The North American Peltry Exchange: A Comparative Look at the Fur Trade in Colonial Virginia and New Netherland

Laura Ann Norbut

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The North American Peltry Exchange: A Comparative Look at the Fur Trade in Colonial Virginia and New Netherland

Laura Ann Norbut
Ellington, Connecticut

Bachelor of Arts, Sacred Heart University, 2010

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts

Lyon Gardiner Tyler Department of History

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Laura Ann Norbut

Approved by the Committee, April 2011

Professor James P. Whittenburg, History
The College of William and Mary

Professor Paul W. Mapp, History
The College of William and Mary

Professor James D. La Fleur, History
The College of William and Mary
The peltry trade in Virginia and New Netherland was a response to a significant decline in skins and furs from Muscovy during the seventeenth century. Overhunting of furbearing animals in this region led to a decline in supply, and subsequently the demand for peltry allowed New World markets to become ever more important. This thesis compares the fur trade in the English-settled colony of Virginia and the Dutch colony of New Netherland to illuminate broader conclusions about the North American peltry exchange, involving Europeans and their Indian neighbors. The second half of the seventeenth century is the focus for the deerskin trade in Virginia, as this period encompasses the successful peltry business of William Byrd I and his uncle, the apex of Anglo-Algonquian violence during Bacon’s Rebellion, and the infringement of South Carolina in the Chesapeake deerskin market. The beaver fur trade in New Netherland began decades before the Chesapeake trade. The period from 1634-1667 is examined for the Dutch fur trade, as this timeframe encompasses Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert’s journey into Mohawk territory, likely the first Dutch exploration to the Mohawk homeland, up to the English takeover of the colony. Anglo-Algonquian interactions were marked by more violence and hostility than relations between Dutch colonists and the Iroquois, particularly the Mohawk; why this was the case is the singular question this thesis strives to answer. The Dutch-Mohawk alliance was relatively peaceful, and no wars ever occurred between the New Netherland colonists and this native group similar to Bacon’s Rebellion in Virginia.

European-Indian fur trading relations in Virginia and New Netherland were overall starkly dissimilar because of the dynamics of their exchanges, access to skins and furs, and outside forces beyond European control. Land encroachment, European competition in the fur trade, and mutual protection are important themes in addressing the divergent peltry trade models in the Chesapeake and New Netherland. This case study suggests that when the fur trade was not mutually beneficial to the Europeans and Indians involved, conflict followed. The Europeans as well as the Indians sought to exploit each other, with the Europeans gaining lucrative skins and furs to export overseas and the Indians obtaining guns, ironware, duffel, and other desirable wares. The Indians were engaged in merchant capitalism as much as the European colonists with whom they traded their peltry.
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This work is dedicated to:

my Mother

You have supported me every step of the way! Please know how much you are loved and appreciated. I am so blessed to be your daughter.
I would like to thank Dr. James Whittenburg, my advisor on this project, for his kind words, encouragement, and sincere advice throughout my experiences at William and Mary. I first met Dr. Whittenburg in 2006 when I was accepted to the National Institute of American History and Democracy’s Pre-Collegiate Program in Early American History. The three weeks I spent in Virginia during this summer program, under the guidance of Dr. Whittenburg, made me fall in love with William and Mary and broadened my knowledge of history, archaeology, material culture, and historic preservation. I always dreamed of studying American History at William and Mary, and this year I fulfilled that goal! Dr. Whittenburg’s greatest advice to me was that there are no deadlines in life, a lesson I will never forget.

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INTRODUCTION

BUILDING A COLONY IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were marked by European exploration and the discovery of new lands, peoples, and resources from the Far East, Africa, and North America.¹ In the early seventeenth century, Spain was the leader in the colonization of the New World, conquering native peoples and acquiring raw materials to benefit the metropole. Spain’s riches from its New World endeavors led other European powers, such as England and the Netherlands, to plant colonies in North America. Yet, Spain’s wealth, Catholicism, and violent interactions with Native Americans confirmed the hatred England and the Netherlands felt towards their European neighbor, encouraging new approaches to settlement. The colonization practices the English and the Dutch developed in Virginia and New Netherland, respectively, retained a central aspect of Spain’s conquistador model: profit. Virginia and New Netherland were part of a colonial Atlantic world in which the establishment of settlements for the metropole initially lacked permanence and cohesion. The goal was revenue, and therefore the “get rich quick” system of extracting raw materials from the New World and returning to Europe was the very definition of colonization in the early seventeenth century.

The profitability of New World colonies was largely reliant on trade: between the colony and the metropole, between the colonists and native peoples, and between and within the colonies themselves. Prior to the establishment of permanent settlements and towns in North America, which brought some stability to colonial life, survival was

¹ James Horn, A Land as God Made It: Jamestown and the Birth of America (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 11.
almost entirely dependent on these forms of exchange. Most importantly, the colonists needed the natives to provide them with subsistence crops, as the colonists did not have ample supplies of food leftover from their voyages at sea. The settlers also needed the natives to teach them the skills of hunting and planting in a foreign environment. Trade with North America’s native populations, both in goods and know-how, was essential to the survival of European colonies in the New World. In telling the story of colonization in North America, trade is a central theme, and it is therefore the motivation of the narrative which follows.

This thesis compares the fur trade in Virginia and New Netherland to illuminate broader conclusions about the North American peltry exchange, involving Europeans and their Indian neighbors. The second half of the seventeenth century is the focus for the deerskin trade in Virginia, as this period encompasses the successful peltry business of William Byrd and his uncle, the apex of Anglo-Algonquian violence during Bacon’s Rebellion, and the infringement of South Carolina in the Chesapeake deerskin market. The fur trade in New Netherland began decades before the Chesapeake trade. The period from 1634-1667 is the focus for the Dutch fur trade, as this timeframe includes Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert’s journey into Mohawk territory, likely the first Dutch exploration to the Mohawk homeland, up to the English takeover of the colony. I will argue that Anglo-Algonquian interactions were marked by more violence and hostility than relations between Dutch colonists and the Iroquois, particularly the Mohawk. The Dutch-Mohawk alliance was relatively peaceful, and no wars ever occurred between the New Netherland colonists and this native group. European-Indian fur trading relations in
Virginia and New Netherland were overall starkly dissimilar because of the dynamics of their exchanges, access to skins and furs, and outside forces beyond European control. This case study suggests that when the fur trade was not mutually beneficial to the Europeans and Indians involved, conflict followed. The Europeans, as well as the Indians, sought to exploit each other, with the Europeans gaining lucrative skins and furs to export overseas and the Indians obtaining guns, ironware, duffel, and other desirable wares.

Historians have conducted substantial scholarship on North America’s English colonies, emphasizing America’s foundations in purely English terms. In addition, scholars have focused heavily on a comparison between the model of colonization employed in New England and the model established in Virginia in an attempt to locate a normative settlement practice from which American culture is derived. The New England-Virginia comparison has also been of interest in examining the divergent developments of the North and the South as a response to colonization. This thesis shifts the focus away from a purely Anglo-American narrative, which has been exhausted in the historiography. Instead, this comparison sheds light on the colonization practices of two of Europe’s most similar nations, England and the Netherlands, both of whom were heavily engaged in the North American fur trade.

This comparison between Virginia and New Netherland is significant because England and the Netherlands were the only two Protestant nations in Europe during this period; both were trade-oriented, maritime, and had a mutual hatred for the Spanish, which influenced their overseas ventures. Trade was central to conflicts between the
Dutch and the English during the seventeenth century. There is evidence that the colonists at Jamestown and New Netherland had contact with each other and traded goods along the eastern seaboard. The colonists' interactions with different Indian peoples under unique environmental constraints, contributed to distinct European-Indian relations in these colonies. Why Anglo-Algonquian and Dutch-Iroquois relations differed primarily in the second half of the seventeenth century is the question this thesis strives to answer by examining the peltry trade as a case study.

Scholars have neglected a comparative history of Jamestown and New Netherland in favor of comparing English colonies throughout the Atlantic world. There are likely two reasons for this; the first involves a language barrier and the second concerns the English conquest of New Netherland. Colonial Dutch studies are still in their infancy, in comparison to colonial Virginia narratives, because there is only a small minority of scholars who can translate the seventeenth-century Dutch documents necessary to write an accurate history of the colony. Many colonial Dutch documents have been lost to history, and some have been difficult to locate in the archives. The work of Dr. Charles T. Gehring and his staff at the New Netherland Institute in Albany, New York in translating and publishing seventeenth-century Dutch documents has furthered the study of New Netherland. Moreover, his guidebook is cited by many Dutch historians, and his translations have been used by scholars interested in writing about the colony, including this graduate student. In addition to the language barrier, historians have shied away from writing a history of New Netherland in favor of studying English New York, as the English conquered the Dutch colony officially in 1667. However, English control of the
colony did not significantly alter the lives of the Dutch colonists, as their political institutions and laws were in large part retained. As opposed to reducing the colonization of New Netherland to a history of English New York, this thesis aligns with more recent scholarship in studying New Netherland as a value in and of itself.

Archaeological evidence has only recently shown how connected Jamestown and New Netherland were via trade. While addressing English-Dutch trade in North America may seem to be wandering from the main argument, discussing Jamestown and New Netherland as part of an Atlantic system of trade between England and the Netherlands further emphasizes the significance of this comparison and the interconnectedness of the two colonies. One of the most definitive ways to place Jamestown and New Netherland in an interdependent, Atlantic trade network is via the extent of the EB pipe trade. The Edward Bird pipe factory was located in Amsterdam, Netherlands, circa 1635-1665, hence the “EB” denoted on the pipe stems found by archaeologists in many seventeenth-century colonial settlements. EB pipe stems have been found not only at Jamestown and New Netherland but also in Brazil, the Caribbean, New England, New France, New Sweden, and Maryland. While historians have often focused on studying colonies as separate entities, archaeology has proven that colonization was not an independent action involving one people and one location, and the EB pipe trade is a quintessential example of this. Interestingly, Edward Bird was born an Englishman and moved to Amsterdam as a response to the political upheaval in England during the reign of Charles I. He died in Amsterdam in 1665, having participated fully in Dutch commerce via his pipe making business and investing in New Netherland in 1646. It is not exceptional that Bird, a
Puritan, would have found refuge in the Netherlands considering that Amsterdam and Leiden were havens for Puritans escaping religious oppression in England. Bird’s pipe making business and the extent of the EB pipe export market offers a fresh look at how colonies around the Atlantic intersected through trade. This trade good also confirms exchange between the English and the Dutch in the New World.²

The construction of EB pipes suggests that Mohawk Indians in New Netherland were participating in this trade. Bird used 34 different pipe molds to meet the needs of his diverse customers around the Atlantic world, which shows that he had some knowledge of the peoples living in these distant places. This awareness of consumer desires was probably derived from letters and people traveling to and from the colony and the metropole. Pipes found at Fort Orange in New Netherland by Paul R. Huey, for example, were modeled after Native American patterns, suggesting that the Dutch colonists were modifying their orders from the metropole to meet the desires of their Indian customers. The adaptation of EB pipes proves an understanding and knowledge of other places outside Bird’s Amsterdam workshop and also the connection between the English, Dutch, and native peoples in North America. The EB pipe trade was not only encompassing European consumers but also Native Americans, illustrating the transmission and translation of culture.³ Jamestown and New Netherland were, in some sense, cosmopolitan as they were players in a vast Atlantic trade network.⁴

³ Ibid.
⁴ According to David A. Furlow, at the time of Bird’s death, his estate catalogued 465,000 pipes in a pre-industrial society.
David A. Furlow’s compilation of archaeological evidence suggests that Dutch merchants were involved in trading with Virginia in the early 17th century, “…buying tobacco and selling pipes, pottery, furniture, horses, and slaves.” Furlow’s presentation at the annual Jamestown Conference in 2010 emphasized that the Dutch were carrying large quantities of tobacco from Jamestown to sell in Europe, especially during the English Civil War. The extent to which the Dutch were involved in trade with Jamestown is reflected in Virginia’s opposition to Parliament’s Navigation Act of October 1651, which upset the Jamestown colonists as it “…limited their trade with the Dutch and New Netherland.” Furlow also underscored the relationship between Virginia’s Governor Berkeley and New Netherland’s Director-General Peter Stuyvesant, who corresponded with one another. Another important connection is Governor George Yeardley’s links to the Dutch. Yeardley was the governor of Jamestown from 1619 to 1621, yet he was a military veteran who had fought for Holland during his teenage years. Yeardley was also accused of treason against the English for trading with the Dutch. In a comparative thesis involving Jamestown and New Netherland, the links between these two colonies, particularly in terms of an Atlantic trade network, cannot be overlooked.

The connection between England, the Netherlands, and their North American colonies was also manifested in Dutch artwork. For example, Pieter van Anraadt’s Still  

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5 Furlow, “Jamestown, Edward Bird, pipe maker and Dutch trade with Virginia.”
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Charles Hodges and Will Moore, “‘for ye defense of ye place’- State Salvage of Sir George Yeardley’s Fort and Moat, Conservation of Pooley’s Parsonage or Piersey’s Manor at Flowerdew (all ca. 1619-1632)” (presented at the annual Jamestown Conference, Williamsburg, Virginia, November 10, 2010).
Life with Stoneware Jug and Pipes (1658) shows a Dutch drinking vessel, similar to those found by archaeologists working at James Fort, as well as tobacco, likely grown in the Chesapeake. The painting features four pipes, which archaeology has proven was a product transported throughout the Atlantic world. This piece of art is not exceptional, as other Dutch artists, such as Hubert van Ravestyn, were painting similar scenes. The connection between the English and the Dutch in terms of trade was observed by many Englishmen and Dutchmen in the colonies and in the metropole, regardless of social class. It is highly likely that the trade network between England, the Netherlands, Jamestown, and New Netherland, impacted the lives of many more people than simply those transported to North America. From the colonist to the merchant to the dual-nationality merchant to the consumer of Chesapeake tobacco and Dutch pipes who had never traveled across the Atlantic, the English-Dutch connection was real and part of everyday life.

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JAMESTOWN AND NEW NETHERLAND: INITIAL SETTLEMENT

When the English colonists landed at Jamestown Island in 1607, supported by the Virginia Company, their goal was to extract natural resources from the New World for export to the mother country. The settlement erected at James Fort was never intended to be permanent. The gentlemen who traveled to the colony in its initial years lacked the skills and know-how to create a working colonization model, and the colonists were forced to rely on Powhatan expertise and corn to survive in this foreign environment. Relations between the colonists and the Chesapeake natives seem to have been tense from the beginning of contact. J. Frederick Fausz argued that as early as 1609, the beginning of the First Anglo-Powhatan War, the colonists and the natives were engaged in violent conflict. Both groups were ethnocentric and competed for dominance in their trade dealings. The First Anglo-Powhatan War was the beginning of many violent clashes between the Europeans and Native Americans. This first war initiated combat as the primary means in which the colonists and the natives defended themselves and their identities. The English came to the New World to make a profit, and without considering their interference on native ways of life, the settlers attempted to do just that. The colonists searched for gold, struggled to produce glass, and grew mulberry trees to encourage silk production, for examples, yet none of these ventures proved successful. Jamestown’s unbalanced sex ratio also contributed to the settlement’s initial instability and militaristic quality as the nuclear family was virtually nonexistent. In 1635, the emigrant population to Virginia was eighty-four percent male, this after almost thirty

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years since the first Englishmen settled the Chesapeake. The colonists also suffered from a high mortality rate due to the seasoning process. In contrast to the colder climate in New Netherland, which tended to be healthier for newcomers, the Virginia environment retarded natural increase until the late seventeenth century. The early years of settlement were marked by disorder. The Virginia Company and the Englishmen on the ground attempted to establish a functioning, profitable colony in the New World with little prior experience to base their trials and efforts on.

Jamestown discovered its economic niche when John Rolfe’s tobacco experiments proved successful. By 1619, tobacco cultivated in the Chesapeake was exported to Europe, and the colony became a boomtown. Jamestown’s tobacco monoculture, accessible to a large population of Virginia landholders prior to 1660, led to colonial encroachment on native land, directly threatening the Powhatan way of life. Tobacco was ultimately an export crop that did not require a working relationship with the natives to cultivate or sell the stinking weed. Tobacco was also more accessible than the trade in deerskin, which became profitable at mid-century due to changes in shipping costs. Fur trading licenses in the Chesapeake were restricted to Governor Berkley’s favored colonists, and therefore most English settlers could not enter this trade. This limited access to the deerskin export market motivated Bacon’s Rebellion, which was not only a royalist uprising but also a war against particular Indian groups for deerskin. The mutual benefits of trade between the English colonists and the Indians ceased to exist.

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12 Ibid., 84.
13 After 1660, Virginia society became increasingly closed to upward mobility.
when tobacco became a cash crop at Jamestown and the trade in deerskin became increasingly restrictive.

While the English colonists at Jamestown did not have a profitable export trade in mind when they settled in the Chesapeake, the peltry market motivated the planting of a Dutch settlement at New Netherland in 1614 by the West India Company (WIC). The Dutch knew that valuable natural resources, including beaver furs, existed in New Netherland after Henry Hudson’s voyages in the early seventeenth century. Like Jamestown, the colony was initially a fortified settlement populated with Company men at Fort Nassau and later Fort Orange; in New Netherland, these men were heavily involved in the fur trade. While a faction of the WIC preferred to diversify the colony’s exports for greater profit, growing wheat and tobacco, these crops did not produce a boomtown. According to Adriaen van der Donck’s *A Description of New Netherland*, an account of the landscape, resources, and natives in the colony published in 1655 and 1656, the Dutch colony was established for the prosperity of the Netherlands. Van der Donck described the metals and minerals found in the region, including gold, reminiscent of the Jamestown colonists’ search for this soft metal.\(^{14}\) Despite all of the profitable resources Van der Donck believed New Netherland could offer, such as agricultural crops and wine, the beaver was the most important commodity in the region. According to the Dutchman, “...the beaver is the main reason and the source of the means for the initial settlement of this fine country by Europeans....”\(^{15}\) Like Jamestown, New Netherland was


\(^{15}\) Ibid., 115.
a for-profit venture, and Van der Donck emphasized (and exaggerated) the colony’s resources and trade possibilities to entice his Dutch readership to cross the ocean.

In contrast to the peltry market in Virginia, the trade in beaver furs in New Netherland constituted the settlement’s leading export commodity and was accessible to Dutch colonists by 1640. The Chesapeake’s leading export crop, tobacco, infringed upon native land, eliminating the need for working relations between the English and the Powhatan. Yet, both colonies relied on the natives for food in the initial years of settlement, particularly maize. It is probable that the fur trade pacified Dutch-Iroquois relations for much of the colony’s existence, a point emphasized by William A. Starna. Interestingly, when the Mohawk were engaged in war with the Mahican, Dutchman Daniel van Crieckenbeeck, the commander of Fort Orange, fought against the Mohawk in 1626. As a result, the fur trade diminished at Fort Orange, and Dutchman Pieter Barentsz was sent to defuse the conflict with the Indians. No records exist that the Dutch and the Mohawk went to war over the van Crieckenbeeck incident or at any other time in the colony’s history. The Mohawk-Mahican conflict may have reduced the threat of the Mohawk waging war against the Dutch.16

The relatively peaceful relations between the Mohawk and the Dutch were not replicated with other Indian groups. Kieft’s War was the outcome of Dutch attempts in 1639 to force the Indians to pay tribute to the colonists in pelts and corn to compensate for expenses acquired during the building of forts in the colony. The Dutch council

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believed that the Indians were also protected by these forts against neighboring native
groups. Military action arose when the Dutch attacked and massacred the Raritan Indians
in 1640 to avenge the killing of swine on David de Vries's property.17 Dutch-Indian
relations deteriorated until Company leadership was altered; at this time, the Company
relinquished its monopoly on the fur trade in 1640.18 Dutch relations with the Mahican
and Munsees were also tense, as the Dutch infringed upon the land of these two groups.
This thesis focuses on Dutch-Mohawk relations almost exclusively because the Dutch
traded beaver furs primarily with this group. Dutch-Mohawk relations were somewhat
unique because of this trading partnership. Nevertheless, to understand the fur trade in
New Netherland, relations with the Mohawk are essential to this study.

17 See J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Narratives of New Netherland: 1609-1664 (New York: Barnes and Noble,
CHAPTER I

THE NORTH AMERICAN PELTRY TRADE IN THE EARLY YEARS:

CONCILIATORY EXPERIENCES

The fur trade in Virginia and New Netherland was a response to a significant decline in skins and furs from Muscovy, which included much of present-day Russia, during the seventeenth century. Overhunting of furbearing animals in this region led to a decline in supply. The demand for peltry allowed New World markets to become ever more important, as the Russian peltry trade decreased by 75% during the 17th century. As furs and hides were valuable commodities in Europe needed for the production of felt hats, coats, gloves, boots, writing parchments, furniture, and women’s corsets, the peltry supply in North America had an assured market demand in Europe.19 As furs and skins were shipped to Europe, the interconnectedness of European ports increased, with Amsterdam initially the center of this trade system and France the main supplier of North American peltry.20 According to Linda France Stine, “Peltry was used in a variety of ways, but particularly to express status statements through personal adornment.” As the semblance of a middle class developed in Europe, the decoration of skins and furs allowed this class to emulate its betters.21 According to Adriaen van der Donck’s *A Description of New Netherland* (1655/1656), “That person among them who owns the most and the best ranks [of furs or pelts] as [is] the grandest, like someone here [New

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Netherland] who is decked out in fine cloth and gold and silver."\(^{22}\) The demand for skins and furs made the peltry trade in North America a lucrative business, and therefore, extremely competitive. Susan Sleeper-Smith suggests that the Dutch, English, Swedes, and French all vied for control of this market between 1600 and 1640. France and England eventually dominated this business via access to the pays d’en haut after England took control of Dutch New Netherland.\(^{23}\)

Beginning in the 1620s, merchants became interested in the fur trade in Virginia. In the Chesapeake, the peltry trade primarily included the trade in deerskin, although beaver pelts were traded on a much smaller scale. At this time, the shipping costs to transport these furs and skins prohibited the colonists from engaging in this trade for export. As the cost of shipping became more affordable, furs and skins became profitable commodities. Nonperishable and easily transported overseas, peltry assumed great profitability in Virginia.\(^{24}\) While Tributary Indians assumed protection by the Virginia government in exchange for their skins, similar to the protection received by the Mohawk from the Dutch, Anglo-Indian relations were tenuous at best.

Early experiences in the fur trade in Virginia and New Netherland were somewhat similar, in that the colonies primarily organized their trading practices with the natives via trading forts; however, the WIC initially had a monopoly on the fur trade in New Netherland, whereas the Virginia colonists controlled the trade until Governor Berkeley’s restrictions. In 1645/1646, the fur trade in Virginia was organized by frontier trading

\(^{22}\) Van der Donck, *A Description of New Netherland*, 118.  
forts, with the leaders of these forts gaining wealth and influence from their position.

Yet, traders did move from village to village to obtain Indian goods.25 In New Netherland, the West India Company had a monopoly on the fur trade until 1640. Colonists were required to sell the furs they acquired from trade with the Iroquois to the WIC for a fixed price, resulting in minimal profits for fur traders. This monopoly was a point of contention between the colonists and the Company since the beginning of settlement in the early seventeenth century. The result was a high rate of illegal trading and smuggling of furs on Dutch ships. According to an ordinance of 1638, examined by Jaap Jacobs, the “...illicit cargo took up so much room in the holds of the WIC ships that hardly any room was left for the legal goods.”26 By 1640, the WIC had lost its monopoly on the fur trade and shipping to attract emigration to the colony. Amsterdam merchants thereafter controlled trade between New Netherland and the Dutch Republic. In addition, patroons, which encouraged agricultural production and the settlement of families to New Netherland, were permitted to engage in the fur trade outside of WIC trading posts; however a small fee per pelt was required for this privilege.27 Similar to the trade system in Virginia, most exchanges between the Dutch and the Mohawk occurred at trading forts, primarily Fort Orange for the Dutch. In contrast, the Mohawk also traded their furs by traveling to Dutch houses, negotiating for the best price, whereas Virginians occasionally traveled to Indian villages to trade. The practice of Mohawk Indians trading their furs door-to-door eventually led to tension between this native group and their

25 Ibid., 16, 36-37.
26 Jacobs, The Colony of New Netherland, 112.
27 Ibid., 140, 112.
Dutch partners, resulting in legal measures in the 1650s and 1660s. In general, early fur trading in these colonies between Europeans and Indian groups was peaceful and mainly occurred at trading forts.

Thomas Stegge, the uncle of William Byrd I, was involved in the deerskin trade in Virginia, controlling a trading fort at the Falls of the James near present-day Richmond. In 1670, when Stegge died, he gave his estate in Virginia and England to William Byrd I. Byrd consequently inherited his uncle’s lucrative Indian trading business. The will of Thomas Stegge illustrates the amount of wealth that one could gain from the peltry trade, particularly as a leader of a trading fort. For example, Stegge provided jewelry and money to help support his wife and sister and granted monetary awards to his mother, his sister’s children, and Sir William Berkeley. Stegge also owned an Indian girl, likely a servant, whom he gave his wife, Sarah. Moreover, he bequeathed Thomas Ludwell full ownership of the house, furniture, and lands that Stegge and Ludwell seem to have jointly owned. Virginia in 1670 was still a wilderness for many colonists where the comforts of England were lacking. Yet, Thomas Stegge’s will suggests that the trade in deerskin made him a very wealthy man, allowing him to emulate some of the luxuries of country gentry in England, such as the ownership of a servant, furniture, rings, jewels, and bracelets. Inheriting Stegge’s plantation and fort, William Byrd secured his financial status and influence in the Chesapeake.

28 Ibid., 116-177.
29 Ibid., 18.
To understand how the fur trade operated in Virginia, William Byrd’s experience provides a case study to analyze English-Indian exchange, despite the fact that his accounts are dated after Bacon’s Rebellion. Byrd had learned how to manage a fur trading business from his uncle Stegge, and it is likely that his business concerns and operation remained the same after the uprising. William Byrd’s involvement in the deerskin trade and tobacco cultivation is described in his letters to Perry & Lane, a merchant firm handling goods to and from the colonies. Byrd depended on the services of Perry & Lane to send his hogsheads of skins and tobacco to England. On April 25, 1684, in a letter addressed to Perry & Lane, Byrd acknowledged the complaints of his Indian traders regarding the quality of English goods being exchanged for furs and skins. Byrd wrote, “I have had many complaints about my stockings this year as allso of hats, threds & some of the linnen, iron worke & nails the worst ever seen, which I hope will hereafter bee mended.”31 This was not the first or last time Byrd voiced his concerns to Perry & Lane about shipments of second-rate English goods for trade with the natives. On February 25, 1683, Byrd mentioned complaints regarding duffields and cotton.32 These complaints on duffel, a thick woolen cloth, were reiterated on March 29, 1685. According to Byrd, the Indians did not wish to trade for light blue duffel, as “a darker blew pleases better.”33 On February 2, 1684, Byrd asked Perry & Lane to speak to the gunsmith in England about the weaponry sent to Virginia. According to Byrd, if the dogs

33 William Byrd to Perry & Lane, 29 March 1685, *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover*, 30.
of the gun lock did not have a good hold, the Indians refused to trade for them. Byrd’s letters to Perry & Lane suggest that English merchants were attempting to flood the market with low quality goods for trade with the natives. His correspondence to the merchant firm also illustrates the agency of the Indians and their influence over the goods that were shipped to the colony. The natives controlled the type and quality of goods sent to Virginia by their acceptance or refusal to trade for them. The Mohawk were also demanding consumers in their exchanges with the Dutch. They desired “hats, linen, shirts, and stockings” as well as duffel and ironware, including guns. On Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert’s journey into Mohawk settlements, he traded beaver pelts for awls, knives, scissors, needles, and blankets, probably duffel. Isaac de Rasière, secretary of New Netherland in the 1620s, acknowledged that the Indians desired black duffel to prevent animals from spotting them in the woods. According to Linda France Stine, English trade goods may have had symbols of status to the Chesapeake natives, as illustrated by the specific color duffel the Indians desired. From these examples, it is obvious that Virginia Indians and the Mohawk were unwilling to trade their skins and furs for inferior goods, suggesting that the peltry trade was mutually beneficial to the colonists and Indians alike.

34 William Byrd to Perry & Lane, 2 February 1684, The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, 29.
35 Jacobs, The Colony of New Netherland, 137. Quote on page 137.
37 Jacobs, The Colony of New Netherland, 137.
38 France Stine, Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry, 30.
The early experiences of Dutch fur traders in New Netherland are described by Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert’s account of exchanges with the Mohawk. Dutch merchants were attracted to North America to gain access to beaver pelts, as there was a highly profitable market for this natural resource in the hat-making business. From the beginning of their settlement in and around New Netherland, Dutch fur traders, allied with the Mohawk, came in contact with French fur traders in New France, who received beaver pelts from the Huron. The New Netherlanders feared French encroachment on Dutch access to furs in the interior. The Dutch were suspicious that the French would attempt to enter into a trade alliance with the Mohawk, negatively impacting the profitability of New Netherland for the West India Company. By the 1630s, the Dutch fur trade had declined. In 1634, the Dutch sent Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert to lead a three-party expedition into Mohawk Country to investigate the decline in furs, speculating French interference. According to William A. Starna, this may have been the first time the Dutch traveled to Mohawk Country, as Mohawk settlements did not border Dutch forts. Van den Bogaert’s account illustrates that Dutch relations with the Mohawk were pacified by circumstances outside of their control, namely French fur-trading operations in New France. Relations between the Dutch and the Mohawk remained mutually beneficial as both groups profited from the fur trade, and the Mohawk received Dutch protection against their enemies, including the French Indians.

As Van den Bogaert and two other Dutchmen traveled to the interior, they came in contact with Mohawk Indians traveling to Fort Orange to deliver furs to the Dutch.

Entering the home of a chief, the colonists “...counted in his house 120 pelts of marketable beaver that he had caught with his own hands. We ate beaver’s meat here everyday.”\textsuperscript{41} These pelts were almost certainly intended for trade with the Dutch at Fort Orange. Departing from this chief’s dwelling, the colonists made their way to another chief’s castle and traded an awl for a beaver.\textsuperscript{42} The beaver trade relied on the Indians’ access to Dutch trade items from which they could benefit, including guns. To support this point, when the Dutchmen encountered a Mohawk councilor on their travels, the Indian asked the colonists if they had brought gifts for exchange. When Van den Bogaert replied that they had not, the councilor chided them. According to Van den Bogaert, the councilor

\begin{quote}
...said that we were worth nothing because we brought him no gifts. Then he told how the French had traded with them here with six men and had given them good gifts; for they had traded in the aforementioned river [Oswego or Oneida] last August of this year with six men. We saw there good timber axes, French shirts, coats, and razors. And this councillor derided us as scoundrels, and said that we were worthless because we gave them so little for their furs. They said that the French gave them six hands of sewant [wampum] for one beaver and all sorts of other things in addition.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

Traditional historians have often focused on Europeans as the exploiters of native peoples. However, this passage, assuming Van den Bogaert’s account is accurate, shows that the Mohawk were just as likely to exploit the Europeans. The trade in furs was not only profitable for Europeans, but it also made the Indians the receivers of highly sought-after European goods. If the Iroquois, particularly the Mohawk, received a better price for their furs from the French as opposed to the Dutch, they would sell their pelts to

\textsuperscript{41} Van den Bogaert, \textit{A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country}, 5-6.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 7.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 13.
French traders. According to the Mohawk councilor, the Dutch were worthless because they did not offer the Indians a fair price for their goods.

This passage also suggests that the Dutch fur trade had diminished because of French competition, an external factor which never played a role in the Chesapeake peltry exchange. The French intrusion on the Dutch fur trade in the region clearly concerned the West India Company because of its loss in profits. It seems as though the Mohawk acted on fears of a potential French-Mohawk fur-trading alliance to secure a higher market value for their furs from the Dutch, a price greater than the French were offering. The Mohawk, like the Dutch, benefited from their alliance and wanted to remain partners in the fur trade. Yet, the Mohawk were unwilling to settle for meager items in exchange for lucrative pelts, just as William Byrd’s Indian traders were unwilling to exchange their skins for shoddy goods. As a result, the Dutch were forced to renegotiate the price of furs, an expectation of the WIC when they sent the Dutchmen on this mission. When the Indians offered five beaver skins to the Dutch, they requested “...four hands of sewant [wampum] and four hands of long cloth [duffel] for each large beaver....”44 The Mohawk eventually settled for “four hands,” a price that secured a Dutch monopoly on Mohawk furs.45 After the Dutch and Mohawk agreed to a new price structure for furs, the Mohawk showered the Dutchmen with furs as gifts for the remainder of the expedition, reminding the colonists that if they received “…more for their pelts, then they would bring us many pelts.”46 Profits from the fur trade were evidently of mutual

44 Ibid., 15.
45 Ibid., 16.
46 Ibid., 19.
importance and benefit to the Dutch and the Mohawk, an incentive which sustained their partnership.

Van den Bogaert also recorded an interaction he had with several Mohawk Indians, who told him of their fear of the French Indians. According to this account, a central reason the Mohawk made peace with the Dutch was because they feared the Huron, refusing to travel to their settlements far in the interior despite the abundance of beaver there.\textsuperscript{47} The Dutch-Mohawk alliance benefited the Mohawk because they received protection from the Dutch against other native peoples via the arms trade.

In addition to Van den Bogaert’s account, Adriaen van der Donck’s \textit{A Description of New Netherland} describes the Dutch-Mohawk fur trade and its profitability for the Netherlands. Like their English counterparts in the Chesapeake, Dutch fur traders in New Netherland responded to the decline in peltry from Muscovy by exporting North American furs and skins to Europe. According to Van der Donck, the cold winter weather in New Netherland contributed to the high quality furs found there, arguing that “…pelts and furs actually surpass those of Muscovy in beauty and quality.”\textsuperscript{48} Describing the hunting of the beaver by the Mohawk, Van der Donck claimed that the beaver were trapped by the Indians far inland, as the population of beaver had declined in and around New Netherland. According to the Dutchman, the Mohawk hunted the beaver in large groups, living off the land for a month or two at a time. During the hunt, which primarily occurred from December to June, each Indian trapped between forty and eighty beavers

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{48} Van der Donck, \textit{A Description of New Netherland}, 70.
as well as other fur-bearing animals.\textsuperscript{49} In his account, Van der Donck suggested that "...an average of eighty thousand beavers per year are killed in this part of the country, not counting elk, bears, otters, and deer."\textsuperscript{50} However, Jaap Jacobs argues that this figure is too high, as Van der Donck's account was designed to encourage migration to the colony. According to records from the 1650s, the time in which Van der Donck wrote and published his account, approximately forty thousand beavers were killed per year, half the number Van der Donck attributed to the trade. This was a marked increase from the 1630s, in which approximately eight thousand to ten thousand beavers were killed annually.\textsuperscript{51} Clearly, the fur trade in New Netherland was a profitable business, which also made it highly competitive after the WIC monopoly was relinquished. While statistics on the Chesapeake deerskin trade are not available for the second half of the seventeenth century, statistics from 1700-1701 suggest that approximately fifteen thousand skins were being exported to Europe.\textsuperscript{52} While this figure was calculated after Bacon's Rebellion, the trade in deerskin in Virginia was a smaller enterprise than the beaver trade in New Netherland.

Early fur trading experiences in Virginia and New Netherland were relatively peaceful. In both settlements, the Native Americans with whom the colonists traded were demanding customers. For Europeans and the Indians alike, the peltry trade was favorable: the Europeans acquired lucrative skins and furs for export overseas and the

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 99, 121.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 99.
\textsuperscript{52} France Stine, \textit{Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry}, 11. Adapted from Crane 1928, Table 1, Appendix A, p. 328.
Indians received desirable European goods. When the Indians received items from the Europeans which were unfavorable or did not provide an even exchange, the Indians voiced their concerns. In this mercantile system, the Indians had control over the European goods which were offered them as well as their quality. To obtain profitable skins and furs, the Europeans had to appease the natives by granting them sought-after, well-made imports. Both groups sought to exploit each other to reap the benefits of this profitable trade. Unlike Virginia's trade in deerskin, the fur trade in the colony of New Netherland had to contend with outside European forces, such as the French, who could damage Dutch relations and trading potential with the Mohawk. While European competition was a fear of the WIC and the Dutch colonists involved in the beaver trade, it also helped to pacify relations with the Mohawk. The Mohawk benefited from Dutch protection against the French Indians, or Huron. French competition likely served to create a pacific, working relationship between the Dutch and the Mohawk. In general, early experiences in the peltry trade for the English and the Dutch in Virginia and New Netherland, respectively, benefited the European colonists and the natives equally, creating nonviolent relations marked by mutual dependence.
CHAPTER II

VIOLENCE, TENSION, AND THE PELTRY TRADE

As the peltry trade developed in Virginia and New Netherland, tensions arose between the colonists and their Indian trading partners. In Virginia, these tensions turned to violence during Bacon's Rebellion in 1676. While the Dutch in New Netherland never experienced combat with the Mohawk, competition over this lucrative trade in both colonies produced hostilities between the colonists themselves and between the colonists and the Indians. The later fur trading experiences in these settlements differed significantly. To understand this phenomenon, I will first analyze the underlying cause and circumstances surrounding Bacon's Rebellion, as this uprising marked the peak of colonial violence with native populations in Virginia and therefore provides a way in which to measure tension against. I will then contrast this unrest in Virginia with events in New Netherland between the Dutch and the Mohawk over brokerage in the 1650s and 1660s, which created unease in the colony but did not produce violence. After examining conflict in both colonies, I will assess the divergent experiences in Virginia and New Netherland in the conclusion.

To understand how Anglo-Indian fur trading relations broke down in the Chesapeake, Bacon's Rebellion illustrates the apex of the tensions between the colonists and the Virginia natives. Historians have portrayed Bacon's Rebellion as a turning point in Virginia's colonial history. For Edmund S. Morgan, Bacon's Rebellion marked the moment when white colonists realized their commonalities as a group and transferred their racism from Native Americans to Africans, an argument now taken as fact by
historians such as T.H. Breen. Bacon's Rebellion was the first popular uprising in America according to Charles M. Andrews and signified competition among rival elite groups for position in an increasingly closed society. Interestingly, Nathaniel Bacon did have a prominent supporter: William Byrd, the father of the well-known Colonel William Byrd of Westover. Bacon and Byrd were allies and neighbors, both heavily involved in the trade for furs, albeit illegally as they did not have proper licensure from Governor Berkeley. When Bacon and Byrd applied for a license as partners in the peltry trade in 1675, government officials denied their request. In March 1676, the Assembly excluded regular traders from obtaining licensure. Byrd encouraged Bacon to lead the rebels at Jordan's Point, beginning the uprising. According to Warren M. Billings, historians have failed to produce an explanation for this event given its significance to the history of Virginia. Historians have argued that Nathaniel Bacon was a hero, juxtaposing Sir William Berkeley as a royalist villain. Interestingly, Wilcomb E. Washburn reversed these roles, and he instead emphasized Berkeley's failed Indian policy as a key factor that lead to rebellion. Billings synthesized various arguments, suggesting that the uprising was a response to a tenuous society, burdened by taxes, low tobacco prices, increasing debt, and Berkeley's lack of control in colony affairs. Whether Nathaniel Bacon or Governor Berkeley was a hero or villain is not the focus of this thesis. Bacon's Rebellion

54 France Stine, Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry, 20. Marion Tinling, ed., The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, 1.
demonstrates Anglo-Powhatan relations in the trade for deerskin as a point of conflict, both among the colonists and among the natives. By analyzing documents drafted by Bacon and his followers, personal narratives of the rebellion, Robert Beverley’s *The History and Present State of Virginia* (1705), and the Royal Commissioners’ 1677 report, it is apparent that Berkeley’s Indian policy in regards to the peltry trade was a central cause of the uprising. When Governor Berkeley restricted the trade in skins, the mutual benefits of exchange between the colonists and the natives ceased to exist and conflict was the natural outcome.

In *The Declaration of the People*, a document Nathaniel Bacon issued in 1676 summarizing grievances against Governor Berkeley and his “Councellours and Confederates, Aiders, and Assistants,” Bacon pointed blame at the Governor for “advancing to Places of Judicature, scandalous and ignorant Favourites.”57 This statement is likely a reference to Governor Berkeley’s policy of issuing fur trading licenses to his elite friends, denying Bacon and other colonists the privilege of legally engaging in this lucrative trade for skins. This conclusion seems credible considering that Bacon’s subsequent grievance is related to the fur trade, suggesting that Berkeley and his accomplices have wronged the colonists “…by assuming the monopolie of the Beaver Trade.”58 In colonial Virginia, the beaver trade included the trade in deerskin, as deerskin was more readily available than beaver pelts and the quality of the skins in demand. This grievance explicitly states that the Virginia elite denied access to the trade

58 Ibid.
in skins to colonists outside of their closed circle of friends. Moreover, this document argues that Berkeley protected certain groups of Indians at the expense of the colonists' safety. After the Third Anglo-Dutch War, Virginia's defenses were questioned by the colonists as Indians began encroaching on white settlements in the northern and western frontier lands, raiding these areas. According to colonial accounts, Berkeley was ineffective in preventing Indian attacks. The fact that these complaints are featured early in the Declaration, grievances three through six, and are mentioned explicitly in a total of five grievances, conveys that Berkeley’s Indian policy and restricted access to the fur trade were central causes of Bacon’s Rebellion.

While the colonists petitioned the Governor to send volunteers to fight the Indians and to protect them from raids, public records from April 1676 suggest that the colonists initially did not wish to fight all Indians. Rather, it seems that the colonists had designated certain native peoples as friends and the Susquahanocks and Occaneechee as enemies. Thomas Stegge’s trading fort, which William Byrd inherited, was located on the Occaneechee Trial, thereby providing access to trade with the Catawbas and the Cherokee. Early in 1676, the colonists considered the Occaneechee to be their allies

59 Ibid.
63 France Stine, Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry, 19.
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against the Doegs and the Susquahanocks. When the Occaneechee refused to give the
spoils, namely furs and skins, from their raids on the Susquahanocks to Nathaniel Bacon
during the rebellion, the Occaneechee became the enemies of the colonists. After
Bacon’s Rebellion, the Occaneechee traded with the colonists, including William Byrd,
on a much smaller scale, and it seems as if this native group never reassumed its
prominence in the Virginia peltry trade.

In response to Berkeley’s incompetence in dealing with Indian attacks, the
colonists attempted to take matters into their own hands to protect themselves from harm.
Yet, when seeking aid from friendly natives, the colonists recorded that “…the Indians in
all places [were] unwilling to assist us against the Common Enemy [the Susquahanocks
and Occaneechee], they having received orders to the contrary from the Right
Honourable the Governer…. As a result, the colonists were forced to seek Indian aid
further from Jamestown, obtaining only 24 men from the Nottowaies and Mayherings.
In essence, Berkeley’s Indian policy divided native groups, who competed against each
other for natural resources, deerskin and furs, as well as Berkeley’s favor in trading with
the colonial elite. In providing aid to Bacon and his supporters, these Indian peoples
would forfeit their ability to trade deerskin with Berkeley’s associates. Bacon’s response,
to travel deeper into the south to gain Indian allies, brought more Indian nations into the
conflict. Bacon’s anger over Berkeley’s monopoly on this profitable trade eventually led

64 “Nathaniel Bacon’s Victory Over the Indians, April 1676,” in The Old Dominion in the Seventeenth
Century: A Documentary History of Virginia, 1606-1689, ed. Warren M. Billings (Chapel Hill, North
65 France Stine, Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry, 21-22.
66 “Nathaniel Bacon’s Victory Over the Indians, April 1676,” 267.
67 Ibid.
him and his supporters to bring civil war and destruction to all enemy (and oftentimes friendly) Indian nations. Bacon’s motives for leading the rebellion were twofold: access to the deerskin trade and profit from this market.

A letter written by a Virginian, Mrs. An. Cotton, to a Mr. C.H. at Yardly in Northamptonshire, explains the events surrounding Bacon’s Rebellion and reinforces the importance of the deerskin trade as a catalyst for revolt. While Mrs. Cotton’s letter was written in 1686, a decade after the uprising, her recollection of the events supports other documentation and provides an eyewitness account of Bacon’s Rebellion from a female Virginian who was not directly involved in the fighting. According to Mrs. Cotton, Nathaniel Bacon questioned the Governor and those in power as to how they had obtained their wealth. Mrs. Cotton implied in her letter that Bacon believed the authorities were stealing from the public treasury for their own advancement and had profited from a monopoly on the deerskin trade. Moreover, Mrs. Cotton suggests that Bacon believed that the authorities, who were the trading partners of the natives, were selling “…the blood of there bretheren and country men” by providing the Indians with weapons, contrary to colonial law. Mrs. Cotton’s account is in accordance with other sources and suggests that Bacon wanted access to the fur trade for monetary gain, envious of the wealth Berkeley and his grandees acquired through the trade in deerskin.

_Bacon’s Manifesto_ supports the grievances defined by _The Declaration of the People_, colonial public records, and Mrs. Cotton’s letter. For example, Bacon argued in

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his manifesto that Governor Berkeley defended and protected Indian groups who invaded
the colonists, rejecting the complaints of these “Most loyall Subjects” against the
natives. Berkeley continued to arm the Indians despite colonial Virginia laws which
prohibited this practice. While Berkeley likely provided the natives with ammunition to
hunt deer for their skins, in his manifesto, Bacon argued that these guns were being used
against the colonists and were “destructfull to us.” This document suggests that
Governor Berkeley blamed Bacon and his followers for ruining trade and commerce with
the natives, despite the fact that the Indians, according to Bacon, were murdering
innocent Virginians. Bacon’s manifesto concludes that the peltry trade was the root
cause of the Indian attacks and the subsequent rebellion. Bacon writes, “If it should be
said that the very foundation of all these disasters the Grant of the Beaver trade to the
Right Honourable Governour was illegall and not granteable by any power here present
as being a monopoly, were not this to deserve the name of Rebell and Traytor.” This
manifesto makes clear that Bacon and his followers believed that the Governor was a
traitor to the colonists because he was providing fur trading licenses to his allies, of
which Bacon and most other colonists were excluded. These colonists believed that
Berkeley’s monopoly on the deerskin and beaver pelt trade was unlawful and contributed
to Berkeley’s indifference to Indian attacks against loyal subjects and their plantations.
Warren M. Billings has argued that scholars have placed too much emphasis on
manifestos drafted by Bacon or his supporters. While the manifestos present charges

69 “Bacon’s ‘Manifesto,’” in The Old Dominion in the Seventeenth Century: A Documentary History of
Virginia, 1606-1689, ed. Warren M. Billings (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North
Carolina Press, 1975), 278.
70 Ibid., 279.
against Governor Berkeley at the time of rebellion, Billings suggests that these documents are nothing more than “skillful propaganda documents which played upon latent discontent with devastating effect.”\(^7\) Despite the fact that these documents may be exaggerations of the truth, the claims Bacon asserted against the Governor in his manifesto are supported by other primary sources from the period. In addition, while the manifesto may have been aimed to persuade, there is truth behind influential, exaggerated narratives. The numerous references to the southern fur trade in this manifesto and other documents during the rebellion cannot be ignored. While Berkeley’s monopoly may not have angered all of Bacon’s supporters, it is clearly the foundation of Nathaniel Bacon’s rebellious actions. Truth lies behind Bacon’s embellishments.

Robert Beverley, one of the Governor’s “pernicious” assistants listed by Bacon in *The Declaration of the People*, provided an account of the rebellion in his book, *The History and Present State of Virginia* (1705). While this account, like Mrs. Cotton’s letter, was written after the uprising, Beverley, apparently one of Bacon’s adversaries, acknowledged the role of the fur trade in producing the rebellion. Beverley argued that Bacon wanted the Governor to grant him a commission to fight the Indians to “…secure a Monopoly of the Indian Trade to himself and his Friends.”\(^7\) In addition, when Governor Berkeley fled to Accomack, fearing the march of the Baconites to Jamestown, he was not welcomed by the colonists. Instead, the people of Accomack “…began to make Terms with him [Berkeley] for Redress of their Grievances, and for the Ease and Liberty of

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\(^7\) Billings, “The Causes of Bacon’s Rebellion,” 415.
The right to freely trade with the natives was a central grievance of Nathaniel Bacon as well as many colonial subjects. Even Bacon's foe, Robert Beverley, acknowledged the restricted access to the fur trade as a key motivation for Bacon's actions. After Sir William Berkeley was recalled to England, the new Governor, Herbert Jeffreys, straightaway attempted to establish peace and allowed free trade between the colonists and the natives. While Governor Jeffreys restrained trade with the Indians to certain Marts, he did attempt to rectify the colonists' complaints against Berkeley's restrictive fur trading licenses. According to Beverley, the Indians refused to bring their commodities to certain marts, which made the new restrictions useless. Yet, the fact that Jeffreys, upon taking office, permitted the colonists to trade freely with the Indians showcases the significance of trade, particularly the fur trade, to Bacon's Rebellion.

In September 1676, news of Bacon's Rebellion travelled to England. In 1677, the same year in which Governor Berkeley was recalled by the Crown, the King sent a special commission and English troops to Virginia to settle the colony's affairs. The subsequent report by the commissioners illustrates their conviction that the Governor and his elite friends were responsible for the uprising; again, the fur trade takes a leading role in the narrative documented by the King's commissioners.

Investigating local complaints, the commissioners concluded that the colonists were resentful of Sir William Berkeley and his trusted circle of friends, who had a monopoly on the fur trade. The colonists were also angered by the Governor's defense of

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73 Ibid., 81, para. 105.
74 Ibid., 86-87, para. 115.
the Indians and his unwillingness to protect them from attack. The narrative of the commissioners explicitly states these points:

This made the People jealous that the Governor for the lucre of the Beaver and otter trade etc. with the Indians, rather sought to protect the Indians than them, Since after publick Proclamation prohibiting all trade with the Indians (they complaine) hee privately gave commission to some of his Friends to truck with them, and that those persons furnished the Indians with Powder, Shott etc. soe that they were better provided than his Majestye’s Subjects. 75

The commissioners also recounted that Governor Berkeley forbade the colonists to attack the Indians without first receiving orders to do so. This angered the colonists, who believed their lives and property were in danger. The commissioners suggested that the colonists had no way of knowing a friendly Indian from an enemy as it was illegal for them to engage in open or free trade with the Indians. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that some Indians did support the colonists, as Bacon had Indian scouts in his army. According to the commissioners’ report, Bacon’s army was served by some ten Indians who spied and killed other Indian parties. To some extent, Bacon’s Rebellion was also an Algonquian civil war in that groups of Indians fought each other to obtain the skins and furs desired by the Englishmen. Access to this highly profitable trade in skins was of the utmost importance to both the colonists and Indians alike, with all classes of colonists and various Indian nations competing for entry into this market. With the tobacco market depressed by overproduction and the selling of poor quality tobacco, the deerskin trade was an avenue to wealth and success in colonial Virginia. It is no surprise that skins and furs were prized by Bacon and his followers as bootie from raids on Indian

settlements. Low tobacco prices and debt led many colonists to believe that the export of deerskin was the path to upward mobility, which seems to have been the Baconites’ goal: to get rich from the deerskin market.

Bacon’s Rebellion was a response to the restrictive trade practices Governor Berkeley and his associates had exercised, preventing the colonists and natives from openly and freely trading deerskin and beaver pelts. Berkeley and his grandees desired a monopoly on the fur trade because skins and furs were highly profitable export commodities. With a declining economy due to low tobacco prices, access to the deerskin trade was crucial to the colonists’ monetary success. By examining a wide range of documents which describe the uprising, the fur trade is clearly at the heart of the conflict. The trade for furs in Virginia divided the Englishmen and their native neighbors as all groups involved were driven by personal gain. For the colonists, the mutual benefits of the peltry exchange ceased to exist when Governor Berkeley restricted their access to this trade. For the natives, the encroachment by the colonists on Indian lands to grow tobacco had long put a wedge in their relations with the English. During Bacon’s Rebellion, the Indians were forced to compete for favor among divisive Virginians, which created conflict between the Indians and the English as well as among different Indian groups. Bacon’s Rebellion illustrates the peltry trade at its worst, a period when the trade was not mutually beneficial to the English or the Indians.

After the uprising and the subsequent reform measures instituted by Governor Jeffreys, some semblance of the peltry trade did survive in Virginia, and William Byrd

76 Ibid., 112-113, 124-125, 127.
remained a key player in this market. While Byrd was profiting from his exchange with the natives, as illustrated by the goods he purchased for his private use from Perry & Lane, it is also clear that there was tension between the Virginians and the Indians after Bacon’s Rebellion. In 1679, Byrd became colonel of the militia to command the Falls of the James, as Byrd had a reputation for being an expert on the natives. In a letter addressed to Thomas Grendon, a member of Byrd’s extended family, on April 29, 1684, Byrd mentioned that he spoke to Seneca Indians and that they “...promised to behave themselves hereafter very peaceable towards the English.” While Byrd did not elaborate on the circumstances surrounding his conversation with the Seneca, as the reader probably had some knowledge of the situation, a conflict of unknown cause did arise between the two groups. This was not an exceptional case and illustrates the more violent relations between the English and the Indians throughout Virginia’s colonial history, as compared to New Netherland.

By the late seventeenth century, South Carolinians became competitors against Virginia’s access to the peltry supply, trading with the Catawba and Cherokee as well as the Lower Creeks. With the fur trading market increasingly accessible to more colonists after the Proprietors relinquished their monopoly in the 1690s, South Carolinians protected their relations with the natives and rejected Indian slavery as the

77 See William Byrd to Perry & Lane, 30 July 1688, The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, 85-86. Byrd tells Perry & Lane to send him one dozen shoes for his wife, slippers, children’s shoes, table linen, etc.
78 Marion Tinling, ed., The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, 4.
79 William Byrd to Thomas Grendon, 29 April 1684, The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, 16.
80 France Stine, Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry, 24.
central labor force of the colony. According to Linda France Stine, "By the mid-1690s, deerskins were worth more than [African] slaves. At this time, there were fewer restrictions on trade, and deerskins were the most valuable commodity shipped to England...." Virginians abandoned the fur trade due to competition from South Carolina, concentrating their efforts on other export markets, including agriculture, by the close of the seventeenth century. Bacon's Rebellion and especially the interference by South Carolina's fur traders depressed the lucrative peltry business in the Chesapeake.

In contrast to the fur trade in Virginia, the trade in beaver furs in New Netherland, the colony's leading export commodity and accessible to Dutch colonists after 1640, required a strong and cohesive partnership between the colonists and the Mohawk, their principal exchange allies. When the settlement was merely a fur-trade outpost in 1609, the beaver had been overhunted in the coastal regions and around the Hudson Valley. The Dutch relied on the Mohawk to obtain furs, as these natives traveled into the interior to hunt the beaver. This in turn made the coastal Indians, who lived in areas where fur-bearing animals were near extinction, less valuable. Historian William A. Starna argues that Dutch relations with the surrounding native populations were more complex than Allen Trelease argued in Indian Affairs in Colonial New York (1960). Starna suggests that merely dividing the Indian groups into "expendable" and "valuable" based on their access and control over the peltry supply, which was the premise of Trelease's work, simplifies Dutch-Indian relations. Starna suggests that both the Dutch and the Mohawk

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82 France Stine, Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry, 25.
interpreted their relationship as mutually beneficial; the Mohawk had more to gain from
the Dutch than material goods, a claim supported by the primary evidence. Dutch-
Mohawk relations were pacific for two reasons. First, the Mohawk received guns and
protection from the Dutch against their competitors in the interior in exchange for beaver
pelts, a profitable export commodity for the Dutch. Second, the Dutch did not engage in
land sales with the Mohawk until late in the colony’s existence. Dutch protection
coupled with the lack of encroachment on Mohawk lands contributed to a trade
partnership which was accommodating to the Mohawk while simultaneously beneficial to
the Dutch who obtained sought-after furs.

Due to the depletion of furs near New Netherland, an area encompassing Munsee
and Mahican territory in the lower Hudson Valley, these Algonquian peoples sold their
land for Dutch trade goods. While private persons were required to have their land sales
with the Indians approved by Dutch officials under the Freedoms and Exemptions of
1629, it seems as though some colonists were acting independent of the director and
council to gain land from the natives. Potentially a response to Dutch-Algonquian
conflict over land, the 1652 ordinance reiterated the importance of land for the colony,
not individuals. The Dutch purchased large tracks of land from the Munsee and the
Mahican, as these lands abutted Fort Orange and New Amsterdam. By contrast, the
Mohawk lived further in the interior and did not have constant contact with the Dutch.
Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert’s 1634 account is the first record of Dutchmen
journeying to Mohawk territory after more than two decades of trade with this Iroquoian
group. The Dutch did not engage in land sales with the Mohawk until 1661. According to William A. Starna, "...the late acquisition of Mohawk land by the Dutch most certainly acted to forestall and perhaps avoid altogether the violent clashes that marked Dutch-Algonquian relations in the Hudson Valley." The Dutch clearly had a unique trading relationship with the Mohawk, their partners in the fur trade. By not infringing upon Mohawk land, and therefore Mohawk settlement practices and ways of life, this, in part, pacified Dutch relations with these native peoples.

When the WIC abandoned its monopoly on the fur trade in New Netherland, its practice of fixing the price for beaver furs was also eliminated. Individual colonists subsequently decided the price they paid for this profitable resource; however, trading alcohol or guns to the natives in exchange for their furs was illegal. In a Fort Orange court session held on July 16, 1658, Poulus Janssen was charged with selling brandy to the Indians. According to the court, this was "...a matter of very dangerous consequence, which cannot be tolerated in a country where justice prevails." Janssen was banished from the province for six years and ordered to pay 500 guilders as punishment for his unlawful action. Jaap Jacobs has argued that despite the severe sentences proscribed by the laws governing New Netherland, punishments were more lenient in practice and banishment was rarely carried out. The Mohawk also appeared before the court at Fort Orange to complain of the sale of alcohol. On September 6, 1659, the Mohawk requested

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84 Ibid., 30-32.
85 Ibid., 32.
87 Ibid., 388.
that alcohol not be sold to the Indians in exchange for furs. According to the Indians, “We have to anticipate our enemies, the French; and if we drink ourselves drunk, we cannot fight.”\textsuperscript{89} While some natives desired alcohol as a way to become closer with the spiritual world, it seems as though New Netherland officials and Mohawk leaders were against this practice.\textsuperscript{90} Selling alcohol to Indians was a threat to New Netherland’s security, according to the magistrates; Mohawk leaders, who needed their warriors prepared for enemy attacks, also frowned upon the practice.

The sale in guns and powder to the Indians was also severely punished by law to protect the colony. The death penalty was required by ordinances passed in 1639 and reiterated in 1645 for any colonist who sold weapons to the Indians. However, as guns became attractive commodity goods to the Iroquois, the Dutch could not refuse to offer weapons in exchange for furs. In response, the arms trade in the colony was theoretically monopolized by the government. Dutch officials believed that if the traders did not sell weapons and powder to the Mohawk, these Indians would trade with the English instead, depressing the Dutch peltry trade. Despite the legal prohibition of this practice, individual colonists did exchange guns for furs according to court records and archaeology, as weapons have been found in Indian burial sites.\textsuperscript{91} Interestingly, the Mohawk came to Fort Orange in 1659 to demand that their guns be repaired by Dutch blacksmiths for free if the Indians did not have sewant and that powder be provided to

\textsuperscript{89} Gehring, \textit{Fort Orange Court Minutes}, 453.
\textsuperscript{90} Jacobs, \textit{The Colony of New Netherland}, 115.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 115-116.
them. The Mohawk felt that these terms were mutually beneficial, as the Indians would obtain weaponry for the price of warring against enemy Indians.

There was a fine line between selling guns for trade purposes and affecting a security threat, as best illustrated in Virginia. While William Byrd supported the Indian arms trade, Nathaniel Bacon vehemently opposed this practice. As the gun trade was prohibited by the laws of the colony, Bacon blamed Anglo-Indian violence on the Governor's willingness to arm the Indians instead of protecting loyal English subjects. In both Virginia and New Netherland, guns were important commodities in the peltry exchange as the Indians used guns to hunt furbearing animals. In New Netherland, the arms trade allowed the Mohawk to protect themselves against enemy Indians, including the Mahican and the French Indians. It seems probable that the Mohawk did not have guns prior to Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert's expedition in 1634-1635 due to their curiosity of pistols and their request for Van den Bogaert and his Dutch counterparts to fire their weapons on four separate occasions.92 The trade in weapons and gunpowder generally created a unified and pacific relationship between the Dutch and the Mohawk, as the Mohawk saw the Dutch as their allies and protectors against outside threats. In Virginia, however, guns were turned against the colonists as shown by events surrounding Bacon's Rebellion. The Chesapeake seems to have been a breeding ground for violence since the early years of English settlement, illustrated by the first Indian war of 1609-161493 and the 1622 and 1644 uprisings. Unlike Dutch-Mohawk relations,

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92 Van den Bogaert, A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, 39, note 69.
English dealings with the Chesapeake natives were rarely mutually beneficial, especially after tobacco became the primary agricultural export in Virginia and the colonists continued to encroach upon native land to cultivate it. Linda France Stine argued that Bacon’s Rebellion was not only a response to the deerskin trade but also the colonists’ increasing need for agricultural land. According to Stine, when the colonists realized that they could not obtain proper licensure to engage in the skins market, they began killing Indians for their fertile lands. 94 However, English colonists had been infringing upon native land since the early settlement period; this was not a new problem for the Chesapeake natives in the late seventeenth century. The North American fur trade illustrates the different dynamics and circumstances English and Dutch colonists faced when they entered into the peltry trade with the Indians. While both the English and the Dutch were forced to exchange weapons for furs to meet the requests of their Indian consumers, this trade clearly had different results in these colonies. The furs-for-guns exchange largely created a cohesive bond between the Dutch and the Mohawk, whereas the gun trade posed a danger to colonists in Virginia.

Dutch fur trading relations with the Mohawk never paralleled the violence that transpired in late seventeenth century Virginia. By the 1650s and 1660s, tension between the Dutch and the Mohawk did arise due to the competition for furs among Dutch colonists, which at times resulted in robbery and assaults against the natives. While the Mohawk took their complaints to court at Fort Orange, they did not retaliate by force and a Dutch-Mohawk war never occurred. Peace between the colonists and the Mohawk in

the period before English control of the colony may have been a response to the Indians’ need for Dutch protection during the Beaver Wars.

In the 1650s, due to the lucrative nature of the beaver fur trade and the elimination of the WIC monopoly, individual colonists began competing for favor among the Iroquois in the hopes of concentrating the peltry trade in the hands of a few Dutchmen. This fierce competition for furs eventually contributed to a decline in price during the late 1650s, as pelts over-flooded the market. Competition also led to violence against the natives. As the Indians exchanged their wares from house to house, they were sometimes beaten or blocked from traveling to other homes to trade.95 The Indians voiced their complaints regarding this behavior to the court at Fort Orange. On February 8, 1658, Jochim de Backer was punished for beating an Indian, forced to pay “two pounds Flemish” for his actions.96 The fur trade was vital to New Netherland society, and Dutch officials listened to complaints made by Indian fur traders as evidenced by this case. Dutch officials were likely concerned that if Mohawk fur traders continued to be assaulted by the Dutch, these Indians would trade their furs with other Europeans, the French or the English, or seek revenge against the colonists.

Competition for furs led colonists or brokers to wait for Indian traders in the woods, bypassing the practice of door-to-door trade, to persuade the Indians to sell their furs to a single Dutch trader.97 The practice of using brokers was outlawed by the colony; however, on June 6, 1657, the court at Fort Orange permitted a one-year hiatus of

96 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 352.
this law, allowing Indian brokers to be employed for trade at Fort Orange and the
surrounding village of Beverwijck. According to Jaap Jacobs, employing Indian
brokers was expensive and accessible only to the large fur traders, many of whom sat on
the court. This ordinance, therefore, benefited some Dutch officials who established the
hiatus for their own financial benefit. By 1660, debates over the use of Indian and
Dutch brokers were ongoing. While the director general, Petrus Stuyvesant, eventually
decided to prohibit the use of brokers, both Indian and Dutch, the court minutes from Fort
Orange suggest that the use of brokers continued despite the illegality of the practice. On
May 27, 1660, court records show that some of the colonists brought to court for using
brokers argued that they would continue to employ this practice “whether it was
permitted or not.” The use of brokers was financially beneficial to colonists who could
persuade the natives to trade their furs with them in the woods before the Indians began
their door-to-door soliciting or who stole the furs outright. However, this practice was
not advantageous to the Indians, who were sometimes robbed, maltreated, or beaten in
the woods, or to the director general of the colony, who feared the decline of Dutch-
Mohawk relations and trade. On June 26, 1660, the Mohawk appeared before the court at
Fort Orange to request that brokers be disallowed as a result of Dutch violence and
robbery against the Indian traders. According to the Mohawk, if Indians continued to be
ill-treated in the woods, “…they will go away and not be seen anymore.” The
Mohawk also implied that they would wage war against the Dutch. As a response, the

98 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 299.
100 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 502.
101 Ibid., 503.
magistrates theoretically forbid the colonists from using brokers under penalty of three hundred guilders and a one-year suspension of the fur trade. This conflict at Fort Orange and Beverwijck shows the importance the fur trade had on the daily lives and livelihood of the people living in this community, as the organization of the fur trade was constantly debated by ordinary colonists, magistrates, the director general, and the Indians who made this trade possible.

The Beaver Wars, a series of conflicts between the Iroquois and the French-supported Algonquians during the middle of the seventeenth century, may explain why the Mohawk did not retaliate by force against the Dutch during the conflict over brokerage. The Beaver Wars contributed to weakening the Mohawk, possibly preventing them from fighting against yet another enemy group, the Dutch. In addition, the Mohawk may have been pacified as the Dutch were their supplier of arms; the Mohawk depended on weapons for their survival and for the continuation of these wars. According to Dean R. Snow, the Iroquois fought the Algonquians during the Beaver Wars for a variety of reasons, only one of which being access and control of the fur trade. These wars were encouraged by the Dutch, English, and French, all of whom vied for control of the North American peltry market. The losses of natives to European diseases during the mid-seventeenth century also contributed to this conflict as Indian groups attempted to avenge the deaths of their members by enslaving natives outside of their community and adopting them. The French Indians, or Hurons, were brutally beaten by the Mohawk,

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102 Ibid., 504.
with many Huron being incorporated and adopted into the Iroquois community.\textsuperscript{105} Attacks on Algonquian nations triggered the French to move westward to engage in the fur trade.\textsuperscript{106} At the same time as the Beaver Wars were being fought, the Mohawk were also engaged in a series of wars with the Mahican. While the mid-seventeenth century was clearly a time of change for the Mohawk, marked by constant warfare transformed by firepower, relations between the Dutch and the Mohawk never escalated to war. As the Beaver Wars and Mohawk-Mahican Wars were fought, the Iroquois ultimately reinforced and strengthened their alliance with the Dutch, who provided them with protection through the sale of guns and offered other desirable trade goods such as duffel and ironware.\textsuperscript{107} According to Frenchman Jérôme Lalemant, who was involved in the Jesuit missions among the Huron, the Mohawk were victorious over the Huron because of the guns provided them by the Dutch. Lalemant argued that the Dutch were able to secure the beaver fur trade with the Mohawk by supplying them with firearms.\textsuperscript{108} The Dutch likely viewed the Mohawk as protectors as well, guardians of the fur trade and defenders against enemy groups, such as the Mahican and Munsees. Despite disagreements and tense relations over brokers, the Dutch-Mohawk relationship was mutually advantageous. “Dutch dependence on the Mohawks grew in much the same measure as Mohawk dependence on the Dutch.”\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{106} Sleeper-Smith, “Cultures of Exchange in a North Atlantic World,” xxix.
\textsuperscript{109} Starna, “The Native-Dutch Experience in the Mohawk Valley,” 34. Quote from Francis Jennings.
The concept of mutually dependent trade is critical to understanding why an event such as Bacon's Rebellion occurred in Virginia but not in the Dutch colony of New Netherlands. First, after the WIC monopoly ended, more colonists in New Netherland had access to this lucrative trade. The opposite occurred in Virginia. While more colonists were able to participate in the deerskin trade during the early years of frontier trading forts, Governor Berkeley's restrictions resulted in the ability of only a small minority of elite colonists to engage in this market. Berkeley's monopoly reduced participation, while in New Netherland, accessibility to the trade increased. Moreover, Virginians were engaged in the cultivation of tobacco, which required large tracks of Indian land. As the natives were pushed off of their homelands and hunting grounds, tension with the English settlers increased. Interestingly, Dutch relations with the Mahican and Munsees were tenuous because these native groups did not have access to beaver furs and exchanged their lands for Dutch imports. The Dutch did not engage in land sales with the Mohawk until the 1660s, and in 1667, the colony was controlled by the English. Lastly, the arms trade pacified Dutch-Mohawk relations because the Mohawk were engaged in combat with other Indian groups, including the French-supported Huron. No outside European force threatened the Chesapeake peltry trade. For reasons which are debatable yet largely unanswered in the scholarship, English relations with the Chesapeake natives turned sore very early in the colony's existence. While guns were desired by the natives in Virginia and were used to hunt furbearing animals, they were also taken up against the colonists. Unlike the Mohawk, the Chesapeake natives did not rely on the Virginians for protection against outside forces, including another European power. To the Virginia Indians, the English were enemies, driving them away from their homeland and creating contentious
relations among native groups. While the Dutch-Mohawk relationship was a partnership, mutually beneficial to the Dutch and Mohawk who needed each other for protection and material goods, the English and the Algonquians were engaged in a power struggle over lucrative skins and land.
CONCLUSION

WHY THE PELTRY TRADE DIFFERED IN VIRGINIA AND NEW NETHERLAND

Colonies in North America were established by the English and the Dutch to compete with Spain and engage in a mercantilist system for the benefit of the mother country. The seventeenth century fur trade in North America was profitable because it was a response to a declining market in Muscovy, a result of the overhunting of furbearing animals. The peltry trade, at least initially, was mutually beneficial to Europeans and the Indians who made this New World market possible. In exchange for skins and furs, the Indians of Virginia and New Netherland obtained guns and other necessary trade goods from the Europeans. Small trinkets and beads would not satisfy North America’s native fur traders. It is apparent from records left by Europeans involved in the fur trade, such as William Byrd I and Isaac de Rasière, that the Indians were not only specific, but also demanding consumers of European products. While scholarship has often focused on Europeans as the exploiters of subaltern groups, this case study shows that the Indians involved in the North American peltry exchange were just as willing to exploit Europeans to obtain choice goods. European-Indian relations were pacific as long as the fur trade remained mutually beneficial.

Land encroachment was the antithesis of a working relationship between the Europeans and Native Americans. While the colonists at Jamestown initially struggled to develop a profitable economy, experimenting with various agricultural crops and searching for natural resources, tobacco eventually became the mecca of wealth for the
colonists who cultivated it as well as the English Crown. In contrast, the Dutch settled New Netherland with the intent to develop a trade in beaver furs with the natives. The economic motivation of the Dutch colony is proven by the coat of arms of New Netherland, which features an image of the beaver.\footnote{Jacobs, The Colony of New Netherland, 106.} Virginia’s tobacco monoculture was a primary point of contention between the English colonists and the Indians. While the English and the Algonquians both sought a trade partnership, the cultivation of tobacco encroached upon native lands. As the English infringed on native grounds, the Indians likely saw their way of life disappearing, which created tension. The Indians were involved in a struggle for survival in the Chesapeake; the English, due to their superiority in battle, were victorious. Linda France Stine accurately suggested that “English perceptions of the Indians oscillated from enemy (taking up land) to friend (consuming trade goods).”\footnote{France Stine, Mercantilism and Piedmont Peltry, 15.} In New Netherland, the Dutch-Indian trade revolved around the peltry market. The exchange of beaver furs for Dutch imports did not require the colonists to bargain for or steal Mohawk lands. New Netherland did not border Mohawk territory, which was located further into the interior. It is worth reiterating that the Dutch did have tenuous relations with the Mahican and the Munsees, both of whom exchanged their lands for European wares. Land encroachment clearly contributed to Anglo-Algonquian conflict; the absence of this infringement pacified Dutch-Mohawk relations.

Foreign competition in the fur trade, a force beyond the colonists’ control, helped to create a partnership between the Dutch and the Mohawk in New Netherland. This
dynamic was not present in colonial Virginia. South Carolinians threatened the
profitability of the trade in deerskin in Virginia; however, the natives gladly traded with
this colony, especially after the violence of Bacon’s Rebellion. While the natives allied
with Governor Berkeley received government protection as Tributary Indians, they did
not need the Virginia colonists to protect them from an alien force, including the fur
traders in South Carolina. In comparison, the Mohawk needed Dutch arms to fight
against the French-supported Huron, whom they feared. Because the Dutch were well-
aware of the threat the French and even the English in southern New England posed to
the fur trade, they ensured that the Mohawk were content in their trade dealings, as
illustrated by Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert’s expedition. The trade in guns and
powder to the Mohawk Indians by the Dutch seems to have strengthened their
relationship, as both groups relied on each other for protection. These mutual bonds did
not exist in Virginia, where violent conflict between the English and the Indians had been
established by 1609.

Moreover, miscegenation was more prevalent in the Dutch colony of New
Netherland than in Virginia, where it was virtually nonexistent. While interracial sex and
family formation are outside of the scope of this project, it may explain, in part, why
Dutch-Iroquois relations were generally peaceful while Anglo-Algonquian relations were
tenuous. According to Adriaen van der Donck, interracial sex was commonplace before
Dutch women arrived in the colony. Van der Donck wrote in his narrative, “...several
Dutchmen, before many Dutch women were to be had there, became infatuated with
them [native women]. ...[I]f they were instructed as our women are, they would no
doubt differ little from them, if at all." An Englishmen in Virginia likely viewed
Indian women in stark contrast to European females. The first recorded conjugal
relationship between an Englishmen and an Indian was John Rolfe’s marriage to
Pocahontas in 1614, which pacified Anglo-Powhatan relations for a time. It is well-
documented that French traders gained access to furs by engaging in relations with native
women, becoming part of their kinship network. Further studies may address this
aspect of the fur trade in Virginia and New Netherland.

By 1710, and even before this date, the fur trade in Virginia was declining.
Eventually, the colonists would surrender this trade due to competition from South
Carolina. While the fur trade continued after Bacon’s Rebellion, the Occaneechee were
no longer prominent players in this exchange. With the exception of Beverwijck, the fur
trade also declined in New Netherland. By the end of the Dutch period, the colonists
were involved in agricultural production, and by 1664, tobacco had outstripped the trade
in beaver furs as the primary export item. When the English officially took ownership
of the colony in 1667, the Mohawk allied with the conquerors, believing that they could
continue the mutual benefits of the fur trade with the new inhabitants. However, the
English did not protect the Mohawk from the enemy French. Subsequently, the

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112 Van der Donck, *A Description of New Netherland*, 75.
Mohawk had no other choice but to join with the French in the fur trade. According to Jérôme Lalemant, the Mohawk feared the French and their weapons.\textsuperscript{116}

The fur trade in North America was a market of exploitation for Europeans and Indians alike. In the case of the Dutch in New Netherland, the shared benefits of the lucrative fur trade created a long-lasting working relationship between the Dutch and the Mohawk. In Virginia, the trade in deerskin was marked by violence when access to the trade was restricted during Berkeley’s governorship and the English colonists continued to trespass onto native homelands. When the peltry trade was mutually beneficial, meaning that Europeans and Indians obtained desired goods of equivalent value, relations were relatively peaceful between the two groups. When this mutuality ceased to exist, however, tension and violence was the norm. The Indians were engaged in merchant capitalism as much as the European colonists with whom they traded their peltry.

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VITA

Laura Ann Norbut was born on February 19, 1989, in Hartford, Connecticut. Laura grew up in a small New England town and cultivated her love of history as a young girl, enjoying numerous visits to Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. She earned a B.A. in History from Sacred Heart University in May 2010 as well as a teaching certificate from the State of Connecticut. Laura graduated with a M.A. in Early American and United States History in May 2011. She will continue to share her love of history by teaching middle school or high school students.