in this study is introduced. A review of the development and current status of ethnohistory is followed by a consideration of the application of the ethnohistorical method to research in textiles and clothing. The context for the study of ribbonwork is provided in Chapter 4 by information on the cultural background of Great Lakes Indians, the historical background of Euro-American contact, and an analysis of acculturative change. Chapter 5 is the presentation of the research findings according to the themes of origin, diffusion, and persistence. The discussion section following each theme consists of the findings collapsed into basic statements followed by hypotheses which interpret the findings. Chapter 6 includes a summary, implications for the research for the study of acculturation and the study of textiles and clothing, recommendations for future inquiry, and a final summation. Explanatory notes (indicated by superscript numbers) have been placed in the section "Endnotes," following Chapter 6. A description of ribbonwork styles is found in the Appendix.
CHAPTER II

ACCULTURATION: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of acculturation provides the framework for the research on ribbonwork. Acculturation has been criticized as never fully reaching the status of theory because of a failure to yield specific laws with predictive value. However, the concept of acculturation has been useful to scholars in suggesting avenues of investigation and in providing a framework for the analysis of culture contact and change. In the following review, the development of acculturation as an organizing concept is examined, followed by a consideration of the current status of acculturation and a summary of selected acculturation studies on Great Lakes Indians, Indian women, and clothing of North American Indians.

Development of the Conceptual Framework

Although the term "acculturation" has been traced to the late nineteenth century (Herskovits 1938), the appointment of a study committee on acculturation in 1935 by the Social Science Research Council was a major indication of the growing interest in the phenomenon in the United States. The committee of three major American anthropologists delineated their task as gathering and listing existing studies on acculturation, working towards a classification, and
proposing techniques for the analysis of acculturation data (Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits 1936). With the goal of clarifying the meaning of acculturation, they proposed the first formal definition:

Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. (Note: Under this definition, acculturation is to be distinguished from culture-change, of which it is but one aspect, and assimilation, which is at times a phase of acculturation. It is also to be differentiated from diffusion, which, while occurring in all instances of acculturation, is not only a phenomenon which frequently takes place without the occurrence of the type of contact between peoples specified in the definition given above, but also constitutes only one aspect of the process of acculturation.) (Redfield et al. 1936:149-150)

The committee also developed an outline as a guide for research and analysis to provide order in data collection and assist in the gathering of comparable materials. The main categories of the outline were: (a) an analysis of the acculturation process, that is types of contacts, contact situations, and cultural processes such as selection and determination of traits and their integration into the accepting culture, (b) psychological mechanisms of acculturation, and (c) the results of acculturation, specifically acceptance, adaptation, or reaction to contact and change. The 1936 memorandum is generally accepted as the seminal effort in formulating the conceptual framework of acculturation.

Two of the three members of the committee continued to publish on the subject of acculturation. Herskovits (1938) reviewed the past usage of the term acculturation and expanded on the distinctions between acculturation, diffusion, and assimilation, which were
addressed in the 1936 Memorandum. Furthermore, he defended an historicist interpretation of the acculturation concept against critiques by British functionalists, mainly Malinowski (cf. page 16). He also reviewed selected publications on acculturation, holistic studies as well as research with a restricted or particular focus, and novels treating the theme of culture contact and change. In the third portion of the book, Herskovits presented recommendations for future research. He emphasized the need to maintain objectivity, a scientific frame of reference, and a holistic perspective, and recommended the development of base studies, a synthesis of data already gathered, and studies focusing on personality and culture.

Linton ([1940]1963) also continued work on the topic of acculturation, and suggests another outline for reporting on acculturation data that was designed to standardize data gathering and allow for comparisons. In Linton's outline, case studies were organized as follows:

(a) The aboriginal community
(b) Influences from other aboriginal groups
(c) The contact continuum, including the nature of contact, the agents, interference, etc.
(d) Non-cultural results of contact, such as changes in demography, economic resources, or environment
(e) The acculturation process, including acceptance of new culture elements, elimination of old culture elements, opposition, etc.
(f) The present community
(g) The modern individual, with emphasis on personality.

Furthermore, Linton developed secondary concepts useful in the analysis of acculturation data. Specifically, he discussed processes of culture change (acceptance by innovators, dissemination, and integration into the cultural matrix), and the processes of perception and selection in culture transfer (utility, compatibility, or prestige).

Finally, he suggested that particular attention be paid to distinctive aspects of acculturation such as directed culture change, social-cultural fusion, and nativistic movements.

While Malinowski did not use the term acculturation, preferring instead to address culture contact and change, his writings were important to the development of the concept through their criticism of the American formulation. Articles, conference presentations, and unpublished manuscripts on the subject from the late 1920s through the early 1940s were edited by a former student and published posthumously (Malinowski 1945). His interest in acculturation was revealed as directly tied to an applied emphasis, that of providing practical advice to the British government on policy and action regarding colonial subjects. In reaction to the American historicist position, Malinowski propounded his understanding of the difficulties of historical reconstruction and the impossibility of comparing reconstructed history and contemporary ethnographic data. Malinowski's contribution to the analysis of acculturation data lies in his proposal of the synoptic scheme, a tabular format listing (a) European interests
(influences and intentions), (b) the process of contact (culture contact and change), and (c) the reservoir of native culture (surviving forms of tradition).

As part of a state-of-the-art volume on anthropology, Beals (1953) produced a review of the acculturation framework. In tracing the history of the definition and usage of the word, he pointed out the lack of consistent terminology despite the proliferation of acculturation research. Beals also identified problems of method, including the American-British debate over the use of historical data, the lack of a comparative approach, the confusion regarding the integration of a psychological approach into the acculturation framework, the failure to identify major cultural processes in acculturation, and the lack of quantifiable data. Beals recommended that the variety of approaches and foci be continued, but with increased concern for providing comparable data in order to work towards a delineation of uniform processes. In addition, he encouraged researchers not to neglect the reciprocal nature of acculturation by emphasizing only changes among aboriginal populations. Finally, he called for another study committee to synthesize findings since 1936 and to work towards a theory of acculturation.

In recognition of the rapid expansion of research concerning culture change, Keesing (1953) compiled an extensive bibliography of international publications from the nineteenth century to 1952. The bibliography provided a comprehensive source of anthropological studies, in chronological order, which dealt with culture and change.
across time. Although oriented to the broader focus of culture change, Keesing documented a sustained interest in the process of culture contact and resulting change beginning in early works (before 1869) and continuing through the expansion of acculturation studies in the 1930s to 1952. Keesing also noted the lack of standardization in operationally defining acculturation and the difficulty in differentiating culture change in a "stable" society from that in societies experiencing change in a contact situation. From an analysis of the selected works, Keesing identified general acculturation concepts, such as selectivity and contextualization processes. In addition, he noted prevailing acculturation hypotheses postulating that culture transfer is facilitated by simplicity in culture elements, a nonsymbolic nature, or the transfer of form (as opposed to function).

A summer seminar was sponsored by the Social Science Research Council at which a synthesis of descriptive acculturation data was undertaken. An article was written to stimulate and order research efforts (Social Science Research Council 1954). The authors of the article, three anthropologists and one sociologist, attempted clarification of the pivotal concept of culture units involved in acculturation and drafted a revised definition:

acculturation may be defined as culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems. (1954:974)

Furthermore, they formulated four facets of acculturation to add precision to acculturation research: (a) the nature of cultural systems, (b) the contact situation, (c) conjunctive relations, and
(d) cultural processes in acculturation. Specific properties of the culture systems noted as affecting acculturation were the boundary-maintaining mechanisms (for an "open" or "closed" group), the flexibility or rigidity of the internal structure, and the existence of self-correcting mechanisms to provide equilibrium after conflict. Variable factors in the contact situation noted as meriting investigation were the ecological context (resources) and the demographic characteristics of the cultures in contact. The conjunctive relationships to be considered included the types of intercultural roles (such as colonial administrator or trading partner), as well as the quality and quantity of intercultural communications. Finally, cultural processes resulting from culture contact were identified: intercultural transmission (diffusion), creativity, disintegration, reactive adaptations, progressive adjustment (fusion and assimilation), stabilized pluralism, differential rates of change, and long-range regularities. Although the group attempted to codify these working concepts in order to minimize the lag between theoretical formulations and empirical research, the authors maintained that their efforts were "exploratory" and not to be considered as a definitive theory.

A fifth member of the seminar, anthropologist H. G. Barnett, abstained from the group document and presented his own comment on the status of acculturation studies (1954). In a rarely-cited dissenting report, Barnett briefly suggested that the domination of philosophical realism, that is the study of ideal types, in current anthropological and acculturation studies impeded a fuller understanding of culture.
dynamics. Acculturation studies, he proposed, would be best served by a nominalistic approach, or an effort to understand the particulars, rather than by an expenditure of effort to delineate universal processes.

In 1956, an Interuniversity Summer Research Seminar was organized by the Social Science Research Council to continue the systematic assessment of acculturation concepts based on comparisons of acculturation data with the goals of identifying recurrent patterns and developing a cross-cultural analytic scheme (Spicer 1961). The outline adopted by the seminar participants focused on (a) significant contact groups, (b) demographic features, (c) community structure, and (d) the network of intercultural roles (specifically, reciprocity, role characteristics, and situational contexts). Recognizing the general inadequacy of acculturation concepts in yielding theoretical formulations, Spicer presented generalizations based on the group's discussions of fundamental similarities in the case studies. He distinguished social and cultural integration as two contact processes, and provided criteria for delineating non-directed from directed contact situations (the presence of sanctions and the interest in effecting change). The chronological arrangement of contact data led to the identification of three factors for differentiating contact periods: (a) the nature of systematic linkages (e.g., political, economic), (b) role and sanction patterns, and (c) structural stability. Finally, Spicer proposed models of culture change under conditions of contact: incorporative, assimilative or replacive,
Spicer confirmed the existence of cross-cultural patterns in acculturation experience, but concluded that comparative analysis did not reveal relationships between specific aspects of culture and processes of acculturation.

In a brief journal article, Dohrenwend and Smith (1962) presented a refined framework of the condition and effects of contact that constitute the concept of acculturation. Patterns of strength-parity-weakness in the contact condition were analyzed in terms of the ability of a culture to admit or exclude members of another culture from the principal orders of activities: political, economic, military, kinship, religious, educational, medical, and social-recreational. Dohrenwend and Smith also proposed four dimensions of change: (a) alienation from tradition, (b) reorientation or internalizations of the contacting culture, (c) reaffirmation (as in nativistic movements), and (d) reconstitution, or the union of both cultures into a new entity. The authors demonstrated the validity of their framework by relating the dominance-weakness-parity continuum and the modes of change to empirical data and by using the model to clarify existing acculturation concepts such as assimilation and marginality. However, the multiplicity of investigable combinations created by their typology rendered them unable to postulate and test hypotheses of uniform acculturation processes of cross-cultural regularity.

Spicer (1968) reviewed the status of acculturation, noting the continuing ambiguity of concepts and lack of theoretical structure, as well as criticism regarding the ethnocentric bias of past
acculturation studies. He also summarized foci current in acculturation research: nativistic movements, cultural fusion, personality and acculturation, biculturism, social scale and culture change, and techniques in directed change (applied anthropology).

The British interest in the practical application of principles of culture contact and change initiated the concept of applied or "action" anthropology in the United States. The Cornell Project in Vicos, Peru, a long-range development program instituted by anthropologists from Cornell University and the U.S. Agency for International Development, was a primary example of this branch of acculturation and applied anthropological studies. One of the main reports prepared by the principal investigators considered four methods for analyzing culture change (Dobyns, Holmberg, Opler, and Sharp 1967). The authors briefly presented Malinowski's three-column chart (the initiator society, the contact institution, and the receptor society) as well as an alternate analytical chart developed by Marion Pearsall (where "System 1", "shared features", and "System 2" comprise the horizontal axis, and five orders of data provide the vertical axis: cultural, social, psychological, physiological, and physical). A third model for the analysis of culture change was an adaptation of Malinowski's scheme, expanded to include six columns of data: initiator (value) antecedents, initiator policy, contact, recipient policy, recipient (value) antecedents, and new forces of spontaneous reintegration or reaction. This model also yielded seven axioms of analysis: the principles of autonomous determinism, interdependence of systems,
dynamic assymetry, the relationship of complexity and multiplicity, the individual and the institutional context of contact, the common factor (or its absence), and cultural continuity. Specific data from the Peru Project were analyzed according to the fourth method: Holmberg's contextual mapping. This technique yielded a chart whereby change in eight value categories (power, respect, rectitude, affection, well-being, wealth, skill, and enlightenment) was analyzed according to the interventions of major institutions (the various activities of the Cornell Project, the Vicos community, the Peruvian Ministry of Public Education, the national army, UNICEF, and the Peruvian Agricultural Development Bank). A second analysis provided by the contextual mapping technique examined chronological changes according to the eight value categories.

In an extension of Linton's 1936 delineation of form, use, meaning, and function, a system for the analysis of cultural transfer was proposed by Eicher and Erekosima (1980; Erekosima and Eicher 1981). The model of cultural authentication established a progression for the modification and integration of artifacts introduced through culture contact. The authors distinguished four analytical levels of authentication: (a) selection or the simple borrowing of form, (b) characterization or the modification of the object's symbolic reference, (c) incorporation or the identification of the item with a socio-cultural unit, and (d) transformation or the recreation or creative adaptation of the artifact into an integrated and culturally unique article. The model was illustrated with examples of clothing, particularly elements
of dress from the Kalabari of Nigeria. The authors suggested that the model of cultural authentication can be extended to the analysis of other items of cultural transfer, such as technology, aesthetics, and institutions (Erekosima and Eicher 1981:51).

The Current Status of Acculturation

The failure of acculturation researchers to develop theoretical models has rendered the concept open to sharp criticism:

There is no acculturation theory, if we mean by theory a set of logically related hypotheses, induced or deduced from general laws, that terminate a series of "why" questions. As theory, acculturation theory varies from application to application and is theory only in the garden-variety sense, i.e., someone has sneaking suspicion that some people in a contact situation are more acculturated than others because they are different on N variables. (Jorgenson 1969:910)

Even those investigating contact and change phenomena and utilizing acculturation concepts have decried "intuitive" classifications (Dohrenwend and Smith 1962) and "anecdotal" approaches (Abrahams and Szwed 1983), both of which are artifacts of an inadequate theoretical base. In addition, the complexity of the models developed by Dohrenwend and Smith (1962) or Dobyns et al. (1967) did not serve to consolidate acculturation data into cross-cultural generalizations with predictive value. In the 1960s, the rise of competing paradigms, such as cognitive anthropology, cultural materialism, and ethology (Garbarino 1977), led to a shift of interest away from acculturation.

Despite the criticisms noted regarding the difficulties and failures of acculturation research and theorizing and the shift to other research topics, studies of culture contact and change persist. The concept of acculturation continues to be applied to a rich variety
of subjects. Recent acculturation studies have considered creativity and acculturation (Blackman 1976), change in women's economic roles (Gonzalez 1981, 1982), and the assumption of dominance in effecting acculturative change (Abrahams and Szwed 1983). Others have utilized multivariate measures to analyze statistically psychological adaptation to acculturation among American ethnic groups (Padilla 1980). Acculturation research has become more clearly historical (such as the studies by Abrahams and Szwed and by Gonzalez), admittedly pluralistic (including definitions of acculturation as a process and a condition), and methodologically more diverse (utilizing both qualitative and quantitative techniques). The fundamental concern for understanding the dynamic nature of culture has permitted the conceptual framework of acculturation to persist and to produce valid, if specific, analyses.

The extensive development and demonstrated utility of acculturation concepts for investigating culture contact and change led to the selection of acculturation as the conceptual foundation for the study of ribbonwork. Concepts such as contact agents, directed and non-directed change, and deculturation were utilized to guide the research and to analyze the resulting historical and cultural data. In addition, the acculturation framework provided directions for research in terms of the roles of material culture and women in culture contact and change. Furthermore, a large body of completed acculturation studies on North American Indians was available as a resource and model for the investigation of ribbonwork of the Great Lakes Indians.
Review of Selected Acculturation Studies

Among anthropologists, interest in contact between American Indians and Euro-Americans and the resulting change has a long and continuing history. A variety of acculturation studies were read in preparation for research on ribbonwork. A summary of these selected studies on acculturation among Great Lakes tribes, acculturation and Indian women, and acculturation and the clothing of North American Indians follows.

Acculturation and Great Lakes Indians

Keesing (1939) published a broad study on culture contact and change among the Menomini of Wisconsin at the time of growing interest in acculturation. Keesing viewed the study as primarily a methodological experiment rather than research to generate theory or practical applications (1939:4). Utilizing historical records, ethnographic data (from personal fieldwork and that of other anthropologists), and museum specimens, he established the proto-contact base and traced changes in Menomini culture. Specifically noted were changes resulting from intertribal relations, the introduction of the fur trade, land sales to incoming settlers, and the institution of the reservation. Despite the retention of tribal identity throughout three centuries of change, Keesing's analysis revealed several themes of culture loss: progressive deculturation, dependence fostered by the reservation system, "social and personal disorganization," and resistance to white dominance (1939:244). Keesing also suggested that racial discrimination by white Americans has militated against the
assimilation of Indians into American society.

A major volume (Linton [1940]1963) brought together in-depth descriptions of the acculturation process in seven Indian tribes. One case presented in the Linton volume was a study of the Fox of Iowa (Joffe [1940]1963), a ribbonworking tribe originally from the Great Lakes region. The Fox were presented as anomalous to the general pattern of acculturation among American Indians. Specifically, the Fox retained linguistic, religious, and social aspects of their culture, thus resisting assimilation by the surrounding American community. Only elements of present-day technology and economy have been adopted voluntarily by the group. Joffe cited four factors as being instrumental in the development of a strong in-group sentiment and the retention of cultural traditions: (a) persistent military opposition to both European and American advancements, (b) resistance to Euro-American cultural traits, (c) incorporation of Euro-American elements into the Fox cultural matrix (when selected), and (d) the collective purchase of land in the nineteenth century. Joffe concluded that the active rejection of the contacting culture resulted in the survival of the Fox as a cultural entity.

Kinietz (1946) investigated culture change among the Delaware or Lenni Lenape according to contact periods and communities. Utilizing historical materials and contemporary fieldwork data, Kinietz organized in a tabular format information on selected cultural elements by four chronological periods (from the mid-1600s to 1938). Almost 60% of the cultural elements were found to be continuous or
persistent across three centuries of contact. In the analysis of changing cultural traits, Kinietz grouped the cultural elements into three categories: spiritual, sociological, and technological. Spiritual life was found to be the least susceptible to change, with language being the most resistant element. Sociological concepts and practices were intermediate, with technology being the category most liable to change. The data indicated a uniform rate of change across the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, with an apparently significant increase in change in the twentieth century. Kinietz pointed out, however, that generalizations were difficult to make as some elements changed across several periods and no patterns were discernible in terms of the three categories. Finally, Kinietz also established that no correlation existed between the type of contact and change, and that the dominance of Euro-American culture in contact situations with the Delaware overshadowed indigenous patterns of culture change.

Originally a doctoral dissertation, Newcomb's study (1956) of the Delaware consisted of a reconstruction of Delaware culture during the early historic period and an investigation of the ensuing processes of acculturation and assimilation among the Delaware. Newcomb was able to organize a complete ethnography of the Delaware (technology, economics, material culture, sociology, and ideology) by using a full-range of documentary materials from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as recorded by European observers. His analysis of culture change resulting from contact between the Delaware and various
European and American influences led to the identification of five major phases. The Contact Period (1524-1690) was characterized by radical changes in technology (the borrowing of metal implements, for example), in economic organization (early participation in the fur trade), and in warfare (increased hostilities due to competition for trade and land). Newcomb pointed out, however, that the introduction of technological traits into the Delaware culture matrix did not result in the diffusion of cultural complexes (such as plow agriculture or the domestication of work animals).

The second phase of acculturation Newcomb termed The Period of Consolidation (1690-1750). The main acculturative trend of this era was the organization of the Delaware as a tribal entity from previously fragmented groups. The concentration of Delaware in towns and their westward migration resulted in a process of political integration, particularly in terms of the organization of relations external to the group. The Nativistic Period (1750-1814) was a reaction to the preceding changes arising from contact with Euro-American cultures. The Delaware Prophet, the preacher Wangomend, and the Shawnee Prophet known as Tenskwatawa led revival movements emphasizing the neglect and disobedience of tradition and calling for the rejection of Euro-American goods, especially alcohol, and the reversion to customary lifestyles. In The Decadent Period (1814-1867), the failure of the nativistic movements to halt the advancing frontier led to the rapid disintegration of Delaware culture. Political and military domination of the United States resulted in forced cessions of land and removal
west. Adoption of Euro-American material culture became almost complete and resistance to changes in traditional subsistence patterns waned. However, Newcomb noted that disparities existed in the rate of assimilation of white culture traits.

Newcomb designated the assimilation process as being operative in the Post-1867 period. Few traditional cultural traits have been retained, as ceremonies have been discontinued and sacred objects sold to collectors and museums. In 1956, the Delaware language was found as the most persistent culture element continuing into the twentieth century. Newcomb noted, however, that despite external conformity to surrounding American culture, an Indian identity for Delaware persons appeared to be provided by the Pan-Indian movement, with intertribal cooperation through the peyote cult, powwows and social clubs, and extra-tribal marriage.

Eggan's volume (1966) on social change and acculturation was a revision of his 1964 Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures at the University of Rochester. Eggan reexamined Morgan's nineteenth century work on the social organization of native American cultures, specifically the Choctaw, Cheyenne and Arapaho, Ojibwa and Indians of the Great Lakes region, and the Pueblo, in light of recent research findings. Utilizing a functionalist perspective that emphasizes the study of kinship systems, and an ethnohistorical methodology, Eggan investigated changes in kin terminology and lineality and their relation to social change. In the chapter on Great Lakes Indians, Eggan stated that ecological factors and changes in technology interacted with social
group size and therefore its organization. Furthermore, depopulation and tribal disintegration led to significant changes in traditional social organization, such as the loss of cross-cousin marriage and the clan system, and to the assimilation of dominant Euro-American social structures.

These general studies of the process of acculturation among Great Lakes Indians used a variety of resources (historical, ethnographic, and material) and focused on various subjects (cultural traits, social organization, psychological adaptation). The tribes considered range in assimilation from the "progressive" Delaware to the "traditional" Fox. All five studies reported significant change in Great Lakes Indian cultures during the development of the fur trade during the eighteenth century.

**Acculturation and Indian Women**

Before the term acculturation was firmly established in North American anthropology, Mead (1932) investigated the role of American Indian women in culture change. In a study of the family life and social setting of the Antler tribe (a pseudonym for the Omaha), she focused particularly on the woman in cultural transition. Specifically, Mead noted that the continuity of routine domestic affairs, the universal domain of women, provided stability during times of change. In contrast, more directly affected by culture change were the male-dominated aspects of Omaha culture, which were religious, social, and economic life. Structural reorganization of these cultural institutions led to the disintegration of men's roles and, therefore, to
problems of adaptations. Thus, from empirical data, Mead induced that women are less severely affected by the breakdown of culture (deculturation) than men.

Spindler (1962) approached the investigation of Menomini women and acculturation from a psychological perspective. Utilizing a battery of psychological tests (such as the Rorschach) in addition to traditional fieldwork methods, Spindler distinguished several levels of acculturation. She also found that Menomini women of all acculturative levels retained traditional values and beliefs to a greater degree than Menomini men. Noting that historically the "expressive" roles in Menomini culture were taken by women, Spindler suggested that flexibility and lack of prescribed role behaviors have provided a sense of continuity for Menomini women, thus allowing a more conservative response to culture contact and change than the men of the tribe.

In an examination of economic roles for Micmac men and women, Gonzalez (1981, 1982) utilized ethnohistorical materials to differentiate factors inducing change. From an aboriginal state of no dichotomy between social and domestic labor, Gonzalez traced disruption of the economic system during the Contact Period (up to 1700). Gonzalez noted that the introduction of European technology, trade items, and religion led to changes in the subsistence patterns with an increase in men's productive contribution and a decrease in women's subsistence contribution and control of distribution. Furthermore, the involvement of the fur trade resulted in the alteration of the basic economic unit from the community or band to the nuclear family. During the
Colonial Period (1700-1850), the institutionalization of European concepts of private property and independent gender-defined tasks limited the economic roles of Micmac women despite continued and equal contribution to subsistence. The establishment of wage labor in the Industrial Period (1850-1950) and of welfare and public service occupations in the Contemporary Period (1950-present) completed the dichotomization of male and female labor in the public and private spheres respectively. Thus, Gonzalez concluded that contact with and subordination to an industrialized class society was a correlate of the dichotomization of economic roles by gender which was manifested by the exclusion of women from social labor and their restriction to domestic labor.

Although only Spindler's work on the Menomini dealt with a Great Lakes tribe, the Omaha and the Micmac also have ribbonworking traditions. Both Mead and Spindler found Indian women to exhibit cultural conservatism and related this to role continuity despite culture contact and change. In contrast, Gonzalez' findings documented the imposition of Euro-American economic roles onto Indian women, including restriction to domestic labor.

Acculturation and Clothing

Many studies on the clothing ways of North American Indians have been oriented to descriptions of aboriginal clothing styles. General works on Indian culture (Driver 1961; Wissler 1938) did not attempt to consider post-contact changes in clothing materials or styles. Following this trend, specific studies on native American dress also
presented descriptive accounts with minimal consideration of change resulting from contact. Clothing studies by Maurer (1979), Bell on Seminole patchwork (1974), Franck on Cheyenne dress (1971), Howard on Delaware men (1976), Krumroy on Sauk and Fox women (1962), Saunders on the Cherokee (1969), Stewart on Delaware women (1973), Thompson on the Kutchin (1972), and Wheat on the Paiutes (1976) were presentations of static clothing styles at one point in time. In addition, volumes on native American art often provided descriptions of clothing and adornment (Coe 1977; Conn 1979; Dockstader 1961; Feder 1971; Walker Art Center 1972). In all of these works, mention of change across time, if any, was limited to brief references to the incorporation of trade goods into Indian clothing ways and to the eventual assimilation of Euro-American styles of clothing.

Other studies have considered the development of native American clothing styles, but have retained the descriptive format without utilizing an analytical framework. Danker (1973) categorized Winnebago dress into three time periods according to contact influences: "Before the White Man Came", "Fur Trading Period", and "Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries". In each section she presented clothing materials and styles and briefly noted innovations and retentions. In a study of the clothing of various Plains tribes, Koch (1977) demonstrated the variety of stylistic and technical patterns in dress, and discussed historical influences on dress. Sturtevant (1980) utilized photographs to demonstrate changes in formal dress from traditional to "citizen" dress, but did not discuss the changes depicted.
Cyr (1978) developed the most extensive study of this type, utilizing primary historical literature and museum artifacts to investigate Chippewa dress across three centuries. Data on articles of dress and adornment were divided into five time periods according to major Euro-American contact, and analyzed according to the amount of change in (a) type and style, (b) source of material, and (c) motif. Cyr found that the most changes in male and female dress occurred during the periods of 1815-1860 and 1900-1940 and that more changes occurred in type and style of dress than in materials and motifs.

Although not indicating an acculturation framework, Cyr attempted to analyze the change data according to transactions between Indians and Euro-Americans in the economic subsystem. Thus, the contact group, the initiator of economic transactions, the type of transaction (such as gift, trade, confiscation, purchase, etc.), and the article of dress or adornment involved in the transaction were studied as contact factors influencing change. However, limited information for three of the five time periods and the generality of information for the remaining two periods revealed only that Chippewa dress has been collectively influenced by the contacting cultures.

Only a limited number of studies have investigated native American clothing from an acculturation perspective. Sturtevant (1967) developed a typology and history of Seminole men's clothing, demonstrating persistence and change in dress styles. Because of the isolation of the Seminole tribe, Sturtevant noted that dress styles have evolved without borrowing or influence from other culture groups,
Euro-American or Indian. This finding of change independent of acculturation also prompted Sturtevant to hypothesize that clothing changes more rapidly than other culture elements.

Miller (1979) focused on sexual differentiation and acculturation in her examination of Forest Potawatomi costume. Articles of clothing and adornment were described and categorized by gender according to similarities and differences. Miller proposed that the form, meaning, and function of Potawatomi costume changed with contact with Euro-Americans. The form of clothing became increasingly complex with the inclusion of fitted garments, the increased number of clothing items worn, and greater variety and intricacy of clothing decoration. Miller also suggested change in the function of Potawatomi costume, indicating that multiple clothing forms and the changes in shelter patterns resulted in less concern for the protective function (from the elements) of clothing. Furthermore, she hypothesized that changes in the status-winning activities of Potawatomi men (from warrior to fur trapper) affected the status communication function of clothing (from the "coup" feathers to peace medals). The meaning of clothing was changed, Miller affirmed, as elements of body covering became an "index of wealth" (1979:322). In addition, Miller detailed the contact groups instrumental in effecting changes in Potawatomi costume: explorers and Jesuit missionaries (whose effect was negligible), French and American fur traders, British military, government agents (including boarding school personnel), twentieth-century tourists, and other Indian tribes (particularly the pan-Indian movement).
Ewers (1980) described the clothing of women of the southern plains as found in historical documents, drawings and photographs, and well-documented museum specimens, and analyzed style changes across the nineteenth century. Ewers concluded that the evidence does not support the assumption of culture area uniformity, and suggested that the variable climate and resources of the plains in addition to differing acculturation experiences were influential factors in the development of regional dress styles.

Haynes (1985) conducted research on changes in Delaware personal appearance as an indication of acculturation. Utilizing ethnohistorical sources, Haynes reconstructed Delaware clothing, ornamentation, and body modification (such as painting and scarification) from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. In particular, Haynes traced change in upper torso coverings, focusing on the development of the Delaware ruffled shirt and blouse. Using the notion that culture contact produces anxiety, Haynes posited that the manipulation of personal appearance through the adoption of European clothing items served to relieve anxiety during periods of culture change.

In summary, a considerable number of studies on North American Indian clothing have been undertaken, with a preference for descriptive accounts. Those considering changes in dress invariably indicated culture contact to be an influential factor (usually in terms of the availability of new materials and techniques, often through the fur trade. Only Haynes considered change in dress as psychological adaptation to culture change.
CHAPTER III
THE ETHNOHISTORICAL METHOD
AND RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Ethnohistory provided the method for research into acculturation and ribbonwork. A review of ethnohistory is followed by a presentation of the procedure followed in this study.

The Ethnohistorical Method

"Ethnohistory" is a neologism of the twentieth century created to identify interdisciplinary research relating to "the past of cultures and societies...emphasizing the use of documentary and field materials and historiographic and anthropological approaches" (Ethnohistory 1985:title page). This global definition is extrapolated from the current statement of purpose published in each issue of Ethnohistory, the first and primary journal in the United States devoted to publishing the results of ethnohistorical research.

Clarity of definition and consensus regarding aims and procedures in ethnohistory have often proved problematic for proponents and critics of ethnohistory. Therefore, the development, the central debates (disciplinary issues and source materials and their uses), and the current status of ethnohistory will be explored, followed by consideration of the relevance of ethnohistorical research for the field of textiles and clothing.
The Development of Ethnohistory

The use of documentary materials in the study of culture is sometimes traced to the nineteenth century, before ethnohistory appeared as a concept or term. Interest in the temporal dimension of culture arose from early anthropological theories focusing on the evolutionary stages in the rise of civilization and the diffusion of cultural traits. Americans such as Henry Schoolcraft (a federal official) and Lewis Henry Morgan (a lawyer) are cited as utilizing historical documents written by non-native Americans in conjunction with their contemporary observations of Indian life and customs (Hickerson 1970; Hudson 1973; Schwerin 1976).

By the turn of the century, however, a major shift occurred in anthropological theory and methodology. As succinctly pointed out by Herskovits (1960), the excesses of evolutionary theories and diffusionism along with a concomitant rise in scientism led to a rejection of history along with these historical-based theories. Ethnographic field work, with its reliance on personally-gathered data, became the dominant methodology in anthropology. Based on the concern for preserving the culture of small, non-literate societies, sometimes referred to as salvage anthropology, research was focused on the collection of cultural data from remaining members before the acculturating influences of large, complex societies from the Western world contaminated or obliterated those cultures. The American school of anthropology, often termed historical particularism for the thesis that each culture develops in a particular manner according to its own
unique history (Garbarino 1977:48), maintained a theoretical tie to history. Yet, Franz Boas, the leading scholar in American anthropology, supported the necessity of gathering ethnographic data before attempting historical reconstruction of past cultural life. Thus, even for American anthropologists, historical research was largely postponed in favor of data collection (Euler 1972; Hudson 1973).

In the first half of the twentieth century, therefore, historiographic study of primitive cultures and the use of documentary sources in the study of culture was continued mostly by individuals. Staff members from the Bureau of American Ethnology, Frank Cushing and James Mooney (Hudson 1973), as well as scholars such as Frank Speck, James Swanton, and William Fenton (Cohn 1968; Eggan 1961) continued to conduct and publish historical studies on North American Indians.

According to Cohn (1968), the term "ethnohistory" was used sporadically in the early twentieth century until it gained currency in the 1940s. This claim is documented by The Oxford English Dictionary (1933) which does not list ethnohistory and The Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary (Burchfield 1972) which includes the term with reference citations dating from 1936. Schwerin (1976) suggested four factors leading to the emergence of ethnohistory as a discrete methodology after World War II: (a) interest in culture contact and change, (b) the work of the federal Indians Claims Commission, (c) rapid growth of anthropological research in Latin America, and (d) resurgence of interest in history by former colonial territories.
Schwerin's first factor prompting the emergence of ethnohistory was the result of extensive contact between expansionist "civilizations" and "pristine" cultures of aboriginal societies. The passage of time placed an increasing distance between the mid-twentieth century situation and the pre-contact way of life. This time gap could not be erased, even through a reliance on "memory culture" (data from the memories of aged informants regarding the cultural patterns of their childhoods and those learned through oral tradition). Anthropological research then turned to take advantage of this culture contact by focusing on the nature of interaction between differing cultures and the resulting changes, which is acculturation. This focus on the process of cultural change clearly indicated attention to historical dynamics (Herskovits 1960) and the use of historical evidence. In addition, the reciprocal nature of influence in acculturation, in which both cultures are changed through contact, dictated the inclusion of written documents from the literate societies regarding their descriptions and impressions of that interaction. Therefore, the move toward acculturation studies promoted the development of ethnohistory.

A second factor which led to the emergence of ethnohistory came from outside academia. The Indian Claims Commission Act was promulgated by the Congress of the United States in 1946 in order to settle claims of land ownership and compensation by native Americans. Ethnologists, called as expert witnesses in cases regarding land tenure, subsistence, and inheritance and kinship patterns, became increasingly aware of the utility of historical documents in validating their
presentations in court (Sturtevant 1968). Furthermore, Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, an anthropologist at Indiana University, was awarded a ten-year contract in 1953 by the Department of Justice to establish an interdisciplinary research center and archives (Voegelin 1954; Jennings 1982). This center, the Ohio Valley-Great Lakes Research Project, became a training ground for ethnohistorians (Hickerson 1970).

Beyond direct support for ethnohistorical research, the federal need for historical documentation generated a sharing of sources regarding North American Indians and information on archival research. The Ohio Valley Historic Indian Conference, held at the Newberry Library in Chicago in 1953, formalized this exchange and resulted in the founding of the journal *Ethnohistory* in 1955. Reformed in 1956 as the American Indian Ethnographic Conference and in 1966 as the American Society for Ethnohistory, the group continues to provide a central location for the discussion of methodological issues and the publication of research results for ethnohistorical research.

Schwerin's third and fourth factors influencing the emergence of ethnohistory stemmed from changes in the state of ethnography (see also Cohn 1968). Since the 1940s, anthropological interest in Latin America and China has grown, and both of these geographic regions are replete with historic documentation for the study of their cultures. Furthermore, countries obtaining independence from colonial rule provided opportunities for unique historical investigations. However, liberation and the growth of nationalism have sometimes resulted in
restricted access to ethnic or minority cultures (Diamond 1974). Anthropology students with interests in history have turned to ethnohistorical investigation with the decline of available fieldwork situations among primitive cultures (for Western ethnographers) and an increase in the availability of historical documentation.

In addition to these four factors promoting the development of ethnohistory, Eggan (1961) noted that the establishment of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., in 1934, consolidated documentary resources and thus facilitated ethnohistorical research in the United States. Also, technological advances in microfilming and photocopying procedures should be noted. These inventions allow for broader distribution of copies of fragile manuscripts, thus aiding the research efforts of ethnohistorians (Lurie 1961a).

The development of ethnohistory is a phenomenon related to American anthropology. Clearly the position of the Boasian historicists, the interest in acculturation studies, and the influence of the Indian Claims Commission cases are peculiarly American factors. In addition, however, the strength of functionalist theories in continental social anthropology explain why ethnohistory is not widely practiced outside of North America. British functionalists, such as Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, posited that the absence of "history," that is written documents, among small societies precluded the validity of attempting a history of these peoples. The rejection of historical research was made in favor of the fieldwork method and synchronic analyses of how social organizations function (Cohn 1968;
European scholars with interests in the historical aspect of culture were often diverted to folklore studies (Cohn 1968; Trigger 1982), a field structurally separate from anthropology in European academic institutions.

A more recent trend toward reconciliation with history has been noted in the work of anthropologists Edward E. Evans-Pritchard and Claude Levi-Strauss (Carmack 1972; see Levi-Strauss 1983). In addition, the rise of social history in European universities does allow for the inclusion of dimensions of culture in historical research (Bloch 1953; Braudel 1981). Although a parallel emergence of ethnohistory in Europe was prevented by the strength of the functionalist position, there is evidence of convergence toward ethnohistory.

Central Debates and Issues

Debates in ethnohistory have centralized around issues related to the two disciplines which serve as the foundation for ethnohistory, and issues regarding the source materials for ethnohistorical research and their uses.

Disciplinary Issues. A preliminary debate in ethnohistory arose in regard to its conceptualization. Ethnohistory could be conceived as a separate discipline (Fenton 1962; Washburn 1961), a hybrid (Fenton 1962), a subdiscipline of either anthropology or history (Leacock 1961), or as "a process and a method" (Washburn 1961:45). This debate revolved around concerns of territory and disciplinary identity which continue in spite of general acceptance of Washburn's position that ethnohistory is a method.
A related debate that is fundamental in ethnohistory concerns the nature of anthropology and history, the two base disciplines in ethnohistory. Despite a commonality of subject—the study of humans—anthropology and history are perceived by some scholars as being in opposition in subject, method, and epistemology. These oppositions can be summarized as follows (see Adams 1981; Axtell 1981; Carmack 1972; Cohn 1968; Hickerson 1970; Levi-Strauss 1983; Spores 1978; Sturtevant 1968; Trigger 1982; Valentine 1961; and Washburn 1961):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Anthropology</th>
<th>History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subject</td>
<td>primitive/exotic humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comparative study of culture</td>
<td>study of unique events and central characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>study of customs, beliefs, daily life</td>
<td>study of nobility, elites, war and peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>method</td>
<td>fieldwork method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of observation and informants</td>
<td>use of written documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>synchronic study of ethnographic present</td>
<td>diachronic study—chronological focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>epistemology</td>
<td>analysis with nomothetic objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objective/value-free stance preferred</td>
<td>ethical judgments permissible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recognition of these oppositions continues to spark controversy among some scholars who remain skeptical about the practice of interdisciplinary research, such as ethnohistory (Adams 1981). However,
the oppositions can also be seen as the consequence of educational systems which emphasize disciplinary boundaries and identity. Leacock proposed that ethnohistorical research provides an alternative to an either-or argument through "detailed analytic description, with the direction of the analysis determined by a broad generalization or theory" (1961:259). Furthermore, Carmack (1972) suggested that the growth of interdisciplinary research contradicts the maintenance of this dichotomy. Smith (1954) posited the replacement of interdisciplinary distrust by cooperation, and twenty-five years later, Cohn (1981) presented evidence that changes within the two disciplines were leading to a rapprochement which supports ethnohistorical endeavors.

A second debate underlying the oppositional nature of anthropology and history concerns the two disciplines as being part of the humanities or the sciences. Both anthropology (Valentine 1961) and history (Pargellis 1957) have experienced tension over this controversy. If anthropology belongs to the humanities and history to the social or behavioral sciences, or vice versa, the two disciplines can be perceived as fundamentally different. Placement of each discipline within an encompassing educational structure often centers on the following discussions: (a) the presence or absence of theoretical structures, (b) description or analysis as the outcome of research, and (c) the presence or lack of criticism of sources (Hudson 1973; Sturtevant 1968; Washburn 1961). These questions comprise basic issues for both anthropology and history, and their answers are related to ongoing controversies within each discipline (Sturtevant
1968; for an example of the debate in anthropology, see Kroeber 1935 and Boas 1936). Although the issue of the humanities versus the sciences remains major to some scholars, others acknowledge multiple paths to truth and dismiss such arguments as placing excessive importance on form over matter (Bloch 1953; Carmack 1972). Furthermore, ethnohistory can be seen as a resolution to dichotomous arguments (Valentine 1961).

Polarities evolving from disciplinary issues arise frequently in state-of-the-art reviews of ethnohistory. Admittedly, the choice of subject, method, and epistemological basis of research as well as an understanding of the humanistic or scientific nature of scholarly enterprise will affect the conceptualization and execution of ethnohistorical research. However, the "new" anthropology and the "new" history are evidence of growth and change within the base disciplines. These debates have become peripheral to the continuing development of ethnohistory. Thus, regardless of traditional polarities, scholars have proven their ability to conduct interdisciplinary ethnohistorical research and to convey effectively their enthusiasm for the results (see Axtell 1981).

Source Materials and Their Uses. The current statement of purpose of Ethnohistory describes the journal as "emphasizing the use of documentary and field materials" (Ethnohistory 1985:title page). Primary historical documents appropriate to ethnohistory consist of the journals and reports of explorers, military personnel, missionaries, settlers, colonial government officials, or other literate persons who
witnessed and wrote about interaction with non-literate peoples (Hickerson 1970). While library and archival materials continue to provide basic historical information, ethnographic studies of modern descendants of the non-literate societies contribute broad cultural description and analysis which aid in interpreting and correcting original sources.

The many sub-fields of anthropology have also contributed to ethnohistorical research. Archaeological data (Baerreis 1961), folklore or oral traditions (Dorson 1961), and linguistic studies (Sturtevant 1968) have all provided evidence central to ethnohistory. This multiplicity of source materials for ethnohistorical study is widely accepted (Axtell 1981; Carmack 1972; Cohn 1968; Euler 1972; Fenton 1962, 1966; Hudson 1973; Sturtevant 1968; Washburn 1961). Ewers (1961) described these approaches to ethnohistory in a diagrammatic fashion. Library and museum studies provide writings, maps and pictures, and artifacts which are useful for ethnohistorical research. On the other side, field studies produce information on ethnology, folklore, language, and data from site explorations that complement the documents and artifacts (Ewers 1961:267). In this model, resources may be derived from library and museum studies or from field studies, but come together in ethnohistory to produce "full-rounded" research.

A major problem in the use of historical documents is the presence of bias and error. Primary records that provide information for ethnohistory were seldom composed with the goal of scientific
objectivity and cultural relativism, which are primary tenets of ethnographic fieldwork. Although some writers were astute observers or attempted to be truthful in their descriptions, many were patently biased in their narratives. Bound by notions of race, religion, and civilization, the culture of the writers fashioned their impressions and thus their writings (Jennings 1975).

Error in historic accounts may be unintentional on the part of the writer, stemming from a lack of observational skills. In other cases, errors arise from ethnocentric misunderstanding of what was witnessed, not an infrequent hazard of cross-cultural interactions. Fraud or errors of deception range from borrowing or retelling an event to misrepresentation in order to effect a particular outcome. Kinietz (1940) noted extensive borrowing in early works on New World explorations.

Error by omission of pertinent information in a primary source may appear as the result of bias, which precludes the writer from considering relevant aspects of a situation. Omissions also result from errors of misunderstanding or fraud. Deficiencies in historical accounts are especially problematic. The absence of information may lead to analyses based on "negative evidence" when in fact the object did exist or the event did occur but was omitted from the record (Hickerson 1970).

Methods for assessing the validity of documentary evidence were developed by "scientific" historians in the late nineteenth century (Pargellis 1957). Acts of borrowing and instances of fraud and error
are revealed through textual criticism which relies on thorough searches of original literature and comparisons of evidence (Hickerson 1970:121). Systematic cross-checking of historical and ethnographic evidence is valuable for revealing further inconsistencies (Valentine 1961). Critical bibliographies detailing the reliability of source material are invaluable tools for subsequent researchers (see, for example, annotations on primary sources by Kinietz 1940 or Stevens 1928). Non-documentary sources, such as archaeological or linguistic data, are also useful as tests of written information.

Resolution of the problem of bias is often difficult. The ability to overcome biased data (Valentine 1961) and cultural bias within the investigator (Trigger 1982) has been questioned. Several avenues are available, however. The researcher's familiarity with the dominant culture of the writer may assist the exposure of bias (Cohn 1968). In contrast, insights into the smaller, primitive culture may be obtained through cross-cultural studies of comparative ethnology (Axtell 1981; Sturtevant 1968) or through more recent ethnographic records (Fenton 1962; Gonzalez 1982; Sturtevant 1968).

Personal experience in fieldwork is considered invaluable to the ethnohistorian, especially for understanding the dynamics of culture so as to recognize and assess biased or inaccurate accounts (Carmack 1972; Cohn 1968). Explicit recognition of the problems of bias and error, and a commitment to the development of critical skills are crucial to ethnohistory. Reciprocal feedback provided by other resource areas, such as museum studies or fieldwork, will test the
interpretation of historical sources (Fenton 1966).

A final consideration in the use of sources is the role of inference in interpretation. Historical documents may not provide direct evidence on a subject being investigated. Ethnohistory is directed to the "subhistorical" problems of the past (Cohn 1968). Documents by authors lacking expertise or training in anthropological concepts and terminology present cultural information through indirect references. Observers may be naive about the culture they witness, or ethnocentric bias may obscure relevant data. Crucial pieces of data may appear in fragments, scattered across a series of narratives. Thus, in the absence of explicit references, ethnohistory requires the interpretation of implicit material (Hickerson 1970:7). Inferences may be drawn through induction, generalizing from specific pieces of evidence, or through deduction, eliciting specific information based on knowledge about comparable groups. The context of the document and the writer are taken into consideration.

As a method, the use of inference is an exacting intellectual task. The ability of a researcher to cross-examine historical evidence and interpret the words beyond the intentions of their writers is considered by Bloch to be instinctive (1953:65). At the very least, the practice of inference relies on a solid background in historical criticism as well as a broad knowledge of the history and ethnology of the cultures being studied (Trigger 1982).
The Current Status of Ethnohistory

Ethnohistory in the 1980s is faced with challenges, many of which were present in preceding decades. Cohn (1981) pointed out the difficulty of delineating a "common epistemological space", while Adams (1981) expressed skepticism regarding the compatibility of anthropology and history. Porter (1982) reminded scholars that historical documents do not provide valid evidence for the thought ways ("real" culture) of native peoples. Gadacz (1981), influenced by continental intellectual movements, proclaimed the impossibility of obtaining objectivity in ethnohistorical study, and called for an individual and group confrontation with personal subjectiveness as an appropriate balance. The Whitecottons (1982) related the challenge of finding appropriate documentation in libraries and archives, and maintained that ethnohistory has neglected an adequate feedback between data and theory. Clearly, these issues represent recurring problems of which ethnohistorical researchers need to be fully aware.

However, new challenges have arisen which similarly demand consideration. In a scathing review of the ethnohistory of colonial America, Porter (1982) decried the dogmatism and political faddishness leading to substandard scholarly work which he perceived in recent ethnohistorical publications. Trigger (1982) also warned of the "pitfall" of revisionist studies with political ends. A more serious and less polemical challenge is presented by Krech (1984) who maintained that significant progress in the location of archival data and in scholarly debate has rendered previous ethnohistorical studies
out-of-date. The developmental nature of research is especially crucial in the publication of encyclopedic works such as the *Handbook of North American Indians* (Trigger 1978).

The controversial nature of ethnohistorical research may lead some to question the validity of continuing ethnohistory. Despite philosophical, methodological, and educational challenges, ethnohistory remains a lively and thriving field of study. Although beset with the difficulties of pursuing research at the crossroads of two disciplines, ethnohistory also benefits from its interdisciplinary nature. Ethnohistory allows for the fullest consideration of source material. With consideration for both diachronic and synchronic dimensions of a research problem, ethnohistory yields studies "in the round" (Washburn 1961). History contributes the dimension of time while anthropology provides the holistic consideration of all aspects of culture.

Furthermore, ethnohistory has not exhausted the potential resources available for examination. Not only do many unpublished manuscripts still exist (in public libraries and archives as well as in private possession), but the explosion of documentation in the twentieth century will provide a continuing source of material for future scholars.

Ethnohistory in Relation to Textiles and Clothing

Since textiles and clothing is an applied field, research focusing on these subjects may arise from various base disciplines and methodologies. Compton and Hall (1972) presented both documentary
research (historical) and field study as appropriate research types for textiles and clothing studies. The use of qualitative methods has also been supported by Skjelver (1971) and Kister (1982). The ethno-historical method would be, therefore, an integration of types already identified as applicable for research in textiles and clothing. However, the combination of anthropology and history as well as aspects of the humanities and sciences encompassed by ethnohistory does not allow the method to fit neatly into the Brown and Paolucci schema (1979) of metascientific perspectives and modes of inquiry. Although this schema represents the primary effort to structure knowledge and inquiry for home economics, including textiles and clothing, the schema does not invalidate the utilization of interdisciplinary methods of research.

In regard to the content of ethnohistorical research, both cultural and historical investigations of clothing have been encouraged by the authors of two major documents on research in home economics. Schlater (1970) identified several specific areas for research under the rubric of 'psycho-socio-cultural' aspects of clothing. More recently, in a list of researchable problems developed for the field of textiles and clothing, Ritchey (1978) included both cultural and historical questions.

Feather and Sibley (1979) underscored the absence of attention to acculturation and the influence of culture contact on change in clothing patterns. Although they did not utilize the term 'ethno-history', the concept of investigation utilizing historical and
ethnographic materials was clearly supported by the authors as a productive method for research.

Personal experience in cross-cultural fieldwork is considered invaluable to the ethnohistorian in terms of conceptualizing and conducting ethnohistorical research, but is not considered imperative (Lurie 1961a). The large amount of ethnographic data readily available precludes the necessity of undertaking such an effort. Since the length of time and the personal interaction required by ethnography have been identified as problematic for the researcher in textiles and clothing (Littrell 1980; Daly 1984), the choice to do ethnohistory can circumvent these difficulties. However, the researcher must cultivate familiarity with the ethnographic process in order to utilize fully the cultural data.

The decision to undertake ethnohistorical study demands appropriate academic preparation. Competency in the disciplines of anthropology and history has been presented as a primary challenge for ethnohistorians (Hudson 1973; Trigger 1982). Historians have been reproached for misusing anthropological concepts and imposing notions of cause and effect (Adams 1981; Snow 1981), while anthropologists have been accused of being insufficiently critical of historical sources (Snow 1981; Sturtevant 1968). Dual preparation in both disciplines is therefore advocated to overcome these problems, which are basic to interdisciplinary research. The textiles and clothing scholar must be prepared to obtain this same competency.

Being a textiles and clothing researcher is an advantage in that
disciplinary polemics in ethnohistory can be avoided. The focus on textiles and clothing subjects and interests obviates fears of identity loss (Hudson 1973; Lurie 1961a) and protracted disciplinary "squabbles" (Washburn 1961:32) and "stupid jealousies" (Pargellis 1957:124). The tradition of utilizing various and often contrasting disciplines as the foundation for study focusing on textiles and clothing (for example, chemistry, social psychology, and history) prepares the textiles and clothing researcher for the interdisciplinary effort which ethnohistory requires.

The Research Procedure

Research into the origin, diffusion, and persistence of ribbonwork was based on a preliminary study of ribbon shirts and ribbonwork in Oklahoma. Data subsequently collected provided the material for the findings discussed in Chapter V. A brief summary of the preparatory study and data collection procedures follow.

Preliminary Investigation

Initial research on ribbonwork was carried out during the 1983 Summer Field School of Anthropology at the University of Oklahoma at Norman. That study involved library and archival (photographic) research at the Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Historical Society in Oklahoma City. Ribbonwork specimens were examined in museums across the state of Oklahoma: the Stovall Museum of Science and History (Norman), Oklahoma Historical Society (Oklahoma City), Gilcrease Museum of Art (Tulsa), Philbrook Art Center (Tulsa), the Southern Plains Indian Museum (Anadarko), and
several smaller collections. Both specimens on display and in storage were studied. Library and museum research served as the foundation for field interviews with several Indian women. Four women served as resource persons regarding the contemporary practice of ribbonwork (from the Delaware/Lenni Lenape, Osage, Sauk and Fox, and Oto and Missouri tribes).

Data Collection

Findings from the preliminary investigation led to interest in pursuing a study of ribbonwork from a historical perspective. Previous coursework in the cultural aspects of clothing, cultural anthropology, and history supported the decision to select ribbonwork and acculturation as the dissertation topic and ethnohistory as the methodology. The plan of procedure developed in several stages: summer 1984, spring 1985, and summer 1985.

Summer 1984: France. Many secondary sources on ribbonwork mentioned French traders and France as a source of silk ribbons and the applique technique used in ribbonwork. During the summer of 1984, a bibliographic survey of works printed in French on Great Lakes Indians and Indian art was conducted at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Printed materials on the history of the French industry were also consulted at the Bibliothèque Nationale and at the library of the Centre International d'Etude des Textiles Anciens (Lyon). Museum specimens of ribbonwork were examined in the collection of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris (both display and storage holdings). Possible French prototypes for the applique technique were sought in the
costume collections of the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires (Paris) and the Musée Historique des Tissus (Lyon).

Spring 1985: Kansas and Missouri. During a period of studying secondary works and reprinted primary sources, a research trip was made to Kansas City, Missouri, and Topeka, Kansas. In Kansas City, the Federal Archives and Records Center serves as a regional repository of records from the National Archives. Microfilm copies of the "Correspondence of the Superintendent of Indian Trade" were viewed at the center. In Topeka, manuscripts and rare books from the Kansas State Historical Society were studied. Some photographs and printed materials had already been examined during a previous visit in January 1984. In 1985, papers from the Abbott, Connelley, Gowing, Simmerwell, and Remsburg collections were consulted, in addition to published materials. Most of these resources at the Kansas State Historical Society dated from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century.

Summer 1985: Midwest and Canada. Reference lists in historiographies and ethnohistorical studies, and bibliographic works (especially those by Beers 1957, 1964) assisted in the location of primary historical sources deemed appropriate for a study of ribbonwork. After correspondence with selected libraries and archives, a major trip through the midwest and parts of Canada was undertaken in order to examine personally the documentary sources. The repositories and examples of the types of records examined at each institution follow in the order visited.
Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Illinois
eighteenth century letters from American military and
traders; commercial papers of trader Pierre Menard
(microfilm)

Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois
rare books on Indian captives and Great Lakes Indians

Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois
papers from eighteenth and nineteenth century traders
(Tardiveau) and trading companies (Menard & Valle, American
Fur Company); rare books; photographs

Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, Indiana
accounts and invoices from traders (Lasselle papers, Ewing
papers); invoices from an Indian agent (Tipton)

Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana
commercial papers (Vigo)

Detroit Public Library, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit,
Michigan
narrative accounts (Trowbridge); commercial papers (Askin)

Metro Toronto Library, Baldwin Room, Toronto, Ontario
commercial papers (Powell; North West Company); rare books

Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
French government records (Archives des Colonies); British
government records (Colonial Office); commercial papers of
traders (Ainsse, Hunter); picture division

McGill University, McLennan Library, Rare Book Collection,
Montreal, Quebec
commercial correspondence (Grant, Campion and Company;
Blackwood); trade accounts (Blondeau); narratives (Hadfield)

McGill University, Lande Collection, Montreal, Quebec
rare books from the eighteenth century

Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio
accounts and records from Indian agent (Johnston)

Documentary research during the summer of 1985 was supplemented by
visits to the Field Museum (Chicago), the National Museum of Man
(Ottawa), and the Milwaukee Public Museum (Wisconsin). Slides of
ribbonwork artifacts from the Milwaukee Public Museum collection were
also examined.

Reprinted Sources. Primary historical sources are increasingly available through reprint publications. Collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Illinois State Historical Library, and the Indiana Historical Society have long been available in print. The correspondence of colonial government officials (Johnson 1921-1925) and traders (Askin 1928-1931) were published over fifty years ago. More recently, the March of America Facsimile Series, printed in 1966 by University Microfilms, has made available significant accounts by explorers and travelers in North America.

Microfilm copies of documentary materials are also increasingly available. The Pierre Menard collection of commercial papers recently was made accessible from the Illinois State Historical Library. During the summer of 1985, the Lande Collection of rare books at McGill University was being microfilmed and will soon be available. Reprinted and microfilmed materials provided an important supplement to the manuscripts consulted during the study.

In summary, the research into the development and cultural dynamics of ribbonwork included a variety of resources from the United States, Canada, and France. Library and archival materials, museum specimens, and fieldwork with contemporary ribbonworkers all contributed to the accumulation of data and the development of interpretive hypotheses.
CHAPTER IV

THE CONTEXT:
CULTURE, HISTORY, AND CHANGE

The development of ribbonwork as a manifestation of acculturation can only be understood with reference to the cultural and historical context. In this chapter, a general overview of the cultural background of Great Lakes Indians, the historical background of Euro-American contact, and an analysis of resulting acculturative change is presented.

The Cultural Background

Ribbonwork is characteristic of a core group from the Great Lakes area. The native cultures of this geographic region of the North American continent are considered to be part of the Eastern Woodland culture area (see Wissler 1938). The homogeneity of culture elements, particularly traits relating to material culture, and the similarity of the ecological system in the northeastern portion of the United States and Canada were the primary factors by which the Eastern Woodland area was delineated. Commonalities of core culture patterns for the Great Lakes tribes of the Eastern Woodland area are presented, and significant deviations considered.
Prehistory

Archaeologists probing the prehistoric past of the Great Lakes region have located major cultural complexes in the Ohio Valley such as Fort Ancient (Griffin 1978), the Cahokia region of Illinois (Fowler and Hall 1978), and the upper Great Lakes area (Brose 1978). Artifacts from these complexes provide evidence of population movement and cultural exchange throughout the lakes region and the North American continent. Archaeological research has traced the waning of these cultural complexes, although the reasons for their demise are not understood. It is clear, however, that in the era of European exploration of the Great Lakes region, the large centralized sites were no longer occupied, and smaller groupings of locally distinct communities had emerged.

Geography

Knowledge of native American cultures at the time of initial contact is derived from historical accounts by Europeans, tribal oral history, and archaeological research. Geographic evidence from these sources does not allow the assignment of precise territorial boundaries to specific tribal units. Furthermore, the temporal nature of contact yields geographic data of varying time periods. An anthropological convention has been to organize maps in the "ethnographic present", that is placing culture groups on a map according to earliest evidence, usually at the moment of initial contact with Europeans. Thus, the map of Indians of the Great Lakes (Figure 1) serves as a general guide to the tribes and locations of the indigenous
FIGURE 1

Indians of the Great Lakes:
Location at the Moment of Contact with Europeans
people of the region.

The primary core of ribbonworking tribes considered in this study, the Ottawa, Chippewa-Ojibwa, Menominee, Winnebago, Illinois Potawatomi, Sauk, Fox, Kickapoo, Miami, Shawnee, and the Wyandot (formerly the Huron) were all indigenous to the Great Lakes region at the point of contact with Europeans. The Delaware (an Atlantic tribe from the Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and eastern Pennsylvania area) did not arrive in the Great Lakes region until the eighteenth century.

**Language**

The major populations of this core group were related through the Algonquian linguistic family. Although the majority spoke different, independent languages, a common parent language, termed Proto-Algonquian, is evident through shared phonetic features and language parallels. These linguistic cognates have been maintained through a common history or geographical contiguity.

Within the Algonquian language family there are varying degrees of similarity. The Fox, Sauk, and Kickapoo are considered to be dialects of a common Central Algonquian language, as are the Ojibwa, Chippwa, and Ottawa. Miami and Illinois languages comprise a third dialect cluster. Other tribal units included in the Central Algonquian family are the Potawatomi, Menominee, and Shawnee. Unami and Munsee, languages of related groups considered collectively as the Delaware tribe, are classified as Eastern Algonquian languages, more distantly related to the Central Algonquian group, but also stemming
from the common ancestor Proto-Algonquian.

The exceptions to this common linguistic base are the Wyandots and the Winnebago. The Wyandots, comprised of remaining fragments of the Huron and allied tribes after the mid-seventeenth century wars with the Iroquois, belong to the Iroquoian linguistic family. The Winnebago, on the other hand, are a member of the Siouan linguistic group that remained in the woodlands area while their linguistic relatives moved westward toward the plains in the seventeenth century.

Subsistence

The woodlands consisted primarily of deciduous forest with smaller areas of prairie parkland in Illinois and Wisconsin, and a mixed conifer-deciduous environment in the northernmost area. The natural resources of the region determined the basic subsistence patterns of pre-contact life. Exploitation of animals through hunting and fishing, along with the gathering of abundant wild foods, such as tubers, nuts, berries, and fruit, were characteristic of their mixed economic base. Horticulture, including the cultivation of corn, beans, and squash with a slash-and-burn technique or planting on river banks, was generally practiced. Throughout much of the Great Lakes area, the food quest also included the manufacture of maple sugar in the spring.

However, the specific mixture of subsistence activities was variable, according to the habitat. In upper Wisconsin and Michigan, a shortened growing season and poor soil militated against gardening, and native wild rice served as the grain staple. In contrast, the
pre-contact Huron were intensively engaged in the production of corn. Moose and elk were hunted in the north, while an eastern prairie species of buffalo was the object of hunts on the grassy parklands of Illinois and Indiana. Fishing was important to the Ottawa, but most other tribes were less dependent upon riparian products, and for some groups fishing was negligible (e.g., the Fox or the Miami).

As is common in hunting and gathering societies, the division of labor for subsistence activities was gender-based. Men hunted large animals, such as deer, bear, buffalo, or moose, and wild fowl with bow and arrow. Trapping small game and fishing were also male tasks. Women were responsible for the gathering and raising of plant resources (using the digging stick and short hoe), although men typically prepared the ground designated for planting. Women were in charge of the preparation of all products of the hunt and garden. Women prepared food for immediate consumption, such as roasting or boiling meat, and prepared future provisions, such as drying meat, berries, or corn. The manufacture of non-food articles, such as tanning skins, making clothing, or fabricating household utensils (for example birchbark baskets, twined bags, or pottery) were female tasks. The women wove mats of reeds or bark which were utilized to cover transportable pole-frame winter lodges. Although women made many items of material culture, men were the manufacturers of armaments, tools of stone and bone for hunting and fishing, utensils of carved wood, and transportation items (such as snowshoes or canoes, both dugout and birchbark). Men were also the creators of artifacts for
religious activities, such as the sacred bundles.

The seasonal nature of the environment was a determining factor in subsistence activities. Gardening and gathering activities occupied the women in late spring and summer while the men were engaged in summer hunts and fishing. After the late summer harvests or early fall wild rice gathering, the food quest became more reliant on hunting. Men were involved in large game hunting through the fall. During the coldest months of winter, small fur-bearing animals were in their most luxurious state, and so became a specific target of hunting. With the thaw of spring came the manufacture of maple syrup, and afterwards the preparation of land for horticulture.

Settlement

The nature of the food quest was related to residence patterns. Among the tribes heavily engaged in horticulture, such as the Huron and Iroquois, large villages with multi-family dwellings and communal buildings were known to exist. Other tribes followed a temporal settlement cycle according to the food quest pattern. The fall and winter months were spent in small hunting groups spread out in pursuit of game. The size of temporary winter camps were related to the natural resources available to support the group. In the spring and summer, winter bands would gather in semi-permanent villages, which were often situated on river and lake shores. The denser population of village communities allowed for cooperation in gardening and hunting activities, as well as in collective activities, such as political organizations (the Iroquois) or ritual celebrations. Woodland tribes
were essentially sedentary, although the Chippewa were nomadic and changed location more frequently according to the available resources. However, the Chippewa also congregated in larger groups for summer fishing and religious activities.

**Social Organization**

Corporate relationships and activities in woodland cultures were kin-oriented. The fundamental social unit was the household consisting of an extended family. Among the tribes who dispersed in winter, hunting groups were composed of bands of several extended families. Although band membership was fluid, an elder male was considered as head. Multi-family summer settlements were integrated by a system of clans. Clans were named after wild life (such as Bear, Sturgeon, or Turkey) or natural phenomena (such as Lightning or Snow), and handed down legends concerning their nominal ancestors. Tribal clans were the organizing factor for social institutions such as descent and marriage. Clan descent was largely patrilineal among woodland tribes, although the Iroquoian groups practiced matrilineal descent. Marriage was prohibited within the clan thus promoting exogamy. Clans controlled names and personal qualities, and sponsored ceremonies for the sacred bundle of the clan. Moieties or other systems of dual division were utilized in organizing games, dances, and other ceremonial activities.

The social organization of woodland tribes was related in part to subsistence patterns. The gender division of labor and the dependence on the environment required cooperation and communal sharing.
Reciprocal relations resulted in an egalitarian society characterized by interdependence rather than social subordination. The pattern of scattered seasonal hunting operated against the emergence of centralized authority found among the sedentary tribes. However, seasonal group settlements and ritual practices facilitated social interaction and thus yielded a collective identity. Relationships through clan and moiety membership also added to corporate sentiment.

**Political Organization**

Political organization existed with varying degrees of complexity among woodland groups. The confederacy of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca tribes, known as the League of the Iroquois, was a highly organized political institution. Political autonomy was characteristic of the central Algonquian tribes, and there were no comparable intertribal political organizations. The prominent feature of the Illinois Confederacy, which included the Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Peoria sub-tribes, was large communal settlements rather than active political structures. Temporal alliances between tribes, such as the Three Fires (Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Ottawa) or the Sac and Fox, were authenticated through legends of common ancestry.

Tribal councils were the affair of adult men, with the advice of the elders being valued. A civil chief, whose position was hereditary, was responsible for moderating the council. A dual division of peace (civil) and war chiefs was characteristic of woodland tribes. A war chief assumed leadership for specific conflicts, based on his reputation for personal valor. Warfare was a male activity, and was
carried out in the form of raids preceded by preparatory rituals. Hostilities often arose in retaliation for encroachment upon hunting lands or the murder of a tribal member. Intertribal conflict was often an ongoing series of disputes and reprisals.

Ritual Life

In woodland cultures, belief in the supernatural world included a central all-powerful creator and numerous spirits both beneficent and malevolent. Animistic philosophies provided the basis for the veneration of nature. Creation myths and legends of tribal heroes and supernatural beings were repeated through a rich oral tradition.

Religious beliefs were expressed in both corporate and individual forms. Seasonal ceremonies celebrating harvest or the hunt brought tribal groups together. Such ceremonies included feasts, dancing, songs, games, offerings of tobacco, prayers, and orations. Rites honoring the dead involved communal activities and reciprocal gift-giving. Other rituals focused on the sacred bundles, and were sponsored by the clan possessing the bundle.

Individual spiritual life was oriented toward the vision quest, a combination of fasting and seclusion leading to personal revelation. First experienced as a puberty rite among woodland Indians, the vision quest provided a guardian spirit and life direction to the young individual. The vision quest was primarily a male tradition, although women sometimes also underwent the experience.

Among woodland tribes, shamans were ritual specialists with knowledge of medicine and divination. Shamans were consulted both in
times of illness and cases of witchcraft.

**Property**

Personal property belonged to individuals or a family. Items from the domestic sphere, such as household items and shelter, were the property of women, while weapons and tools of the hunt belonged to men. Although women cooperated in many horticultural activities, such as planting, an individual owned the products of her field. In comparison, the products of a communal hunt were divided among the members of the hunting group. The woodland concept of land tenure, however, was not based on notions of property. Rather than exclusive ownership by individuals, the custom of household rights allowed access to land and its resources.

Corporate groups, such as the clan, did not own property. Clans held title to a stock of ancestral names and personal qualities associated with those names, and a minimum of ritual items, such as a sacred bundle. Bundles, which included medicines and supernatural powers, were the primary example of corporate property.

The rights of distribution differed from ownership (Newcomb 1956). Traditionally, women were responsible for the products of the hunt after the kill, both in terms of preparation (for food or material items) and distribution. Similarly, men could distribute products from the garden in the form of feasts.

The redistribution of property was an important cultural process. Goods and services were shared with kin and generosity was valued. The elderly were often honored through gifts of food and manufactured
items. Ceremonial exchanges were a significant way to redistribute material goods beyond the kin network. The communal sharing of material goods was a part of name-giving events, adoption rites, and curing ceremonies, as well as games and festivals. Marriage was formalized by the exchange of gifts between the families. The death of an individual resulted in the redistribution of property. Archaeological excavations have revealed the presence of burial goods, although the remaining possessions of the deceased were customarily given away to non-relatives as well as kin.

The distribution of material goods was a customary way of gaining status as well as effectively preventing the concentration of wealth. The tribal chief received many gifts through these ceremonial exchanges. These goods did not accumulate, however, as the property of a chief was traditionally redistributed as part of his leadership responsibilities.

Trade

Woodland economic life was based on self-sufficiency in the production of food and material items. Whether hunting and gathering bands or semi-sedentary village residents, woodland groups provided for their own subsistence needs. Their economic life was geared to production for use rather than production for exchange.

Archaeological evidence, however, demonstrates the existence of external trade. Material finds from some prehistoric cultural complexes, such as the Hopewell (Fitting 1978), provide examples of extensive long-distance trade across the North American continent.
Items such as salt water shell, sharks' or bears' teeth, copper, obsidian, or flint, have been found at considerable distance from their natural environments. Other archaeological sites show relatively little evidence of material culture originating from outside their local regions.

In the era preceding contact, various items have been indicated as commodities of intertribal exchange. Items traded among woodland tribes included food (for example corn, dried berries, and fish), and implements (such as mats or nets). Much trade centered around specialty commodities, such as wampum, furs, catlinite, porcupine quills, or tobacco. Two widely circulated trade items were shell and copper. Both served utilitarian functions, such as shell for scrapers and copper for spear points and knives. Both, however, were utilized for adornment. Large shells were prominently worn on a leather thong as a gorget while smaller shells were strung as necklaces or fastened to clothing. Copper was flattened into sheets and fashioned into tubular hair ornaments and beads.

The basic similarity of environment and natural resources across the woodland area obviated the development of major exchange systems within the region. Trade appears to have been motivated by a desire to obtain various specialty goods and did not expand into formalized flows of material goods and relationships of economic dependence. External trade among woodland tribes operated as a barter economy. There is no evidence of the development of money nor marketing systems. However, it is known that some tribes exercised a unique role
in intertribal trade, serving as a middleman between commodity suppliers. The Huron and the Ottawa promoted trade among their Algonquian neighbors in this manner (Heidenreich 1978).

Among the Huron, intertribal exchange was a manifestation of political and social relationships (Heidenreich 1978). Trade was conducted with treaty partners and not with enemies. Political alliances and trade were a unified activity established through ceremonies with reciprocal gifts and speeches, as well as intermarriage. The exchange of material goods formalized the creation and renewal of political and economic relations. Thus, pre-contact trade functioned as a communal rather than an individual activity (Rotstein 1972).

Women

According to the gender division of labor, woodland Indian women were responsible for the domestic sphere. Many of their tasks related to the maintenance of the household (both the physical structure and its furnishings). They wove the rush or bark mats for the lodge and its interior. They manufactured domestic utensils such as simple pottery and birchbark receptacles. Women were also in charge of transporting the household upon seasonal resettlement. Responsibility and ownership were analogous as the household was considered to be the property of the woman and was retained by her at the death of a spouse or upon divorce.

Other areas of domestic labor included subsistence activities. According to the season, women were engaged in gathering or horticulture, planting, cultivating, and harvesting the crops of corn, squash,
and beans. Women were always in charge of food processing, including the products of the men's hunt. Women also gathered firewood and carried water as part of the household tasks.

Textiles and clothing were another area of female expertise. Women prepared twine, rope, and yarn of vegetable fibers or animal hair (particularly buffalo wool). From the yarn they fabricated soft bags, belts, burden straps (tumplines), and ties by a twining or finger weaving method. Loom weaving was not practiced among woodlands Indians, although true weaving techniques were utilized in the production of mats. Clothing was constructed from skin or furs that were dressed and tanned by women. Sewing consisted of punching holes with a bone awl, and passing leather sinews through the holes (sometimes utilizing bone needles), bringing the cut edges together in a butt joint. These sewing tools were also manufactured by the women.

In addition to managing the household, the domestic sphere of the women also included family responsibilities. Women were responsible for the socialization of young children, both male and female. Girls remained under the tutelage of mothers and women relatives, learning domestic skills and ritual procedures (particularly adherence to menstrual taboos).

Iroquoian women exercised political power through their role in the choice of the clan representative to the League council (Tooker 1978). The public role of women in central woodland tribes was not comparable. It does not appear that women served in a political capacity nor attained a political rank of chief. However, women
customarily supervised ritual feasts, and among the Shawnee (Callender 1978b:627, 628) and Miami (Callender 1978a:685) women with such a ceremonial role were considered as "chiefs". Among the Kickapoo, the approval of a religious "queen" was necessary for the scheduling of dances (Callender, Pope and Pope 1978:661). Furthermore, women organized planting rites in association with their gardening responsibilities. Thus, even the public involvement of women in religious life was oriented toward the domestic sphere of food production and preparation.

Decorative Arts

The woodlands environment provided a variety of media for pre-contact decorative arts. Rock faces were painted or engraved. Pipe bowls of wood or stone were carved with three-dimensional figures (often birds or animals) or decorated with incised lines or rows of punctates. Wood utensils, such as bowls and ladles, also featured small figurines. Pottery of native clay was decorated with impressions around the lip and rim, made with cords or punches. Designs on birchbark containers were made by scraping away an outer layer of bark to reveal a lighter colored layer. Household mats were decorated by dyeing reeds prior to weaving or by painting. Dyes and paints were produced from the roots, leaves, and flowers of native plants. Soft bags, sashes, garters, and pack lines included rectilinear designs created by twining dyed yarns made from bast fibers or animal hair. Sometimes plain twined straps were ornamented with a false embroidery technique, wherein dyed animal hair or porcupine quills were wrapped
around base yarns to form multicolor motifs.

Leather clothing, including robes, shirts, clouts, skirts, leggings, and moccasins, was decorated in a variety of ways. Different colors of skins were produced through variations in the tanning process. The addition of bark or clay decoctions could yield dark brown or black leather in addition to a natural light brown. Skin robes were decorated with hand-painted designs, or by the addition of animals teeth, shells, or deer dewclaws. Porcupine quills that were dyed various colors were flattened and "sewn" on clothing items as variegated border designs. Cut-out forms also provided design through subtraction.

The human body also served as the vehicle for aesthetic expression. In addition to decorated clothing, strands of shells or animal teeth were suspended from the neck and feathers inserted into the hair. Body painting, tattooing, and ear piercing or notching (to permit the suspension of beads, bird down, and other decorations) were body modifications recorded frequently.

Although the variety of media and techniques utilized by woodland Indians has been documented, details on pre-contact designs, colors, and processes are not well understood. Brasser claimed that, in general, native American art prior to 1850 has not been adequately defined and described (1976:30). Some forms of decoration appear to be linked to production techniques. Carving allows for the creation of three-dimensional figures, whereas the twining technique results in rectilinear designs. Although the twined pouches and straps
frequently show geometric, abstract designs, depictions of animal life have been found in both media.

The decorative arts were integrated into several aspects of pre-contact culture. Mythological beings were depicted on twined bags utilized in sacred bundles. Body decoration was a customary practice of communal celebrations and war preparation. Furthermore, the production of decorative items reflected the gender-based division of labor. Men worked with wood, stone, and bone with carving and engraving techniques. Men also painted themselves for ceremonial and war activities. All other art media were part of the women's sphere: quillwork, twining and weaving, pottery, birchbark decoration, and ornamented clothing.

Conclusion

In the era prior to contact with Europeans, the American Indians of the Great Lakes region held in common many broad cultural patterns such as affinities in language, subsistence, sociopolitical and religious patterns. Simultaneously, woodland tribes manifested a degree of heterogeneity in cultural specifics. Ribbonworking tribes from the Great Lakes include three different linguistic stocks (Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Siouan), variations in pre-contact subsistence patterns (e.g., hunting/fishing/wild rice gathering as opposed to hunting/horticulture), various kinship models (patrilineal or matrilineal), and differences in social organization (e.g., the existence of moieties, or the importance of the clans). Both commonalities and differences among Great Lakes tribes continued with the advent of
European contact.

The Historical Background

Unlike Indians of the coastal areas, tribes in the Great Lakes experienced a period of indirect contact (protohistory) before sustained relations were developed with Europeans. Direct contact further varied according to the European source (French, Dutch, or British) and the nature of the contact: (a) exploration and empire building, (b) the westward expansion of the fur trade, and (c) the desire for land for settlement.

Protohistory of Contact

Despite the immensity of the Atlantic coastline available for exploitation, the European desire to explore and to claim land and trade drove them inland. Two physical barriers initially restricted their ability to gain the interior. The Lachine Rapids (at the confluence of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers) and Niagara Falls effectively blocked the direct water route to the Great Lakes. The Appalachian Mountains, stretching from southern Québec to Alabama, prevented access to the interior by rivers, in addition to hindering overland travel. Thus, while Jacques Cartier reached the Lachine Rapids as early as 1534, he was barred from pursuing his search for a sea route to Asia. Subsequent European wars of religion absorbed the financial resources of the French throne and also prevented further exploration through the end of the sixteenth century.

However, military and trade alliances between the French and the Huron Indians, who were situated north of Lake Ontario, led to
indirect contact with Indians further west. The increasing demand by the French for beaver skins prompted the Huron to adopt the role of middlemen between French traders located in the lower St. Lawrence valley and hunting tribes to the north and west. The Huron had served as middlemen in the pre-contact exchange of furs, food supplies, and luxury items among Woodlands Indians, and readily replicated this position in the early fur trade. The Huron brought items of European manufacture, such as metal axes and ornamental items, and exchanged them for fur pelts from surrounding tribal units, and later traded the peltry to the French. Although this trade relationship was not extensive with Great Lakes Indians, European material goods became the first aspects of European culture to come into contact with the Indian cultures of the Great Lakes.

A second form of indirect contact was the spread of European disease. Again, through the intermediary of tribes trading with Europeans, common European germs, such as measles and smallpox, were passed on to inland tribes. Not possessing immune systems resistant to these diseases, American Indians experienced illness in epidemic proportions, some populations being decimated. Upon meeting the French for the first time, the Winnebago informed them of their reduced conditions (Lurie 1978:690).

**Exploration and Early Contact**

Despite discouragement from the Huron, presumably fearing the loss of their economic role in trading, Samuel de Champlain continued explorations and by 1615 arrived on the shores of Lake Huron. By
traveling up the Ottawa River by canoe, and portaging across to Lake Nipissing and then to Georgian Bay, Champlain was able to bypass physical barriers and reach the upper Great Lakes area. There he encountered the Huron and probably the Ottawa and Chippewa. Drawn inland by his drive to explore new territory, Champlain also expected to consolidate the incipient fur trade by establishing a westernmost location. However, the lack of adequate working capital prevented permanent French settlements and the utilization of the Huron as trade intermediaries obviated the need for the French to establish a continuous presence in the Great Lakes.

Even as the dual interests in developing trade and territorial claims led the French into alliances with the Huron, Dutch explorers and traders entered into association with Indian tribes. Originally searching for a passage to China, the Dutch settled along the Atlantic coast and the Hudson River, notably at Fort Orange (Albany), establishing trade and diplomatic relations with the Iroquoian tribes who controlled the territory south of the St. Lawrence River (New York). By the middle of the seventeenth century, intense rivalry arose between the Huron and the Iroquoian Five Nations Confederacy, who also aspired to a middleman role in the fur trade. Exacerbated by traditional enmities, the conflict led to vicious and widespread warfare. The Iroquois aggressors not only decimated and scattered the Huron and their closely related allies the Petun and Neutrals, but also destroyed or dispersed unknown tribal groups in the Ohio Valley, thus opening up that territory for hunting by the Iroquois.
The momentum of the so-called Beaver Wars also drove other central woodland tribes to the west. However, the vacuum created by the dissolution of the Huron was filled by 1654 by the Ottawa, who invited French explorers and traders into the upper lakes. Within ten years the Ottawa controlled trade from the Ottawa River west, extended contacts to the northwest, and consolidated exchange between Montreal and Indians of the Great Lakes.

Guided by the vision of Colbert, the French minister of finance, French traders contracted alliances with Indians. Sault Ste. Marie was the site in 1671 of an "annexation" ceremony between the French and the Potawatomi tribe. Further exploration, designed to outflank English claims and the hostile Iroquois, extended French claims to New World territory. The 1673 expedition of Father Marquette and Louis Joliet, through Lake Michigan, along the Illinois River, and down the Mississippi River, was followed by the exploration of René Robert Cavalier de La Salle, who pursued a similar route reaching the Gulf of Mexico in 1687. These travels confirmed French claims to the Mississippi drainage, including the Great Lakes region, and led to the establishment of a chain of posts in the Illinois country, notably Fort de Chartres, on the Mississippi River. Furthermore, alliances with Illinois, Miami, and other tribes led to direct trade relationships with these tribes. The French thus developed an extensive inland trading network with a Montreal base.
French-British Rivalry

Although British interest in the New World was originally focused on coastal settlements, by 1664 they had taken over New Netherlands as part of a diplomatic transfer of territory. Leaving the Albany-based trading system intact, the British continued trade with the Iroquois tribes as foremost supplier of furs. The establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670 represented a major effort by the British to penetrate the interior of the continent from the north, with the goal of establishing trade relations and territorial claims.

The expansion of European efforts throughout the eastern portion of the North American continent was stimulated by imperialistic and mercantilist philosophies. The expansion favored the growth of the fur trade, both in the establishment of inland trading posts (such as Michilimackinac) as well as the entry of individual traders into the interior (especially the French coureurs de bois or individual trading agents).

By 1695, however, the supply of beaver pelts (both in terms of quantity and sometimes inferior quality) outstripped the demand in Europe, leading to an economic crisis. In addition to lowering prices, all but one French post in the Illinois country were abandoned in order to reduce the amount of trade.

However, the retrenchment in trading did not lead to a long-term exodus of the French from the Great Lakes. At the end of the seventeenth century, reports of English traders crossing the Alleghenies (the Pennsylvania section of the Appalachian mountain system) fueled
fears of British encroachment on trade and territory. Such fears prompted La Mothe Cadillac in 1701 to establish a settlement of Ottawa, Huron/Wyandot, and other Indians from Michilimackinac at Detroit. The purpose of this trading post/garrison/mission was to deter western Indians from gaining access to the British traders at Albany, whose goods were reputedly less expensive and of superior quality.

French and British rivalry in the New World was an extension of ongoing imperial, commercial, and religious competition in Europe. The War of the League of Augsburg or King William's War (1689-1697) prompted increased militarization of North American garrisons. The 1713 Treaty of Utrecht culminated the European hostilities over the succession to the Spanish throne (Queen Anne's War, 1702-1713). As a result of this treaty, the French lost Acadia in the northeast and trading rights around Hudson's Bay. However, French claims to the Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley area were legitimized, although entry of British traders into the region was permitted (see Figure 2).

The peace, which resulted partially from economic exhaustion, did not dampen expansionist efforts. Although the use of animal resources was regulated through hunting taboos of the indigenous cultures, the breakdown of such cultural injunctions resulted in the decimation of the fur-bearing population. The drastic decrease of furs in the northeast, particularly beaver skins, led European traders to focus efforts on the Great Lakes region.
FIGURE 2

French and British Territorial Claims, 1759
The English, seeking to extend the Albany trade and to open posts accessible by water routes to western Indians, built a trading post/fort at Oswego on western Lake Ontario in 1726. This prompted the French to reestablish a fort at Niagara the following year, to block inland Indians from access to English traders. In this, the French strategy was two-fold—to attract trade by offering more western locations (including Detroit), as well as to militarily discourage and thus prevent passage east. With Great Lakes navigation under French control, the British turned to the Ohio Valley. Alliances with the Iroquois nations were expanded to include coastal tribes subjugated by the Iroquoian Confederacy who were now moving westward into the central woodlands area.

However, despite the considerable attention to the Indians of the Great Lakes area during this time, interest in the fur trade continued shifting westward. Through control of the Great Lakes, French explorers, led by La Verendrye, pushed inland to central and western Canadian territory. Montreal-based merchants used Great Lakes posts, such as Detroit and Michilimackinac, as intermediate stages for pushing trade routes westward. Despite the promise of luxurious furs from the more northern climes, the costs of establishing new routes, and the extra expenses incurred because of the long distances did not allow immediate profits. Thus the long-established trade with Indians in the Great Lakes was able to retain its position in the fur trade.

Again, the impact of European dynastic competition culminating in the War of Austrian Succession or King George's War (1740–1748) was
felt in the New World. Naval battles in the Atlantic disrupted maritime traffic, leading to shortages of goods for the fur trade. Peace bought renewed competition as British traders again crossed the Alleghenies and developed relations with Miami and Potawatomi Indians at posts on Lake Ontario and in the Ohio territory.

French diplomatic and commercial alliances with woodland Indians were extended to include military assistance with the commencement of the French and Indian War in 1753. At first, North America served as the neutral battleground for French and British rivalry. Claims to territory and trade were backed up by the creation of new garrisons (the French Fort Duquesne, 1754) and skirmishes (British General Braddock's defeat, 1755). In 1756, the conflict broadened to include warfare in Europe which became the Seven Years' War. Because North American military engagements were centered in the eastern corridor, Great Lakes Indians were not directly attacked in their tribal territories. Although they participated in frontier raids and joined French and British forces in major military engagements, they did not experience direct military defeat.

The withdrawal of France, following the fall of Québec (1759) and the defeat of Montreal (1760), ruptured French-Indian relations that had endured through the previous century. The Treaty of Paris in 1763 officially extinguished French claims to Canada, including the Great Lakes region.
British Control

The consolidation of British military power in North America brought change to the indigenous populations of the Great Lakes. Diplomatic alliances were severed as the French relinquished their claims to mainland North American territory, and economic relations were therefore significantly altered. French traders on the Mississippi River moved across the river to Spanish-controlled territory and utilized New Orleans as the port for supplies and transoceanic shipping. Tribes in the Illinois Territory continued trading with the French, now at Saint Louis.

However, established French-Canadian agents and trading posts around the Great Lakes maintained routes to Montreal. The change to British rule also affected the organization of Montreal trading companies and their suppliers. French merchants lost their crown-granted monopolies and British immigrants, notably former military personnel, established partnerships and trading groups. The cessation of hostilities in Europe did not include the resumption of open trade between England and France. Montreal firms ceased ordering shipments of goods from French ports and established commercial relations with British manufacturers and wholesale houses in London. Trade with French suppliers was further ruptured through protectionist laws prohibiting the importation of many French manufactures to England.

In addition, coastal commercial houses located in Philadelphia and Baltimore became increasingly interested in the interior trade and established posts across the Alleghenies. The awarding of trading
licenses to many peoples and the existence of multiple trading routes led to continuing economic competition in the Great Lakes region.

An immediate consequence of peace in North America was increased interest in western lands by British colonists. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 dictated that land west of a line running along the crest of the Allegheny Mountains was to remain Indian territory and not open to settlement. This temporary policy included a prohibition against the purchase of Indian lands, except for authorized colonial agents. The 1774 Quebec Act placed the Great Lakes region within the jurisdiction of the province of Québec. This action restored political control to Canada and strengthened economic ties with Montreal.

The elimination of France as a rival and the extinguishing of French competition for political alliance with Indian tribes allowed a change in British policy toward gift-giving. Citing the expenses incurred for past presents, British officials attempted to scale down the goods and provisions offered to Indians in conferences and treaties. However, the custom was never abandoned.

**British-American Competition**

The rebellion of the American colonies became another factor in British-Indian relations and reinstituted the dual political and economic competition. Recognizing the value of alliances with Indian nations, the Americans sought to concretize diplomacy with promises of trade and gifts. The limited development of manufacturing in the colonies, the inadequacy of American supply lines to the interior, and the maritime blockade of imported goods by the British prevented the
Americans from conducting trade and contracting alliances in the manner established by the French and the British.

Thus, during the years of the revolution, the majority of tribes in the Great Lakes area maintained relations with the British, including those trading with the French out of Saint Louis. However, these alliances were never of a unified or homogeneous nature. The anti-European history of the Fox led them to disdain alliance with the British. The Miami and allied Wea and Piankashaw adopted a neutral stance during the conflict. The Potawatomi of the Detroit area supported the British while western Potawatomi were anti-British.

The Treaty of Paris in 1783 awarded the area south of the Great Lakes to the United States. Although considered a surprise concession by some, the British appeared to be more intent on retaining Canadian territory with its promise of lucrative furs. However, the withdrawal of British traders and military forces from the Great Lakes region proceeded slowly. Montreal merchants were reluctant to abandon established trade routes and contacts, and the fledgling American nation was unable to staff adequately the western garrisons. British-Canadian trading companies continued operations south of the midline of the Great Lakes (the official border) until Jay's Treaty of 1794. Some Indian groups who had supported the British moved to the Canadian side (such as some of the Delaware). Not until 1796 were the Great Lakes posts turned over to the Americans.
The American Frontier

The Americans initiated negotiations with Indian nations to obtain greater amounts of territory for settlement. Sometimes multiple agreements were required in order to extinguish all claims. In the 1784 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, the Iroquoian delegates ceded rights to land in western Pennsylvania and Ohio. The following year, the Fort McIntosh Treaty was purported to obtain release of these same lands from western (or Ohio valley) "chiefs". However, the treaty was repudiated by many tribes who maintained that the surrender of land was illegally contracted by unauthorized representatives. Nevertheless, a series of land-cession treaties followed, continually extending land for settlement westward.

The American Indian policy was strongly diplomatic in character, preferring treaties to military engagement. However, the rejection of treaty settlements by Great Lakes tribes led Ohio Indians to defend their territory by attacking incoming settlers. The U.S. Army attempted to maintain control of the Northwest Territory, but were militarily ineffective. Not until the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794, led by Gen. Anthony Wayne, were the Americans victorious. Peace between the Indian nations and the United States was contracted in 1795 with the Treaty of Greenville. In this treaty, all of Ohio but the northwest corner was opened for settlement, and the charter for the reservation system was organized (Wallace 1978:443).

In addition to the establishment of Indian agencies for negotiation and distribution of annuities from land cessions, the United
States government entered into trade with Indians of the Great Lakes region. Beginning in 1795 and lasting until 1822, a series of congressional legislative acts maintained the Indian factory system (Peake 1954; Prucha 1962). At the factories or trading posts, European and American manufactured items were made available to Indians in exchange for peltry, which was disposed of in public auctions on the east coast. In an analysis of the trade acts, Prucha identified four purposes of the factory system (1962:87). First, the development of trade with the Indians was to cement diplomatic alliances by providing an alternative to the British trade and gifts which customarily paralleled political alliance. The second purpose was economic, to draw away trade from Canadian merchants toward American suppliers. Military concerns were a third purpose. The institution of trade was calculated to involve the tribes in hunting and inhibit attention to incoming white settlers. The fourth purpose was based on humanitarian concerns, as legislators stated that they wished to avoid the excessive prices and irregular practices of some unscrupulous private traders. In summary, the policy guiding the factories was to promote peace through trade.

The first factories were opened at Fort Wayne and Detroit in 1802, although the Detroit factory closed in 1805. Within six years, other posts opened for business throughout the western Great Lakes area: Chicago, Belle Fontine (near St. Louis), Sandusky (which began as an Ohio subsidiary of the Fort Wayne post), Mackinac, Fort Osage (in Missouri), and Fort Madison (in Iowa). Competition from British
and American private traders caused some factories to close. However, the factories expanded as an 1811 law regarding the purchase and transport of annuity goods increased the responsibilities and duties of the post's factor.

The War of 1812, however, severely damaged the factory system. Posts in Fort Wayne, Chicago, Sandusky, and Mackinac were closed due to destruction in the war or severe disruption of trade. Other factories and branches were established to serve Indians further to the west. Green Bay replaced Mackinac, while Prairie du Chien, Fort Edward and Armstrong (in Illinois), and St. Peter (in Minnesota) were subsequently founded.

The factories were never intended to turn a profit. However, excessive deficits from management problems and war-related losses weakened the economic viability of the system. In addition, private fur trading companies (particularly Astor's American Fur Company) lobbied against the maintenance of a government-sponsored business. In 1822, Congress voted to discontinue the trade legislation supporting the factory system, and trade with Indians reverted to private enterprise.

Removal and Reservations

Mounting pressures by American easterners wishing to move into the Northwest Territory prompted the United States government to seek release of these lands from Great Lakes tribes. A series of tribal and intertribal treaties ceding land resulted in blocks of the Territory being opened to settlement and formed into states: Ohio (1803),
Indiana (1816), Illinois (1818), Michigan (1837), and Wisconsin (1848). The simultaneous reduction of fur-bearing animals in the Great Lakes area significantly altered the economic base of Indians in the region. Thus, the decline of the fur trade assisted Americans in securing land by offering cash payments and annuities to replace diminishing economic resources.

With the entry of white settlers into the Great Lakes region, the United States government began to encourage the removal of American Indians to territories beyond the Mississippi River. By the turn of the century, some factions had already responded to the influx of settlers by migrating westward. Trans-Mississippi movement was accelerated with the promulgation of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 which institutionalized the extensive relocation of tribes from east of the Mississippi (including those of the eastern Great Lakes). Tribes from the northern lakes were also forced further north and west. However, treaty agreements allowed the Iroquois to remain on reserved land in up-state New York. Great Lakes tribes that had scattered during the process of land cessions were reconsolidated in western reservations or reorganized with other tribal groups. Some tribes assigned to the Kansas Territory, such as the Delaware, were later removed again, this time to the Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

Reservation life was marked by the efforts of the United States government to assimilate the American Indian into Euro-American society. Schools for Indian children, and programs to teach a Euro-American style of farming by men were established to encourage the
adoption of white culture patterns. Progress was often evaluated according to dress styles. The number of Indians adopting "citizen" dress (Euro-American clothing) rather than retaining the "blanket" was recorded by government agents, missionaries, and travelers as an index of civilization.

**Conclusion**

The experiences of Great Lakes tribes during the historic period varied according to the specific development of contact: the time period, the nature of contact, and the European nation with whom relationships were formed. Commonalities of experience can also be noted. First, all tribes entered into political alliances with Europeans (although the Fox were primarily hostile to such relations). Second, Great Lakes tribes universally entered into commercial relationships with Europeans through trading peltry for European manufactured items. Third, by the mid-nineteenth century, all Great Lakes tribes had been geographically displaced and were dominated by the policies of the United States government.

**Culture Change**

From the moment of first contact, European influence on woodland tribes was maintained through a dual system of politics and economics. The combination fort/trading post effected a variety of changes in woodland cultures.

Changes in material culture, because of their visible nature, are frequently cited as evidence of acculturation. Items of European manufacture were available to Great Lakes Indians through both
political and economic spheres. Diplomatic alliances were formalized through reciprocal gift-giving, according to woodland custom. The exchange of furs and European goods was also preceded by the presentation of presents. The European articles for gifts were the same as those available in barter for peltry.

Many of these introduced items were accepted as replacements for traditional artifacts. Metal implements (knives, hatchets, awls, needles, kettles) were substituted for those of stone, bone, or pottery. Cloth was utilized in place of skin for clothing. Firearms increasingly superseded the bow and arrow for hunting and warfare. The adoption of these European goods obviated the manufacture of many indigenous tools. Other items of European manufacture (such as glass beads) were added to woodland culture, thus prompting new forms of adornment and decoration. Silver ornaments, both those produced especially for the Indian trade and those created by Indian craftsmen, were incorporated into woodland material culture. The introduction of liquor, especially by traders, was another innovation. In contrast, traditional foods, forms of shelter, and transportation were retained.

Involvement in the fur trade led to alterations in the traditional subsistence pattern. Broad participation in the hunting and trapping of fur-bearing animals was a major change in the men's activities. Hunting shifted from a production pattern of self-sufficiency in food and clothing to production of furs for exchange. Intertribal trade relationships shifted to ties between native groups and European traders. New rivalries based on commercial competition arose among
some Great Lakes tribes.

The acceleration of hunting activities generally has been linked with the establishment of a new economic order among American Indians. Although many traditional techniques and crafts were retained, the adoption of European items is commonly related to economic dependence upon the European supplier. The inability to manufacture metal tools, textiles, ammunition, and the lack of alternate sources for these items led to a reliance on the European for procurement. In some places, the concentration on hunting for furs was carried out at the expense of the food quest, furthering the increased dependence on foodstuffs provided by traders.

Furthermore, this economic dependence led to a pattern of credit and debt, concepts without counterparts in pre-contact Indian culture. Firearms and provisions needed to be secured before hunting could commence. Although the issuance of credit is sometimes equated with the inexperienced or frightened trader (Sunder 1965:36), the credit-debt system is commonly seen as a manifestation of Indian dependence upon trade or as a manipulation by the trader to maximize trade through the creation of obligations.

Another widespread change resulting from contact was massive geographic movement. In order to consolidate their role as suppliers of furs, the Iroquois decimated and scattered the Huron, forced Algonquian tribes westward, and displaced groups in the Ohio Valley. The establishment of French alliances and trade relationships with Montreal reversed this territorial contraction, for hunting groups
dispersed in search of fur-bearing animals, thus expanding their territory and creating competition over contested zones. The development of family hunting territories is hypothesized to have resulted from the increased need for organization and conservation in hunting. The inexorable advance of the frontier pushed eastern Indians into the Great Lakes region and prompted the eventual relocation of many Great Lakes tribes, some by chosen migrations and others by force.

Involvement in the fur trade also led to changes in residential patterns. The development of small, mobile hunting bands in circulation for long periods of time led to a decline of the summer village pattern. In contrast, multi-clan communities and even multi-tribal settlements were established in connection with trading posts.

The diminution of the clan-based village was related to the fragmentation of the clan system. Consolidation in multi-tribal settlements near trading posts or dispersal in small hunting bands disrupted clan structures for the organization of corporate ceremonies. Clans, therefore, lost their integrative function. The attenuation of the clan structure was related in a second way to the increased importance of the hunting band. Not only were bands performing as the primary socio-political unit for extended periods of time, but European traders supported the band system through their preference to negotiate with individual "chiefs".

The establishment of large trading post communities fostered intertribal relations and thus influenced marriage patterns. The system of cross-cousin marriage, that served to regulate marriage in
small, isolated groups, declined. Intermarriage among tribes became more frequent, often as a profession of alliance. Furthermore, relationships between European men and Indian women resulted in offspring, known as métis. In many cases, the métis served as intermediaries between European and Indian cultures, specifically as agents in the fur trade and interpreters in political negotiations.

Religious structures also underwent significant changes. Jesuit and Recollect priests were vigorous proponents of Christianity and were able to gain some converts. Most woodland groups, however, resisted the appeals of the Catholic brothers. But the degree of innovation and change in Great Lakes cultures affected the religious sphere. Traditional religion was weakened by the introduction of Euro-Americans who ignored taboos, defied ritual customs, and did not incur supernatural retribution. Modifications of traditional religion incorporated some European religious elements (such as the cross) while maintaining a firmly indigenous character. The Midewiwin, developed in the early eighteenth century among the Chippewa and other central Algonquian tribes, and the Delaware Big House ceremony are two examples of post-contact religious activities. While these two religious practices continued into the twentieth century, other nativistic movements developed by native prophets faded at the death of the individuals.

Change in political structures also resulted from contact with Europeans. The Euro-American policy of contracting diplomatic alliances required a political entity for negotiation. Previously
autonomous bands became amalgamated into a tribal unit, losing their localized identities. Intertribal competition in trade assisted the process of tribal consolidation, as did unification for military action in support of their European allies. Shifting coalitions, interaction at trading posts, and multi-tribal treaty negotiations increased inter-tribal contact. At the same time, population losses due to war and disease resulted in the subordination of some tribes. The Mascouten were absorbed by the Kickapoo, the Wea became a sub-tribe of the Miami, and many of the Fox were integrated into a collective identity with the Sauk.

Contact with Euro-Americans also altered political patterns of leadership. Euro-American hierarchical systems permeated the French and British political and economic interactions with woodland Indians. A centralization of authority was tied to the insistence of Euro-American government officials and traders on dealing through chiefs. However, in many cases, Euro-Americans disregarded traditional Indian leaders in favor of negotiations with congenial individuals. The actions of these "chiefs" were frequently repudiated by their tribes. Land cessions in particular were often contested by woodland groups protesting the lack of authority claimed by treaty signatories.

Much change in indigenous American cultures was initiated by the introduction of material goods and behavior patterns of the Europeans. The response of the Great Lakes Indians to these new culture elements was not totally passive. They made choices regarding the material items they borrowed and stated preferences for types and qualities of
trade and gift goods to European traders and political negotiators.

Another type of response to change was the creation of religious movements advocating the rejection of Euro-American culture and a return to pre-contact lifestyles. A nativist revival in the 1760s was led by the Delaware Prophet. The message of the Shawnee Prophet, Tenskwatawa, spread throughout the Great Lakes region in the first decade of the nineteenth century, even to the northernmost Chippewa. Tenskwatawa exhorted native Americans to return to traditional communal life and material culture, to repudiate liquor, and to seek regeneration in religion (Edmunds 1983). The latter required the relinquishment of traditional rituals which were perceived to have lost their power. Other revivalistic movements of the early nineteenth century were more localized. However, the Winnebago Prophet (of Winnebago and Sauk ancestry) and the Kickapoo Prophet, Kenekuk, also drew adherents from across tribal lines.

Pan-tribal movements of a political/military nature also were initiated during the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The defeat of the French in 1760 coupled with the threat of advancing British settlers upset the territorial balance in the Great Lakes region. Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, traveled throughout the region in 1762 and 1763 urging united action to expel the Europeans. In May and June of 1763, simultaneous multi-tribal expeditions of Indians attacked and destroyed western posts, such as Michilimackinac, and caused the garrison at Green Bay to be abandoned. Only Detroit and Fort Pitt successfully resisted invasion. Though experiencing
military success, Pontiac's movement was stalled by the inability to capture major forts and to conduct sustained warfare.

Indian dissatisfaction continued during the final years of the eighteenth century, focusing on treaties and land cessions contracted with the government of the United States. Tecumseh, a Shawnee leader and brother to Tenskwatawa, endeavored to coalesce discontent into a pan-tribal political and military alliance. Tecumseh's goal of resisting American expansion received support from British Canada. Factions of the Delaware, Kickapoo, and Potawatomi tribes joined Tecumseh on the Tippecanoe River in central Indiana, while some Sauk and Winnebago maintained relations from a distance. Tecumseh was never able to achieve a complete unification of Great Lakes Indians as the neighboring Miami and many of his own tribe, the Shawnee, declined to join the confederation. While Tecumseh was visiting southeastern Indians in 1811, William Henry Harrison, the governor of the Indiana Territory, attacked the Tippecanoe settlement. Although the Indians were not routed, their inability to mount a military offensive led to the disintegration of the movement. Subsequent anti-American movements, such as the Black Hawk resistance in 1832, were militarily suppressed.

The consequence of contact with Europeans was significant culture change. Some changes were voluntary, such as the adoption of textile goods, while others were forced, such as geographic relocation. New economic patterns were initiated while other culture elements, such as language, remained stable. In summary, many new material items and
behaviors were successfully integrated into the indigenous culture inventory simultaneous to the displacement of many customary patterns.
CHAPTER V
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This investigation of the origin, diffusion, and persistence of ribbonwork commenced with an analysis of secondary sources readily available (i.e., published during the last fifty years). The information was obtained from volumes on American Indian art, the clothing ways of native Americans, "how-to" descriptions of ribbonwork, and ethnographies (see pages 4-7). Background data on ribbonwork from these sources are summarized at the beginning of this chapter.

Based on the analysis of secondary sources, research continued with the examination of historical documents, historiographies and ethnographies, supplemented by interviews with contemporary ribbon-workers and the study of museum specimens. The larger portion of this chapter is devoted to a presentation of findings from the in-depth research and a discussion of the significance in relation to the origin, diffusion, and persistence of ribbonwork. (See Appendix for detailed discussion and examples of ribbonwork.)

Analysis of Secondary Sources

Recent resources on ribbonwork provided a common set of general information about the development of ribbonwork. This background data can be summarized in five points.
1. **Woodland Core.** Although no specific point of origin has been identified for ribbonwork, the concentration of ribbonworking tribes in the Great Lakes region has led most authors to propose a woodland origin for the decorative art. Brasser (1976, 1982) noted the use of ribbon strips on garment edges by the Huron and Iroquois, and extended the center of ribbonwork innovation to include these groups. The existence of ribbonwork among prairie tribes is commonly equated with the removal westward of the woodland core and the subsequent diffusion of ribbonwork to these tribes. Only Marriott (1958) suggested that the practice of ribbonwork diffused toward the north and east.

2. **Eighteenth Century Origin.** Ribbonwork is assumed to have begun sometime in the eighteenth century, although estimates vary considerably. Goddard (1978) suggested its beginning as after the seventeenth century, while Brasser (1976, 1982) indicated the early eighteenth century. The mid-eighteenth century was often cited (Coe 1977; Ritzenthaler 1972; Ritzenthaler and Ritzenthaler [1970]1983; Wood 1981) as was a late eighteenth century date (Conn 1979; Douglas and d'Harnoncourt 1941; Feest 1980; and Osage Exhibition 1978). A few authors have placed the origin of ribbonwork in the early nineteenth century (Dockstader 1961; Leech et al. 1973; Lyford 1943) while others suggested that ribbonwork was truly integrated into American Indian cultures by the early years of the nineteenth century (Phillips 1984; Whiteford 1976).

Conn (1980) documented his estimation regarding a date of origin. Pointing to a museum specimen dated 1802 and pictorial evidence from
the 1830s, Conn maintained that the level of ribbonwork development revealed in such data argues for a pre-nineteenth century origin.

3. Indigenous Prototypes. Precedents for ribbonwork design and techniques have been noted in other indigenous decorative arts. Brasser (1976, 1982) and Phillips (1984) compared the ribbonwork technique to cut-out decorations of leather garments, a pre-contact custom. Others have proposed a relationship between ribbonwork and decorative leather bands applied to clothing (Feder 1956; Leech et al. 1973; Feest 1980; Marriott and Rachlin 1980). Painted leather garments have also been suggested as a precursor (Feder 1956; Leech et al. 1973; Phillips 1984).


4. European Prototypes. Conn (1979, 1980) stated that ribbonwork techniques had no European nor native prototype. However, Coe (1977) suggested that the applique process was copied from the French, while others claimed that the technique was introduced by French nuns
(Osage Exhibition 1978). Feder (1971) acknowledged the debate regarding inspiration for floral designs from European handcrafts as taught in French mission schools, but did not relate the controversy to ribbonwork. Marriott (1958) and Abbass (1979) noted the technical similarities to European quilts, while Dockstader (1961) proposed that the "piecework" costumes of white settlers provided a model for ribbonwork.

5. The Dumping Hypothesis. Several authors stated that ribbonwork became popular when French ribbons were dumped onto the American market because of regulations on luxury dress following the French revolution. Marriott's 1958 essay was cited in several articles claiming this influence (Abbass 1979; Brasser 1976, 1982; Leech et al. 1973). More recently, Phillips (1984) referred to the dumping statement including only Brasser in her bibliography. Miller (1979) credited Underhill (1953) with the same statement about dumping. Neither Marriott nor Underhill provided primary nor secondary references for this hypothesis, although its validity has been generally accepted.

Summary

Despite the commonality of information generally available on ribbonwork, several claims conflict (the existence of European design prototypes), and other points remain vague (the date of origin). The lack of clarity in recent secondary sources regarding ribbonwork development and the absence of documentation from historical records led to in-depth research into the origin, diffusion, and persistence of ribbonwork.
Origin

Investigation into the origin of ribbonwork led to findings in a number of areas. These are presented and discussed as follows: the availability of ribbon, the dumping hypothesis, the selection of ribbon, the use of ribbon, and indigenous and European prototypes for ribbonwork.

Availability of Ribbon in the New World

Although immigrants to North America began producing wool and flax textiles for their own consumption, specialty fabrics and notions were imported from Europe (Burnham 1976; Dechêne 1974; Little [1939]1982; Séguin 1973; Wilson 1979:239). Europeans in the New World continued to dress in the style of their home country, adopting only a few pieces of native American dress such as moccasins (Séguin 1973; Axtell 1981). Utilizing notarial inventories of New France, Séguin (1973) demonstrated the variety of ribbons and other items of passementerie (such as ties, lace, fringe, braid) among the personal possessions of seventeenth century French colonists.

A 1749 tax proposal for imports into Québec confirms the continuing availability of ribbon in Canada. The proposal included taxes on moire ribbon (fancy and plain), figured ribbon (with and without gold or silver threads), and plain silk ribbon and passementerie (AN C11A 121:308-311). The Lyonnais region has been found in the importation records as the point of manufacture for mid-eighteenth century ribbons imported to Canada (Lieux de production 1951). The importation of silk and ribbons from English manufacturers became especially
important in the late eighteenth century (Rothstein 1975).

It could be debated that relatively few Indians of the Great Lakes region would have made the journey to the cities of Montréal or Québec to trade for furs or to contract alliances. Thus, few would have been able to view the use of ribbon in European dress. However, during the eighteenth century, the French method of bringing trade goods to the Indians of the interior brought Frenchmen and French goods directly into the Great Lakes area. The French established inland trading posts with military garrisons. There is evidence that the families of these traders continued to utilize European textiles and to dress in European modes. "A Statement of Account for Illinois Trade" dated 1688 listed ribbon in seven places, five times in lengths of a yard to 2 1/2 yards, and twice as a knot of ribbon (Pease and Werner 1934:171-174). An editors' note indicated that these items were probably destined for the wife and daughter-in-law of the French trader (Pease and Werner 1934:162). Journals from British military and their wives stationed in Upper Canada also mention the availability of ribbons: in 1793 (Holford 1983) and the first decade of the nineteenth century (Phillips 1984:16).

The earliest record of ribbon in the hands of ribbonworking tribes was not an objective of this research. However, it was found that ribbon, along with other material items, was received in 1732 by the Delaware Indians from the sons of William Penn (Weslager 1972:185). These European manufactured items were payment for the sale of land in Pennsylvania. Although the Delaware were originally a
coastal tribe, this land sale payment coincided with the tribe’s movement across the Alleghenies into the Ohio Valley, thereby increasing interaction with Great Lakes groups.

**Availability Through Trade.** Fuller documentation of the availability of ribbon in the Great Lakes region was found in invoices and inventories of trade goods or as individual transactions in the account books kept by traders (see Table 1). The documents listed in this table represent an intensive, wide-ranging but not exhaustive survey of trade records for the Great Lakes region. Both original records and some reprinted materials were examined for references to ribbon.

From the information in Table 1, several conclusions can be made regarding ribbon availability through trade.

1. **Date of Availability.** Although the availability of ribbon in trade is not widely indicated by documents from the pre-Revolutionary War period, the mid-eighteenth century records consulted in this survey were few in number. However, a global view of the tabular data suggests that trade ribbon was generally available in the Great Lakes region from the late 1770s through the 1830s, the period of Indian removal.

2. **Locations Available.** Although Detroit and Michilimackinac served as depots for late eighteenth century trade oriented to the plains of North America, both of these posts also supplied traders in the Great Lakes region. Original records are particularly abundant for Vincennes (the Lasselle Papers and the Vigo Papers) which served
TABLE 1

Availability of Ribbon to Great Lakes Indians Through Trade

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<td>Weslager 1972:241</td>
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<td>1829-1837</td>
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<td>Massinoui Indians</td>
<td>Indiana trader</td>
<td>Van Pelt 1825-1883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Indiana)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>inventory</td>
<td>Mendota trader</td>
<td>American Fur Company</td>
<td>Gilman 1982:74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Minnesota)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>ledger</td>
<td>Mendota trader</td>
<td>American Fur Company</td>
<td>Gilman 1982:56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Minnesota)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
both Indians and traders' agents in the areas of Indiana and Illinois. Ribbon was also available through eastern traders in Albany and Pennsylvania. Thus, ribbons were clearly available across the entire region.

3. The Trading System. Various groups can be identified as receiving or supplying ribbon through the trade system. On the local level, Indians were named as consumers of ribbon (Askin Papers; Carter & McCartney Papers; Lasselle Papers, Menard & Valle Papers; Van Pelt Papers).

A second group is agents receiving small assortments of goods to be taken to Indian settlements for trade. Agents were often listed in these accounts, most frequently identifiable by French-Canadian names, such as Malhiot (Ainsse Papers; American Fur Company Papers; Askin Papers; Feinberg Papers; Lasselle Papers; Malhiot 1910; Northwest Company Papers; Tardiveau Papers).

A third group consisted of the middlemen located at major trading centers. Detroit merchants named as receiving or supplying trade ribbons include John Askin (Askin Papers; Lasselle Papers; Vigo Papers), the Miami Company (Vigo Papers), and William Robertson (Vigo Papers). At Michilimackinac, David McCrae received ribbons from Montreal and outfitted agents for trade in the Great Lakes region (Powell Papers). The Sanders brothers traded ribbon from their post in Albany (Sanders Papers).

During the eighteenth century period of French and British trade in the Great Lakes region, Montréal and New York functioned as the
major centers for trade imports and exports. Montréal merchants continued to supply goods to inland traders (Askin Papers; Askin 1928:73) with ribbons being specifically listed on some invoices (Feinberg Papers; Northwest Company Papers; Powell Papers). Commerce between Montréal firms and British manufacturers has been indicated by Fleming (1929), Innis (1927), Rich (1966), and Stevens (1928). The British origin of some trade ribbons is confirmed by invoices for ribbons among trade goods purchased in London and sent to Montréal in 1781 (Hunter Invoice Book).

The Vigo Papers include invoices for ribbon from Detroit suppliers who were clearly connected to Montréal merchants. Vigo invoices and letters also designated commerce with firms from Baltimore (Box 2 1791-1793, 1794-1800), Philadelphia (Box 2 1791-1793), New York (Box 1 No Date), and New Orleans (Box 1 1785-1786) but did not list these sources as supplying ribbon for the Vincennes trade. While other documents also mentioned trade relations with firms in Philadelphia (Van Pelt Papers 1833-1849) and New York (Ewing Papers April 1847; Van Pelt Papers 1825-1832), only an 1829 invoice from a New York merchant contained ribbon as an item for the Great Lakes trade (Van Pelt 1825-1832). However, the inclusion of ribbon in the commercial papers of the American Fur Company probably links nineteenth century ribbon imports to east coast American importers (American Fur Company Papers; Menard and Valle Papers). The mid-eighteenth century Sanders Papers from Albany provide some evidence of the commercial relationship between British colonies and London suppliers of ribbon.
The inventories of stock held by the Indian agency at Fort Wayne for trade at the United States government factory include a continuous supply of ribbon available from 1803 through 1811 (Griswold 1927:401-663). While the initial source of these ribbons has not been uncovered during the survey, invoices for goods to Fort Wayne in the years 1803 and 1805 listed ribbon values in British pounds and other trade goods in American dollars (Griswold 1927:420, 423, 424, 444). Furthermore, correspondence from the Superintendent of Trade includes an 1809 letter concerning articles to be imported from England "for the Indian trade" (SIT LS 1-0058) and an 1809 communication with the U.S. consul in Liverpool regarding the purchase of British goods "for Indian consumption" (SIT LS 1-0142). Both letters confirm the procurement of British textile items for trade at U.S. factories.

In the documents surveyed, the majority of material goods for trade in the Great Lakes region were supplied by Montréal merchants. East coast American merchants also appeared as suppliers of trade goods. The production source of trade ribbons has not been pursued in depth, although evidence from the survey points to the procurement of textile items, including ribbon, from British manufacturers.

No attempt was made to document actual amounts of ribbon available through trade because of the disparate nature of the information contained in the documents, and the absence of complete records. For example, account books listing individual purchases contain references to yards, aunes, verges, or ells (all different but approximately equivalent measurements). Some records refer to pieces of ribbon
while other documents include less specific designations such as rolls of ribbon. Notwithstanding, the data contained in Table 1 amply document the availability of significant stocks of ribbon in trade to Indian groups in the Great Lakes region during the last quarter of the eighteenth century through the period of removal.

**Availability Through Gift.** In recently published information on ribbonwork, the availability of ribbon to native Americans is uniformly connected to the fur trade. A broader study of the flow of European goods to North American Indians prompts consideration of material goods exchanged through diplomatic gift-giving. In a work demonstrating the critical role of presents in European and Indian military and diplomatic relations, Jacobs referred to ribbon (among other textile goods) as a specific gift item (1950:46, 48, 50, 52).

It can be hypothesized that ribbon was introduced as a gift item along with honorary medals. A 1749 letter admonished French government officials for sending wool braid instead of the silk ribbon "necessary" for suspending the medals presented to Indian negotiators (AN C11A 93:425-427v). Expense accounts of 1755-1756 from the Northern Department of Indian Affairs of the British colonies included "Ribbond for new made Sachems Meddals" (Johnson 1922, 2:575). More than fifty years later in 1812, medals on ribbons were requested by the Indian agent at Fort Wayne for gifts from the American government (SIT LR 0183).

The availability of ribbon through gift is confirmed by a variety of documents from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
(see Table 2). From the data in the table, several conclusions can be made about the availability of ribbon as a gift item.

1. **Date and Location.** There were fewer specific references regarding ribbon as a gift item in comparison to the trade documents. However, lengths of ribbon were clearly available to Great Lakes Indians through diplomatic gift-giving from the latter part of the eighteenth century well into the nineteenth century. Like trade ribbon, gift ribbon appears to be widely available at various locations in the Great Lakes region.

2. **Donors.** One narrative account relates a gift of ribbons, other items of clothing, and munitions by the French in 1758 (Post 1904:209). More frequently, agents of both the British and American governments recorded the use of ribbon as gift items. Additional records from the British Colonial Office document the prevalent inclusion of ribbon for gift-giving purposes. In some records, specific tribal groups are not mentioned: a 1781 requisition for 200 pieces of ribbon by the Superintendent of Indian Affairs (PRO CO 42 40:329-329v); a 1782 estimate for 2,000 pieces of ribbon as presents signed by the Superintendent General of the Indian Department (PRO CO 42 43:251-252). Other British accounts demonstrate that Indians outside the Great Lakes region received ribbon. The account books for the Northern Indian Department from 1755-1756 specifically included ribbon for the Iroquoian Six Nations and the Delaware tribe (Johnson 1922, 2:566-645). An estimate of 1,500 pieces was submitted as the 1781 gifts for the Six Nations group by the Niagara Superintendent (PRO CO
TABLE 2

Availability of Ribbon to Great Lakes Indians Through Gift

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1755-1756</td>
<td>accounts</td>
<td>45 pieces</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Six Nations and Delaware</td>
<td>British Northern Indian Department</td>
<td>Johnson 1922, 2:574-637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758</td>
<td>narrative</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Fort Duquesne</td>
<td>Delaware man</td>
<td>French military</td>
<td>Post 1904:209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777</td>
<td>trader's receipt</td>
<td>20 aune Miami (in Wabash River valley in Indiana)</td>
<td>Kickapoo, Wea, Plankashaw, Chippewa, Ottawa, Potawatomi, etc.</td>
<td>British military detachment</td>
<td>Baubin Etat generalle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>estimate</td>
<td>250 pieces</td>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>British Detroit commandant</td>
<td>PRO CO 42 40: 331-331v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>estimate</td>
<td>760 pieces</td>
<td>Michilimackinac</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>British Michilimackinac commandant</td>
<td>PRO CO 42 42: 99-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca 1796</td>
<td>memo-random</td>
<td>36 yards Upper Country</td>
<td>Mohawk chief chief's wife</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Outfit 1892:102-103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18 yards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on next page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>invoice</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Fort Malden</td>
<td></td>
<td>British Indian Department</td>
<td>observed at Fort Malden (Pannabecker Field Notes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1814</td>
<td>invoice</td>
<td>900 yards</td>
<td>Michilimackinac</td>
<td>Western Nations</td>
<td>British Indian Department</td>
<td>Indian Stores 1892:122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Drummond Island</td>
<td></td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Peake 1954:130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1823-1824</td>
<td>abstract of delivery</td>
<td>7 yards</td>
<td>Fort Wayne</td>
<td>Miami, Potawatomi, and Eel</td>
<td>United States Indian agent</td>
<td>Tipton Folder 24:712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>abstract of purchase</td>
<td>18 yards</td>
<td>Logansport</td>
<td></td>
<td>United States Indian agent</td>
<td>Tipton Folder 51:1917, 1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>trader's estimate</td>
<td>2,000 yards</td>
<td>Amherstburg</td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Ironside R2 1831-1832</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One document links gift ribbon and the use of ribbon in clothing decoration. In a Detroit trader's invoice for 1773-1774, "fine Aurora leggins with Ribbon" and "fine Aurora Stroud [a wool blanket] ornamented with Ribbon" were each supplied twice to the British Indian Department for use as gifts to Indians (Sterling Papers 1770-1797). While the tribal affiliation of the Indian recipients of these gifts was not indicated in two cases, a Chippewa chief and a Huron chief were each listed as receiving a beribboned stroud. All tribal designations in the invoice are western Great Lakes groups.

3. Amount of Ribbon Available. Trade ribbon was usually limited to small amounts, rarely more than ten yards for individual purchases. Even agents' invoices, often listed in piece lengths, rarely exceeded three pieces. Although the data in Tables 1 and 2 are not readily comparable, it appears that a significant amount of ribbon became available as gifts to American Indians, including tribes in the Great Lakes area. Furthermore, it is evident that the British utilized considerable stocks of ribbon as gifts.

Summary of Availability. The flow of Euro-American material goods into the Great Lakes region fluctuated with political contingencies. Competition between English and French led to an increase of gifts to American Indians as part of diplomatic alliances (Jacobs 1950). The disruption of maritime traffic during the imperial wars of the 1740s and 1750s, the Revolutionary War, and the War of 1812 limited the amounts of manufactured goods reaching the North American
interior. The expulsion of the French in 1760 resulted in a decrease in the use of political presents by the British, which subsequently increased with competition between the British and American politico-economic systems (Jacobs 1950).

The data in Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate that historical records do exist to trace the availability of ribbon (contrary to Marriott 1958:54). In addition, the data thoroughly document the availability of ribbon through Euro-American and Indian trade as well as European and American diplomatic gifts to American Indians. The availability of ribbon through gift has been overlooked by most writers on ribbon-work (with the exception of Feder 1971, and Abbass 1979).

A significant extension of these findings is that during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, ribbon was primarily available through British and American sources. The French are often assumed to have played a major role in the material acculturation of Great Lakes Indians because of early contact, the establishment of major political alliances, and institution of the fur trade in the region. While the French influence is incontrovertible, assuming the exclusivity of French and Indian interaction in material acculturation reveals an inadequate examination of the historical record.

The Dumping Hypothesis

Although the origin of the dumping hypothesis has not been attributed to a definite source (see p. 107), the claim is clear and persuasive. Briefly stated, simplicity in dress following the French revolution created stocks of merchandise which were disposed of in New
World markets. This hypothesis explains an apparently greater availability of ribbons to the Great Lakes Indians at the end of the eighteenth century. Investigation of this hypothesis yielded information which places the assumption of dumping in doubt.

First it must be noted that the manufacture of ribbon has traditionally been a part of the passementerie or trimming industry rather than organized with silk fabric or textile production. The sources for raw materials, financing, and marketing were often shared with the silk textile producers. However, the fabrication of ribbon was separate both in terms of labor organization and location in France as well as in England. Therefore, information cannot be generalized from the history of textiles to ribbon without specific investigation of conditions in ribbon manufacture.

It is true that the French revolution of 1789 had repercussions in the production of ribbon (Martin 1913; Poirier-Coutansis 1969). However, the depression in ribbon manufacture was far more complex than the dumping hypothesis would lead one to believe. Ribbon manufacture had been beset by structural problems since the early eighteenth century (Bondois 1944), and cyclical ups and downs in production have been recorded (Guitton 1928). Changes in fashion (Gras 1904; Guitton 1928), sumptuary laws (Guitton 1928), natural disasters in the production of silk fiber (Guitton 1928), and economic instability created by the financial demands of military clashes (Gras 1904; Guitton 1928) all contributed to the precarious nature of ribbon manufacture. Poirier-Coutansis discussed the drop in ribbon
production after the French revolution and delineated three causes: the ruin of the merchant class through an excess of revolutionary zeal, the difficulty of obtaining silk fiber in times of war, and the depreciation of money after the collapse of the royal government (1969:125).

The effect of dress regulations issued by the revolutionary assembly of France has not been named as contributing to problems in the ribbon industry in historiographies of French ribbon manufacture. Although changes in the fabrics, ornamentation, and style of French dress have been claimed to occur following the revolution (Köhler [1928]1963:374, 375), it has been questioned whether legal restrictions were ever effective in halting fashion trends (Payne 1965:402).

In fact, fashion had been moving toward simplified styles before the French revolution. Histories of costume show that ostentation in dress began to diminish in the 1750s in England (Buck 1979) and by the 1770s in France (Varron 1939). This change involved a movement away from silk fabrics, lavish trimmings, and stiff styles toward the use of cotton fabric and simpler designs. Extensive use of ribbons in court costumes had waned even earlier. However, ribbons remained in common use for drawstrings on clothing and as bows and ties on caps and bonnets (Buck 1979; Köhler [1928]1963). The general use of ribbon by the common people would not have been covered under the attempt of the General Assembly to abolish distinctions in dress. Indeed, hat ribbons and plain ribbons without ornamentation have been listed as accessories whose production remained fairly constant across the years
Guitton noted that exportation became essential to French ribbon production from the nineteenth century on and that the English and American colonies became markets for French ribbons (1928:68). Guitton also claimed that problems of overproduction dated from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thus, the assumption of the role of dress restrictions following the French revolution is not supported by historical studies of the ribbon industry in France.

Furthermore, the dumping hypothesis ignores crucial facts about the North American market. First, it must be noted that military defeat in 1760 eliminated French commerce in the New World, except through Spanish-held territory west of the Mississippi River. Although the British maintained Montréal–Great Lakes trade routes and personnel, material goods were procured from suppliers in London. Legislation restricted the importation of French manufactured items into England. From 1768 to 1826 the importation of foreign ribbons
into England was prohibited by law (Prest 1960). Thus, the flow of ribbon to North America via transshipment by London merchants would have been curbed. Even though commercial relations were established between the United States and France after the American revolution, Great Britain continued to supply the large majority of manufactured items imported to the United States (Heaton 1948; Ramsay 1957; Schlote [1938]1976).

The concentration on French ribbon also ignores the availability of ribbon manufactured in England. In the Coventry area of the English midlands, ribbon production flourished throughout the eighteenth century. Although the existence of smuggling (Rothstein 1972) and individual entry of prohibited articles (Buck 1979:157) demonstrate the English demand for French luxury goods, it can be argued that the English were as proficient in the production of plain ribbons as the French (Buck 1979:157).

Furthermore, although flowered ribbons were utilized in plain bands as clothing ornamentations by Great Lakes Indians, the cut-and-sewn applique method almost exclusively utilized plain ribbon. The ribbon manufacturers of St. Etienne did produce plain ribbon (Guitton 1928; Lorcin 1969; Martin 1913), but the introduction of the bar loom, also known as the Zurich loom, around 1750 favored the production of ruban façonné or figured ribbon (Gras 1904; Lorcin 1969). Thus, a significant portion of French ribbon would not have been the type received by Great Lakes Indians. Furthermore, it can be suggested that the French manufacture of plain ribbon was insufficient even for
national needs much less for export, inasmuch as the French imported plain ribbon from Basel (Schaefer 1939).

In contrast, the ribbon industry around Coventry in England specialized in the manufacture of plain ribbon (Prest 1960). In addition, the introduction of the "Dutch engine loom" around 1770 mechanized the fabrication of plain ribbons. The power loom allowed for quantity production not yet attainable in figured ribbons (Prest 1960).

This information from economic and industrial historiographies leads to a reconsideration of the adequacy of the dumping hypothesis. The role of revolutionary dress restrictions in producing an oversupply of French ribbon has been questioned. Although the French ribbon industry did undergo a depression after the revolution of 1789, it can be hypothesized that the democratic use of ribbon as trimmings on clothing and hats obviated the creation of an unsaleable supply. In addition, the ability of French merchants to dump ribbons onto the New World market has been questioned, because of the lack of direct commercial connections, the existence of legislation prohibiting the sale of French silk goods to English merchants, and the availability of competing ribbons from English manufacturers in Coventry.

Future research into the archives of French and English manufacturers and suppliers of ribbon and American and Canadian merchants is required before the hypothesis can be completely refuted. Simultaneous inquiry into the mechanization of the ribbon industry is suggested. It can be hypothesized that industrialization in the European
textile industries allowed increased quantity and lower prices of ribbons, thus increasing the marketability of ribbon to Great Lakes Indians.

The Selection of Ribbon

One of the least considered links in the story of ribbonwork lies between the availability of ribbon and the use of ribbon in clothing decoration. It is unquestioned that the availability of ribbon resulted in its adoption and ultimate use as ribbonwork decoration. However, the common omission of the process of selection leads to an inadequate understanding of the development of ribbonwork. For this study, documents were sought to rectify this deficit and to determine the factors involved in the selection of ribbon by Great Lakes Indians.

The expression of preferences. Despite myths that native Americans gullibly accepted "trinkets" and valueless objects in trade (see White 1982:125), the process of selection of European goods was considerably more complex. Scholars have noted references to Indians exercising choice and stating preferences regarding the price, types, and qualities of European items that would be acceptable (Axtell 1981; Ewers 1972; Gilman 1982). In addition to the demand for quality merchandise, Gilman observed that Indian demands led to the marketing of specialty items, such as the gorget, crooked knife, and Northwest gun (1982:99-103).

Historical documents often mention preferences in regard to textile items; the color, fineness or coarseness, and type of colored
selvedge have all been mentioned as important to the Indian consumers in French archival records (AN C11A 19:69; 34:8; 35:51, 331, 462; 91:68v-69). Blankets, or stroud, a wool textile manufactured in the area of Stroudwater, England, was favored by the Indians of the Saint Lawrence Valley.

French companies were thus at a disadvantage in trade. Heavy duties on English exports made English woolens expensive for French merchants, even before transportation costs to the North American interior were considered. French factories which were supplied with samples of English woolens failed to produce an appearance and quality acceptable to the Indian and were harshly reproved in a memorandum from 1749 (AN C11A 93:6-8v). The inability of the French to duplicate and supply preferred types of wool textiles was instrumental in the development of illegal trade between the merchants of Montréal and Albany in the eighteenth century (Buffinton 1922; Lunn 1939; Norton 1974). Peltries gathered by French traders were smuggled to Albany and exchanged for English woolen goods. The extended effort by the French to procure English woolen goods clearly demonstrates the general power of Indian preferences in the selection of European textile manufactures.

The expression of textile preferences by northeastern Indians has been traced through seventeenth and early eighteenth century documents by Kidd (1961). No corresponding study exists for Indians of the Great Lakes region, although the operation of preferences has been noted by Gilman (1982). The present study unearthed a variety of
references which substantiate the process of selection among Great Lakes Indians.

A letter dated 8 January 1783 to François Bosseron at Vincennes from Pierre Latoure at Petit-Ouabache (a trading post in central Indiana) included a complaint that the merchandise was too expensive. Even with enticement the Indians refused to trade (Lasselle Papers, Charles B. 1781-1785:165). Knowledge of the suitability of trade items was considered to be essential to the success of trade with Indians. In 1827, William C. Linton of Terre Haute requested the opinion of John Tipton, the Indian agent at Fort Wayne, regarding the quality and types of merchandise to offer.

Our store of goods is very ample & we should be Entirely disposed to furnish the Indians with the best or most desirable Merchandise—You know that considerable expense must accrue in the delivery, and It will be quite an object to take few or none upon the ground that might not suit therefore a line at an Early day will be esteemed a very decided favour. (Tipton Papers Folder 40:1390)

A letter from George W. Ewing at St. Louis to R. Chute of New York City on April 26, 1847 explicitly stated the types of calico prints for trade with the Miami tribe and included samples of appropriate specimens. Ewing specifically noted print colors that "will not do" or "will not suit" (Ewing Papers April 1847).

Letters sent and received by the United States Superintendent of Trade provide documentation of preferences and the selection process among Great Lakes Indians. As noted in Linton's letter of 1827, the transport of trade goods to the interior was costly, and a good business practice therefore was to avoid ordering merchandise that would
not sell and have to be returned. A concern for disposing of unsalable stock was indicated in 1806 by John Johnston, the Fort Wayne factor (SIT LR 0006) and Joseph Varnum, the factor at Michilimackinac in 1810 (SIT LR 0093). An acceptable price was a determining factor in the willingness to trade. In a letter by the Superintendent of Indian Trade, John Mason, to a British supplier, Mason reiterated the concern for advantageous price structures and mentioned:

It has been constantly the desire of the Government to give the Indians (who are very particular and suspicious on that score [price]) full satisfaction... (SIT LS 1-0062)

The importance of stocking material goods suitable to Indian preferences was accepted by the Superintendent of Indian trade in an 1808 letter by the current Superintendent, John Mason.

Your remarks as to the necessity of sending out only such goods as will suit the Indian demand are entirely correct. The best way to prevent this is that the agents be extremely particular and descriptive—and to quantity widths color &c &c—in every article they request to be sent. (SIT LS 1-0030)

Other items of correspondence indicate the efforts of government factors to supply detailed descriptions or samples of preferred merchandise.

I shall send you a number of Models and patterns for Indian Goods with the last Boats, together with unsaleable silver ornaments and such other small light articles as can conveniently be sent. [from John Johnston at Fort Wayne, 1808] (SIT LR 0049)

I will send you a real Indian Blanket and will continue to send you as opportunities offer, such specimens of articles as will lend to a perfection of the system. We only want the Goods suited to the wants of the Indians to put down all opposition on the part of the British Traders to these stores. [from John Johnston at Fort Wayne, 1808] (SIT LR 0055)
I should like to have a sample of such [net thread] as you can procure forwarded to me, that I may ascertain before the purchase is made whether it will answer the intended purpose or not, as a little variation from the real kind will render it totally unfit for use. You will readily perceive the necessity of its being of the very best materials. [from J. B. Varnum at Dranett, 1811] (SIT LR 0164)

These efforts were supported by the Superintendents of Indian Trade, through seeking out suppliers who could furnish appropriate trade goods. In an 1808 letter to an American middleman, Thomas Waterman, Superintendent John Mason noted:

   I am well pleased with the sample of cloth you have sent me of domestic manufacture... (SIT LS1-0057)

A subsequent Superintendent, Thomas McKenney, also provided evidence of the necessity of supplying suitable merchandise in an 1816 letter to a Baltimore firm, Simpkins and Usher:

   I am obliged to be very particular in buying Blankets—It is a primary article; and required to be very good. (SIT LR 4-0023)

He further noted that size and weight were factors by which he would accept or reject merchandise.

The importance of Indian preferences in material goods is summarized in correspondence by Superintendent McKenney to John Johnston, serving as Indian agent at Piqua (in Ohio) in 1816. In a letter accompanying invoices of merchandise to be delivered to the Delaware and Shawnee tribes as annuities and presents, McKenney stated:

   I sincerely hope that the goods called for by these Invoices will prove unexceptionable and altogether in accordance with the wants and the tastes of the Indians. (SIT LS 4-0051)

Thus, the data for preferences operating in the selection process are extensive, both for private traders and U.S. government factories in
the Great Lakes region.

The selection of ribbon. Direct evidence regarding preferences for ribbon is less plentiful but nonetheless available. As shown in the section "Availability of Ribbon", ribbon was selected by Indians as a trade item. Table 3 is comprised of data excerpted from Table 1 plus additional detail in order to analyze more specifically the dynamics of selection. In all cases, the documents show that Indian women had accounts or conducted individual transactions with the traders. Without a knowledge of Indian languages and cultural patterns of naming, the gender was discerned through the use of European names (French or English), and linguistic designations such as wife, mother, sister, daughter, niece, girl, or woman. Based on these signs, women could be distinguished as trading for ribbon in half of the accounts (Askin Papers, M5 1785-1786; Menard and Valle Papers, Account Book; Menard and Valle Papers, Compte des Sommes; Menard and Valle Papers, Ledger Book A; Van Pelt Papers 1825-1883). In the 1786-1787 Askin record, the recipient of ribbon was a male (his wife was listed later). Of the remaining three documents, it cannot be said that women did not barter for ribbon, only that the use of Indian names prohibited the interpretation of the gender of the recipients.

The Menard and Valle Account Book (for the Delaware, Shawnee, and Miami tribes) is particularly interesting in terms of ribbon selection. Five women were specifically mentioned as receiving ribbon in trade. In addition, eighteen accounts of goods purchased included the notation "pr s/ femme", "a s/ femme", or variations thereof.
### TABLE 3
Selection of Ribbon by Great Lakes Indians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accounts for</th>
<th>Recipients of Ribbon</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1785-1786</td>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes yes</td>
<td>Askin M5 1785-1786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786-1787</td>
<td>&quot;Indian country&quot;</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>one none</td>
<td>Askin Z-L4 1786-1787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801-1803</td>
<td>Vincennes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>--- ---</td>
<td>Lasselle Indian Book 1801-1803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1817-1827</td>
<td>St. Genevieve</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes Têpétochez (Betsy) wife of Papamousseé femme de Merrakechica femme de Chelasa femme de Chépîteau pr/a sa femme</td>
<td>Menard &amp; Valle Account Book on Trade with the Delaware Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>St. Louis area</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes Cokpié féme La Vielle Femme (Petacouniches)</td>
<td>Menard &amp; Valle Compte des Sommes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828-1830</td>
<td>Logansport</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes ---</td>
<td>Carter &amp; McCartney S2620</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on next page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accounts for Women</th>
<th>Recipients of Ribbon</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1829-1831</td>
<td>White River area</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>wife of Talemenowee for wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Menard &amp; Valle Ledger Book A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829-1837</td>
<td>Massinouai</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>La Vielle Boiteuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>La Vielle Louison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Van Pelt 1825-1883</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(translation: for his wife and to his wife), and one notation "pr sànièce" (for his niece). Although the names on the accounts are Indian, it can be assumed that many of these accounts were for men, and that by the notation the trader was specifying the woman’s role in the selection process or the woman as the exclusive recipient of the trade item. Nine of the nineteen notations were for the specific purchase of ribbon. The remaining ten transactions consisted of two shirts, Holland cloth, cotton fabric, a wool hat, ostrich feathers, a set of three die, two bridles, and a folding knife. Thus, almost half of the trader’s notations referred to ribbon, while almost three quarters involved textiles, clothing, or articles of adornment.

All of the above accounts are primarily records of sales transactions with few indications of methods of payment. However, four documents shed some light on the goods and services women offered to obtain trade goods. Askin noted that Indian women made bags, shirts, and mantuas (a cloak or outer garment), supplied fish, or provided household services (Askin Papers, Z-L4 1786-1787). Carter and McCartney specified that one woman paid cash and another exchanged a buckskin for trade goods (Carter and McCartney Papers S2620). The accounts for the Lac du Flambeau post show that in 1804 native women supplied wild rice, corn, and meat to the post as well as performing services such as husking corn, scraping skins, lacing snowshoes, and cutting thongs (Malhiot 1910:216-219). The "Account Book on Trade" listed moccasins (once in exchange for ribbon) and tanned skins as barter items, and also recorded the fact that women received trade
goods on credit against future government annuities (Menard and Valle Papers).

Non-trade narratives substantiate the fact that women provided items of domestic manufacture to traders. Carver recorded that an Indian woman employed by the Detroit commandant was making a pair of moccasins for him when she reported the Pontiac's plans to attack the fort (in Schoolcraft [1821]1966:56). In 1780, Zeisberger wrote about the maple sugar harvest of the Ohio Delaware and noted:

Sugar boiling is chiefly the employment of women. Even widows are able to earn enough by it to secure clothing and whatever else they may need. (Zeisberger 1910:51)

In addition to trading items of their own manufacture, Heckewelder's accounts also document the role of Delaware women in the barter of men's products from the hunt.

The husband generally leaves the skins and peltry which he has procured by hunting to the care of his wife, who sells or barters them away to the best advantage for such necessaries as are wanted in the family; not forgetting to supply her husband with what he stands in need of, who, when he receives it from her hands never fails to return her thanks in the kindest manner. (Heckewelder [1876]1971:158)

The data in Table 3 confirm that ribbon was selected by both Indian men and women in the Great Lakes region. Furthermore, the documents provide direct evidence that Indian women participated in the trading process and held individual accounts with traders. In addition, it can be suggested that the notations in the Menard and Valle account book point to women's interest in and possibly personal preference for articles of textiles and clothing, especially ribbon.
Preferences for ribbon. A second type of information regarding the selection process is derived from lists of preferred, necessary, or requisite goods for trade or gift, as compiled by traders and other European observers. During the survey of historical documents, seven of these lists were located and examined (see Table 4). Textile items were routinely mentioned in these observations, including specific mention of blankets, strouds, linen, and calico. Johnson's 1747 list and those of Kalm and McKenzie did not include ribbon in their recommendations, while the Johnson lists of 1756 and 1761, the Tardiveau memorandum, and the Hadfield document did.

The inclusion of ribbon in Johnson's later lists in comparison to its omission in the 1747 list suggests a change in the value of ribbon to Indians in the British sphere of influence. Kalm described ribbon on clothing and as a bag strap (Kalm 1772, 2:116-117). Therefore, ribbon was available in the areas he visited, and his failure to include ribbon as a "chief good" carried to the Indians by the French must be construed as deliberate. Hadfield's compilation did not provide details regarding ribbon "necessary" for trade, and the lack of specific trade outlets and a date further detracts from its utility for interpretation. However, its existence does lend support to an hypothesis of the growing importance of ribbon. Mackenzie's omission of ribbon does not disturb this hypothesis, as his target population was the far northwestern plains rather than the Great Lakes region, but supports the idea that ribbon was not universally valued by North American Indians.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Gift or Trade</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1747</td>
<td>British Indian Service</td>
<td>gift</td>
<td>Johnson 1921, 1:110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748-1749</td>
<td>French traders</td>
<td>trade</td>
<td>Kalm 1772, 2:391-395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>British Northern Indian Department</td>
<td>gift</td>
<td>Johnson 1922, 2:898-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761</td>
<td>list from Sir William Johnson to General Amherst</td>
<td>trade</td>
<td>Johnson 1922, 2:334-336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Ohio River trader</td>
<td>trade</td>
<td>Tardiveau Mémoire concernant le commerce, 4 of 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca 1785-1810</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>trade</td>
<td>Hadfield Observations upon the commerce of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789-1793</td>
<td>far Northwest</td>
<td>trade</td>
<td>Mackenzie 1801:xxv</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Tardiveau document, entitled "Mémoire concernant le commerce avec différentes nations sauvages écrit a La Chute de l'Ohio en Mars 1784" (Memorandum concerning commerce with different savage nations written at the Ohio Falls in March 1784), consisted of a nine-page history of the Shawnee, Chickashaw, Choctaw, and Creek tribes (in French), followed by a nine-page table (in English) regarding the types, colors, qualities, and saleability of each trade item for those tribes. Regarding ribbon, Tardiveau specified:

- plain, or of one colour, & this very lively
- 2 yard for 1 skin
- Deep & light Reds, Saxon & deep Greens, deep & light Blues, broad yellows & a few flour'd wou'd likewise sell; half sattin ribbon call'd Pealing better for the Southward.

(Tardiveau Papers Mémoire concernant le commerce, 4 of 5)

Situated on the Ohio River, Tardiveau served both the southern Indians who did not develop ribbonwork, and the Shawnee who were located in Ohio territory and who did practice ribbonwork. While no differences were indicated for color preferences by the two groups, there was a differentiation in the type of weave specified.

No definitive conclusions can be drawn from such a small sample of lists. However, a trend toward the preference for ribbon can be hypothesized for Indians in the Great Lakes area, with the possibility that preferences for specific types of ribbon existed.

The rejection of ribbon. The Tardiveau memorandum can be interpreted as demonstrating preferences for specific types of ribbon in a region. A striking piece of evidence from the correspondence of the U.S. agent at Fort Wayne supports this interpretation of the selection
process in operation. Letters from John Johnston, the Fort Wayne agent, to the Superintendent of Indian Trade in Washington referred several times to concerns for the suitability of trade goods, such as one from 1808:

There are very few goods now on hand here that are suitable for Trade with the Indians and Messrs Varnum [agent at Michilimackinac] and Tupper [agent at Sandusky] inform me that they are equally ill off for an assortment. (SIT LR 0052)

The salability of goods was a related concern expressed by Johnston in several letters (SIT LR 0049, 0050), including one dated 1806:

I know not what I can do with the unsaleable goods if they cannot be distributed to the Indians as Gifts or Annuities from Government. they cannot be sold here for first cost. (SIT LR 0006)

While Joseph Varnum, the Indian agent at Michilimackinac, wrote in 1810 that he was able to move old stock by selling to whites (SIT LR 0093), two 1808 letters from Johnston referred to disposing of unsalable goods by returning them to the federal storehouse (SIT LR 0049, 0050). In each case, Johnston mentioned that he chose the lightest unsalable goods to be sent back.

I send you a number of Models..., together with unsaleable silver ornaments and such other small light articles as can conveniently be sent. (SIT LR 0049)

It is important to note that the return of these trade goods occurred after the season proclaimed as the "most prosperous ever" by Johnston (SIT LR 0050). These letters did not list further the specific items that were rejected. However, an "Invoice of Merchandize, returned as being unsaleable from the Fort Wayne Trading House to the Superintendant of Indian Trade at Washington City" can be found in Colonel John
Johnston's Indian Agency Account Book 1802-1811 (Griswold 1927:503).

The May 5, 1808 invoice included a variety of articles of adornment (brooches, ear bobs, arm and wrist bands, hair pipes, and feathers), textile goods (gingham, India Persian, scarlet, green, and yellow worsted, nonsopretties [a general term referring to tapes or ribbons according to Montgomery 1984:310], and nankeen [a durable cotton cloth according to Griswold 1927:423]), and clothing (three dozen cotton stockings). In addition, Johnston returned:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China Ribbon</td>
<td>65 ps.</td>
<td>39.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribbon</td>
<td>7 ps.</td>
<td>21.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In subsequent inventories and invoices, nankeen, Persian cloth, worsted, cotton stockings, and silver ornaments were again listed, leading to the supposition that defects or unsuitable designs rendered the returned items unsaleable. Gingham, hair pipes, nonsopretties, and China ribbon, however, did not reappear in Johnston's records in the following three years.

Inventories of merchandise on hand at the Fort Wayne factory reveal the lack of movement in China ribbon in comparison to other ribbon stocks prior to their return in 1808 (see Table 5).
TABLE 5

Pieces of Ribbon on Hand
Fort Wayne Trading Post 1805-1811

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Ribbon</th>
<th>Inventory Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9/8/05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Ribbon</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribbons Assorted</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair Ribbons</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Ribbons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribbon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Griswold 1927

Although new goods were received during this three-year period, it seems probable that the extra piece of China ribbon in the 1806 inventory resulted from miscounting rather than from the infusion of new supplies.

Of the returned ribbon stock, the China ribbon was valued at $0.60 per piece, and the other ribbons at $2.65, $3.00, and $3.30 per piece. In comparison, subsequent factory inventories of ribbon from June 1806 through June 1811 list "Half" or "Sundry Ribbon", both at $2.00 per piece (Griswold 1927:558, 575, 604, 614, 635, 647, 657). The uniformity of the $2.00 price in comparison to the unsalability of less expensive and more expensive ribbon leads to the hypothesis that the price or the type of ribbon correlated to price played a role in the selection or rejection of ribbon.
Summary of Selection. The information on selection, preferences, and rejection significantly add to an understanding of the development of ribbonwork. Historical records on the selection process demonstrate the tastes of Indian consumers and reveal their active participation in the acceptance or rejection of Euro-American material goods. Even more specifically, the data lead to hypotheses on the role of women in selecting trade goods and the function of price or its correlates in the selection process.

The Use of Ribbon

Ribbon and other European textiles were selected by the Great Lakes Indians and incorporated into their native material culture. Great Lakes Indians used ribbon as clothing ornamentation as did Europeans, but modified its use in a uniquely non-European manner.

Use of and Preference for European Cloth. The adoption of European cloth was a universal feature of material acculturation among American Indians. In the Great Lakes region, textiles were received in trade from Indian middlemen prior to the entry of Europeans into the area. The adoption of European material goods signaled to Europeans the receptivity of the Indians to trade and alliance. During Joliet's first trip into Illinois territory (1673-1677), Father Jacques Marquette remarked:

I was reassured when I observed these [pipe] ceremonies, which with them are performed only among friends; and much more so when I saw them Clad in Cloth, for I judged thereby that they were our allies. (Marquette [1900]1966:117)

Louis Hennepin, the Recollect friar traveling with LaSalle through Indiana, Illinois, and Minnesota (1678-1680), described native
clothing. In addition to skin garments, Hennepin noted the use of cloth and European-manufactured clothing by men, women, and children (Hennepin [1880]1966:287-289). However, all groups did not have early access to European textiles, and cloth is not mentioned in other seventeenth century accounts on Great Lakes Indians (Perrot 1911; Bacqueville 1911; Deliette 1934).

Several European writers indicated Indian preferences for imported textiles. A memoir written around 1790 by a co-intendent of Canada, Antoine Raudot, contained the following observations on Indian dress:

> They prefer both our shirts of Lyon linen and our materials and covers to those of skin, so much so that they are almost all dressed with these when they have the means to be. (Raudot 1940:343)

During a period spent with the Miami and Potawatomi in 1721, the Jesuit priest Pierre de Charlevoix also noted these preferences:

> They are, however, much fonder of our stuffs and coverings which they esteem much more commodious. (Charlevoix [1761]1966, 2:117)

Thus, these notations document the perception of native preferences.

**Use of Ribbon in the Eighteenth Century.** The use of European cloth antedates the mention of ribbon in the historical documents surveyed in this study. According to data listed in Table 6, ribbon on clothing is mentioned from the second quarter of the eighteenth century and onward. The earliest reference found in this survey was a letter written in 1735 by Rev. Father Nau, a Jesuit missionary. As suggested by Brasser (1976, 1982), the use of ribbon on clothing is first recorded among Iroquoian groups. However, data from
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Garments with Ribbon Decoration</th>
<th>Other Decorative Media</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1735</td>
<td>Caughnewaga</td>
<td>Iroquois</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>elk-hair embroidered flowers</td>
<td>Kenton 1927, 2:458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748-1749</td>
<td>Mohawk and Hudson Rivers</td>
<td>Iroquois</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>petticoat</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Kalm 1772, 2:116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1751-1761</td>
<td>eastern Great Lakes</td>
<td>Iroquois</td>
<td>male &amp; female</td>
<td>moccasins</td>
<td>porcupine quills, beads, copper ornaments</td>
<td>JCB 1978:173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>skirt</td>
<td>quills &amp; beads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>quills &amp; beads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>breechcloth</td>
<td>quills &amp; beads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1762</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>beads</td>
<td>Heckewelder 1971:271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>Michilimackinac</td>
<td>Chippewa</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Henry [1809]1966:156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on next page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Garments with Ribbon Decoration</th>
<th>Other Decorative Media</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1773-1774</td>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Sterling Papers 1770-1797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chippewa &amp; Huron</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>stroud</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Delaware &amp; Iroquois</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>white coral</td>
<td>Zeisberger 1910:15, 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>coat</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>petticoat</td>
<td>none</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>coral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early 1790s</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Iroquois</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>moccasins</td>
<td>beads, quills,</td>
<td>Spencer [1835]1966:84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hair/tin ornaments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>bead edging, hair/tin ornaments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>stroud</td>
<td>bead edging, hair/tin ornaments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795-1797</td>
<td>Malden</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>moccasins</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Weld 1807, 2:232-233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>beads &amp;ca</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td></td>
<td>apron</td>
<td>beads &amp;c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Michilimackinac and Detroit show that Great Lakes tribes also were acquainted with ribbon on clothing. Alexander Henry, an English trader, adopted a Chippewa lifestyle while hiding among them during the era of Pontiac's war. Henry reported purchasing in Michilimackinac a pair of scarlet leggings with ribbon to garnish them (Henry [1809]1966:156). Ribbon-decorated garments were also received as gifts. Chippewa and Huron chiefs were specifically listed as receiving wool blankets or strouds ornamented with ribbon from the British Indian Department in 1773 (Sterling Papers 1770-1797).

In many cases, the texts do not indicate precisely how ribbon decorated the garment. Ribbon "adorned" (Kenton 1927, 2:458; Weld 1807, 2:233; Zeisberger 1910:86), "decorated" (Heckewelder 1876[1971:271], "garnished" (JCB 1978:173; Henry [1809]1966:156), or "ornamented" (Sterling Papers 1770-1797; Weld 1807, 2:232) items of clothing, or a piece was "curiously wrought" with ribbon (Spencer [1835]1966:84). Henry perceived an element of fashion in the use of ribbon:

> a pair of leggings, or pantaloons, of scarlet cloth, which, with the ribbon to garnish them fashionably, cost me fifteen pounds of beaver; (Henry [1809]1966:156)

Other writers were slightly more specific, describing ribbon as a border or edge trim on clothing.

> They have a short blue petticoat, which reaches to their knees and the brim of which is bordered with red or other ribbons. (Kalm 1772, 2:116)

> Cette jupe qui se nomme machicôté ne tombe pas plus bas que les genoux et est souvent garnie ou ornée par le bas de rubans de poil de porc épic et de petits grelots, comme les souliers, les mitases et les brahiers. [This skirt which is
called machicôté falls no longer than the knees and is often garnished or ornamented at the bottom with ribbons, porcupine quills, and small beads, like the moccasins, leggings, and the breechcloth.] (JCB 1978:173; my translation)

the borders of their leggings, and the bottoms and edges of their strouds tastily bound with ribands, edged with beads of various colours; (Spencer [1835]1966:84)

they [the men] wear such hose [leggings] with a silken stripe extending from top to bottom...It is also customary for them [the women] to sew red, yellow or black ribbon on their coats from top to bottom. (Zeisberger 1910:15)

The women, at the expense of their husbands or lovers, line their petticoat and blue or scarlet cloth blanket or covering with choice ribands of various colours, or with gartering on which they fix a number of silver broaches, or small round buckles. They adorn the leggings in the same manner; (Heckewelder [1876]1971:203)

The first three writers on ribbon borders were describing the clothing ways of Iroquoian groups, and the last three observations were in reference to the Iroquois and Delaware residing in the Ohio region.

Several documents hint at the transition between plain ribbon borders and ribbonwork. In a description of the burial garments of a highly respected Delaware woman, Heckewelder noted that:

Her scarlet leggings were decorated with different coloured red ribands sewed on, the outer edges being finished off with small beads also of various colours. (Heckewelder [1876]1971:271)

The use of multiple ribbons of varying colors can be seen as a step prior to the layering of ribbons, which is alluded to by Zeisberger.

The dress which particularly distinguishes the woman is a petticoat or stroud, blue, red or black, made of a piece of cloth about 2 yards long, adorned with red, blue or yellow bands laid double and bound about the body. (Zeisberger 1910:86)
In the same paragraph, Zeisberger refers to these bands as being of silk and also calls them ribbon (Zeisberger 1910:86). While no design or technique are mentioned, the structure of doubled ribbons can be interpreted as the layered ribbons found in developmental, shingled, or applique styles of ribbonwork.

While no documented specimens of ribbonwork or ribbon decorated clothing from the eighteenth century are known to exist, verbal descriptions are corroborated by pictorial evidence of contrasting borders on garments. A mid-eighteenth century portrait of a Huron couple from Lorette (who moved to the Montreal area after the seventeenth century Iroquois wars) depicts a woman wearing a dark-colored skirt with a contrasting light-colored band parallel and close to the bottom edge. The Huron man is portrayed wearing a dark robe with six light-colored bands placed edge to edge horizontally from the bottom hem of the robe (see reproduction in Trigger 1978:391). Similarly, an engraving of a Wyandot woman before 1772 shows her skirt with multiple horizontal bands (see reproduction in Trigger 1978:401). Again the evidence relates to Iroquoian groups, although the Wyandots were situated in the Detroit area throughout the eighteenth century.

A copy of a 1796 drawing of a Shawnee man in the Illinois country can be found in the Public Archives of Canada (Picture Division C-70664) and is reprinted in Phillips (1984:92). The light-colored robe shows a contrasting dark border, while the dark breechclout has a light border along the horizontal hem. Although the drawing is well documented, the information does not include specific descriptions
regarding the elements depicted. The borders on these two garments could be ribbons. Alternatively, the bands could be contrasting selvedges woven into the fabric. Such details were common (Spencer [1835]1966:83) and even requested specifically by American Indians (Jacobs 1950:52). Therefore, while pictorial evidence confirms the existence of garments with borders, all visual depictions of borders cannot be assumed to be portrayals of ribbons.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the written accounts and pictorial evidence of the eighteenth century.

1. **Date and Place.** European authors noted the use of ribbon on clothing as early as 1735 with subsequent observations through the rest of the century. The earliest descriptions all referred to Iroquoian groups utilizing ribbon, although tribes in the western Great Lakes were mentioned by the second half of the eighteenth century.

2. **Ribbon as Decoration.** The writers uniformly perceived ribbon as ornamentation, and explicitly expressed this perception through words such as "adorn", "decorate", "garnish", or "ornament".

3. **Decorative Media.** Descriptions in Kalm, Henry, and the Sterling Papers mention only ribbon as the decorative medium. The three eighteenth century illustrations also show only plain bands of decoration. The other written accounts, however, include a mixture of decorative media on various garment pieces. Floral embroidery is listed with ribbon in the description by a Jesuit priest (Kenton 1927, 2:458), although this is the sole mention of animal hair embroidery with ribbon. Heckewelder ([1876]1971:271) and Zeisberger (1910:15,
Moravian missionaries to the Delaware, mentioned the use of beads or "coral" with ribbon-decorated leggings. Porcupine quillwork and beads appeared with ribbon on skirts, leggings, and breechcloths, while quillwork, beads, copper ornaments, and ribbon simultaneously embellished moccasins according to JCB (1978:173). Spencer also noted quillwork, hair and tin ornaments with ribbon on moccasins, although quillwork was omitted on leggings and only ribbons with bead edging were mentioned on the strouds (Spencer [1835]1966:84). "Beads, ribands, &c" ornamented leggings and "aprons" (breechcloths) according to Weld (1807, 2:233). The use of only ribbon can be interpreted as the replacement of native materials by European. However, the mixture of decorative media described in other accounts demonstrates both the maintenance of pre-contact materials, such as animal hair and porcupine quills, in addition to the adoption of European goods, ribbon, beads, and metal, as decorative materials.

4. Gender According to data in the gender column of Table 6 and pictorial evidence, ribbon was utilized to decorate both men's and women's garments. Paradoxically, some descriptions indicate ribbon-decorated clothing for only one gender. Ribbon on men's garments was described by Father Nau (in Kenton 1927), while ribbon on women's garments was mentioned by Kalm, Heckewelder, and Spencer. However, only Weld suggested that ribbon decoration was linked to gender, noting that women's moccasins were adorned by ribbons while men's were garnished with quillwork, beads, and hair/metal ornaments (Weld 1807, 2:232). The data are insufficient to test for regional or
tribal variations, although it can be hypothesized that the paradox arises from the vagaries of observation or memory in the writers.

While the gender-division of labor customary in pre-contact Indian life would presuppose women as creators of ribbon-decorated clothing, this inference is supported by several documents. Women in the eastern Great Lakes region prepared the leather for both men's and women's moccasins (JCB 1978:172, 173). Heckewelder noted that:

The wealthy adorn themselves besides with ribands or gartering of various colours, beads and silver broaches. These ornaments are arranged by the women, who, as well as the men know how to dress themselves in style. (Heckewelder [1876]1971:203)

Spencer maintained that the quality and richness of women's dress was a function not of social or economic class but of "the ability of the wearer" (Spencer [1835]1966:84). Weld remarked:

The utmost ingenuity of the squaws is exerted in adorning the little aprons with beads, ribbands, &c. (Weld 1807, 2:233)

Thus, these documents provide evidence that clothing ornamentation, including the use of ribbon, belonged to the women's sphere of activity.

5. Occasions for Ribbon-decorated Clothing. In many accounts, the eighteenth century descriptions do not indicate the occasions on which ribbon-garnished clothing was worn. In describing the material life of his adoptive Indian mother, Spencer noted that her dress was:

very plain and simple...The form of the dress is the same among the Indian women of all ranks and ages, varying only in its quality and in the richness and variety with which it is adorned. (Spencer [1835]1966:83, 84)
Spencer noted that young and middle-aged women were particularly fond of ornamented styles, but did not relate the wearing of such apparel with special events. In comparison, Heckewelder's description of ribbon-decorated clothing was in the context of burial garments ([1876]1971:271). Zeisberger noted that men wore ribbon and bead-decorated leggings "if they desire to go in state" (1910:15), while Weld observed that leggings ornamented with "beads, ribands &c" were intended for dress occasions (Weld 1807, 2:233). Therefore, although ribbon-decorated garments seem to be considered more special than non-decorated clothing, there is no indication of any relationship to ritual costume.

Despite the variety of documentary and pictorial evidence confirming the use of ribbon decoration on clothing, there have been no eighteenth century records that adequately describe the development of ribbonwork techniques or designs. This may be attributed to the lack of cut-and-sewn ribbonwork during this period, or to the failure of European observers to describe the details of ribbon use. Indeed, these same observers seldom related more than brief sketches on the use of quillwork or beadwork in decoration. The historical evidence supports the notion that plain ribbon as borders on clothing antedates the development of ribbonwork. Heckewelder's mention of multiple ribbons ([1876]1971:271) and Zeisberger's comment in 1780 on the doubling of ribbons (1910:86) may indicate a transition from plain ribbons to ribbonwork.
Use of Ribbon in the Early Nineteenth Century. The first concrete evidence of cut and sewn ribbonwork is provided by artifacts rather than by written documents (see Table 7). Until recently, the oldest known examples of ribbonwork in North America were a woman's robe, skirt, and leggings from the collection of the Neville Public Museum, Green Bay, Wisconsin (pictured in American Indian art before 1850, 1965: back cover; Conn 1980: 20, 21). The four pieces were reputedly the wedding costume worn by Sophie Thérèse Rankin, of Menomini and French heritage, upon her marriage to Green Bay trader Louis Grignon in 1802.

The Rankin ensemble is valuable because it links the use of plain ribbon borders to cut and sewn ribbonwork. Of the decoration on the robe and skirt, more space is given to plain ribbon than ribbonwork. Multiple bands of wide ribbon parallel the bottom edges of the robe and skirt. Of the ribbonwork styles, the shingled type predominates with one strip of the developmental style along the shingled front border of the robe.

A structural type not identified in the Abbass typology (1979, 1980) is found on both the robe and skirt. Two colors of ribbon were applied to a third wide ribbon in a continuing criss-cross pattern. This double zig-zag resulting in a chain of diamond outlines appears on one strip on both vertical edges of the robe front, and on three strips on each vertical edge of the wrapped skirt front.

Efforts to trace the development of ribbonwork have been assisted by the identification of ribbonwork items in the Jasper Grant
### TABLE 7

Earliest Specimens of Ribbonwork

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection Date/Place</th>
<th>Garment</th>
<th>Plain Ribbon</th>
<th>a Dev.</th>
<th>a Shi.</th>
<th>a Pos.</th>
<th>a Neg.</th>
<th>a Other</th>
<th>b Other Decorative Media</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rankin/1802/ Green Bay</td>
<td>robe</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>American Art 1965, Conn 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skirt</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indian Phillips 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phillips 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant/1800-1809/ Niagara or Amherstburg</td>
<td>leggings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phillips 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>garter pendants</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phillips 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mocassins</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q/B/M&amp;H</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mocassins</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q/B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson/1818/ Mackinac Island</td>
<td>wall pocket</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q/B</td>
<td>Phillips 1984</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a = Ribbonwork Styles: Dev. = Developmental; Shi. = Shingled; Pos. = Positive Applique; Neg. = Negative Applique; Other = Types not included in the Abbass typology (1979, 1980)

b = Other Decorative Media: Q = Porcupine Quillwork; B = Bead edging, outline, or beadwork; M&H = Metal and hair ornaments
Collection of the National Museum of Ireland. The Grant Collection along with other American Indian artifacts from Canadian museums were exhibited in Canada in 1984 and 1985 (Phillips 1984). Although the objects in the collection are not specifically documented as to date and tribal provenance, all items were acquired during Grant's military service in Canada in the early nineteenth century. Twice Grant was posted to Fort George in the Niagara region (1802-1803, 1805-1806), and from 1806-1809 he commanded Fort Malden at Amherstburg across the river from Detroit.

Two pouches from the Grant Collection show ribbon used only as a border or as short streamers (Phillips 1984:63 no. 17, 66 no. 16). However, other items show true ribbonwork. Leather leggings provide another example of combining ribbonwork with plain ribbon borders (Phillips 1984:59 no. 3). The inside edges and the back edge of each legging flap are faced with a single thin ribbon whereas the front edge is ornamented with narrow ribbons in a zigzag pattern executed in a shingled style. In this case, a plain ribbon border is structurally equivalent to the shingled ribbonwork border.

Other items from the Grant Collection are examples of mixed media decoration. Two sets of garter pendants show shingled ribbonwork borders along with porcupine quill-wrapped yarn ending in metal and hair tassels, and linear designs outlined in white beads on the wool yarn pendant (Phillips 1984:60 no. 9 and 10). Four pairs of moccasins in the collection illustrate further the combining of decorative materials. Moccasin cuffs or flaps, resulting from the woodland
technique of moccasin construction, were decorated with a band of shingled zigzag with the outer edge outlined by a single row of white beads. The vamp and heel seams of the moccasins were embroidered with vari-colored porcupine quills in a two-quill diamond or zigzag band and simple line stitches (Phillips 1984:70 no. 33 and 84 no. 32). A third pair contains shingled ribbonwork and bead outline (Phillips 1984: 70 no. 34), while the fourth pair shows a sawtooth developmental style, quill embroidery on the seams, and white beads outlining not only the flap edge but also the ribbonwork seam and a series of winged figures (Phillips 1984:84 no. 31).

The Grant Collection again shows the predominance of the shingled style with one example of using plain ribbon as a border and one model of the developmental technique. In contrast to the Rankin ensemble, articles from the Grant Collection demonstrate mixed media in clothing decoration. The use of quills, beads, and metal and hair ornaments exemplify the eighteenth-century descriptions mentioned in the preceding section.

Grant collected a wide variety of natural history specimens as well as Indian artifacts. Through his letters, it is known that he took an interest in gathering examples of seeds, feathers, and animal pelts (Phillips 1984:17, 18). Thus, it can be assumed that Grant's penchant for collecting the "exotic" was tempered by a concern for the authentic. Only a wood paddle with engraved scenes appears to be an example of tourist art (Phillips 1984:45; 1984/5:23). Phillips suggested that the inclusion of Grant's initials on the piece indicate
that the paddle was decorated for him as a gift or was commissioned by him (1984/5:23).

The remaining ribbonwork specimen dating from the early nineteenth century is probably also an example of tourist art. A cloth piece with four pockets and a loop for hanging on a wall was collected by the wife of Captain Thomas Gomersal Anderson around 1818 while stationed on Mackinac Island (Phillips 1984:49). The piece is edged with a one-ribbon developmental style. The four pockets each feature multiple bands of ribbonwork showing both positive and negative applique techniques but without the mirroring indicated in the Abbass typology (1979, 1980). The top pocket includes the criss-cross motif seen in the Rankin garments and is additionally embellished on the inner edge of each ribbon by a sawtooth design (Phillips 1984:77 no 68). While the ribbonwork links the wall pocket with an Indian artist, the form of the piece is non-native, thus suggesting that it was made for a European buyer.

In comparison to the variety of ribbonwork pieces from the early nineteenth century, only one written document was found regarding the use of ribbon in clothing decoration. Mrs. Baird's recollection of an 1819 wedding at Michilimackinac (when she was nine years old) was not written down until 1886-1887. Although she was praised by editor R. G. Thwaites for her memory (Baird 1898:17-18), her reminiscences could have been affected by other memories or later experiences. However, commonalities between Baird's description and the Rankin ensemble substantiate the accuracy of her observations. Baird described plain
ribbon borders and ribbon "embroidery" on the outfit worn by a full-blood Indian bride marrying an American from Philadelphia:

The skirt reached about half-way between the ankle and the knee, and was elaborately embroidered with ribbon and beads on both the lower and upper edges. Above this horizontal trimming were rows upon rows of ribbon, four or five inches wide, placed so near together that only a narrow strip of cloth showed like a narrow cord. Accompanying this was worn a pair of leggins made of broadcloth...the embroidery about three inches from the side edge. Around the bottom the trimming is between four and five inches in width. The moccasins, also, were embroidered with ribbon and beads. Then we come to the blanket...with most elaborate work of ribbon; no beads, however are used on it. (Baird 1898:44,45)

Baird noted that similar ensembles were worn by the bride's Indian mother, and two women traders of French and Ottawa extraction, Thérèse Schindler and Marie LaFramboise (1898:45). While Baird did not indicate the construction technique of the ribbon embroidery, her description coincides closely to the Rankin garments with plain ribbon in parallel rows to ribbonwork strips.

In summary, a variety of garments and one item of tourist art from the first two decades of the nineteenth century have been found that are fully-developed examples of ribbonwork. Thus, while eighteenth century evidence does not specifically describe ribbonwork, it can be assumed that ribbonwork developed before the turn of the century. The shingled style was the most prevalent technique, appearing on all items of the Rankin ensemble and all but one piece in the Grant Collection. Bands of plain ribbon were utilized with ribbonwork in three cases and were also mentioned in Baird's reminiscences. Five clothing pieces featured other decorative media, quillwork, beading,
or hair and metal tassels, along with the ribbonwork. The use of beads with ribbonwork was also noted on the wedding skirt and moccasins described by Baird. The base material was variously leather (leggings and moccasins), woven cloth (robe, skirt, wall pocket), or twined yarn (garter pendants).

The robe and skirt from the Rankin ensemble and the Anderson wall pocket both exhibit a subtype of positive applique in which two ribbons form a criss-cross design. Marriott and Rachlin (1980) stated that this was the first type subsequent to the use of ribbon borders. This ribbonwork type has seemingly waned over time and is not discussed by Abbass (1979, 1980) or Conn (1980). Neither was such a type found in museum specimens examined as a part of this study.

The Rankin ensemble and Baird's description link ribbonwork garments with métis weddings held in major trading centers. The Rankin-Grignon marriage was performed in 1802 in Green Bay, while the 1819 ceremony in Michilimackinac united the full-blood Indian stepdaughter of a French trader with a Philadelphian. Ribbonwork pieces were worn as bridal garments in both weddings. In addition, ribbonwork outfits were worn by the Indian mother of the bride and two métis women at the Michilimackinac ceremony.

Use of Ribbon and Ribbonwork in the 1830s. Ribbon continued to be available in the 1830s to American Indians through trade and gift (see Table 1, pages 110-115, and Table 2, pages 121-122). During an 1833 visit to Kansas, a traveler made the following observations regarding a Kickapoo group:
They carry on a species of traffic with the sutler at the post; exchanging furs and skins for ribands, and such other showy articles as are likely to catch the eye of a savage. This tribe, from long intercourse with the inhabitants of the settlements, have become accustomed to driving bargains and are looked upon by the generality of traders as pretty hard customers. (Irving 1835, 1:72)

In addition to ribbon available as a trade good, Irving noted ribbon as a gift item during a distribution of presents in an Oto village. The Oto women:

were presented with those articles most suited to their domestic economy. To the young squaws, were given only trinkets and ribands, which were of small value in themselves, but possessed the strongest attraction for them. (Irving 1835, 1:232)

Some references document the continued use of ribbon by American Indians, but without a clear relation to ribbonwork. While visiting Shawnee and Delaware groups in Kansas, Irving related that the Indians mixed pre-contact styles of clothing with Euro-American fashions. In his journal, Irving described a person who combined a broad-brimmed hat ornamented with bands of tin, spectacles, a blue calico shirt, and:

a pair blue cloth pantaloons, secured close to his legs by several bands of yellow riband. (Irving 1835, 1:30)

An Episcopalian missionary to Green Bay also recorded the use of ribbons in his journal from 1834:

Some had several long plaits in front tied at the end with ribbons....Some had turbands of dark party col[oure]d handkerchiefs on their heads—most were without any covering on the head but were ornamented by ribbons or feathers stuck together most fantstically, generally eagle feathers—sometimes a profusion of ribbons with them. (Kemper 1898:411)
These references document the continuing access to and use of ribbon as clothing or body ornamentation by Great Lakes Indians.

Two portraits from the 1830s provide pictorial evidence of ribbonwork. The journeys of George Catlin through the Mississippi Valley enabled him to paint many Indians of that region. A full-length portrait of Nah-wee-re-coo, the wife of Keokuk, was painted in 1835 at the Sauk camp on the Des Moines River (see reproduction in Trigger 1978:652). The soft focus technique utilized by the artist inhibits a precise replication of the designs on the woman's garments. However, wide bands of ribbonwork are clearly evident at the horizontal hem and left vertical front of the wrapped skirt. The horizontal piece contains multiple rows of equilateral diamonds common in shingled work. The vertical piece resembles the larger rectilinear motifs produced by the negative applique technique. A second painting by Catlin of two young Menominee men was produced at Prairie du Chien in 1835 or at Green Bay in 1836 (see reproduction in Trigger 1978:713). One young man wears a blanket robe over his left shoulder and arm. Again the designs on the wide band bordering the robe are not clearly discernible. However, the multiple rows of large rectilinear forms, similar to those on the skirt of the Sauk woman, are found in negative applique ribbonwork.

The earliest, most explicit description of ribbonwork found in this study was recorded by a painter, George Winter (1948). Winter visited Indian villages in central Indiana in 1837 (Lake Kee-wau-nay and Crooked Creek) and 1839 (Deaf Man's Village). In his journals,
Winter made various references to ribbon used as borders on clothing.

Their leggings [Potawatomi] are made like ladies' pantalettes but of cloth, and are adorned with wings, or wide side stripes handsomely adorned with many coloured ribbons (1948:96)

Her nether limbs were clothed with fady-red leggings, "winged" with green ribbons (1948:176)

Her blanket and petticoat were of good dark blue broadcloth, handsomely bordered with ribbons (1948:Text opposite Plate IX)

Winter's descriptions seem to indicate that multiple rows of one color or variously colored ribbons were utilized as borders on clothing.

Three additional observations relate more specifically to ribbonwork.

Their nether garments were also made of cloth, handsomely bordered with many colored ribbons, shaped into singular forms (1948:110)

her wrapper or otherwise petticoat is handsomely checkered by various coloured ribbons etc.— (1948:137)

Two or three pairs of "leggins" with handsome borders, or "wings," decorated with the primitive coloured ribbons, some sewed in diamond forms, others in straight lines. (1948:173)

The first citation in this series establishes the fact that designs were constructed from the ribbon, while the subsequent descriptions indicate that Winter saw "checkered" and "diamond" shapes in ribbonwork. The third citation also confirms the continued use of plain ribbon borders.

Winter's paintings were published with the excerpts from his journals. Multiple variously colored stripes are depicted several times on men's leggings (1948:Plate XVII, XX, XXIII). Multi-color designs that could be formed by cut-and-sewn ribbonwork appear on a
woman's skirt (Plate XIV) and a pair of man's leggings (Plate XVI). The design on the woman's skirt appears to be the more complex rectilinear shapes found in negative appliqué, while the leggings feature alternating blocks of red and yellow which could derive from a developmental style. In all cases, however, the subjects are pictured from a distance and design details are difficult to discern. Furthermore, Winter's watercolor technique yields a soft focus, thus preventing a clear perception of the design shapes.

In addition to documenting the practice of ribbonwork, Winter's journal entries provide additional insights. He repeatedly made observations regarding the expense put into garments. He noted that the Potawatomi at Lake Kee-wau-nay were:

> dressed in the most fantastic manner imaginable: some expensively, others beggarly (1948:96)

They wore red and black blankets, as their rich mantles are called, which are made of superfine broad cloth decorated with colored ribbons and silver ornaments—are very costly...Some of their dresses were estimated as being worth $200. (1948:110)

The garments of a Potawatomi woman, the wife of a Mr. Baron, were described in detail with the observation that "Her wardrobe is very splendid and costly" (1948:137). During the 1839 trip, Winter visited the home of Jean Baptiste Brouillette, a French and Indian métis. In describing the ribbonwork clothing of the women of the Brouillette family, Winter again recorded:

> Much expense is devoted to this ornamental part of the Indian's costume. (1948:173)
During the visit to Deaf Man's Village, Winter painted Mas-saw, an Indian woman married to a white man. Although the portrait did not include ribbon, Winter described her in his journal:

Her blanket and petticoat were of good dark blue broadcloth, handsomely bordered with ribbons; earbobs she wore in profusion. Her cape was ornamented with large silver brooches...All the appointments of her dress were expensive. (1948:Text opposite Plate IX)

Clearly, Winter perceived the materials of Indian garments and ornamentation, including ribbon, to represent a significant use of economic resources.

In addition, Winter commented on the process of the decorative art:

Their [the women's] occupation principally was making moccasins or leggings; (1948:Text opposite Plate XXIX)

Their leggins are...adorned with many colored ribbons. This is the work of the squaws, and its displays much patience and ingenuity. (1948:96)

The construction of clothing and clothing ornamentation is confirmed by Winter as part of the female sphere of labor. His reflections constitute the earliest recognition of the amount of time and artistic creativity involved in ribbonwork.

In summary, Winter's observations confirm eighteenth century documents describing clothing construction and ornamentation as women's work. Winter also clearly recognized the expense, time, and creativity required by ribbonwork. The use of plain ribbon borders is clearly continued in addition to ribbonwork among tribes residing in the Indiana territory. Despite Winter's meager description of ribbonwork, the mention of diamond forms clearly indicates the shingled
style, while his paintings could be interpreted as representing negative and developmental styles of ribbonwork. Catlin's paintings from the mid-1830s, in comparison, more clearly suggest the development of the larger rectilinear motifs commonly found in negative applique.

Summary of the Use of Ribbon and the Development of Ribbonwork.

A variety of historical documents provide evidence for the general use of ribbon as decorative borders on clothing by Great Lakes Indians in the eighteenth century. No eighteenth century artifacts nor explicit descriptions were found to clarify the origin of ribbonwork. However, the existence of documented, fully developed examples of ribbonwork from the early years of the nineteenth century suggest that ribbonwork was known before the turn of the century. Descriptions of the use of plain ribbon borders on clothing as well as the use of other decorative media (traditional and non-native) were found in the eighteenth century. This combination of decorative media was continued into the nineteenth century, incorporating ribbonwork with other forms of ornamentation on a garment.

Prototypes, Analogies, and Parallels

Discussions of the development of ribbonwork often relate possible precedents or prototypes from the indigenous or European decorative arts. These attempts suffer from several drawbacks. First, there is a lack of detailed description of North American decorative arts of the pre-contact and early contact periods (Sturtevant 1978). Early European observers frequently failed to record specific information on artistic techniques and designs that could be used for
comparative purposes. Although archaeological findings include pottery pieces and fragments and rock engravings, these clearly pre-contact arts have no apparent technical nor design relationships to a clothing art, such as ribbonwork. Extrapolations from indefinite descriptions, therefore, form a precarious base for generalizations.

A second drawback is that comparisons of ribbonwork designs and techniques to "traditional" decorative arts often assume a static conception of tradition. All time periods are lumped together, and the natural evolution resulting from the dynamic nature of art is ignored. Imprecision arising from a disregard for time and change again leads to questionable conclusions.

As a corollary to considering indigenous art as static, a third drawback is the neglect of the effect of acculturation on the traditional decorative arts. In the case of ribbonwork, the role of acculturation is particularly important, as the use of ribbon to decorate clothing is not documented until after more than a century of contact. By the mid-eighteenth century, traditional arts such as quillwork and birchbark decoration could conceivably have changed. The retention of traditional materials cannot be assumed to signify the maintenance of traditional designs or forms, functions, use, or meanings.

Fourth, attempts to alignate prototypes, whether indigenous or European, have not been based on a comprehensive study of historical descriptions or museum specimens. These attempts, therefore, must stand as conjectures rather than definitive statements. A comprehensive investigation of ribbonwork will be facilitated by the
publication of the forthcoming Abbass monograph which will analyze the structural and visual characteristics of ribbonwork specimens in museums in the United States, Canada, and Europe (Abbass 1985 personal communication).

The crucial nature of these four drawbacks has been demonstrated by Brasser (1975) in an ethnohistorical study of another post-contact phenomenon—wood-splint basketry. Brasser exploded long-dominant conclusions about the technical and design relationships of decorated splint baskets to aboriginal art and basketry traditions. Data gathered in an extensive examination of historical records and European decorative arts, and a reconsideration of acculturation among northeastern Indians, led Brasser to reformulate the development and diffusion of splint basketry. Brasser's example provides a model for questioning suppositions about North American art traditions and for investigating the effect of acculturation on American Indian material life.

In order not to duplicate the work being completed by Abbass, no attempt was made in this study to analyze the technical and design characteristics of ribbonwork. The study of indigenous prototypes will be dependent on Abbass' survey and other studies that rectify existing gaps of knowledge by the establishment of a more adequate research base. However, an examination of analogies and parallels in indigenous and European arts was undertaken, and these findings are presented here.
Concurrent Indigenous Analogies and Parallels. The Jasper Grant collection assembled between 1800 and 1809 provides corroboration for several claims of relationships between ribbonwork and other indigenous arts. A tanned deerskin shirt (Phillips 1984:41, 57, no. 1) illustrates the use of cut-out designs (both circular and foliate) on leather. Brasser suggested these cut-outs as technical precursors to the cut designs of ribbonwork (Brasser 1976, 1982). The outer edges of the Grant shirt and a matching pair of leggings are decorated with bands of red pigment (Phillips 1984: 41, 57 no. 2). These items in addition to moccasins cuffs garnished with quillwork panels (Phillips 1984:45, 83 no. 35) are further examples of decorative borders parallel in form to plain ribbon and ribbonwork borders.

Triangular and diamond designs found in the shingled style of ribbonwork are comparable to bead outlines in twined bands (Phillips 1984:65 no. 8), designs in twined straps (Phillips 1984:69 no. 25), and patterns created by quillwork in the false-embroidery technique (Phillips 1984:81, no. 22). A rectilinear motif associated with negative applique (Abbass 1979, 1980) is found worked in moosehair embroidery on a pouch (Phillips 1984: 61 no. 12). A similar motif is found on an eighteenth century twined pouch decorated with false embroidery in the Rijksmuseum voor Volkerkunde in Leiden, Netherlands (Brasser 1975: 79, 100).

Mirrored symmetry, which is characteristic of both positive and negative ribbonwork applique, is also found in the Rijksmuseum pouch, with a transposition of colors in the opposite design. This reversal
of colors in patterns is seen again in braided "arrow" sashes (Burnham 1978:364). Although these sashes are most closely associated with Indians and French settlers from the Québec region, one sash from the Grant Collection also exhibits a simple mirrored design (Phillips 1984: 58 no. 4). In addition, triangular quillwork designs on a Grant Collection belt are mirrored in contrasting colors (Phillips 1984: 81 no. 22).

Conn (1978) determined that designs from the Great Lakes repertoire were often utilized in more than one medium. He specifically discussed a design of seriated diamonds and elongated hexagons, demonstrating the recurrence of the pattern in twining, beaded outlines on braided sashes, loom beadwork, beaded outlines sewn on cloth, and ribbonwork. Many years earlier, Speck investigated the double-curve motif, which occurs in positive ribbonwork applique (Speck 1914). In his monograph, Speck traced the use of this common design in birchbark etchings, moosehair embroidery, quillwork, beadwork, skin painting, and ribbon applique.

The interpolation of designs in various decorative media discussed by Conn and Speck is confirmed by objects from the Grant Collection. The finding of design parallels is a reflection of the innovation process. The transfer of ribbonwork designs from or to beaded outlines on twined sashes, for example, requires a perceptual reorganization involving both material and technique of execution. The alteration of this relationship between the design and the decorative medium is a compound process that goes beyond the simple
substitution of material. Thus, it can be hypothesized that these design parallels represent a period of artistic experimentation and innovation among woodland Indians. The results of Abbass' survey will aid the testing of this hypothesis by providing data not only on the design characteristics of ribbonwork specimens but on their technical development as well.

Concurrent European Stimuli. The sewing techniques in ribbonwork (turning under cut edges and sewing with a hem or blind stitch) are clearly European derived, differing from indigenous methods of joining two edges by lacing. While native styles were transferred from leather to cloth for leggings, skirts, breechcloths, and robes, the European mode of sewing was adopted for the construction of European-style shirts and bodices as well as for ribbonwork. The later addition of cross-stitch or herringbone stitch embroidery to convex curves in the positive applique style is also of European origin.

1. The French Connection. Coe claimed that the applique technique was "copied from the French" (1977:77). While the term applique is admittedly of French derivation, the word has been part of English technical vocabulary to represent one material sewed onto another. Applique usually refers to an individual design motif applied by a sewing technique to a background cloth. There is nothing about the term to prescribe the national origin of the technique nor to indicate the form of a decorative band or border. No specifically French prototype was found during this study to fill the conceptual gap between applique as known in European textile arts and the process of
applying ribbons in either plain or cut-and-sewn strips.

The claim that the applique technique was taught to Indian women by French nuns was made by the anonymous author of the article on the Osage Exhibition (1978). This claim is not replicated by other authors. Inquiry into the schools established by the Ursuline Sisters in Québec and Trois Rivières revealed that the schools were primarily oriented toward the education of the daughters of Europeans. A concern for "civilizing" and Christianizing American Indians led to the inclusion of a small number of young women from the Huron and Iroquoian tribes (Repplier 1931). The educational efforts of the Ursuline Sisters were directed toward Indians of lower Canada, and there is no explicit connection with tribes of the Great Lakes. However, the children of Catholic métis families in the Great Lakes region were known to be sent to Montréal for their education (Baird 1898). Therefore, connections with Catholic schools did exist.

The needlework skill that was definitely known to be taught to all the students was fine embroidery of realistic floral designs (Brasser 1976:13; Conn 1979:24; Feder 1971:43; Repplier 1931:240). This emphasis on embroidery can be seen in artifacts on exhibit at the Musée des Ursuline in Trois Rivières, Québec (Pannabecker Field Notes). However, there is no sample of any type of applique work in the exposition.

One confounding factor still remains to be investigated to clarify the influence of the French on ribbonwork. A developmental style of ribbonwork featuring concave scallop borders has been a
decorative art on clothing practiced by the Micmac, a northeastern tribe (observed in the McCord Museum; Pannabecker Field Notes). Among the Micmac, oral tradition states that Micmac woman learned ribbonwork from the French nuns (Jones 1985 personal communication). The development of Micmac ribbonwork and its relationship to that of the Great Lakes region remains to be explored.

2. Quilting Prototypes and Parallels. Marriott (1958) suggested that patchwork and applique quilts of European and Dutch colonists provided a prototype for ribbonwork. Abbass (1979) expanded this hypothesis by positing that the "saw-tooth" pieced border is related to the developmental style of ribbonwork, and that the decorative embroidery commonly found on positive applique work is related to the embroidery found on Victorian "crazy" quilts. More recently, Abbass has suggested a relationship between the linear patterns created by the quilting stitch and ribbonwork designs (1985 personal communication).

Hypotheses regarding the relationship of quilts to ribbonwork can be differentiated according to the nature of the proposed prototype. Abbass' connection between embroidered ribbonwork and crazy quilts consists both of a direct borrowing of a technique (cross-stitch and herringbone-stitch embroidery) and an analogous conception (decorative stitchery over the seams of a decorative union of fabric pieces). A significantly different relationship than borrowing is suggested by parallels between ribbonwork and pieced quilt patterns or ribbonwork and quilting patterns. In these parallels, there is no direct
borrowing of technique, such as embroidery. Although the piecing or quilting of quilts and the creation of ribbonwork all require the same tools, there is no relationship between their construction techniques. Nor is there a substitution of one element in the framework, such as the use of a ribbonwork strip as the base for embroidery in place of a quilt top. Instead, the proposed prototype relationship consists of a design stimulus provided by the finished pieced or quilted configuration. Indeed, the perception of a relationship between pieced or quilted designs and ribbonwork designs is again an example of parallels.

At this point, the possibility of independent invention of the sawtooth or other motifs by Great Lakes Indians cannot be eliminated. During the late eighteenth century, the major Euro-American contact agents in the Great Lakes region were traders, military personnel, and missionaries. The first two communities were stationed primarily in larger population centers, while missionaries and traders' agents were located in the interior. In comparison to the ready availability of woolen blankets in the region, the presence of quilts in the Great Lakes area has not been documented. The simplicity of construction of the sawtooth design and the presence of indigenous parallels (on birchbark baskets and even pre-contact pottery) may obviate the role of quilts in the development of ribbonwork.

Summary of Prototypes, Analogies, and Parallels. The search for indigenous and European prototypes is hindered by the absence of in-depth diachronic studies of North American Indian arts and the lack of
data on the technical and structural characteristics of ribbonwork. Abbass' forthcoming monograph will fill the gap of information on ribbonwork and will establish the basis for examining prototypes.

During the course of the present research, no direct indigenous nor European precedents were found for ribbonwork. However, the existence of design parallels in indigenous art forms was presented. In addition, the borrowing of European sewing and embroidery techniques and the possible relationship of Euro-American pieced and quilted patterns to ribbonwork were discussed in terms of the innovation process.

**Discussion on Origin**

Extensive effort was given in this study to the investigation of the origin of ribbonwork. It was believed that attempts to understand ribbonwork diffusion and persistence would be restricted and inadequate without sufficient elucidation of the availability of ribbonwork and the dynamics of ribbonwork innovation. A number of historical documents, traders' accounts, government records, and travelers' observations were utilized to reconstruct the context of the origin of ribbonwork. Indeed, there were more data available than some authors suspected (Marriott 1958; Conn 1980). No single document or ribbonwork specimen explicitly clarified the specific development of ribbonwork. However, historical materials were identified to rectify misconceived claims and to support new interpretations regarding the origin of ribbonwork. Findings and hypotheses on ribbonwork origins are summarized below with supporting discussion.
Finding 1

Ribbon was generally available to Great Lakes Indians during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries through trade and gift. The case for dumping French ribbon was not substantiated and therefore remains a speculation.

Hypothesis 1. Ribbonwork is a manifestation of Indian preferences and not a result of the mere availability, attractiveness, or superiority of ribbon.

The dumping hypothesis claims to explain that ribbonwork developed because of the increased availability of ribbon. This claim has parallels to the common assumption that Indians traded valuable furs for "trinkets" or manufactured items unavailable in a "primitive" or "Stone Age" technology. The European trader is thus depicted as encouraging material wants and manipulating the trade exchange to his advantage. Conversely, the Indian is viewed as adopting whatever goods the trader chose to make available and becoming dependent upon the trader for imported items.

These assumptions are rooted in early documents which referred to the attraction of Indians to European-manufactured items and a willingness to change life patterns to procure such goods. A seventeenth century French observer noted that:

Their [the Ioways'] eagerness to obtain French merchandise induced them to go away to hunt beaver during the winter; and for this purpose they penetrated far inland. (Bacqueville 1911:369)
This attraction to European goods has been explained as arising from their technological superiority over the material culture of Indian aboriginal societies. Again this assumption is based on early descriptions:

they [the Ottawas in Montréal] admitted all the wares brought to them by the French, which they regarded as extremely precious. The knives, the hatchets, the iron weapons above all, could not be sufficiently praised; and the guns so astonished them. (Bacqueville 1911:307)

Trade items such as firearms, metal implements (iron kettles, awls, needles, and scissors), and cloth are all viewed as goods selected by the Indian because of technological superiority.

Non-utilitarian items, such as beads, bells, feathers, ribbon, and silver ornaments served decorative rather than technological functions and therefore usually fall under the category of "trinkets". American Indians are perceived as universally desiring cheap and gaudy imported items. Axtell extended the superiority concept to include decorative items by suggesting that European ornaments were "aesthetically superior" to aboriginal decorative materials (1981:253).

While the twin motifs of attractiveness and superiority of European material culture are pervasive (Axtell, 1981; Bishop 1981; Gibson 1980:240; Newcomb 1956:83, 123; Trigger 1981), their power to explain all economic relations of North American Indians is being challenged. Using Hudson's Bay Company records from western Canada, Rich (1960) documented the lack of responsiveness of trading tribes to material incentives to increase the supply of pelts. Among the Montagnais and Naskapi tribes, McManus (1972) found a "Good Samaritan" principle that
constrained the individual accumulation of material goods. Martin (1978) utilized native oral literature regarding spiritual beliefs to posit noneconomic motivations for extensive and deleterious participation in the fur trade. Morantz (1980) refuted the generalization of the dependence of the Indian upon the trader by demonstrating the autonomy of the Cree of James Bay in northeastern Canada.

These scattered efforts, while not directly concerning the Indians of the Great Lakes, negate the certainty of an economic explanation for the selection of ribbon. Thus, information on the exchange process was examined for references to ribbon. Evidence regarding the selection of ribbon is not as extensive as that for woolen textiles. As outlined in the section "Selection of Ribbon", however, historical documents do exist from which to draw interpretations.

First, it must be recognized that ribbon was a desired material good. Lists of preferred goods which include ribbon document its attractiveness to Great Lakes Indians. The common assumption would be that availability led inexorably to attraction. However, preferences for colors and types of ribbon (mentioned in the Tardiveau memorandum), and the rejection of China ribbon at the Fort Wayne government trading post imply that factors other than mere availability were important in the selection of ribbon by Indians. The evidence can be interpreted to indicate the active participation in the selection process of imported material goods.

Second, ribbon does not readily fit the common assumption of superiority. As an ornamental item, ribbon did not enjoy a
technological superiority in the manner of an iron knife. It could be suggested that ribbons were perceived as superior to the traditional decorative materials, such as porcupine quills, paints, or birchbark. Such superiority could be related to ribbon being aesthetically more pleasing or to being technically finished and ready for the creative act (rather than requiring gathering time, dyeing, or other processing steps). However, ribbon as ribbonwork did not replace native decorative arts nor indigenous materials. As described in the section, "Use of Ribbon", ribbon was added to the cultural inventory of decorative materials. Although ribbon borders originally may have substituted for painted borders on clothing, ribbonwork was commonly mixed with other decorative media, both traditional (e.g., quillwork), and European-derived (e.g., beads). This combination with, rather than the displacement of, traditional arts argues against the assumption that ribbon was adopted as a "superior" good. The retention of traditional material also falsifies the idea that European materials replaced "inferior parallels in native culture" (Newcomb 1956:123). Furthermore, the finding of mixed decorative media contradicts the general notion that traditional materials and skills were replaced by imported goods and manufactured items thus creating an "artisan gap" in which the memory of indigenous materials and skills was lost (Jennings 1975:41).

The predominance of the assumptions of the attractiveness and superiority of European material goods has led to a skewed understanding of the acculturative effects of the fur trade on Indian
societies. The adoption of these goods has been interpreted as resulting from "economic seduction" (Martin 1978), while historical documents bearing witness of the operation of Indian preferences in the selection of European goods have been overlooked or minimized. The findings of this study, however, have led to a reconsideration of conventional explanations. It is hypothesized that ribbonwork points to the active participation of Great Lakes Indians in a true selection process of material goods made available through culture contact.

**Finding 2**

Great Lakes Indians utilized ribbon first as a simple border on clothing and later as intricate ribbonwork decoration.

**Hypothesis 2.** Ribbonwork represents the adaptation of Great Lakes Indians to changing economic conditions, as represented by the accumulation of luxury materials and increased leisure time.

Acculturation of the Great Lakes Indians during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is commonly portrayed as a process of culture loss and impoverishment. Dependence on an unstable fur trade and the threat of encroaching settlers are depicted as major factors in the disintegration of native Great Lakes cultures. Inequities in financial settlements for land cessions and military losses are seen as exacerbating the cultural decline.

In this context, the innovation of ribbonwork as a uniquely Indian decorative art constitutes an anomaly. The development of ribbonwork was dependent upon the accumulation of lengths of different colored ribbon. The ability to accumulate material goods is a
function of economic power. The cost of ribbon decorated garments was noted both by Kemper during a visit to Green Bay in 1834 and by Winter while visiting Indians in central Indiana in 1838:

Mrs. Grignon has Indian dresses that wld cost 80 or 100 dollars. (Kemper 1898:416)

They wore red and black blankets, as their rich mantles are called, which are made of superfine broad cloth decorated with colored ribbons and silver ornaments—are very costly...Some of their dresses were estimated as being worth $200. (Winter 1948:96)

The monetary value of ribbonwork materials in conjunction with the supplementary ornamentation signals an ability to accumulate luxury goods. Silver ornaments are frequently mentioned simultaneously with ribbon decoration (Baird 1898; Zeisberger 1910:12, 15, 86; Heckewelder [1876]1971:203, 270). Thus, the accumulation of ribbon is only one material indicator of economic power.

Economic power leading to the accumulation of material goods was related to the changing economic conditions of that time in the Great Lakes region. Four different avenues made European-manufactured items accessible to indigenous groups. First, as is commonly known, the development of the fur trade provided an important way for Indians to obtain European goods. Competition among traders further favored efforts of Great Lakes Indians to receive trade items and to express preferences for goods. Second, competition for territory and diplomatic alliances between the French and British and later the Americans resulted in an acceleration of gift-giving (Jacobs 1950). The policy of giving political presents to Indians was a significant means of access to European goods which is often overlooked. A third avenue
that facilitated the acquisition of material goods was the institution of credit by traders. The issuance of credit resulted from the competition for furs and was intended to ensure trade through the development of credit obligations. Fourth, treaties with and land cessions to the United States provided another means of accumulating material goods. Acquiescence to political subjugation and the loss of territory was recompensed by annuities in material goods chosen by the Office of Indian Affairs or by cash which was readily converted into purchases by enterprising frontier traders.

Ribbonwork clearly demonstrates the ability of Great Lakes Indians to accumulate material goods. In addition to requiring lengths of ribbon, a noticeable factor in ribbonwork is its lack of efficiency in terms of the use of materials. The most economic use of ribbon would be the utilization of the whole ribbon, as hat bands or hair ties, or as the plain borders on clothing. Ribbonwork, however, makes no effort to maximize the ribbon. The layered structure of the shingled and applique styles, and the cutting, folding, and hemming of all styles represent an interest by the creator in the design capabilities of the ribbon rather than concern for material parsimony.

Ribbonwork also demonstrates a lack of efficiency in the amount of production time. Tiny hem or blind stitches (both time-consuming techniques) are used to secure the ribbon layers to the garment cloth or a support fabric. Thus, the sewing itself represents a significant expenditure of time and effort. In addition, much of the positive applique work includes embroidered outlines of the curvilinear motifs.
The ornamentation on top of decoration can be interpreted again as aesthetic values predominating over economic concerns.

The ability of Great Lakes Indian women to devote time to the creation of decorative arts is an indication of the economic conditions during that period. Logic may posit that the increased involvement of Great Lakes Indian men in the fur trade would increase the social or political responsibilities of the women. Mead (1932) posited that men's hunting activities increased women's labor in the processing of furs and skins. However, it can also be suggested that the introduction of European tools eased women's work. The adoption of the kettle, for example, facilitated food preparation and also eliminated the need to manufacture pottery. The iron knife increased efficiency in the processing of both food and skins. Keesing posited that the introduction of these material goods provoked a reorganization of time thus leading to a growth in the decorative arts (1939:107-109).

The conception of ribbonwork as a leisure activity based on the accumulation of luxury goods cannot negate the simultaneous reality of starvation and impoverishment of many Great Lakes Indians. Such conditions were reported by B. F. Stickney, an Indian agent in 1812 (Thornbrough 1961:117) and Schoolcraft ([1821]1966 :155). The above interpretation does not claim to ignore the problems and injustices concurrent to the development of ribbonwork. Rather, it can be hypothesized that ribbonwork signals a change in economic conditions among Great Lakes tribes. Despite a general increase in access to European
material goods, there is no indication that this access was uniformly available to all tribes or to all individuals. The observations by Heckewelder ([1876]1971:203) and Winter (1948) of differences in economic status according to dress styles support the concept of variable economic power. In this interpretation, ribbonwork can be seen as evidence of a change from economically homogeneous societies to individual accumulation of goods and increasing differentiation of economic wealth.

Jennings has suggested that American Indians rejected the Euro-American notion of capital and thus "failed to acquire property" (1975:103). While ribbonwork can be seen as signifying the power to amass goods, ribbonwork also represents the choice to consume wealth through decoration over the accumulation of "property". When viewed as part of the economic conditions in the Great Lakes area during the late eighteenth century, ribbonwork reveals a uniquely Indian adaptation to economic change.

**Finding 3**

Ribbonwork is a manifestation of the adoption of European materials (silk ribbon, thread), tools (needles, scissors), and techniques (sewing and embroidery). Ribbonwork also maintained design parallels to other indigenous decorative arts and is found mixed with traditional and other innovative decorative media.

**Hypothesis 3.** Ribbonwork represents a unique innovative and yet conservative aesthetic response by Great Lakes Indian women to culture change.
The impact of European culture upon native American culture is often focused on technological change. The readiness of North American Indians to adopt European textile products and to replace leather clothing is viewed as a recognition of the superior technology of European-manufactured items. Discussion of change in technology is often centered on Indian men, focusing on the adoption of European armaments and metal tools. However, native American women also adopted a variety of utilitarian imports (kettles, knives, and awls) as well as ornamental items.

Changes in aesthetic aspects of culture have not been totally ignored, however. Several anthropologists and art historians have noted the stimulating effect of new materials and techniques on American Indian art (Brasser, 1975, 1976, 1982; Conn 1979; Feder 1971; Keesing 1939; Underhill 1953:137). Keesing, in particular, examined the elaboration of the decorative arts in which new materials, designs, and techniques were integrated into ornamentation alongside their indigenous counterparts (1939:203). As a manifestation of this efflorescence in art, ribbonwork represents a unique addition to the inventory of the Great Lakes decorative arts that was specifically a woman's creation.

Ribbonwork is innovative in several ways. First, it represents the adoption of non-indigenous construction materials, tools, and techniques made available through culture contact with European societies. Ribbonwork resulted from the introduction of silk ribbon and thread manufactured in France and England. It was dependent upon the
availability of metal implements, such as needles and scissors. Furthermore, it required the learning of the European techniques of sewing, embroidery, and cutting with scissors.

Second, ribbonwork is innovative as it reflects a unique approach to ribbon as a decorative medium. Ribbon was utilized by North American Indians in European ways: as a hair tie (Biggs [1788]1922; De Schweinitz 1870:84; Landes 1938:158; Skinner 1910:290), or to suspend a medal (Kalm 1772, 2:117). However, North American Indians did not use greater lengths of ribbon by tying European-style bows or rosettes. Instead, ribbon was layered and designs created through the contrasting colors of the layers and applied to articles of clothing. Both the layered structure of ribbonwork and the reconstruction of the ribbon through cutting, folding, and sewing are inventive modifications of a non-indigenous material. Thus, the transformation of ribbon into ribbonwork required both the excerption of ribbon from a Euro-American context and the creative adaptation of the decorative medium.

Ribbonwork is innovative. It is a manifestation of the willingness to borrow new materials, tools, and techniques. Furthermore, ribbonwork went beyond the simple substitution of European materials for native goods as in the shift from leather to cloth. Ribbonwork signals a creative perception of an imported ornamental medium and manipulation of that item into an innovative decorative art.

At the same time, ribbonwork can be interpreted as conservative of native American tradition. First, as demonstrated in the section
"Prototypes, Analogies, and Parallels", ribbonwork designs are found translated into other decorative media. This substitution of design elements in a range of varying construction techniques and artifacts points to a period of aesthetic experimentation by Great Lakes Indian women. At the same time, this experimentation largely maintained traditional geometric structures and curvilinear motifs. Experimentation was contained. Thus, ribbonwork can be interpreted as conserving indigenous decorative patterns.

Second, ribbonwork was confined to Indian-style garments and objects. By the late eighteenth century, European textile products had largely replaced leather as the basic material for clothing, with the exception of moccasins and occasionally leggings. Except for bodices and shirts, the cloth garments retained the pre-contact wrap-around styles. Ribbonwork is found as borders on these traditional-style articles of clothing in addition to objects such as cradleboard wrappers and pouches. Not until the second half of the nineteenth century is there evidence that ribbonwork was utilized on European-derived men's shirts (in photographs: University of Oklahoma Library, Western History Collection Photographic Archives, Rainey Collection 76; on specimens: Stovall Museum of Science and History NAM 10-3-14). Although ribbonwork represents a conspicuous surface change in clothing decoration, the retention of traditional styles and designs sustained a distinctive Indian identity.

Third, ribbonwork maintained aboriginal roles and gender-based divisions of labor. Clothing construction and ornamentation were
customarily part of the domestic sphere of activities performed by women. The addition of new materials, tools, and techniques leading to ribbonwork did not alter the conception of appropriate tasks nor the customary workplace. By the maintenance of the gender division of labor, ribbonwork exhibits compatibility with traditional roles. Therefore, ribbonwork can be seen as essentially conservative in character.

Ribbonwork represents change in the cultural materials available to Great Lakes Indians. The adaptation and transformation of ribbon in a non-European manner indicate its innovative nature. At the same time, the adaptation of ribbonwork to indigenous designs, articles, and work patterns suggests its integration into the native Indian cultural complex. Therefore, ribbonwork is a material expression of a simultaneously innovative and conservative response to acculturation.

Conclusion of Discussion on Origin

Ribbonwork is essentially a small, minor artifact in the complex, shifting interaction between American Indian and Euro-American cultures. This position has caused ribbonwork to be overlooked and understudied. Assumptions regarding the availability of ribbon and the origin of ribbonwork have been published with limited investigation. A major contact agent—the Euro-American political community—has been disregarded consistently in terms of the transfer of European textile goods and other items of material culture. The active participation of native Americans in the selection of ribbon and other material goods has been neglected. The accumulation in this study of
facts gleaned from primary sources regarding the origin of ribbonwork, however, enables the generation of interpretive hypotheses. In this way, ribbon serves as a material indicator to illustrate some basic problems in the study of the acculturation of Great Lakes Indians, and to encourage further investigation of economic change and women's roles.

Diffusion

Elucidation of the diffusion of ribbonwork among tribes in and around the Great Lakes region is dependent upon clarification of the origin of the decorative art. Without factual information on the locale and circumstances of innovation, an understanding of diffusion is obviously circumscribed. Accepting the limitations of this base, the present study on the diffusion process was focused on investigating the tribes known to practice ribbonwork in comparison to existing diffusion hypotheses. Oral tradition, the history of intertribal contact, and Keesing's thesis of cultural homogenization (1939) were also considered in terms of the diffusion of ribbonwork.

Ribbonworking Tribes

Ribbonwork has been attributed to a wide range of tribes (see Table 8). Feder (1956) was the first to attempt a definitive list of tribes practicing ribbonwork, but he did not organize the list in any stated order, nor did he specify the information on which he based his list.

Mariott (1958) listed some 40 tribal groupings as ribbonworkers. She classified them into four groups according to her perception of
TABLE 8

Lists of Ribbonworking Tribes Compiled by Researchers

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a Spelling of tribal names retained.
the development achieved in the decorative art. Although she did not acknowledge a particular information base, she did note that single examples (probably found in museum collections) could have resulted from intertribal gifts.

Leech, Polyak, and Ritzenthaler (1973) adopted Marriott's data and reclassified the tribes according to geographic region. They chose to omit the "single examples" list. However, they also inexplicably excluded the Delaware tribe and added the Chippewa tribe.

The results of Abbass' comprehensive survey of ribbonwork specimens in international museums are still forthcoming. However, her dissertation did include a frequency chart of ribbonwork techniques by tribe and a map of ribbonwork distribution by tribe (Abbass 1979:95, 96). The Abbass lists were compiled from ribbonwork specimens examined in 12 museums, including 106 strips of ribbonwork in the Denver Art Museum (Abbass 1979:12). In the Abbass listing, three tribes are cases of single examples (Crow, Kaw, and Kiowa). The tribes were presented in alphabetical order.

Since it was known that the Abbass survey would become available soon, no effort was made to duplicate her work. However, in the course of the present investigation, information on tribal attribution was obtained. The Pannabecker list is derived from museum specimens (five of these museums were also visited by Abbass), historical photographs, and information in books and articles (see Table 9 for a more detailed accounting). The tribal listing of this admittedly incomplete survey is arranged in alphabetical order.
# TABLE 9

## Sources of Pannabecker List of Ribbonworking Tribes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Museum Specimens</th>
<th>Historical Photographs</th>
<th>Secondary Sources (Museum Specimens/Historical Photographs/Descriptions)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caddo</td>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>OHS, WHC</td>
<td>Phillips 1984</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chippewa</td>
<td>FMN</td>
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<td>Gilman 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cree</td>
<td>MdH</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brawer 1983; Coe 1977; Howard 1976; Stewart 1973; Trigger 1978:228</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dakota</td>
<td>BPL, PAC, SMS</td>
<td>BPL, WHC</td>
<td>Abbass (forthcoming); Joffe [1940]1963:269; Trigger 1978:638</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>MPM</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feder 1956; Skinner 1926</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>MPM</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trigger 1978:664, 666</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iroquois</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coe 1977; Ewing 1982; Feder 1971</td>
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<td>Kaw</td>
<td>PCC</td>
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<td>Conn 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kickapoo</td>
<td>MPM, SMS</td>
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<td>Mead 1983:23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>MPM</td>
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<td>Conn 1979</td>
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<td>Micmac</td>
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<td>Ojibwa</td>
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<td>SPI, TGI, W-M</td>
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<td>Oto</td>
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<td>OHS, WHC</td>
<td>Coe 1977; Conn 1979</td>
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<td>Ottawa</td>
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*Continued on next page*
TABLE 9 (Continued)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Museum Specimens</th>
<th>Historical Photographs</th>
<th>Secondary Sources (Museum Specimens/ Historical Photographs/Descriptions)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pawnee</td>
<td>W-M</td>
<td>OHS, WHC</td>
<td>Douglas &amp; d'Harnoncourt 1941</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penobscot</td>
<td>PCC, SMS</td>
<td>WHC</td>
<td>Speck 1927</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ponca</td>
<td>FMN, MPM</td>
<td>KSH</td>
<td>Coe 1977; Feder 1956; Quimby 1966; Skinner [1924]1970</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quapaw</td>
<td>MPM, SMS</td>
<td>OHS</td>
<td>Feder 1956; Skinner 1921</td>
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<td>Sauk &amp; Fox</td>
<td>FMN, SMS</td>
<td>KSH, OHS</td>
<td>Krumroy 1962; Skinner 1921</td>
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<td>Sauk</td>
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<td>Shawnee</td>
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<td>Trigger 1978:633</td>
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<td>Shawnee/Caddo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winnebago</td>
<td>FMN</td>
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<td>Coe 1977; Conn 1979; Danker 1973; Feder 1956</td>
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*a = Museum Specimens and Historical Photographs

BPL = Bartlesville Public Library, History Room, OK
FMN = Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, IL
KSH = Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS
McM = McCord Museum, Montreal, Quebec
MdH = Musée de l’Homme, Paris, France
MPM = Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee WI
NMM = National Museum of Man, Ottawa, Ontario
OCH = Osage County Historical Society and Museum, Ponca City OK
OHS = Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City OK
OTM = Osage Tribal Museum, Pawhuska, OK
PAC = Philbrook Art Center, Tulsa, OK
PBM = Pawnee Bill Museum, Pawnee, OK
PCC = Ponca City Cultural Center, Ponca City, OK
SMS = Stovall Museum of Science and History, Norman, OK
SPI = Southern Plains Indian Museum, Anadarko, OK
TGI = Thomas Gilcrease Institute, Tulsa, OK
W-M = Woolaroc Museum, Bartlesville, OK
WHC = Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK
A comparison of the tribes designated in the five lists suggested a reconsideration of some tribes as ribbonworkers. First, the exclusion of "single examples" appeared to be warranted. As noted by Marriott (1958) and Abbass (1979:95), possession of objects does not necessarily indicate origin of manufacture. Misattribution of museum specimens is a frequent problem as tribal labels refer to the person from whom the piece was collected. In Table 8, single ribbonwork specimens were found for the Comanche, Kiowa, Ute, and Taos Pueblo tribes by Marriott, and for the Crow and Kiowa tribes by Abbass. The absence of further evidence of ribbonworking by these five groups led to the elimination of the tribes from further consideration.

Next, it seemed appropriate to question the status of southern tribes as ribbonworkers. Marriott (followed by Leech et al.) included these tribes, while Feder, Abbass, and Pannabecker did not. Two reasons can be posited to explain this lack of agreement. First, Marriott designated these tribes as making applique and did not specify ribbon applique. It is possible that despite her stated intention to describe ribbon applique work, an interest in technique led her to include these southern tribes. Conn (1980) also reviewed the applique practiced by southeastern tribes, but clearly differentiated the process from true cut and sewn ribbonwork techniques. Indeed, in a more recent article on ribbonwork by Marriott and Rachlin (1980), the southeastern tribes were omitted.

Second, it must be noted that the Cherokee were indicated twice as the creators of silk applique in Appleton (1950:Plate 15). While
this might seem to support the inclusion of the Cherokee as a ribbonwork tribe, the historical record provides other explanations for the label. In 1867, the Delaware were removed from Kansas Territory to a portion of lands belonging to the Cherokee Nation in northeastern Oklahoma (Goddard 1978:224). This move required negotiations between the two tribes, and the Delaware were often named as the Cherokee Delaware. The museum items consulted by Appleton could have been inappropriately attributed to the Cherokee, the Cherokee could have received ribbonwork as gifts from the Delaware, or the items could have been duplicated by individual Cherokee artists without representing the adoption of ribbonwork by the entire tribe. At this point, there is no solid evidence that the Cherokee or any other southeastern tribe (such as the Seminole also listed in Feder 1956) made or utilized ribbonwork decoration.

Of the remaining tribes designated in the five lists (Table 8), five distinct regional groupings can be derived from geographic locations at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The five groups are:

1. **The Northeast**  
   Micmac  
   Penobscot (Eastern Abenaki)

2. **The St. Lawrence/New York**  
   Huron  
   Iroquois  
   Seneca  
   Oneida  
   Narragansett (a Rhode Island tribe, some of whom that joined the Oneida after the Revolutionary War)  
   Mohegan
3. The Western Great Lakes
   Chippewa
   Delaware
   Fox
   Illinois
   Peoria
   Kickapoo
   Menominee
   Miami
   Ojibwa
   Ottawa
   Potawatomi
   Sauk
   Shawnee
   Winnebago
   Wyandot

4. The Canadian Northwest
   Cree
   Red River Métis

5. The U.S. Eastern Plains
   Caddo
   Dakota/Sioux
   Santee
   Sisseton
   Iowa
   Kansa
   Kaw
   Missouri
   Omaha
   Osage
   Oto
   Pawnee
   Ponca
   Quapaw
   Wichita

This list demonstrates the extremes of the possible geographical extension of ribbonwork. However, it must be noted that by the mid-nineteenth century, many of these tribes were living in close proximity in the central plains.
Existing Diffusion Hypotheses

Among writers on ribbonwork, there are two basic hypotheses on diffusion:

1. diffusion from the Great Lakes region to the prairies or eastern plains (Abbass forthcoming; Conn 1979, 1980; Feder 1971; Osage Exhibition 1978; Skinner 1926; Wood 1981);

2. diffusion from the Great Lakes east to the Atlantic, west to Nebraska and Kansas, south through the Mississippi Valley, and north into eastern and central Canada (Marriott 1958; Marriott and Rachlin 1980).

The westward flow of ribbonwork is based on the fact that historical descriptions and museum specimens from the Great Lakes region predate those of the prairies or plains. Thus, diffusion is generally presented as resulting from the geographical dislocation of the Great Lakes tribes. No evidence to the contrary was discovered in this study.

Only Marriott (1958) and Marriott and Rachlin (1980) considered the evidence of ribbonwork outside of the Great Lakes and prairie/plains regions. However, they did not go beyond a hypothesized direction of diffusion to explain the process by which ribbonwork spread beyond the initial core. Although Marriott's 1958 article is frequently cited by more recent writers, her hypothesis of diffusion has been ignored (omitting reference to eastern and northern diffusion) or questioned (Stewart 1985 personal communication). Only Phillips (1984) approached the void by speculating trade or exchange
of goods among various northern native groups and Great Lakes traders.

In this study, the practice of ribbonwork by such disparate groups as the Micmac and the Cree was confirmed. Trade connections between Indians of the Canadian plains and trading posts in the northwestern Great Lakes, especially Michilimackinac, were also found in the historical record. However, no specific historical or ethnographical evidence was discovered to interpret the possible relationship of Great Lakes ribbonwork to that of northeastern Canada (Micmac, Penobscot) or that of the Canadian northwest (Cree, Métis).

**Oral Tradition**

Nora Thompson Dean, a full-blood member of the Delaware (Lenape) tribe, was consulted in the course of this research (Pannabecker Field Notes). She died on November 29, 1984 in Oklahoma at the age of 77. A traditionalist, Dean had served as a resource person for researchers from the fields of anthropology, linguistics, history, and ethnomusicology. She was also recognized for her craftwork, including the construction of traditional clothing. Dean learned ribbonwork from her mother.

Dean was visited twice in the early stages of research. On both occasions she related an account regarding the diffusion of ribbonwork. During the reservation era, the lands of the Delaware tribe were adjacent to those of the Osage. Although initial interaction between the two tribes were sometimes estranged, an entente was reached and the two tribes have enjoyed cordial relations. At a Quawpaw pow-wow in the 1960s, Dean was approached by an elderly woman
of the Osage tribe. The woman, who was in her upper 90s, expressed interest in the ribbonwork skirt worn by Dean. When informed that Dean had made the ribbonwork, the Osage woman commented that the Osage people learned ribbonworking from their neighbors, the Delaware.

This piece of oral history remains a unique clue to the common assumption that woodlands tribes introduced ribbonwork to tribes of the prairies and eastern plains. The physical proximity and intertribal relations resulting from the reservation period support the oral tradition.

Intertribal Contact

The extent of ribbonwork can be interpreted as resulting from significant intertribal contact. With the arrival of the Europeans and the fur trade, additional factors influenced the nature of intertribal relations. In the pre-contact period, interrelationships were primarily diplomatic (reinforced by intermarriage and reciprocal gift-giving), ceremonial (such as the summer Feast of the Dead), or commercial (some tribes served as middlemen). With the introduction of European competition for trade and alliance, tribal contact flourished at European-established trading centers and treaty events. Alliance of American Indian tribes with European powers included pledges of military support. Mutual expectations of armed assistance were repeatedly manifested from the seventeenth century Iroquois wars through the War of 1812. Pan-tribal groups participated in raiding parties and military engagements with their European allies.
Another type of intertribal relations grew from a reaction to the Euro-American presence. Some nativistic movements were military-based, such as the mobilization of warriors by Pontiac in 1763 and 1764, or the pan-tribal union organized by Tecumseh in the early 1800s. Other movements were religious responses to Euro-Americans and culture change. The messages expounded by various prophets, such as Tenkswatawa, emphasized the rejection of Euro-American culture and the renewal of traditional spiritual life. In both types of movements, the leaders were never fully supported by their own tribes, but found followers from tribes across the Great Lakes region.

The geographic contraction of territory was another factor prompting intertribal contact. The move of the Delaware tribe into the Great Lakes region involved sponsorship by the Iroquois and later the Miami tribe. American-initiated land cessions were often negotiated with individual tribes, but through a collective treaty. The institution of government trading factories and group annuity payment days also provided new opportunities for intertribal fraternization. Ultimately, the removal of many Great Lakes tribes to the central plains resulted in the extreme of forced contact as tribes were relocated within close proximity in a new environment.

**Acculturation and Homogenization**

From an extensive study of historical documents and museum specimens in conjunction with ethnographic fieldwork among the Menominee, Keesing (1939) offered several conclusions about acculturation in the Great Lakes region. First, Keesing noted that early culture change
was voluntary. The adoption of European material items as well as the movement from a subsistence to a fur-based trading economy were volitional changes. They were not imposed upon the American Indians by a dominant culture.

Second, Keesing suggested that wealth, from involvement in the fur trade and subsequently from land sale payments, changed women's tasks. Many household utensils traditionally manufactured by women were replaced by store-bought articles, thus freeing the women for other activities. Keesing hypothesized that the efflorescence of the decorative arts among the Menominee and other Great Lakes Indians arose from this change in the economic system.

Third, Keesing perceived a "leveling" process among Great Lakes tribes in the late eighteenth century. He posited that a trend toward regional cultural uniformity resulted from the fraternizing deriving from "common economic, political, and military interests" (Keesing 1939:103).

Fourth, Keesing proposed that Indian-European marriages and métis offspring were significant channels of diffusion for innovations (1939:112, 118). While not attempting to delineate specific dates and patterns of diffusion, Keesing hypothesized that trading posts such as La Baye (Green Bay) and the trading agents, many of whom were of mixed descent, were important models for change (1939:205).

Discussion on Diffusion

While Keesing (1939) was clearly interested in ribbonwork as part of a broader interest in artistic innovation of the early nineteenth
century, writers on ribbonwork have not cited or referred to his conclusions. Given the incomplete nature of the findings on the diffusion of ribbonwork, Keesing's propositions provide a valuable base for the creation of hypotheses and the interpretation of the findings.

Finding 4

Documentary and material evidence of ribbonwork was found to exist among various tribes in the Great Lakes area.

Hypothesis 4. The spread of ribbonwork through the Great Lakes region is a reflection of cultural homogeneity brought about by acculturation and intertribal contact.

This hypothesis is derived from Keesing's proposition regarding the homogenization of woodlands culture in the late fur trading period. The universal adoption of many European manufactured goods naturally led to uniformity in material culture. Cross-tribal contact in trade or diplomatic settings increased opportunities for intertribal exchange and modeling of innovations, thus fostering diffusion. Pan-tribal political and religious movements are non-material examples of homogenization in cultural life. Thus, the development of ribbonwork in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries provides an outstanding material example of a larger cultural process in action.

Finding 5

The earliest examples of ribbonwork were from major trading centers (Niagara, Detroit/Amherstburg, Green Bay, and
Hypothesis 5. Trading posts were major centers of ribbonwork diffusion in the Great Lakes region.

The nucleus of early ribbonwork specimens from large trading centers suggests that ribbonwork was not a tribal-specific development but flourished in settings with cross-cultural interaction. Both non-native and extra-tribal material items and behaviors were readily observable in the European and métis environment of the trading posts. Thus, the models as well as the materials for acculturative change were available in these settings.

However, an alternate hypothesis is that the existence of ribbonwork from trading centers is an artifact of collection and preservation and is not evidence of innovation nor the direction of diffusion. The sample of early ribbonwork specimens is admittedly small, and generalizations based on them may be misleading. The alternative hypothesis is supported by a pouch with ribbon decoration from the Grant Collection (Phillips 1984:61 no. 11). In addition to developmental and negative applique styles of ribbonwork, the pouch has a broad band of quillwork clearly associated in design and construction technique to that of the Cree or Red River Métis of the sub-Arctic region (Phillips 1984:42). Phillips stated that objects were traded among native, métis, and trader groups, and thus could have been passed southward and ultimately acquired by Grant at Amherstburg. Therefore, the collection site of the pouch does not indicate its point of origin, and hypotheses of diffusion may be erroneous.
Finding 6

Early ribbonwork is often associated with métis individuals.

Hypothesis 6. The métis were primary agents in the diffusion of ribbonwork in the Great Lakes region.

Euro-American observers clearly perceived ribbonwork as Indian (see Baird 1898; Grant in Phillips 1984; and Winter 1948). However, both specimens and historical descriptions with background information link ribbonwork to the métis. The Rankin ensemble was worn at the 1802 wedding of a métis woman and a trader of French heritage (Conn 1980). Baird's recollections of ribbonwork were in the context of an 1819 wedding at Michilimackinac between a full-blood Indian woman and a Philadelphia white man. At this wedding, the bride, her mother, and two métis women traders wore the ribbonwork-decorated garments (Baird 1898).

Winter (1948) described the general use of ornamental ribbon on the clothing of Indiana Potawatomis in his visits during the late 1830s. However, the observations which are clearly descriptions of ribbonwork were in reference to métis families, the Potawatomi wife of Mr. Baron, and women of the family of Jean-Baptiste Brouillette.

The Great Lakes métis population exercised a unique role in the interaction between Euro-Americans and Indians. Kin relationships to both groups allowed multi-lingual métis to act as middlemen in commercial transactions and interpreters in political negotiations. These positions thus granted the métis a prestige status as well as economic power.
As an intermediary between two cultures, the métis had access to European materials and techniques. Their knowledge of indigenous customs would also enable them to understand methods to integrate novelties into customary patterns. It is also possible that the relatively wealthy position of the métis allowed for experimentation with European items.

The existence of artifacts and descriptions is not always a true representation of the past, as not all things are chosen to be remembered or saved. Thus, observations mentioned may have resulted from inconsistencies of preservation and thus exaggerate the relationship of ribbonwork to the métis. However, the combined data from documents and specimens suggest further investigation is needed into the role of métis as innovators and agents of diffusion.

The Persistence of Ribbonwork

The practice of ribbonwork has persisted into the twentieth century. Investigation into the continuation of ribbonwork was based on the gathering of support evidence from written, visual, and material sources. The absence of corroborating evidence from some resource material is also discussed. Findings on the integration of ribbonwork into Great Lakes cultures are presented, in addition to a consideration of the renewal of interest in ribbonwork.

Sources of Evidence

A variety of sources provided evidence of the continuing manufacture and use of ribbonwork. Information on ribbonwork from the mid-nineteenth century to the present was obtained from museum specimens,
historical photographs, references in ethnographies, and descriptions in material culture studies.

**Museum Specimens.** Material evidence of the persistence of ribbonwork can be found in museum collections in North America and Europe. During this study, ribbonwork specimens were viewed in museums throughout the state of Oklahoma and in the cities of Chicago, Milwaukee, Ottawa, and Paris (see pages 56-59 and Table 9). Other researchers have investigated ribbonwork in museum collections in Michigan (Cyr 1978) and Wisconsin (Miller 1979). Abbass (1979) surveyed ribbonwork holdings in twelve museums in the United States. Feder (1956) referred to items in the Denver Art Museum, Field Museum, and the Milwaukee Public Museum, while Conn (1980) mentioned specifically specimens in the Denver Art Museum and the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Texts on American Indian art and exhibition catalogues provide extensive evidence of ribbonwork from various locations, tribes, and time periods. Such information on museum specimens can be found in Brawer (1983), Coe (1977), Conn (1979), Dockstader (1961), Douglas and d'Harmoncourt (1941), Feder (1971), Flint Institute of Arts (1973), Osage Exhibition (1978), Phillips (1984), Walker Art Center (1972), and Whiteford (1976). The specimens found in these works come from museums in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Information on the provenance and date of manufacture is often incomplete for many items collected over the past two hundred years. Despite the restriction imposed by inadequate documentation,
many ribbonwork specimens dating from the removal to the present are available in museum collections. Furthermore, ribbonwork garments from the twentieth century with strong collection histories attest to the continuing practice of this decorative art. In particular, the Oklahoma Historical Society and the Milwaukee Public Museum have collected twentieth century ribbonwork (Pannabecker Field Notes).

Photographs. The invention of the daguerreotype in 1839 and succeeding photographic processes revolutionized the recording of visual information. The persistence of ribbonwork has been documented through photographs showing not only the ribbonwork and the garment which it decorated, but also the person by whom it was worn, and occasionally the background context. By virtue of the date of invention, photographic evidence is limited to the post-removal period. However, photographs provide visual evidence of the wearing of ribbonwork garments during the second half of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century.

In this study, historical photographs were viewed at the archives of the Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma State Historical Society, and the Kansas State Historical Society (see pages 56-58 and Table 9), and on display at the National Museum of Man (Smithsonian Institution). Photographs from a variety of Great Lakes tribes have also been published in Abbass (forthcoming), Brawer (1983), Danker (1973), Feder (1956), Fletcher and LaFlesche (1911), Hilger (1960), Howard (1976), Krumroy (1962), LaFlesche (1928), McCracken (1956), Radin (1923), Ritzenthaler and

Material culture studies. Several early twentieth century anthropologists extensively investigated the material culture of Great Lakes Indians. Collections of artifacts and information on the manufacture of tools, weapons, and clothing were sponsored by major museums, such as the Milwaukee Public Museum, and the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation.

Alanson Skinner in particular documented the use of ribbonwork in the twentieth century. Skinner found ribbonwork on Winnebago costumes (moccasins, women's leggings, skirt, and shawl, and men's leggings) but suggested that the art was "almost obsolete" (1910:292). He also noted that Winnebago material culture resembled that of the Sauk and Fox and other central Algonquian neighbors. Skinner's Menomini study (1921) included descriptions of ribbonwork decoration on women's clothing and reported an oral tradition relating that ribbonwork replaced porcupine quillwork decoration. Skinner (1925) recorded the use of ribbonwork on men's headbands and women's skirts among the Sauk. In a study of the clothing ways of the Iowa tribe, Skinner (1926) noted ribbonwork on women's garments and suggested that the conventionalized floral designs in Iowa ribbonwork were borrowed from the Sauk. Furthermore, he found commonalities between the ribbonwork of the Iowa and that of the Oto tribe. Skinner's publications do not provide in-depth descriptions of ribbonwork designs or manufacture and do not link this decorative art to the cultural context. However,
despite the claim that ribbonwork was declining, his discovery of ribbonwork items supports the retention of ribbonwork into the first quarter of the century.

**Ethnographies.** One of the main tenets in the practice of ethnography is holism:

the principle referring to the study of all aspects of a culture or society in context rather than of a selected few without reference to their context. (Edgerton and Langness 1974:126)

The concern for holism guided many cultural anthropologists to collect data on and specimens of material culture. However, central interests of inquiry in twentieth century anthropology have denigrated artifact-centered research. Therefore, although some ethnographers may have field notes on ribbonwork, specific information in ethnographic publications is almost solely in terms of passing references. Yet these references do supply evidence of the persistence of ribbonwork among Great Lakes tribes.

In a study of the Fox of Iowa, a tribe that resisted assimilation by Euro-American culture, Joffe mentioned ribbonwork in the section on social organization:

When the girl was fifteen she learned to do fine bead-work and make ribbon applique. When she had learned all of these skills she was considered ready for marriage. (Joffe [1940]1963:269)

Mead referred to ribbonwork in the context of changes in men's and women's work in Omaha society:

The introduction of guns and of steel traps reenforced the Indian's ability to obtain game—but his work was nevertheless augmented, and his wife's labor in dressing skins was enormously increased. The introduction of beads
and the substitution of beadwork and ribbon applique for the more laborious decoration with porcupine quills did lessen the woman's work somewhat, as did also the introduction of iron kettles and broadcloth. (Mead 1932:23)

In a publication of the Bureau of American Ethnology on the Osage, LaFlesche described the dress of the Osage women:

In recent times, the dresses are made of broadcloth, silk jackets, short leggings embroidered with ribbon, woven belts, moccasins and blankets. (LaFlesche 1925:196)

Mountain Wolf Woman, a Winnebago, mentioned ribbonwork clothing in reminiscing about her turn-of-the-century wedding:

They dressed me. I wore a ribbon embroidery skirt and I wore one as a shawl. I wore a heavily beaded binding for the braid of hair down my back, and I had on earrings. It looked as if I were going to a dance. (Lurie 1961a:29)

In the most recent ethnographic study to mention ribbonwork, Ritzen-thaler and Ritzenthaler ([1970]1983) related that ribbonwork was an important art form to woodland Indians. However, they reiterated Skinner's observation of the decline of ribbonwork manufacture, noting that "Today silk applique is a dying art" ([1970]1983:74).

Absence of Evidence

Despite the variety of written, visual, and material evidence for the persistence of ribbonwork, it must be noted that references to ribbonwork were absent in many sources. Ethnographers often did not include any information on ribbonwork. Harrington (1921), Kinietz (1946), Newcomb (1956), and Speck (1931) all undertook fieldwork with various Delaware tribes but did not report anything on ribbonwork. Hoffman (1896), Hilger (1960), and Spindler and Spindler (1971) provided data on the Menomini but did not cover ribbonwork. Hilger did,
however, publish a photograph of a woman wearing a ribbonwork shawl. Ethnographic treatments of the Chippewa (Hickerson 1970), Fox (Tax 1955), Ojibwa (Landes 1938), Omaha (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1911), Potawatomi (Skinner [1924] 1970; Cliffton 1977), and Winnebago (Radin 1923) did not contain any references to ribbonwork, although Fletcher and LaFlesche, and Radin did include photographs of ribbonwork. Volume 15 of the Handbook on North American Indians (Trigger 1978) contains illustrations of ribbonwork, but none of the authors on ribbonworking tribes treats ribbonwork except for Goddard on the Delaware (1978). Densmore's work ([1929] 1970) on Chippewa material culture also did not include ribbonwork.

The discrepancy between the existence of evidence of the persistence of ribbonwork and the absence of evidence could lead to a hypothesis that ribbonwork was never universally adopted by Great Lakes Indians. Alternately, it could be hypothesized that by the twentieth century, ribbonwork was extinct in some regions or among some tribal groups. However, the common admission that material culture has been ignored by anthropologists (Edgerton and Langness 1974:51; King 1978) suggests that the absence of published information does not indicate the nonexistence of ribbonwork. A cultural anthropologist listed in the preceding paragraph as not mentioning ribbonwork in his published works verified the persistence of ribbonwork among the Potawatomi and its value to tribal members (Cliffton 1985 personal communication).

For the purpose of this study, the variety of evidence to support the persistence of ribbonwork was taken to validate its continuing
manufacture and use, while the absence of information on ribbonwork was construed to result from the disciplinary and personal lack of interest in material culture, clothing, or the decorative arts on the part of many twentieth century researchers.

**Integration into Great Lakes Cultures**

The persistence of a minor cultural element is related to its integration into the cultural inventory of Great Lakes Indians. Evidence of the integration of both ribbon and ribbonwork was found in the course of this study.

**Integration of ribbon.** Beyond the use of ribbon as ornamentation on clothing, there is evidence that ribbon was utilized as a gift item, as ornamentation on ritual items, and was incorporated into native languages.

Historical records provide evidence that ribbon was not only a gift to Great Lakes Indians but also a gift item among these tribes. Heckewelder ([1876]1971) recalled the 1762 funeral of a highly respected Delaware woman. The deceased was dressed in ribbon-ornamented leggings (see p. 151). The inclusion of ribbon-decorated clothing as a burial item was confirmed by Quimby who reported silk fragments and a strip of ribbon with miniature brooches in Ottawa graves circa 1760-1820 (1966:148, 149).

Ribbon was also a part of the funeral gift-giving reported by Heckewelder. The interment and mourning ceremony were followed by a meal and the giving of presents according to age, gender, and service during the funeral:
Articles of little value, such as gartering, tape, needles, beads, and the like, were given to the smaller girls; the older ones received a pair of scissors, needles and thread, and a yard or two of riband. (Heckewelder [1876]1971:274)

Although ribbon has never been found to have any particular religious significance, ribbon was used to decorate sacred bundles (Clifton 1977:116). Ribbon was used to border the edge of an animal skin pouch, or as short streamers. Landes (1938) also reported that in the ritual celebration following a bear kill, the bleached skull was adorned with paint and ribbons.

Historical evidence also exists to show that ribbon was incorporated into indigenous languages. Two eighteenth-century vocabulary lists of terms for trade merchandise included ribbon. An Englishman, John Long, compiled a table cross-listing "ribbons, or silk" with the Chippewa "Sennebar" (Long 1904:175). Ribbon was cross-listed in French, "Le Rubans", and an unidentified Indian language, "Senihans", by a Montréal trader circa 1770 (Trinque Papers).

Furthermore, the term ribbon was utilized as a name in the early nineteenth century by Great Lakes tribes. An 1824 letter between traders in Wisconsin concerned trade with a Menomini chief:

I found the band of ruban at the Lake du boeuf. I traded with them and gave them a little credit. (The fur trade in Wisconsin 1911:363)

In addition, an Indian account book from a Massinoui trader in central Indiana listed "Old Ribbon" as receiving $4.60 worth of unnamed merchandise circa 1830 (Van Pelt Papers). Thus, a variety of records document the integration of ribbon into multiple institutions of Great
Lakes culture.

Integration of ribbonwork. Like the case for ribbon, historical documents provide evidence of the incorporation of ribbonwork into Great Lakes cultures beyond the utilization of ribbonwork ornamentation on clothing. The use of ribbonwork on a ritual item of the Delaware tribe and the maintenance of ribbonwork among conservative factions of Great Lakes tribes provide examples of the integration of ribbonwork into Indian cultures.

A unique indication of the integration of ribbonwork is provided by a ceremonial doll which was part of the Delaware doll dance. Harrington's monograph (1921) on the religion of the Delaware recorded information on several female dolls. According to Unami (a Delaware subtribe) tradition, the health of the owner and his family was related to the care of the doll:

You must give me new clothing and hold a dance for me every spring. (Harrington 1921:163)

The doll pictured in Harrington's monograph was collected in Ontario and wears a cloth skirt bound with braid.

Reverend Cutting Marsh (1900) also related information about a ceremonial doll among the Stockbridge (or Mahican) Indians in Wisconsin. In an 1839 journal, Marsh noted that the more-than-100-years-old doll was:

arrayed in Indian costume and nearly covered with silver brooches and trinkets; and whilst retained as an object of worship was kept wrapped up in some 20 envelopments of broad-cloth trimmed with scarlet ribbon. (Marsh 1900:145)
While the "trimming" was not explicitly described, Marsh likely saw plain ribbon borders or ribbonwork decoration.

During this study, resource persons supplied information regarding a ceremonial doll originally from the Delaware in northeastern Oklahoma. After several Delaware owners, the doll was given to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. The doll was acquired with eleven skirts or shawls decorated with ribbonwork and beads, other items of clothing and ornamentation, and scraps of cloth and ribbon (Brawer 1983:111; Pannabecker Field Notes). The ribbonwork-adorned items exhibit variable signs of degradation, and thus appear to have been constructed for the doll across a period of time. Although the doll dance is considered a "minor" ceremony by some (Newcomb 1956:67-68), the appearance of ribbonwork on an item of ritual importance is a unique testimony to the integration of ribbonwork and ribbonwork-decorated clothing into the cultural fabric of the Delaware.

Another type of evidence of the degree of ribbonwork integration into native cultures arises from the tribes who maintained ribbonwork. During the nineteenth century, several tribes split into factions based on pro-assimilation philosophies in opposition to conservative convictions. In four separate documented cases, the traditionalist communities retained the decorative art of ribbonwork. The Western (or Absentee) Delaware of the Anadarko, Oklahoma area represent splinter groups who preferred to move west before removal or who were less assimilated to Euro-American culture than the main body. The Fox of
Iowa retained a strong tribal identity and resisted changes in language, religion, and social organization. The Mexican Kickapoo, composed of several immigrations of traditionalists, have been characterized as "one of the most conservative Indian societies extant" (Callender, Pope, and Pope 1978:666). The Prairie band Potawatomi resisted religious and political changes leading to assimilation. Both historical photographs and museum specimens attest to the preservation of ribbonwork by these conservative, tradition-oriented groups (the Delaware: Brawer 1983:95, 97, 100; Trigger 1978:228; the Fox: Stovall Museum of Science and History NAM 10-7-7; Trigger 1978:638; the Kickapoo: Stovall Museum of Science and History NAM 10-3-14; the Potawatomi: Clifton 1985 personal communication).

Resurgence of Interest

The persistence of ribbonwork has not been without difficulty. The social forces of assimilation gradually led to cultural changes in all Great Lakes tribes. Traditional clothing and decorative arts did experience a twentieth century decline as noted by Skinner (1910:292). However, Gunther (1944:29) noted an Oklahoma revival of ribbonwork.

Indian Arts and Crafts Board. Established in 1935 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board was formed to promote the native American artistic heritage. During the midst of the depression, the Board focused on sponsoring exhibitions outside of Indian areas (such as the exposition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Douglas and d'Harnoncourt 1941), and developing non-Indian markets for Indian creations (Marriott and
Rachlin 1980). Agencies and field representatives of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board promoted the manufacture and sale of ribbonwork, often translated into contemporary garments (Feder 1956). Women's apparel were marketed with adaptations of ribbonwork applique (for example, the evening dress created by a Pawnee artist, pictured in Douglas and d'Harnoncourt 1941:47). In addition, ribbonwork designs were interpreted in non-ribbon textiles, such as cotton cloth, and produced on aprons, curtains, and pillowcases (Feder 1956; Pannabecker Field Notes). The Southern Plains Indian Museum of Anadarko, Oklahoma, which is administered by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, continues to offer for sale traditional and contemporary adaptations of ribbonwork (Pannabecker Field Notes). Thus, patronage by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board has supported the maintenance of ribbonwork production.

Reaffirmation of tradition. In contrast to the adaptation of ribbonwork on articles for non-Indian markets, the 1960s and 1970s were a period of resurgence of interest in the traditional decorative arts among native Americans, including ribbonwork. Pan-Indian social events such as pow-wows and the "Indian Awareness movement" (Marriott and Rachlin 1980) both stimulated the creation of ribbonwork for Indians from tribes with a ribbonworking tradition. Classes on ribbonwork construction and a publication containing ribbonwork patterns were developed by the Arts and Crafts Program of the Osage Tribal Museum (Cheshewalla n.d.).
Ribbonwork manufacture has never been commercially profitable because of the materials and time required for production (Marriott and Rachlin 1980). Several Oklahoma artists/entrepreneurs operate small businesses (shops or mail order operations). Others market ribbonwork through sale or consignment to galleries and shops specializing in Indian arts and crafts. Museums have also purchased specimens of ribbonwork (Abbass 1979; Marriott and Rachlin 1980; Pannabecker Field Notes).

The use of synthetic fabrics (rather than silk ribbons) and sewing machines (rather than hand stitching) facilitated the production of contemporary ribbonwork. In the summer of 1983, traditional ribbonwork designs printed on satin ribbon by a silkscreen process were introduced in Oklahoma as a less expensive alternative to cut and sewn ribbonwork. The Osage artist who introduced printed ribbonwork acknowledged the innovativeness of the production process but maintained that the designs retained their traditional form (Pannabecker Field Notes).

A renewal of interest in ribbonwork was related to movements to affirm the value and significance of the traditional Indian arts and crafts. Contemporary ribbonworkers have served as resource persons in museums and exhibitions across the United States (Horse Capture 1980; Pannabecker Field Notes). Georgeann Robinson, an Osage ribbonworker now deceased, was the first American Indian to receive a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts for contributions to American folk art (Turcott 1982; Pannabecker Field Notes).
The déculturation of the American Indian, or loss of cultural patterns in the face of pressures to assimilate and become like the dominant Euro-American culture, has been a common assumption undergirding many writings on native American culture and history. The survival of a non-indigenous material element such as ribbonwork is an example of a continuity in culture that refutes the monolithic nature of the déculturation assumption. Comments on the findings of the persistence and its interpretation are presented below.

Finding 7

Ribbonwork has persisted into the twentieth century and continues to be produced and worn.

Hypothesis 7. Ribbonwork has persisted because it represents the transformation of a non-native good into a culturally authentic element of American Indian life.

This interpretation of the persistence of ribbonwork could be challenged as circular reasoning: a non-native element must be integrated into a culture if it is to be retained; therefore, a non-native element that persists must be culturally integrated. However, the history of the development of ribbonwork and the evidence of its incorporation into existing cultural patterns suggest that inferences of integration are not solely based on circular logic.

According to historical documents, the adoption of ribbon by Great Lakes Indians was evident through much of the eighteenth
century. The earliest observation of ribbon-decorated clothing, that was located in this study, was recorded by a Jesuit priest in 1735 (Kenton 1927, 2:458). Thus, ribbon has been used as ornamentation on Great Lakes Indian dress for over 250 years. The variety of eighteenth century references to ribbon and ribbon-decorated garments suggest that as a decorative medium, ribbon was well integrated into the cultural inventory of Great Lakes Indians before periods of economic and political crisis. The nativistic movements of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries emphasized the rejection of Euro-American material goods and the revival of pre-contact patterns of life. The retention of ribbon decoration on clothing during this period leads to the proposition that ribbon was no longer perceived solely as a foreign item but as a meaningful element in Great Lakes material culture.

The concept of cultural authentication developed by Eicher and Erekosima (1980; Erekosima and Eicher 1981) assists in the interpretation of the persistence of ribbonwork. According to Eicher and Erekosima, cultural authentication is defined as:

the process of assimilating an artifact or idea external to a culture by accommodative change into a valued indigenous object or idea. (Eicher and Erekosima 1980:83)

The model of cultural authentication consists of four analytical levels from which to examine the process of cultural transfer: selection, characterization, incorporation, and transformation (see pages 23-24).
At the first level, "selection", the historical evidence confirms that ribbon was selected by Great Lakes Indians. Furthermore, the adoption of ribbon can be interpreted as an active expression of Indian aesthetic preferences. Great Lakes Indians made known their preferences for ribbon as an item of trade and gift and also for the types of ribbon suitable to their needs.

No documentation in historical nor ethnographic records has been found to substantiate the second level, "characterization". Except for the so-called "ottertail" motif (see Endnote 6 of Chapter V), no names were found for ribbonwork garments or ribbonwork designs. Speck noted the absence of naming in the decorative arts of the Delaware (1914).

At the third level, "incorporation", ribbon and ribbonwork have been found to be included by Great Lakes Indians in clothing ornamentation from the eighteenth century onward. Ribbon was incorporated into language and naming and served as gift items, such as presents at a funeral give-away. In addition, ribbon and ribbonwork were utilized to adorn ritual artifacts, such as the Delaware doll, and were maintained by conservative factions.

The extent of the cultural integration of ribbonwork is demonstrated by the fourth level of the authentication model, "transformation". Ribbonwork represents a creative, distinctively Indian reinterpretation of a non-indigenous article. Ribbon was borrowed, and its European value as an artistic medium was retained. However, the radical modification of the ribbon length through the cutting and
sewing process of ribbonwork constitutes a significant transformation of the material good.

The analysis of ribbonwork according to the Eicher and Erekosima model demonstrates the extent of the integration of ribbon and ribbonwork in Great Lakes Indian cultures. Non-Indian observers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries consistently perceived ribbon-garnished and ribbonwork garments as Indian. Ribbon was no longer a Euro-American textile decoration but an expression of American Indian culture. As a culturally authentic element, ribbonwork persisted despite cultural contact and change. As a visible, culturally authentic marker, ribbonwork continues to serve those who affirm their cultural heritage.
CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion to this study of ribbonwork and acculturation is presented in three parts. A general summary includes a review of the purpose, conceptual framework, and method used to guide the research. In addition, the findings and interpretation are briefly recapitulated. Second, the implications of these findings for the study of acculturation and for the study of textiles and clothing are presented. Third, recommendations for future research are proposed, followed by a final summation.

Summary

Ribbonwork is a unique decorative art found on clothing and personal accessories which developed among Great Lakes Indians in the late eighteenth century. Ribbonwork is a manifestation of culture contact and change, utilizing non-native textile goods (silk ribbon) and European needlework techniques. (See Appendix for detailed discussion and examples of ribbonwork.) Indian women have continued to create ribbonwork garments despite nativistic movements rejecting Euro-American cultural products, economic impoverishment, and pressures to discontinue a "savage" lifestyle and to adopt Euro-American modes of dress. Ribbonwork was perceived as authentically Indian, and today
signifies tradition or "Indianness" to native Americans with a ribbon-working heritage.

The concept of acculturation provided the framework for the examination of the cultural dynamics of ribbonwork. Extended commercial and political contacts existed between Europeans and American Indians prior to the development of ribbonwork. Ribbonwork relied on the introduction of European sewing techniques and the continued availability of European textile goods. The acculturation perspective provided concepts such as contact agents, directed and non-directed change, and deculturation. In addition, the acculturation framework provided directions for research in terms of the roles of material culture and women in culture contact and change.

Investigation into the origin, diffusion, and persistence of ribbonwork was based on the ethnohistorical method. Interviews with American Indian resource persons in Oklahoma supplemented by the examination of museum artifacts and archival photographs provided the preliminary foundation for the study. Research in France at the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris) and the Centre International d'Etude de Textiles Anciens (Lyon) yielded further information. Additional travel to museums and archives in the midwestern United States and Canada permitted the examination of manuscripts, primary materials, and additional museum specimens.

Data collected during the research process were presented according to the themes of origin, diffusion, and persistence. The findings were collapsed into seven basic statements and used to generate
hypotheses followed by an interpretive discussion. A summary of these findings and discussion are presented below.

Origin of Ribbonwork

In regard to the origin of ribbonwork, it was found that during the second half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, ribbon was available to Great Lakes Indians through trade and diplomatic gift. Information substantiating trade relationships with English manufacturers was found for this period. However, no documentation was discovered to substantiate the hypothesis that French ribbon was dumped on New World markets after the 1789 revolution.

Findings on the selection process included evidence of the expression of preferences for textile goods in general and ribbon in particular. Furthermore, individual documents indicated the rejection of unsuitable ribbon, and provided a link between the selection and purchase of ribbon by Indian women.

Although the use of plain ribbon borders on clothing is well documented for the eighteenth century, the earliest evidence of ribbonwork dates from the early years of the nineteenth century. Early nineteenth century specimens and descriptions frequently demonstrated the combination of ribbonwork and plain ribbon, or the combination of traditional decorative materials (e.g., quillwork) with ribbonwork on a garment piece. Design parallels were found in ribbonwork and other traditional decorative arts (quillwork, birchbark decoration) or other innovative arts (beadwork). Ribbonwork sewing techniques were clearly
European derived, but no design prototypes were found in Euro-American decorative or clothing arts.

These findings prompted several interpretive hypotheses. It was posited that ribbonwork is a manifestation of Indian preferences, and not a result of the mere availability, attractiveness, or superiority of ribbon. Second, it was hypothesized that ribbonwork represents the adaptation of Great Lakes Indians to changing economic conditions, as represented by the accumulation of luxury materials and increased leisure time. Third, it was proposed that ribbonwork represents a unique innovative and yet conservative aesthetic response by Great Lakes women to culture change. In summary, it is hypothesized that ribbonwork is a material indicator not only of the transfer of culture traits but of the active participation of Great Lakes Indians in the selection, reconstruction, and adaptation of material goods in response to culture contact and change.

**Diffusion of Ribbonwork**

Lists of ribbonworking tribes prepared by various authors were compared to examine assumptions regarding the diffusion of ribbonwork. Southeastern tribes with an applique tradition were differentiated from those producing ribbonwork. The spread of ribbonwork through the Great Lakes region was hypothesized to be a reflection of cultural homogeneity brought about by acculturation and intertribal contact. Furthermore, trading posts could have operated as major centers of ribbonwork diffusion, and métis traders could have acted as primary agents in the diffusion of ribbonwork. The possibility also exists
that the evidence leading to these interpretations might be biased and therefore misleading.

**Persistence of Ribbonwork**

Written, visual, and material resources were utilized to trace the persistence of ribbonwork into the twentieth century. The survey of ethnographic sources revealed that many did not mention ribbonwork. The absence of information was attributed primarily to disciplinary foci or lack of interest in material culture by many twentieth century ethnographers.

The integration of ribbon into Great Lakes Indian cultures was examined in terms of its use as a burial good, ritual gift, and decoration on sacred items, and its incorporation into languages and names. Evidence for the integration of ribbonwork into Indian cultures was provided by the ribbonwork ensembles of a Delaware ceremonial doll and the preservation of ribbonwork by conservative, tradition-oriented factions of Great Lakes tribes. The resurgence of interest in ribbonwork both as a marketable product to non-Indians and as an ethnic marker was discussed. It was hypothesized that ribbonwork has persisted because it is "culturally authentic" and wholly integrated into American Indian cultures.

**Implications**

This study was based on two foundations—acculturation and the role of textiles and clothing in culture. The results of the research on ribbonwork thus provide implications for continuing inquiry to both areas.
Implications for the Study of Acculturation

The study of ribbonwork produces significant implications for the concept and study of acculturation. Four points are presented for consideration: contact agents, directed vs. non-directed change, women's roles, and the role of material culture in acculturation.

Contact Agents. The role of the fur trade is omnipresent in discussions of changes in American Indian cultures. It is a truism that the traders supplied imported manufactured items to the Indian, thus prompting the displacement of native material life. The power of the fur trade as a contact community is suggested by its designation as one of five generic types in the North American acculturation situation (Spicer 1961:526). (The other four types are: Spanish mission, United States reservation, Canadian reservation, and urban segment.)

In this study of ribbonwork, it immediately became evident that a focus on material change prompted by the fur trade was too simplistic. Primary sources are replete with references to presents. In addition, major research on diplomatic gift-giving in the pre-colonial era was published thirty-five years ago and has been reprinted (Jacobs 1950, 1966), and still is largely unrecognized. To concentrate on the role of the fur trade in acculturation to the exclusion of the political community and diplomatic gift-giving is to ignore the effect of a major agent of culture transfer. The search for the origins of ribbonwork clearly indicated the necessity for considering multiple contact communities in an analysis of culture contact and change, and
avoiding reductionistic and simplistic causal interpretations.

**Directed vs. Non-Directed Change.** Another common assumption regarding change in the material culture of American Indians is the voracity of the Indian for European manufactured items and the willingness to adopt these "superior" goods. Despite observations of "judicious borrowing" by the Indian (Lurie 1959) or the adoption of individual traits without the associated complex (e.g. Newcomb 1956), the notion that the trader directed the material exchange is dominant.

The present study of ribbonwork prompted a reconsideration of the uniformity of this assumption. Again, historical documents provided evidence of the active participation of American Indians in the process of selecting non-native items (see section on "Selection"). Compilations of goods "preferred" by Indians in trade and gift (see Table 4, page 141) and evidence of the rejection of unsuitable goods further substantiated the active role of the Indian. Furthermore, the innovative manipulation of ribbon in ribbonwork provided evidence of the creative response of American Indians to imported materials beyond the Euro-American use. Thus, the study of ribbonwork supports reconsideration of the participation of the Indian in the process of acculturation.

**Women's Roles.** Characterization of American Indian women is often reduced to the stereotype of a passive "drudge". Their roles as producers and consumers are invariably overshadowed by a focus on the male hunter, warrior, and chief. Research into the origin of ribbonwork and how women obtained ribbon supplied evidence that women
had individual accounts with traders and bartered domestic items and services in exchange for European manufactured goods. Furthermore, métis women were traders in their own right. In addition to information on economic roles, the study of ribbonwork also provided evidence of Great Lakes Indian women as artists. Innovative approaches to non-native materials were balanced with creative and yet conservative experimentation in design. The concentration on men's roles in acculturation is often seen as the result of limited historical documentation. The investigation of ribbonwork revealed sources that can be used in the future for more balanced studies on culture contact and change that include consideration of women's roles as innovators and conservators of tradition.

Material Culture. The search for universal patterns in acculturation prompted the proposition that traits of material culture were more readily changeable than social organization or tenets of belief. This was a basic and early generalization in acculturation studies (Herskovits 1938:29), and was apparently supported by research. Kinietz (1946) conducted a comparison of Delaware culture traits as documented by historical materials and twentieth century ethnographic data. His findings suggested that technological elements were more liable to change than sociological or spiritual traits. Kinietz's work, however, was criticized both in terms of method and interpretation (Speck 1948). In the review published by a committee of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), it was further posited that "luxury" products, such as ornamentation, art, and leisure activities
were less resistant to change than basic cultural institutions (Social Science Research Council 1954:991). Vogt's review of acculturation studies of American Indians ([1957]1972) also maintained the hypothesis that "core" aspects of culture are more stable than elements of material culture.

However, subsequent research on North American Indians by anthropologists at an SSRC-Interuniversity seminar resulted in the finding that change in material culture is differential. Comparative analysis of American Indian cultures demonstrated that change in material culture was situationally determined and did not universally occur at a particular point in the acculturation process (Spicer 1961:542).

The study of ribbonwork adds to the understanding of the role of material culture in acculturation. First, ribbonwork demonstrates that a single trait of material culture can exhibit multiple responses to culture contact and change. Ribbonwork involved the innovative utilization of a non-native material but the innovation was confined to traditional styles and designs. Furthermore, the innovative decorative art was incorporated into the cultural inventory to the point that it was perceived to be compatible with conservatism. Thus, ribbonwork is an example of a response to acculturation that is not a simplistic, change-as-deculturation response. Second, it is often posited that items of material culture are readily borrowable because they are visible (Newcomb 1956). The efficiency of metal tools over stone and bone was readily demonstrable. However, the visibility of Euro-American clothing did not lead inexorably to the adoption of
those fashions. The retention of traditional clothing or the retention of traditional garment styles augmented by non-native materials suggests that not all items of material culture respond to acculturation in the same manner.

**Implications for the Study of Textiles and Clothing**

The study of ribbonwork entails several implications for textiles and clothing research. Three considerations are presented: clothing and identity, the history of textile industries, and options in research methods.

**Clothing and Cultural Identity.** Much clothing research concerns the clothing ways of people in contemporary industrialized societies. Thus, investigation of clothing as a non-verbal symbol of communication has focused on the relation of clothing to the identity of the individual and of that individual's status and social role. The study of ribbonwork demonstrates the value of examining clothing as a correlate of cultural identity.

Recent studies have confirmed the operation of clothing as an ethnic marker: among the Delaware (Haynes 1985), among the Mien, a Laotian tribe (Hoffman 1983), among the Hmong, another Laotian tribe (Roberts 1984), among the Swazi (Kuper 1973), and among the Yoruba (Wass 1979). Haynes' ethnohistorical research demonstrated that ethnic clothing operates to affirm cultural heritage despite distance in time from the development of the clothing style. In contrast, the investigations by Hoffman and Roberts indicated a relationship between continuities in ethnic clothing and identity despite distances in
space resulting from immigration. The Kuper and Wass findings referred to the role of clothing as an ethnic marker in response to African nationalist sentiments and the acceptance of Euro-American fashions. The present study of ribbonwork and the individual inquiries into clothing ways by researchers previously noted do constitute a cross-cultural body of research. These studies form a foundation for further investigation into clothing as a system of communicating cultural identity.

History of Textile Industries. Abbass (1979) briefly considered the mechanization of the ribbon industry as a factor in making ribbons broadly available in the New World. Further investigation into the exportation of ribbon from England and France will be necessary to document adequately that hypothesis. In contrast, the study of ribbonwork suggests inquiry into the relation between trade and gift ribbon (or other textile goods) and the growth of European ribbon and textile industries. Exploration and territorial claims in the New World were sponsored by commercial interests seeking new markets.

Yet the demands generated by the American Indians had not been traced in regard to the impact of those demands on European manufacturers and suppliers. Both Braudel (1981) and Wolf (1982) have encouraged global economic studies and have provided international and cross-cultural models for the analysis of industrial growth. The study of ribbonwork provides evidence of Indian preferences in the selection process and suggests the value of reconsidering the relationship of New World markets to the growth and development of
European textile industries.

Research Methods. Daly (1984) proposed the ethnographic approach as an alternative to the analytic-empirical orientation most commonly found in textiles and clothing research. While maintaining the compatibility of the ethnographic method to research problems in textiles and clothing, Daly noted limitations inherent in the ethnographic approach. Specifically, the length of time and the participation of the researcher in the cultural setting were presented as pragmatic barriers to the pursuance of ethnographic research.

The study of ribbonwork demonstrates the potential of research into the cultural aspects of clothing by an alternate method—ethno-history. While characteristics of the ethnographic method were utilized in the study (such as interviews with American Indian resource persons), cultural data were also utilized from existing ethnographic publications, historical documents, and material artifacts. Ethnohistory presents a viable method for conducting holistic studies of clothing ways.

Recommendations for Research

Based on the findings and implications of this study, three recommendations for future inquiry are suggested.

Ribbonwork

Despite the wide range of this study on ribbonwork, it cannot claim to be definitive. Many primary materials remain to be consulted. The examination of traders' accounts, travelers' observations, and government reports, while extensive, was not exhaustive.
The forthcoming Abbass analysis of museum specimens of ribbonwork (1985 personal communication) will undoubtedly provide new directions for inquiry. Concentrated investigation of the ribbonwork of a particular tribe, relationships between Great Lakes ribbonwork and that of the Micmac, or métis traders and ribbonwork would add further breadth to present knowledge of ribbonwork.

The Role of Textiles in the Fur Trade

All lists of European manufactured items exchanged in the fur trade include textile products. Jacobs (1950) also noted the role of cloth and fabric trims as diplomatic gifts from the French and British to North American Indians. However, the study of the role of textiles in trade and gift-giving has been neglected. It remains unclear what proportion of goods exchanged were textiles. The demand for textiles and the expression of preferences for types, qualities, and prices of textiles (see pages 130-134) certainly affected European manufacturers. The records of producers and suppliers in France and England could be searched for information to understand the demand-supply relationship between North American Indians and the growing European commercial sector.

Economic Roles of Indian Women

The perception of the Indian woman as a passive drudge by European observers has been assailed as biased and misleading (Albers and Medicine 1984). In a recent ethnohistorical study of the economic roles of Micmac men and women, Gonzalez (1981, 1982) found the development of dichotomized economic roles and the elimination of women
From the production sector. From historical records, Gonzalez posited that this dichotomization was a result of the imposition of a Euro-American economic system rather than an indigenous pattern. Gonzalez maintained that Micmac involvement in the fur trade depreciated women's economic contributions in favor of the economic efforts of men.

Documentary evidence examined during the study of ribbonwork suggests that Great Lakes Indian women were not eliminated from participation in economic relations during the fur trade. Women had individual accounts with traders, provided both goods and services to trading posts, and received gifts from traders. Delaware women were also reported as conducting the fur trade exchange because they could bargain better (Heckewelder [1876]1971:158; see page 139).

Proto-contact patterns, as established by early European observers in the Great Lakes region, maintained that the products of the hunt belonged to the women who processed and prepared them as food or skins. Such a concept requires reconsideration of the economic role of women within the tribal context and the development of extra-tribal trade. Economic questions of property, barter, and material consumption have been inadequately studied in terms of women's participation. Although a considerable amount of ethnohistorical research has been conducted on the Indians of the Great Lakes area, no analysis of men's and women's economic roles was found. Such an investigation would rectify past omissions and also provide a basis for comparison of the Great Lakes Indians with the Micmac situation.
Final Summary

Ribbonwork has been one of the "overlooked pages of North American clothing history" (Feather and Sibley 1979). Ribbonwork has been depreciated as a "minor" art form or a "gaudy" expression of American Indian aesthetics. This study was begun because of my perception that ribbonwork was both meaningful and complex. Inquiry into ribbonwork required consideration of economic and political factors in cultural transfer, the participation of the American Indian in the process of selection of non-native material goods, the role of the métis in changing economic relationships, and the development of the decorative arts in relation to women's roles. The study required the location and examination of historical documents, ethnographic data, and material artifacts in the United States, Canada, and France. No one source explicitly answered questions on the origin, diffusion, and persistence of ribbonwork, thus requiring the consolidation and interpretation of the resource materials. In this study, ribbonwork did not provide the missing link to a universal equation of acculturation. Ribbonwork does, however, provide evidence of culture contact and change at an elemental level. As an element of material culture developed in response to the introduction of textiles materials through culture contact, ribbonwork is truly the material of acculturation.
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

1. The name of the author of "Ribbon applique" published in the American Indian Hobbyist III(2&3) in 1956 does not appear with the article. References to this article frequently cite it as anonymous. However, Norman Feder claims authorship in a list of his publications (1971). He was editor of American Indian Hobbyist in 1956.

CHAPTER II. ACCULTURATION: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1. The Social Science Research Council, a not-for-profit organization, has stimulated multidisciplinary research in the social sciences since the mid-1920s. With grants obtained from private foundations and government agencies, the SSRC has supported study committees, conferences, and the publication of monographs on critical topics in the social sciences, including conceptual models, methodological issues, and contemporary problems.

CHAPTER IV. THE CONTEXT: CULTURE, HISTORY, AND CHANGE

1. Many primary sources were perused during the course of the research which assisted in the development of this section. General secondary sources on the cultural background of Great Lakes Indians that were also utilized were: Clifton (1977), Hickerson (1970), Keesing (1939), Kinietz (1940), Newcomb (1956), Ritzenthaler and Ritzenthaler ([1970]1983), and Volume 15 of the Handbook of North American Indians (Trigger 1978).


CHAPTER V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. According to an account dated 1749 of entry and exit taxes on merchandise to and from Canada, a piece of ribbon was equivalent to a dozen aune or approximately 12 yards (AN Ci1A 121:308). The 12 yard piece was also used by the British, according to the Oxford English
ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER V continued

Dictionary (1933).

2. The suggestion that Johnston's record-keeping was subject to errors is derived from two sources. The editor of the publication of the account books noted that mathematical errors were found and left uncorrected in the inventories (Griswold 1927). In addition, the inclusion of recounts substantiates the premise that his records were not error-free.

3. JCB are the initials of a Frenchman who traveled among central woodland Indians in the mid-eighteenth century. The three initials are utilized in the reprinted version of his manuscript, although the account is sometimes attributed to a Mr. Bonnefois (editor's note in the preface to JCB 1978:8), while the manuscript is catalogued at the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris, France) under the author Bonnefons.

4. The terms prototype, analogy, and parallel are adapted from Barnett (1953). A prototype is a preceding configuration that serves as a reference in the development of an innovation. Analogies and parallels are compound processes. An analogy involves the substitution of an element in a traditional configuration (e.g., utilizing a new technique with traditional materials). A parallel involves a double substitution (e.g., using new materials and new techniques to achieve an innovation which maintains a relation to the traditional configuration).


6. Conn (1978) referred to the ribbonwork design of seriated diamonds and elongated hexagons as the "ottertail" motif. This term was noted as being used by the Chippewa/Ojibwa in beadwork (Densmore 1929:1980:62, 84) and by the Ojibwa (Lyford 1943:144). Densmore suggested that the appellation was totemic in origin, while Lyford indicated a relation between the form of the design and the track left by an otter's tail. No other ethnographers have noted the usage of this term among other tribes. The lack of native descriptive terminology for ribbonwork motifs has made the term useful and it continues to be utilized by non-Indians for the motif. However, this practice is misleading, unless corroboration of the term can be found among other ribbonworking tribes.
7. Many of the decorative arts of North American Indians do not utilize special names—both those arts using traditional materials and those using non-native media, such as beadwork. Perhaps the act of distinguishing a non-indigenous artifact by special naming is a part of the west African experience that is not cross-culturally valid. Further inquiry on this point is required.
APPENDIX

RIBBONWORK STYLES: A DESCRIPTION

Ribbonwork is a decorative art on clothing and personal accessories consisting of cut-and-sewn designs on ribbon strips attached to a textile or leather foundation. Ribbonwork has been referred to as ribbon applique, silk applique, or ribbon embroidery.

In a doctoral study of contemporary Oklahoma ribbonwork, Abbass (1979) developed a typology and notation system for describing the visual and structural characteristics of cut-and-sewn ribbonwork (as opposed to plain ribbon borders). These systems have been substantiated by her continuing examination of museum specimens of ribbonwork (1980; in press). During my research into the cultural dynamics of ribbonwork, I found Abbass' work to be useful and to surpass in extent and accuracy other efforts to describe the appearance and construction of ribbonwork.

The following description of ribbonwork is based on the typology developed by Abbass. The descriptions of styles are illustrated with examples from my own personal investigation of Oklahoma ribbonwork.

Abbass distinguished four different styles or construction techniques in ribbonwork: developmental, shingled, positive, and negative. The developmental style (see Figure 3) is the simplest of the
FIGURE 3
DEVELOPMENTAL STYLE OF RIBBONWORK

Osage Blanket
ca. 1920-1930
Philbrook Art Center 76.9.2
Tulsa, Oklahoma

four techniques. It is produced by placing one color of ribbon on top of a contrasting color of ribbon, cutting slits at intervals into the top ribbon, folding under triangles of the top fabric, and hemming the folded edges to the base ribbon. The resulting triangular design has been referred to by some writers as "sawtooth". The two-ribbon developmental style can be elaborated by the use of irregular spacing or angling of the slits, and embellished by the use of frets (steps) on the triangles. The repetition of the cutting, folding, and sewing process on the second ribbon produces a doubling effect sometimes referred to as "zigzag". The developmental style can also appear as a parallel border with other ribbonwork styles.

The shingled style (see Figure 4) is a complex elaboration of the developmental style. The shingled style involves a series of contrasting layers of partially overlapping ribbon. The cuts made successively in each layer of ribbon are angled so that the folding
produces geometric motifs such as equilateral and elongated diamonds, hexagons, and parallelograms. The ribbons can be layered towards the edge of the garment, away from the garment edge, or in both directions away from a center ribbon. Shingled work can range from a simple three-ribbon strip on a moccasin flap to a deep field of more than 20 ribbons on a blanket. Shingled work can be embellished by piping, a narrow contrasting outline that highlights the rectilinear motifs, or by cut-outs which reveal the base cloth beneath the ribbons.

The positive style of ribbonwork (see Figure 5) consists of two pairs of contrasting ribbons. One pair of ribbons is sewn together along the selvedges as the base ribbon. A contrasting ribbon is placed on top of each half, from which is cut a design that is repeated the length of the ribbon strip and is mirrored in the
opposite ribbon strip. The positive style is technically similar to the European method of applique, in that the design motif is cut out, the raw edge folded under, and then hemmed to the base. It differentiates from European applique in that ribbonwork involves a decorative band rather than an isolated motif. The motifs in the positive style are generally curvilinear, and conventionalized floral forms can be distinguished in some pieces. The convex curves of the positive style are occasionally embellished with cross-stitch or herringbone stitch embroidery in a contrasting color. Specimens of the positive style have also been found with rectilinear designs.

The negative style (see Figure 6) also consists of a four-ribbon layered arrangement. The negative style is sometimes described as
reverse applique, in that the design figure is produced by cutting away the top layer of ribbon to reveal a design in the base ribbon. Rectilinear designs are most frequently seen in the negative style, with triangles, chevrons, and fork-like motifs being common designs. Again, the design produced by two ribbons is mirrored in the opposite half of the strip. The negative style of ribbonwork can be embellished with the piping outline.

Ribbonwork garments frequently contain multiple strips of ribbonwork. In some cases, the strips which are placed parallel to each other contain differing designs. In others, the design elements in the parallel strips mesh to create a figure-ground ambiguity (see Figure 7). The complexity of these designs is often more readily perceptible in black and white photography, or in reproduced drawings.
Tribal differences in design motifs and construction techniques have been suggested (Pannabecker Field Notes). Coe categorized the "hourglass" and "double fork" designs as "typically Osage" (1977:77, 92). Others have noted cross-tribal similarities in designs (Feder 1956), and Skinner (1926) posited intertribal sharing of designs. Abbass (1980) conjectured that visual and structural characteristics may be useful discriminators of tribal styles.
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Abbreviations used:

AN C11A: Archives Nationales, Archives des Colonies.
PRO CO 42: Public Record Office, Colonial Office.
SIT LR: National Archives, Superintendent of Indian trade, Letters Received.
SIT LS: National Archives, Superintendent of Indian Trade, Letters Sent.


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