

The Pig and the Postwar Dream:
The San Juan Island Dispute, 1853-1872,
in History and Memory

by

Gordon Robert Lyall
B.A., University of Victoria, 2011

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| Abstract

Historical events are framed by the actors of the time and then re-framed by subsequent historians and the public. This thesis examines the historiography of the San Juan Island Dispute, 1853-1871, known colloquially in the twentieth century as the “Pig War.” In 1859, after an American settler on San Juan shot a pig owned by the Hudson’s Bay Company, the American military and the British Royal Navy met in a tense stand-off resulting in a twelve year joint-military occupation of the island. This conflict was the last border dispute between the two nations. Following World War II, a message of peace became the dominant trope of histories written about the “Pig War.” The term itself has come to represent this overarching theme. With documents from the dispute, such as colonial despatches, official correspondence and newspaper editorials, this thesis considers how the event was framed at the time; and employing semiotics as a technique for discourse analysis, it examines how the “war” was re-framed in the twentieth century. The thesis follows Alfred Young’s research on antebellum America’s commemoration of the “Boston Tea Party,” with its message appropriated by politicians, merging history and myth.¹ The “Pig War” occupies similar terrain as the reconceptualization of the event embodies its own message of a unique identity for the Pacific Northwest, associated with the 49th parallel as the world’s longest, most peaceful, “undefended” border

¹ Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999).

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| Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Richard Jenkins. By no means a scholar, but the most loyal and loving brother anyone could ever ask for.

Introduction

The Pig and the Postwar Dream, Part 1.

A place to stay,
Enough to eat,
Somewhere old heroes shuffle safely down the street.
Where you can speak out loud,
About your doubts and fears.
And what's more,
No-one ever disappears,
You never hear their standard issue kicking in your door.
You can relax,
On both sides of the tracks,
And maniacs,
Don't blow holes in bandmen by remote control.
And everyone has recourse to the law.
And no-one kills the children anymore.

- Roger Waters (Pink Floyd), "The Gunner's Dream"
From the album, *The Final Cut*, 1983.

In his final album with Pink Floyd, Roger Waters asked, "what happened to the Postwar Dream?"² This question reflects what a lot of people have wondered since the conclusion of the Second World War. Instead of a world of peace, there have been multiple international conflicts from the 1950s until now. Waters designed the concept of the album in response to what he saw

² Roger Waters, "The Post War Dream," from the album, *The Final Cut*, 1983.

as the continuing belligerence of imperial nations. He viewed Great Britain's participation in the Falkland War as "jingoistic and unnecessary."³ He created an album to address the impact of war and imperialism on the psyche of people who live in the aftermath. He found that people have become jaded, hardened and cynical. The "promise of a brave new world," never did "unfurl[] beneath a clear blue sky."⁴

Waters was deeply affected by World War II. His father, Eric Fletcher Waters, a schoolteacher and Communist Party member, was a conscientious objector to the war. But as the war continued, he felt compelled to join the fight. Eric Waters was declared missing in action and presumed dead when Roger was not even a year old.⁵ The loss of his father had a profound impact on how Waters viewed the world and he expressed his feelings of great loss in his music. This album, as well as the better known album "The Wall," deals with the fragile psyche of a man who has lost his father in combat. "The Final Cut" specifically addresses what Waters sees as a great betrayal to the servicemen who had sacrificed their lives for the "Dream."⁶

As the lyrics above suggest, the Postwar Dream is a world in which people can feel safe from violence and fear. It is a world where the leaders of nations solve differences by negotiation and not war. Unfortunately, it is a world that is still yet to exist. Hence, the album was originally titled *Requiem for a Post-War Dream* because he laments the fact that such a dream has never been realised.⁷ Waters shows that music is a viable genre with which to convey this message of peace over war. Movies are also often thought of as a suitable genre. But what about the writing of history?

Historians have debated their role in society for a long time. Some argue that it is simply the historian's job to research and report on the past. Others say that there is a moral and ethical duty of the scholar to exert a positive influence on society. The relationship between history and morality is complex. Often there are varying opinions on what a story means or what should be emphasised. But sometimes, a story is so redolent with moral meaning that it becomes the dominant narrative among historians and their audiences. This is what has occurred for the story

³ Wikipedia, "The Final Cut (album)" <accessed 01/12/12> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Final_Cut_\(album\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Final_Cut_(album)).

⁴ Roger Waters, "Goodbye Blue Sky" from the album, *The Wall*, 1979.

⁵ Wikipedia, "Roger Waters" <accessed 01/12/12> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Waters.

⁶ Wikipedia, "The Final Cut (album)" <accessed 01/12/12> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Final_Cut_\(album\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Final_Cut_(album)).

⁷ Ibid.

of a pig, shot dead in 1859, a single casualty in a war that never happened, the perfect example of how conflicts could be resolved in a world of the Postwar Dream.

The “Pig War”

On June 15, 1859, Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) sheep farmer Charles Griffin recorded in his farm journal, “an American shot one of my pigs for trespassing!!!”⁸ This shooting occurred on a tiny island off the coast of Vancouver Island called San Juan. At this time, British colonists of Victoria and American settlers of the Puget Sound were quarreling over ownership of this island. After the pig’s death, General William Harney of the United States Army ordered troops to be landed to occupy San Juan. Soldier William Peck wrote in his journal: “rumors of troubles concerning the rights of ownership of the Island of San Juan in Puget Sound are going the rounds. The case, simply stated, is General W.S. Harney, in behalf of the government of U.S., claims and has taken possession of the Island per contra Governor Douglas of all the British Columbias [who] insists upon it as property belonging to Hudson’s Bay Company, and as General Harney has already sent U.S. troops there, it is feared a collision will occur.”⁹ In response to Harney’s action, the British Royal Navy sent ships to contest the landing of American troops. After a tense stand-off, it was decided that military forces representing both nations would reside on the island in equal numbers until the dispute was settled. This joint military occupation lasted twelve years. The settlement was ultimately decided by the German Kaiser in arbitration, and the island was awarded to the United States; San Juan remains an American island today.

This event, or non-war, featured many colorful characters with personalities that would “tax the skill of Hemingway.”¹⁰ They included: Harney, Captain George Pickett, of later Gettysburg fame, James Douglas, the first governor of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, and, perhaps

⁸ Charles Griffin, *Journals, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Post, 1854-1855 and 1858-1862*. Hudson’s Bay Company Records, microfilm, Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada).

⁹ C. Brewster Coulter, *The Pig War, And Other Experiences of William Peck, Soldier 1858-1862, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: The Journal of William A. Peck Jr.* (Medford, Oregon: Webb Research Group, 1993), 93.

¹⁰ David Richardson, *Pig War Islands* (Eastsound, Wash: Orcas Publishing Company, 1971), 11.

most amazingly, an aging Winfield Scott, the “Great Pacificator” and veteran of the War of 1812 against Great Britain.¹¹ David Richardson observes:

Most accounts of the Pig War center around the erring British owned porker, and its sudden demise at the hands of the dead-eyed Yankee homesteader. But it was an altogether different kind of piggishness that actually brought two frontier forces eyeball-to-eyeball in a confrontation designed neither in London nor Washington. The chief engineers were in fact an American general who wanted to be president, and a British governor who could not forget that he was a company man. At stake in their egoistic contest: a gaggle of sparsely inhabited islands, smack in the middle of a peaceful inland sea separating America’s Pacific Northwest from what is now British Columbia.¹²

A travel guide to San Juan comments, “a Friml or a Gilbert and Sullivan might well have used the plot for one of their famous light operas.”¹³ However, the dispute at the time was seen as having the potential to become a third major war between the two nations in less than a century. Observer Viscount Milton explained, “on a just and equitable solution of the so-called San Juan Water Boundary Question depends the future, not only of British Columbia, but also of the entire British possessions in North America.”¹⁴ The original framing of this dispute was one of a Manichean battle between American Manifest Destiny and the British Empire’s advance guard, the HBC. Adherents of Manifest Destiny claimed the Pacific Northwest was destined to be settled by Americans; the only trouble with this was that the HBC already operated in the area. While the HBC did not actively encourage colonisation by English immigrants it fiercely opposed American presence.

By the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, historians placed this dispute in the context of their respective nation building histories. For Americans, it was the victory of Manifest Destiny over John Bull. For Canadian historians, as Jean Barman notes, the dispute “underlined the necessity for law and order at the local level” and that the two colonies

¹¹ Michael Vouri, *The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay* (Friday Harbour, WA.: Griffin Bay Bookstore, 1999), 166.

¹² Richardson, *Pig War Islands*, 14.

¹³ C.T. Morgan, *The San Juan Story: Brief History, Tourist Guide, Pictures of Points of Interest, and 4-color map*. 16th Edition (Friday Harbor: C.T. Morgan, San Juan Industries, 1966), 5.

¹⁴ Viscount Milton, M.P., *A History of the San Juan Water Boundary Question, As Affecting the Division of Territory Between Great Britain and the United States* (London: Cassel, Petter, and Galpin, 1869), 8.

needed to defend themselves, thus aiding the decision to Confederates with Canada.¹⁵ Chapter one will show how the dispute unfolded, using correspondence and editorials from the time. Their words display the serious tenor of the actors; they show how peace was a much sought-after goal, although many doubted it was possible.

By the mid-twentieth century the theme of this story would evolve to fit the Postwar Dream. It was held up as shining example of how leaders *ought* to solve their problems. It also comes to define the region of the Pacific Northwest as the world's safest and most peaceful place to be. As Will Dawson proclaims: "the friendship that exists between the United States and Canada as symbolized by the Peace Arch standing astride the Washington State-British Columbia border, is among the world's most admired and cherished achievements." He continues: "never before in all recorded history has a nation with the military might of the United States refrained of its goodwill and intelligence from usurping the national rights of its physically much weaker neighbor. Never before in all recorded history has the world witnessed such a near miracle of tolerance and understanding between nations."¹⁶ This unique event became a special identifier for the island and the region. All modern histories about the event carry this didactic message of peace, and works of fiction, such as a 2012 novel by Mark Holzen, also share this perspective.¹⁷ Chapter two will chart the development of San Juan Island Dispute histories; and chapter three will address the re-framing of the event to a theme of peace and how the pig became a focal point of the story.

Awareness of the pig's contribution to the dispute has a long history dating back to the occupation of the island. On August 24, 1859, while stationed on San Juan Island, Peck wrote in his journal, "it seems present difficulties all arose from an unruly hog, of which there are plenty here."¹⁸ Coming from a regular "grunt,"¹⁹ this entry shows that the pig incident was a hot topic around the island when the troops landed. The pig was later mentioned in official correspondence

¹⁵ Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 79.

¹⁶ Will Dawson, *The War That Was Never Fought* (Princeton: Auerbach Publisher, 1971), vii.

¹⁷ In this story, the kids are told that it is sometimes more difficult not to fight than to fight, and the island dispute was like them fighting over the comfy chair; Mark Holzen, *The Pig War* (North Charleston, N.C: CreateSpace, 2012), 107-109.

¹⁸ Coulter, *The Pig War, And Other Experiences of William Peck*, 99.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 12.

of the time, but not seen as an important detail of the dispute.²⁰ It wasn't until historical writers heard of this pig that it became seen as a significant part of the story.

Immediately after the dispute, only people in Victoria were still talking about the pig.²¹ It was an amusing anecdote from the "salad days" of the British colony. But, in 1888, Julian Ralph took this anecdote and placed the pig on a pedestal. Not only does his title, *A Pig that Nearly Caused a War*, imply that the pig was responsible for the whole mess, but he also transforms the pig into a patriot (despite being a British boar).²² He concludes, "so, although the pig was merely in search of something to eat (as pigs are, most of their time), and although Mr. Hubbs desired only to save himself from the consequences of an angry act, America well may be grateful to both- especially to the pig, for he lost his life for his country."²³ While this veneration of the pig was likely not shared by any of his fellow Americans, the idea that it was a necessary factor in the dispute crystallized by the end of the nineteenth century. In the decade following Ralph's article, Major John Brooke claimed "the originator of the quarrel which well-nigh brought two great nations together by the ears, was a pig- a stupid, groveling pig."²⁴ By the turn of the century, the pig had taken a prominent role in the dispute, but it did not fully take center stage until the event became known as the "Pig War."

In 1905, Charles McKay, one of the last survivors from the dispute, published his memoir in *The Washington Historical Quarterly*. He never uses the term "Pig War," but he relates in some detail what he refers to as the "hog-scraper." His narrative gives the impression that he was prompted by an interviewer to talk about the pig.²⁵ This focus on the pig, and its direct

²⁰ United States Government. *The Northwest Boundary. Discussion of the Water Boundary Question: Geographical memoir of the Islands in Dispute: and History of the Military Occupation of San Juan Island: Accompanied by Map and Cross-Sections of Channels* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), 149.

²¹ Julian Ralph, "A Pig That Nearly Caused A War." *St. Nicholas Magazine for Young Folks*. Vol. XV, No. 5 (March 1888), 371.

²² Joseph Kinsey Howard, correctly and amusingly identifies the pig as an "imperial pig." He says, "it was a thoroughly British pig. It went where it listed and it ate what it damned well chose to eat, much to the annoyance of Americans on San Juan;" Joseph Kinsey Howard, "Manifest Destiny and the British Empire's Pig." *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, vol. 5, no. 4 (Autumn, 1955), 20-21.

²³ Ralph, *A Pig That Nearly Caused a War*, 374.

²⁴ Maj. John Brooke, U.S.A. "San Juan Island," *Recreation* (Edinburgh), Vol. IV (January 1896).

²⁵ McKay says, "I said I would tell you about the hog scraper that nearly caused a war between two great nations. The man by the name of Cutler had a farm with a small garden of potatoes. While we had to go forty miles across the Straits in a rowboat, you will see that potatoes were potatoes. This Cutler potato patch was growing fine. One day a hog belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company broke into Cutler's potato patch... [shoots pig] Then he went to the

connection to the war, carried on through the twentieth century. Joseph Kinsey Howard joked in 1955 that the treaty which settled the Oregon Question in 1846, contained “a loophole large enough to admit a pig.”²⁶ In 1971, David Richardson summed up the general attitude nicely: “it is hard enough to believe that two great nations could come to the brink of war over a mere pig.”²⁷ This line of thinking continues into the twenty-first century. Scott Kaufmann explains his interest in the San Juan story: “a boundary dispute between the United States and Great Britain over the island of San Juan nearly erupted into a military clash all because of the death of a pig. I could not believe that such a seemingly minor event could have such enormous ramifications.”²⁸ The pig continues to enjoy the starring role in what has been viewed as a “near-miss” in the history of nineteenth century Anglo-American relations.

But why blame this unfortunate pig for the international events that ensued? Likely, it is because people desire reasons for events such as the San Juan Island Dispute. They look to historians to answer the question of why. In 1961, E.H Carr proclaimed “the study of history is a study of causes.”²⁹ Although many historians would argue that there is much more to the study of history than simply a search for causes, causation often plays a large role in historical interpretation. Peter Hoffer observes “just as no one wants a diagnosis of their illness as ‘idiopathic,’ so no one wants a history without causation.”³⁰ The Pig War is no different. The pig, due to his rooting proclivities, became seen as the instigator of the conflict.³¹ In 1960, Washington State Senator Warren Magnuson stated, “perhaps the best, if silliest, war this country

Hudson Bay agent and offered to pay for the hog, but the agent refused to take pay and said he would send for the gunboat and have him arrested and taken to Victoria. The gunboat came to arrest him and I had to plead with Cutler to hide, for I knew that Cutler was a good shot and was going to kill all that would come to arrest him,” Charles McKay, “History of San Juan Island,” *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (July 1908), 293.

²⁶ Howard, *Manifest Destiny and the British Empire's Pig*, 20.

²⁷ Richardson, *Pig War Islands*, 11.

²⁸ Scott Kaufman, *The Pig War: The United States, Britain, and the Balance of Power in the Pacific Northwest, 1846-1872* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004), xiii.

²⁹ E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Random House, 1990), 87.

³⁰ Peter Charles Hoffer, *The Historians' Paradox: The Study of History in Our Time* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 65.

³¹ Although, in 1909, Meany did note that, “in late years an effort has been made to shift the responsibility of this trouble from the pig to some sheep,” Edmond S. Meany, *History of the State of Washington* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909), 241.

ever fought was caused by the death of a rooting pig.”³² And E.C. Coleman ponders more recently, “if only Lyman Cutler had attempted to get a law enacted rather than shooting Griffin’s pig, how different might things have been.”³³ This suggestion assumes that the island would not have been occupied by American troops without the shooting of the pig. But there are often multiple conditions that help create a historic event as opposed to a single cause.³⁴

Historian Allan Megill comments “causation does not occur in a vacuum: hence it is always a matter of assessing the relative strengths of various *possible* causes.”³⁵ The pig, or more precisely the shooting of the pig, alone could not have caused the conflict, and yet it is often cited as the primary factor in the sudden escalation of the “war.” While there can be no doubt that the pig’s death preceded an immediate military takeover of the island by American troops, it can never be truly ascertained that the reason for the landing was this fatality, due to the existence of other causing factors. What the pig offers is a case of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*.³⁶ This is a logical fallacy which bestows the power of cause to one event simply because it precedes another event. Because the pig shooting immediately predates the occupation, it is labelled the cause. This fallacy is a close cousin of concomitance which mistakes two coinciding events for one causing the other.³⁷ Yes, the pig was shot, then there was a private confrontation between Griffin and Cutlar, and then Harney landed troops on the island in response to requests made by American settlers to protect their interests. But this sequence of events does not make the pig the cause; it simply makes it a link in a chain of events going back to the settlement of the Oregon Question in 1846.

³² Warren G. Magnuson, “One-shot War with England: It lasted for years and the outcome was decided by the Kaiser. The total casualties: one dead pig.” *American Heritage: The Magazine of History*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (April 1960), 63.

³³ E.C. Coleman, *The Pig War: The Most Perfect War in History* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2009), 200.

³⁴ Although S.H. Rigby reminds us that conditions are not causes. For example, the condition of him being born cannot be said to be a cause of him writing his article; S.H. Rigby, “Historical Causation: Is One Thing more Important than Another?” *History*, Vol. 80, Issue 259 (June 1995), 234.

³⁵ Allan Megill, *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error: A Contemporary Guide to Practice* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 7.

³⁶ At the 2012 Qualicum History Conference, Ben Isitt suggested the pun that this was a case of “Post *Hog!* Ergo propter Hog.”

³⁷ Peter Charles Hoffer, *The Historians’ Paradox: The Study of History in our Time* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 72-73.

S.H. Rigby observed that answering any causation question often results in a laundry list of causes.³⁸ The island was already in dispute prior to the pig shooting and there were other confrontations on the island, such as a sheep stealing incident, and a boundary commission, both which paved the way for eventual settlement of the San Juan Question. Therefore, Rigby asserts that the true historian will make a hierarchy of importance.³⁹ Choosing the pig shooting as the main cause is not incorrect in this sense; determining the most significant factor of an event is a matter of interpretation. What it shows is that historians want to place an emphasis on this pig, for reasons perhaps unknown even to themselves. Rosemary Neering comments this conflict could have been called “the sheep war,” or the “customs inspector war,” after the sheep stealing incident. Or she provocatively suggests that it could have been called the “you’re too damn arrogant war.”⁴⁰ Mike Vouri already proposed this line of thinking when he wrote an article titled, “The San Juan Sheep War,” which focuses on the sheep incident.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the pig retains center stage and embodies the message that it would have been “silly”⁴² if two great nations went to war over the shooting of such a miserable animal.

The historiographical question of knowing an event in a particular way for particular reasons will be considered in light of Alfred F. Young’s research on the naming of the “Boston Tea Party.” Young observes that the dumping of tea in Boston Harbour was not referred to as the “Boston Tea Party” until the 1830s. This prompts him to ask why, then, was it called in this manner and so long after the incident? Young finds no reference to the term prior to 1835.⁴³ Therefore, he attempts to locate the genesis of this term within a “twilight zone that lies between living memory and written history... one of the favourite breeding places of mythology.”⁴⁴ He asserts, “the contest over names, I discovered, is part of a larger contest for the public memory of

³⁸ Rigby, *Historical Causation*, 227.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 227.

⁴⁰ Rosemary Neering, *The Pig War: The Last Canada-US Border Conflict* (Victoria: Heritage House Publishing, 2011), 10.

⁴¹ Michael P. Vouri, “The San Juan Sheep War.” *Columbia Magazine*, 14:4 (Winter 2000-2001). Digital Copy sent from author.

⁴² Warren Magnuson said: “Perhaps the best, if silliest, war this country ever fought was caused by the death of a rooting pig;” Magnuson, *One-shot War with England*, 63; Joseph Howard called it, “the silliest war ever fought, a war over a pig;” Howard, *Manifest Destiny and the British Empire’s Pig*, 21.

⁴³ Alfred Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 156.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 89.

the Revolution, a process I now think of as wilful forgetting and purposeful remembering of American history.”⁴⁵

Part of Young’s concern is over memory. How was the Boston Tea Party remembered? What was the contest over this memory? Young finds that the private memory of one participant in the Tea Party was appropriated by politicians for the purpose of promoting a public memory of the event.⁴⁶ Young asks what it meant to call it a “tea party” and not the “destruction of the tea.” He suggests that the term may have existed in oral culture prior to the 1830s but all official language referred to it as “the destruction of the tea.” He offers two explanations; one was a mocking of British genteel customs with a gender and class reversal at play (working class men “making tea” in the Boston Harbour, and having a tea party). The other lay in the political realm of American Whig ideology and their attempts to disassociate themselves from the mob aspects of the American Revolution; it was a playful way of making the revolutionary era seem “safe” and not as violent as it was.⁴⁷

The creation of the name occurred within the historical context of a political moment in American history in which the public officials were fighting over the authoritative rights to the country’s revolutionary history. Politicians attempted to tame its image in the public mind and make it a positive political tool and a proud part of their heritage. Hence the name “Tea Party” served to remove the historical event from its violent reality and place it in a mythical hierarchy of great American deeds. For Young, the naming was an appropriation of the event by public figures for political purposes. I view the naming of the Pig War in a similar light; the name contains pejorative connotations towards international conflict and war. Postwar historians of the Pig War generally view this narrative as a triumph of peace over irrational war. Young concludes that names are “value-laden.”⁴⁸ I find the “value-laden” aspect of the Pig War moniker to be this theme of peace.

⁴⁵ Young, *The Shoemaker*, xvii.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, xvi; Tina Loo also sees words in this context. She says, “words do not simply describe things; they are value-laden. So when we use words we are both describing the world and making certain implicit judgements about it;” Loo, Tina. *Making Law, Order, and Authority in British Columbia, 1821-1871* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 6.

One scholar who offers a cogent analytical framework with which to examine the re-framing of the San Juan Island Dispute into the Pig War is Hayden White. His (in)famous theory on troping and modes of emplotment shows how stories are crafted with specific purpose, perhaps not always consciously, with a tacit understanding of what the narrative is supposed to mean. Alan Munslow says “White places his emphasis in the writing of history upon discursive practices and determining tropes, offering a formal model which... allows historians to relate the structures of narrative representation to the nature of historical change.”⁴⁹ White offers four main tropes which are defined by their “particular and, therefore, explanatory function.” Metaphor is representational; metonymy is reductionist; synecdoche is integrative; and irony negational.⁵⁰ I argue that the Pig War story of the post-war era represents a story of peace through irony: a pig was the only casualty in a war never fought.

White argues that historians do not objectively report the past but deploy language to define concepts used. Munslow explains “troping means using metaphors to imply meaning and explain events by altering our perceptions, forcing us to look again at objects and concepts from the perspective of something different- signification and resignification.”⁵¹ It is this ability to express ideas through signification that concerns me most. I examine the language and how the term “Pig War” is employed to convey a specific message. Daniel Chandler asserts that “identifying figurative tropes in texts and practices can help to highlight underlying thematic frameworks; semiotic textual analysis sometimes involves the identification of an ‘overarching (or ‘root’) metaphor’ or ‘dominant trope.’”⁵² Along with White’s theory of representation, I use semiotics, the study of signs and language, to further aid my deconstruction of the term and the implications it has on how the Pig War narrative is represented.

I take a semiotic approach because, as Callum Brown attests, “at the very root of all knowledge, all learning, all academic subjects, all education, is language. Words are our very

⁴⁹ Alan Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 151. <accessed 02/08/12> <http://lib.myilibrary.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/Open.aspx?id=47836>.

⁵⁰ Metaphor is often used as an umbrella term for the other figures of speech; Daniel Chandler, *Semiotics: The Basics. 2nd Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 126.

⁵¹ Munslow, *Deconstructing History*.

⁵² Chandler, *Semiotics*, 126.

trade.”⁵³ Words can be conceptualised as signs. A sign is anything that represents something else⁵⁴ and “sign analysis is a basic method of historical analysis.”⁵⁵ Umberto Eco states that “there is a sign every time a human group decides to use and to recognize something as a vehicle of something else.”⁵⁶ For example, “the woman, the moment she becomes ‘wife’, is no longer merely a physical body: she is a sign which connotes a system of social obligations.”⁵⁷ According to Brown, “signs lumped together make a discourse.”⁵⁸ It is through discourse that knowledge is created and disseminated. Chandler argues, “we learn from semiotics that we live in a world of signs and we have no way of understanding anything except through signs and the codes into which they are organized.”⁵⁹ Sign theory is a way to deconstruct the meaning intended behind the use of certain language. I rely heavily on the work of Brown and Chandler as their books provide a comprehensive overview of semiotic approaches designed for beginners to understand. I mainly utilise the contributions of four major semioticians. These men are Ferdinand Saussure (1857-1913), Charles Peirce (1839-1914), Roland Barthes (1915-1980) and Umberto Eco (b. 1930). The work of these four men is foundational to semiotic theory.

Saussure is considered the father of modern semiology. According to Brown, until Saussure, the study of language was just a history of languages, not a theory of them. Saussure’s biggest contribution to semiotics is the observation that signs and ideas come into existence through the interaction of language and speech, or in Saussurean terms, “langue” and “parole.”⁶⁰ Every sign has two parts- a signified and a signifier. The signified is the langue, the mental conception, of the object; while the signifier is the parole, the sound or drawing, of the object. The signified is

⁵³ Callum G. Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians* (Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Ltd., 2005), 37.

⁵⁴ Umberto Eco says that “semiotics is concerned with everything that can be *taken* as a sign. A sign is everything which can be taken as significantly substituting something else. This something else does not necessarily have to exist or to actually be somewhere at the moment in which a sign stands in for it. Thus *semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie*. If something cannot be used to tell a lie, conversely it cannot be used to tell the truth: it cannot in fact be used ‘to tell’ at all. I think that the definition of a ‘theory of the lie’ should be taken as a pretty comprehensive program for a general semiotics;” Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, 7.

⁵⁵ Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians*, 47.

⁵⁶ Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, 17.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵⁸ Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians*, 59.

⁵⁹ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 11.

⁶⁰ Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians*, 34.

not the object itself, but “the pre-existing (or learned) mental conception of the object.”⁶¹ Early scholars, like Saussure, placed the signified before the signifier, but new theories suggest the opposite. After the rise of poststructuralism, most semioticians now argue that “written formats, like prehistoric drawings on cave walls, precede the verbal, putting the signifier before the signified.”⁶² For the Pig War story this distinction confirms that the term was created before it came to represent the larger theme it does today.

Pierce was the founder of the American semiotic tradition. His “formal doctrine of signs” is closely related to logic.⁶³ Pierce designed a model of the sign which further develops how signs operate at the level of communication. His model recognizes three working parts in a sign: 1. “The *representamen*: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material, though usually interpreted as such)- called by some theorists the ‘sign vehicle;’” 2. “An *interpretant*: not an interpreter but rather the *sense* made of the sign;” And 3. “An *object*: something beyond the sign to which it refers (a *referent*).”⁶⁴ The important part of the “Pig War” sign is the interpretant. The sense that is made of the sign, that the Pig War was not actually a war, is shared by the authors and readers of Pig War histories; without this understanding, the term “Pig War” would not make sense.

Chandler points out that “thinking and communication depend on *discourse* rather than isolated signs.” Saussure and Pierce were concerned with identifying language systems and ignored the impact of discourse. For this reason some theorists have abandoned their frameworks to focus on discourse and others have sought to “reformulate a more socially orientated semiotics.”⁶⁵ This occurred as part of the rise of poststructuralism. Whereas structuralists, such as Claude Levis-Strauss, saw signs in terms of strict binaries with naturalized meaning, poststructuralists challenged these structures as essentialism.⁶⁶ Poststructuralists see signs and their interpretants as social constructions, designed by both the creator and consumer of a sign. According to Brown, poststructuralism is related to postmodernism, in the sense that it believes

⁶¹ Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians*, 35.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶³ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 70.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁶⁶ Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians*, 79.

history cannot be neutrally observed and reconstructed, but it also has its own theoretical existence, which allows scholars to use the aspects of postmodernism they agree with but not accept it in its totality.⁶⁷ As Chandler explains, “while we need not accept the postmodernist stance that there is no external reality beyond sign-systems, studying semiotics can assist us to become more aware of the mediating role of signs and of the roles played by ourselves and others in constructing social realities.”⁶⁸ The work of Barthes and Eco exemplify this approach.

Barthes’ contribution to the field came largely after he made the switch from a structuralist to a poststructuralist approach. Inspired by the work of Louis Hjelmslev and Levi-Strauss, Barthes’ main concerns were over connotation and myths. Barthes noted that Saussure’s model of the sign focused on the denotation of its meaning at the expense of connotation. He argues the first order of signification is denotation; connotation is the second order and derives from the denotative sign; there can be multiple connotations to one denotative sign; and a signified can become a signifier on the connotative level.⁶⁹ For the Pig War, it is important to note that “tropes such as metaphor generate connotations.”⁷⁰ It is these connotations that create the meaning of a sign. Chandler explains that connotation “is used to refer to the socio-cultural and ‘personal’ associations (ideological, emotional, etc.) of the sign. These are typically related to the interpreter’s class, age, gender, ethnicity and so on. Connotation is thus context dependant.”⁷¹ The context for the Pig War story is that it was written by historians who were witnesses to violent twentieth century conflicts. The connotations derived in the term “Pig War” are negative thoughts about modern warfare and reflect the ideological standpoint of the authors for a specific audience. This connotative function of the sign is to “construct” an addressee or “ideal reader.”⁷² The ideal reader is one who understands the interpretant of the sign as a message of peace, despite the word “war.”

A related source of meaning to connotation is myth. Chandler asserts: “like metaphors, cultural myths help us to make sense of our experiences within a culture: they express and serve

⁶⁷ Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians*, 75.

⁶⁸ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 11.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁷¹ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 138.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 194.

to organize shared ways of conceptualizing something within a culture.” For Barthes, “myth, like connotation, can be seen as a higher order of signification... the mythological or ideological order of signification can be seen as reflecting major (culturally variable) concepts underpinning particular worldviews.”⁷³ The worldview understood by the interpretant of the Pig War lies in the story’s relation to the Postwar Dream. We live in a violent world that is long overdue for an era of peace, and the Pig War expresses a desire for this Postwar Dream. Chapter three will show how the writing of Pig War histories uses the term with this particular interpretant in mind.

Finally, Umberto Eco is concerned with “signs as social forces.”⁷⁴ He views the meaning of a term as a *cultural unit*. Eco says, “in every culture ‘a unit... is simply anything that is culturally defined and distinguished as an entity. It may be a person, place, thing, feeling, state of affairs, sense of foreboding, fantasy, hallucination, hope or idea.’”⁷⁵ Eco offers a semantic system as a framework for semiotic method. His system declares:

(a) meanings are cultural units; (b) these units can be isolated thanks to the chain of their interpretants as revealed in a given culture; (c) the study of the signs in a culture enables us to define the value of the interpretants by viewing them in a system of positions and oppositions; (d) the postulation of these systems makes it possible to explain how meaning comes into existence.⁷⁶

In much simpler terms, for the Pig War story, there is a cultural value in place when the narrative is told, which makes sense only when the opposite position is also considered. This method of deconstruction is the recognition of absent signifiers, which are signifiers not included in the text, term or code which “nevertheless influence the meaning of a signifier actually used.”⁷⁷ As Mike Vouri observes, “this is a story of peace,” not war.⁷⁸ It is because there were such horrific wars throughout the first half of the twentieth century that a story of peace became so idealized. This message evolved along with the development of the term.

⁷³ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 143, 145.

⁷⁴ Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, 65.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁷⁷ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 243.

⁷⁸ Vouri, *The Pig War*, Acknowledgements.

The last important semiotic principle that guides this thesis is that signs “do not just exist; they also grow.”⁷⁹ Unlike the Saussurean model, which takes a synchronic view on language systems, I believe, like many modern semioticians, that historical factors influence the meaning of signs and they change over time.⁸⁰ A very astute example of this change is illustrated in this Chicago-based trade magazine. Written in 1918 it says:

Pink or blue? Which is intended for boys and which for girls? This question comes from one of our readers this month, and the discussion may be of interest to others. There has been a great diversity of opinion on the subject, but the generally accepted rule is pink for the boy and blue for the girl. The reason is that pink being a more decided and stronger color, is more suitable for a boy; while blue, which is more delicate and dainty is prettier for the girl.⁸¹

Today the choice of colour for boys and girls is the reverse for a variety of reasons. This shows that signs and meaning are not static. A diachronic approach to this topic appreciates that what was meant when people first said, “Pig War” may not have held the same meaning and/or significance as it does today. Part of this project is to show how, over time, the theme of peace became the meaning behind the term. This was a historical process.

To show the historical development of the peace theme, the historical profession of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest will be analyzed, with particular attention to the scholars that contributed to the *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* over the last century. I will also draw upon theories developed by scholars of empire such as Mary Louise Pratt. The purpose is to put a spotlight on the European settler culture within this region and to display the Euro- North American inscription of the past which has often been employed to give a sense of belonging to the land. This approach is, in part, a response to Barthes’ style of discourse analysis which attempts to evaluate “cultural assumptions” as problematic. Chandler asserts that “Barthes is a hard act to follow, but those who do try to analyse their own cultures in this way must also seek to be explicitly reflexive about their ‘own’ values.”⁸² As scholarship has arguably entered its

⁷⁹ John Deely, *Basics of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 23.

⁸⁰ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 141.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 145.

“postcolonial” moment, it is important to take stock of what it means to live in a settler society. Chapter four will investigate the relationship between the “Pig War” story, with its theme of peace, and the history of Pacific Northwest settlement by Europeans.

Postcolonialism is a term with no universal meaning and therefore needs to be defined. For some reason, since imperial ties between Great Britain and the United States were severed over two hundred years ago, the postcolonial lens is not often applied to American scholarship and history.⁸³ Therefore, the question of a relationship between postcolonialism and the Pig War story will be discussed in the Canadian context. Some scholars argue that postcolonialism is a method, while others argue it is a condition. I believe it can be both. But to say only this is to muddy the water. Neil Bresner argues, “if the postcolonial is understood primarily as a methodology, as I think it should be, then it must also be understood primarily as an approach to a condition: the colonial condition. Herein, I think, lies part of the reason for the slippage between understandings of postcolonialism.”⁸⁴ The problem for Bresner is that to say Canada is postcolonial is to ignore the multiculturalism of the country; it adheres to only one version of the past, one of the teleological and nation-building variety.⁸⁵ Laura Moss agrees that “within Canada, nationalism relies on a unified notion of nation that is outdated and exclusionary.”⁸⁶ In the case of Canada, some scholars believe it is a postcolonial nation because it is no longer a colony but a nation under its own power; others argue that Canada remains in a colonial framework in consideration of the Canadian Government’s relationship with its indigenous population. Instead of viewing

⁸³ Jenny Sharpe argues that, “an understanding of the ‘postcolonial condition’ as racial exclusion offers an explanation for the past history of ‘internal colonies’ but not the present status of the United States as a neocolonial power. Although the naming of America as ‘postcolonial’ is intended to displace the center/periphery binarism belonging to colonial systems of meaning, its effect has been to reconstitute the margins in the metropolitan center.” Sharpe believes that a different “periodization” is required to appreciate recent migration to the United States and its new geopolitical role. And, with European presence in North America, some could argue that Native Americans are still being colonized. (In my view this may be true for Canada as well.- Gord); Jenny Sharpe, “Is the United States Postcolonial?: Transnationalism, Immigration, and Race.” *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Fall 1995), 182-185.

⁸⁴ Neil Besner, “What Resides in the Question, ‘Is Canada Postcolonial?’” In *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*. Laura Moss eds. (Waterloo, On: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 43.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁸⁶ Laura Moss, “Is Canada Postcolonial? Introducing the Question.” In *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*. Laura Moss eds. (Waterloo, On: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 10.

postcolonial as the “nation” that has supplanted the “colony,” scholars must grapple with the significance of being a settler (invader) society.⁸⁷

I agree with Diana Brydon that the “post” does not mean “the end of colonialism, but [refers] to what was framed under colonialism and remains after official colonialism is abandoned and colonialism begins to be recognized as a major component of modernity.”⁸⁸ The term colonialism may have died sooner than the practice; it has been argued that institutional discourse has had a role in the ongoing colonialism in both “settled” nations of the West and third world countries predominantly of the East.⁸⁹ Therefore, it is important to make discourse a dialogue across borders and difference. As Brydon asserts, postcolonialism should not be a “Eurocentric theory;” instead, it should be “a hybrid and emergent discourse struggling with the legacies of Eurocentrism.”⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Anna Johnstone and Alan Lawson, on the process of settler culture: “In the founding and growth of cultural nationalism, then, we can see one vector of difference (the difference between colonizing subject and colonized subject: settler-indigene) being replaced by another (the difference between colonizing subject and imperial center: settler-imperium). We can see this, with the benefit of postcolonial hindsight/ analysis, as a strategic disavowal of the colonizing act. In this process, ‘the nation’ is what replaces ‘the indigenous’ and in doing so conceals its participation in colonization by nominating a new ‘colonized’ subject- the colonizer or settler-invader;” quoted in Diana Brydon, “Canada and Postcolonialism: Questions, Inventories, and Futures.” In *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*. Laura Moss eds. (Waterloo, On: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 57; Bresner, *What Resides in the Question*, 44; Len Findlay, “Is Canada a Postcolonial Country?” In *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*. Laura Moss eds. (Waterloo, On: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 297.

⁸⁸ Brydon, *Canada and Postcolonialism*, 56.

⁸⁹ Edward Said’s work famously shows how knowledge of the third world has been historically inscribed by Western intellectuals. He says, “the orientalist reality is both antihuman and persistent. Its scope, as much as its institutions and all-pervasive influence, lasts up to the present;” Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 44; Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994); In response to the question, “Is Canada Postcolonial?”, Bresner responds: “No. It is not *only* that. Canada is not simply postcolonial because the formulation suggests that the story of Canada is only and simply a narrative about its evolution out of a colonial status, begging the chorus of questions about that inference outlined above. Canada is not postcolonial because the very idea of Canada implied in the question is too univocal, monolithic, monocentric, monocultural;” Bresner, *What Resides in the Question*, 48; Judith Leggat observes that “[Thomas] King argues that post-colonialism is not applicable to Native literature, and that the label itself reinscribes many of the ideas of colonialism.” [Lee] Maracle sees *post-colonialism* as a luxury which her people cannot afford, since they continue to live under colonial conditions, both in their material lives and in their artistic expressions;” Judith Leggat, *Native Writing, Academic Theory: Post-colonialism across the Cultural Divide*.” In *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*. Laura Moss eds. (Waterloo, On: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 112; Findlay asks, “Has decolonization, necessarily viewed as a domestic as well as an international project, been anything more than an illusion, the persistence of old dependencies within the aura and aspirations of political independence? What has the empire writing back or striking back amounted to in practice? Why is Said’s orientalism currently being challenged so vigorously by Cannadine’s ornamentalism?”; Findlay, *Is Canada a Postcolonial Country?*, 297.

⁹⁰ Brydon, *Canada and Postcolonialism*, 57.

Part of the project of postcolonial scholarship is to evaluate the cultural significance of history and historical writing. This thesis investigates the historical writing of the Pig War while keeping in mind that this is a region of the world still in a colonial situation. As this story centers on an international conflict between a European and a North American nation, it is easily forgotten that at the same time this is a story of dispossession. As the British battled with Americans for territory, Native Americans struggled to maintain control over the lands they lived on for thousands of years. The histories of the San Juan Island Dispute are not stories of multiculturalism or of native resistance to settlement.⁹¹ I do not believe that such a historical perspective is impossible, but it is still a long way off. Someday, perhaps, there will be a history of the indigenous perspective on the Pig War. But for now, the best contribution to this issue I can make is to turn the spotlight on the Euro-American/Canadian inscription of the historical record.

Before I proceed, I wish to address two glaring ironies within this thesis. First is the focus on the pig. By displaying how this Berkshire boar came to such prominence in the Pig War narrative, I also place a great amount of significance on the pig. My attention to previous historians' focus on the pig elevates my focus on it to hyperbolic proportions. Second, by highlighting the didactic theme of peace, and suggesting that there are strong connections between this theme and the constructed historical identity of British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest, it may seem at times that I am critical of this message. I wish to stress that this is not the case. I think the message of peace is incredibly important, especially in the twenty-first century which has already seen much violence since the 9/11 tragedy. War and violence should be seen as archaic activities, but I fear it will be a long time before such a day arrives. Hence, I write a thesis about histories that espouse the virtue of peaceful negotiations for world leaders. This thesis is as much about my own values as it is about the historians and scholars I interpret.

⁹¹ There are a few mentions of aboriginals in most histories, but these are usual nods to a small fishing station on the island, or that the island was not inhabited, or that American settlers were being harassed by "Northern Indians." An overview of these topics can be found in the following texts; Milton, *A History*, 256. United States Government. *The Northwest Boundary*, 133, 135-136, 149; Richardson, *Pig War Islands*, 43-44; Vouri, *The Pig War*, 34.

Chapter 1

“Some War, Some Pig:”⁹²

The San Juan Island Dispute, 1853-1872.

Historians have not always agreed on what exactly constitutes the “Pig War.” Some think it encompasses the entire San Juan Island Dispute, while others argue it refers more specifically to the “affair of the pig” itself and the following military stand-off.⁹³ Some end the Pig War with the removal of the large American force and British Royal Navy, while still others see the subsequent twelve-year military occupation as a part of the Pig War story.⁹⁴ But all historians agree that there was one necessary condition for the whole debacle. This was the “peculiar language” of the 1846 Oregon Treaty.⁹⁵

This treaty, signed by the British and American governments on June 15, 1846, was designed to settle, once and for all, the Oregon question and to create a permanent border between the two nations on the 49th parallel. The “peculiar language” referred to was scripted in the first article of the treaty as follows:

From the point on the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, where the boundary laid down in existing treaties and conventions between the United States and Great Britain terminates, the line of boundary between the territories of the United States and those of her Britannic Majesty shall be continued westward along the said forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver’s Island, and thence southerly through the middle of the said channel, and of Fuca’s Straits, to the Pacific ocean: *Provided, however,* That the navigation of the whole of the said channel and straits, south of the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, remain free and open to both parties.⁹⁶

⁹² Vouri, *The Pig War*, 211; David Hunter Miller, *San Juan Archipelago: Study of the Joint Occupation of San Juan Island* (Bellows Falls, Vermont: Wyndham Press, 1943), 52.

⁹⁴ Vouri, *The Pig War*; Coleman, *The Pig War*; Neering, *The Pig War*.

⁹⁵ Prevost to Campbell. Nov. 9, 1857. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*. 17.

⁹⁶ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, cover page.

What the authors of this treaty neglected to take into account was that there was a cluster of islands in the middle of “Fuca’s Straits” which made passage through the middle of the strait virtually impossible. The water boundary would have to be made along the Haro Channel or the Rosario Channel. If the boundary was chosen along the Haro, San Juan Island would belong to the Americans; if the Rosario was chosen, the island would belong to the British. Neither side could agree which channel was intended by the treaty.

Why there was such an oversight in this important treaty is not quite clear.⁹⁷ British officials at the time lamented, “it is much to be regretted that there was not annexed to the Treaty of 1846 any map or chart by which the true meaning of the expressions made use of in Article I of that Treaty could have been authoritatively ascertained.”⁹⁸ Historian John Long offers three explanations: “the incompleteness or the inaccuracy of existing maps, a general failure to agree upon the nomenclature of the Pacific Northwest, and, in many instances, the failure of negotiators to employ such maps [that] existed [which referred] to the course of the boundary.”⁹⁹ James McCabe suggests that it may have been an issue of hastiness or laziness. He explains, “the Americans neglected to insist that Haro Strait should be specified in the Oregon treaty, and the British based their claim on incomplete information.”¹⁰⁰ This vague article of the treaty became the underlying condition of the disagreement over ownership of San Juan, which would continue for the next twenty-five years.

The years between the signing of the treaty and the resolution of the San Juan Island Dispute were uneasy ones in the relationship between American and British settlers in the Pacific Northwest. As George Herring asserts, “the Oregon crisis brought out old suspicions and hatreds,

⁹⁷ Interestingly, this is not the only significant cartographic error in 19th century American boundary negotiations. In 1848, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe, forming the border between the United States and Mexico, created a subsequent boundary dispute. The confusion was based on the use of an 1847 map which placed El Paso half a degree too far south and the Rio Grande two degrees too far west, placing the valuable Mesilla Valley and the Santa Rita de Cobre mines in Mexican territory, which was unsatisfactory to American authorities. The dispute was settled by the 1853 Gadsden Purchase. Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: A Legacy of Conflict* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 55-61.

⁹⁸ British Government, *Correspondence Relative to the Occupation of the Island of San Juan by United States’ Troops. August to October, 1859* (London: The Foreign Office, 1859), 1.

⁹⁹ Long, *The San Juan Island Boundary Controversy*, 65-66.

¹⁰⁰ James O. McCabe, *The San Juan Water Boundary Question* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 4.

nearly provoking an unnecessarily and costly war.”¹⁰¹ Although war was averted, the mistrust between the two nations continued and frequent filibustering operations by Americans raised alarm in British North America. On Vancouver Island, it was feared that Americans would overrun the British colony. Governor James Douglas wrote to his superior in London that the Wakefield system of colonization, which he was instructed to employ, could not hold up against the American system of colonization, with their free land grants “prodigiously” strengthening the American’s influence “in this part of the world.” He feared that Americans would soon seize the British property under his care.¹⁰²

For their part, Americans viewed conquest of the West as their “Manifest Destiny” and politicians, spurred on by the Young America movement, pushed to revive the Monroe Doctrine and assert claims to all of North America to the exclusion of every European power.¹⁰³ Great Britain represented a major obstacle to American progress. Sam Haynes comments, “allowing their imaginations free reign, Anglophobes espied an evil empire of Mephistophelean dimensions, convinced that Whitehall was secretly marshalling the full resources of British power in a vast, insidious campaign against them.”¹⁰⁴ He notes, at this time, “talk of a third war with Great Britain” was prevalent.¹⁰⁵ Yet, neither nation desired war. Great Britain was involved in multiple global conflicts, most notably the Crimean and Opium Wars. And the United States, already finished with one major war for territory with Mexico, suffered from internal political strife which exacerbated regional tensions resulting in a civil war. A war in the Pacific Northwest would have been an added strain to both governments.

For Americans in the region, “anglophobia and respect for Britain coexisted uneasily during the antebellum years.”¹⁰⁶ And for the British, fears of annexation and filibustering grew, as a visible American presence around the colony of Victoria increased. Warren Magnuson, co-

¹⁰¹ George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 189.

¹⁰² Douglas to Newcastle. May 17, 1854. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁰³ Yonatan Eyal, *The Young America Movement and the Transformation of the Democratic Party, 1828-1861* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 119.

¹⁰⁴ Sam W. Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 8-9.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 240.

¹⁰⁶ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 184.

creator of the bill for the San Juan Island National Park, commented, “it is difficult to exaggerate the tensions that time and again brought British-American relations to the boiling point in the half century following the War of 1812, or the skill and patience of responsible officials who managed to control the militant popular sentiments on both sides of the Canadian border.”¹⁰⁷

In 1850, James Douglas made his first attempt to secure San Juan and the rest of the islands as British property by commissioning a small fishing station on the southern side of the island. But according to Douglas, British occupation of San Juan was first initiated by “the Agents of the Hudson’s Bay Company in the month of July 1845, and a notice to that effect, engraven on a wooden tablet, was erected on an eminence near the South east point of the Island, a record which is still in existence, but there was no real occupation of the Island, until [the] fishing Station was established... and lastly their pastoral and agricultural establishment was commenced by Mr Griffin in November 1853.”¹⁰⁸ Douglas also authorized the construction of a sheep farm under the management of Charles Griffin of The Puget Sound Agricultural Company, a Hudson’s Bay Company subsidiary. On December 15, Griffin and a team of Kanaka shepherders commenced work on Bellevue Sheep Farm, with 1,350 sheep and other farm animals, including some pigs.

At this time, Douglas also had his first confrontation with an American settler. Richard Cussans’ timber operation on Lopez Island had caught the attention of the governor. The British Foreign Office (FO) reported: “attempts seem to have been made by American citizens to occupy the Arro Islands [sic].” The FO approved Douglas’s efforts to hold the islands as “a *de facto* dependency of Vancouver’s Island, unoccupied by any white Settlement, either British or American, excepting a fishing-station belonging to the Hudson’s Bay Company on the Island of St. Juan [sic].”¹⁰⁹ To execute these orders, Douglas issued a licence to Cussans on July 25, forcing him to pay a duty of ten pence for every load of fifty cubic feet.¹¹⁰ Due to the high duty imposed on his timber, Cussans abandoned his operation, costing him thousands of dollars in wasted labour and logs, some 30,000 feet of it. Cussans reported this confrontation to U.S.

¹⁰⁷ Magnuson, *One-shot War with England*, 63.

¹⁰⁸ Douglas to Molesworth. December 13, 1855. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/12/12> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁰⁹ British Government, *Memorandum Respecting the Island of San Juan* (London: The Foreign Office, 1859), 13.

¹¹⁰ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 88.

officials. In an affidavit on September 11, he swore, “I hereby certify that... I am an American citizen; have located a tract of land on the island above referred to, believing it to be the property of the United States; and that I have never given any security for the payment of any dues whatever to the British government.”¹¹¹ But despite his complaints, Douglas had temporarily removed American presence from the islands.

Two years later, Americans returned to re-assert their claim. The American authorities, led by customs collector Isaac Ebey, assessed the HBC farm \$935 in back taxes for operations on the island. As Griffin did not recognize American authority, he refused payment. In the middle of the night, American Sheriff Ellis Barnes rowed ashore with some fellow Americans, stole several sheep, and held a make-shift auction where he sold the sheep to his compatriots in order to make up the taxes owed. Awoken by his Kanaka employees, Griffin rushed to the rowboats that were clumsily being loaded with sheep. The Americans produced firearms to defend their flight and succeeded in making off with 34 of the animals. Douglas described the sheep heist as an “outrage.”¹¹² He said: “this is an exceedingly annoying affair, and I most heartily regret that our people though dispersed at their various occupations, and taken by surprise, did not shew [sic] a more resolute bearing. The ‘Beaver’ was dispatched to their aid, and was within two hours of catching the fellows in the act, and had she given chase, might have overtaken them and recovered the abstracted property.”¹¹³

The FO reported: “we received from the Hudson’s Bay Company, and from the Colonial Office, accounts of further aggressions on the part of the United States’ authorities upon the Island of San Juan; and more particularly of the forcible seizure and carrying away from that island of certain valuable stock sheep, in payment of taxes levied on behalf and in the name of the United States of America.”¹¹⁴ The American government in turn received a bill from Griffin and

¹¹¹ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 88.

¹¹² Douglas to Grey. May 18, 1855. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹¹³ Douglas to Secretary. April 19, 1855; in Shepard to Labouchere. Feb. 29, 1856. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹¹⁴ British Government, *Memorandum*, 13.

HBC for a sum of £2990 to compensate for the stolen sheep.¹¹⁵ The incident proved to both governments that a resolution of the disagreement was necessary in order to avoid any future collisions.

In 1857, a joint commission of British and American surveyors surveyed the islands to make a decision as to whom the islands belonged. The British side was represented by Captain James Prevost and the American side by Commissioner Archibald Campbell. The two men's working relationship was very strained and each stubbornly insisted on possession of San Juan. Campbell related his difficulty to the Secretary of State: "being fully satisfied, from my own observations, that the Canal de Haro is the main channel, and consequently 'the channel' intended by the treaty, and being supported in this opinion by indisputable contemporaneous evidence of the highest official character, I declined to accede to any compromise."¹¹⁶

For Prevost, the wording of the treaty was his main concern. In his interpretation of these words, the Haro Channel could not be the intended channel because it was not, in his opinion, the most direct route to the mainland, whereas the Rosario was seen as a continuation of the Juan de Fuca Strait.¹¹⁷ Campbell complained that Prevost had "a blind adherence to a tortured interpretation of the meaning of the words of the treaty," which appeared to Campbell as Prevost's "sacred act of duty." Campbell continued, "this perverted reading of the treaty has been his infallible guide throughout my connection with him. And he has so resolutely shut his eyes to the light of the most authentic contemporaneous evidence I have laid before him, not only of the views of my government, but also of his own, that I sincerely believe, though one should rise from the dead to confirm it, he would not give it credence."¹¹⁸ For Campbell, the surveys of the islands were more important than the "peculiar" language of the treaty.

The two men struggled to come to any compromise. Campbell accused Prevost of not having the proper authority to settle the issue, while Prevost accused Campbell of being evasive in his

¹¹⁵ Lewis Cass, *Letter from the Secretary of State, Transmitting A Report relative to the Occupation of the island of San Juan, 1860* (36th Congress, 1st Session), 9.

¹¹⁶ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 11.

¹¹⁷ McCabe, *The San Juan Water Boundary Question*, 23.

¹¹⁸ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 107.

responses and presence during negotiations.¹¹⁹ In fact, Prevost sometimes had trouble even finding Campbell. On August 1, 1859, Prevost informed Douglas, “upon arrival there [Semiahmoo Bay] I found that Mr. Campbell had been absent for about a fortnight, and I could glean no information as to his probable position or movement.” He later reported, “Mr. Campbell was then in the ‘Shubrick,’ professedly on a deer-shooting excursion.”¹²⁰ While it appears that Campbell had more on his mind than just a land survey, Prevost saw the graveness of the situation in hyperbolic proportions. He wrote to Campbell:

I may remark that an act so unprecedented in the history of civilized and enlightened nations, and so contrary to that natural courtesy which is due from one great nation to another, cannot be productive of good, and may, in the end, entail such serious consequences that I am sure both you and I would deplore to the last hour of our existence, any hesitation or neglect on our parts, to do all that lies in our power to avert impending evil.¹²¹

He was disappointed in Campbell’s response:

I cannot recognize your pretensions to catechize me thereupon, and, therefore, I decline to return you either a positive or negative answer to your queries... Notwithstanding the apparent air of moderation with which you have clothed your words, there pervades your whole communication a vein of assumption, and an attempt at intimidation, by exciting apprehension of evil, not well calculated to produce the effect you profess so ardently to desire.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Campbell said to Prevost: “the whole tenor of your correspondence... has led me, upon further reflection, to apprehend that you were governed by instructions which virtually, if not positively, prohibited you from adopting the Canal de Haro as the boundary channel, without reference to your own judgement thereupon. I will, therefore, be obliged to you to inform me whether or not I am correct in this inference... I need hardly say that my instructions left me entirely free to adopt that channel which should be found to correspond with the terms of the treaty and the intention of the treaty makers.” Campbell to Prevost. Dec. 4, 1857. Prevost responded: “I beg to furnish you with an extract from Her Majesty’s Commission, dated the 18th December 1856, by which you will perceive that my powers as Her Majesty’s First Commissioner for determining the aforesaid line of boundary are full and entire.” Prevost to Campbell, Dec. 8, 1857. In Milton, *A History*, 142-144; Prevost to the Admiralty, Aug. 6, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 47.

¹²⁰ Prevost to Douglas. Aug. 1, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 32, 34.

¹²¹ Prevost is referring to the American military occupation of San Juan which occurred in the middle of this correspondence: Prevost to Campbell, July 31, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 34.

¹²² Campbell to Prevost. Aug. 4, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 35.

Prevost notified the Admiralty that “Mr. Campbell’s replies were not only most unsatisfactory, but they were little short of being insulting in their tone. He evaded the principal question at issue, and he denied in angry and discourteous terms, any right on my part to catechize him on the subject.”¹²³ Campbell also told Prevost:

In my discharge of my official duties, it has ever been my desire and disposition to exhibit towards you a spirit of courtesy and frankness. In my private relations, I have never been backward in meeting your most cordial advances. But how far, outside of our legitimate official duties, you have a *right* to expect me to reciprocate with you in a ‘friendly intercourse’ in my official capacity, as Commissioner, is not for you alone to judge... It is hardly necessary for me to add that I am equally desirous with yourself for the preservation of the peace and harmony which now subsist between the United States and Great Britain, and which I trust most sincerely may long remain unbroken.¹²⁴

Campbell also defended his actions to his government back home:

I came out here to do a fair and honest business- to carry out faithfully, on the part of my government, a contract entered into with Great Britain. Although the language of the treaty is as clear as day, and scarcely admits of more than one meaning, I did not plant myself upon its mere letter, but, finding that the lapse of time, the changes of administration in our government, and selfish interests on the part of the British government, instigated by the Hudson’s Bay Company, had enveloped its meaning in an air of obscurity, I made diligent search for evidence which would throw light upon the intention of the negotiators, framers, and ratifiers of the treaty, fully determined, whatever might be the result of my investigations, to give due weight to it, without partiality, fear, or favor.¹²⁵

By 1859, Campbell and Prevost hit a stalemate in negotiations. Prevost offered a compromise channel in the middle, which would have given the Americans the majority of the islands and San Juan to the British. But Campbell rejected this. San Juan was the prize coveted by both sides, and neither was willing to relinquish control of the island. As American gold miners, disappointed by low gold yields on the Fraser River, began to settle the Puget Sound region, including San Juan

¹²³ Prevost to the Admiralty. Aug. 6, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 47.

¹²⁴ Campbell to Prevost. Aug. 8, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 116.

¹²⁵ Campbell to Cass. Aug. 4, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 107.

Island, negotiations between Prevost and Campbell stalled; a confrontation between Griffin and an American would soon intensify the dispute.

June 15, 1859, exactly thirteen years after the signing of the Oregon Treaty, was the “day of the pig.”¹²⁶ Lyman Cutlar,¹²⁷ an American settler on the island, had built himself a small dwelling accompanied by a potato patch, near Charles Griffin’s farm, on one of the company’s most valuable sheep runs. Cutlar’s potato patch was targeted by Griffin’s grazing Berkshire boars. As historian Edmond Meany quipped, “Cutler told Griffin to keep that pig out of his potato-patch. Griffin told Cutler to keep the potatoes out of his pig.”¹²⁸ The pig was not to be told what to do. When Cutlar found that the pig had once again rooted his potatoes, he shot it near the treeline beside his homestead. According to Cutlar, he then went to Griffin’s farm and offered to pay for the destroyed animal. Griffin rejected this offer and instead demanded \$100 for the pig, which Cutlar found too steep and refused to pay. Cutlar later reported to American authorities that he was subsequently informed, in “manner and language... both insulting and threatening,” that he would be taken to jail in Victoria if payment was not made.¹²⁹ HBC Director A.G. Dallas denied these charges.¹³⁰

Griffin was concerned that this pig shooting incident was only one of many conflicts he was going to have with American “squatters,” as more of them settled on the island. He reported to Douglas that “an outrage was committed here today.” He continued: “a man of the name of Cutler, an American, who has very recently established himself on a prairie occupied by me and close to my establishment, he has dug up about one third of an acre in which he planted potatoes and partly very imperfectly enclosed, my cattle and pigs had free access to his patch, one of my pigs, a very valuable Boar, he shot this morning some distance outside of this same patch and

¹²⁶ Thompson, Erwin N. *Historic Resource Study: San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Denver: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1972), i.

¹²⁷ There is no consensus on the spelling of Cutlar’s last name. I will defer to the assertion of Pig War expert and *San Juan Island National Historic Park* historical interpreter Mike Vouri that the spelling is with an “a” as in “Cutlar” and not “Cutler.”

¹²⁸ Edmond S. Meany, *History of the State of Washington* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909), 240. Oddly, Alfred Tunem says, “Mr. Cutler told Griffin to keep his pig out of the patch, but Griffin merely told Cutler to keep the potatoes out of the pig.” An almost verbatim quote of Meany with no citation. Tunem Alfred, “The Dispute over the San Juan Island Water Boundary.” *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (April 1932), 136.

¹²⁹ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 184.

¹³⁰ A.G. Dallas to Harney. May 10, 1860. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 260.

complains the animal was destroying his crop.” Griffin then described the confrontation he had with Cutlar adding that Cutlar came with “threatening language to openly declare he would shoot my cattle if they trespassed near his place.” Griffin feared that “such outrages unless checked in the commencement will render my position here not only a dangerous one as far as I personally am concerned but also the position of my Herdsmen.” Griffin informed his superiors that he “distinctly” told Cutlar that the American “had not a shadow of a right to squat on the Island and much less on the centre of the most valuable sheep run.” Cutlar replied that “he had received assurances from American authorities in Washington Territory that he had a right, that it was American soil and that he and all other Americans squatting or taking up claims would be protected and their claims recognized as being established on American soil.”¹³¹ This attitude, which exemplifies a strong belief in Manifest Destiny, is what caused Griffin to fear that his farm land would soon be overrun by Americans.

Griffin’s fears proved accurate. General William S. Harney, in command of the Pacific troops soon became aware of activities on San Juan and used them to assert American military control of the island. News of the threat issued by Griffin and Dallas to Cutlar reached Harney; he informed his superiors, “I had ordered the company from Fort Bellingham to San Juan Island to protect the American citizens residing on that island from the insults and indignities which the British authorities of Vancouver’s Island did not hesitate to offer them on every occasion.”¹³²

Observing the American military movements, Griffin reported to his superiors. In the evening of Tuesday, July 26, 1859, Griffin “received intelligence of the arrival of a steamer in Griffin Bay.” The next morning he went to investigate and found “the United States’ steamer ‘Massachusetts’ had also arrived, with a party of soldiers on board.” Griffin went down to the wharf and met with the Commander of the “Jefferson Davis” who informed him that “the United States’ Government was landing these forces to build a military station on the island.”¹³³

A few days later, Captain James Hornby wrote: “this morning, I perceive the Americans have formed a camp about 200 yards from the beach, in which they have two howitzers; the ground rises considerably behind the camp, and on either side, at a distance of about 300 yards, it is

¹³¹ BC Archives, Old MS K/RS/Sa5, San Juan Island Correspondence, etc., 1959, Volume 1 of 5.

¹³² Harney to Adjutant General. Aug. 7, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 150.

¹³³ Memorandum by Charles Griffin. July 28, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 57.

flanked by woods... I am assured that the force at the disposal of the American Captain consists of 50 soldiers, with the two howitzers above mentioned, and about the same number of armed civilians; and if they take to the bush, the Magistrate does not see how they could be arrested, at the same time that they might be expected to commit serious depredations on the cattle of the Hudson's Bay Company."¹³⁴ British authorities saw that the Americans were digging in to take possession of the island.

Harney ordered Captain George Pickett to occupy the island. On July 27, Pickett issued Order No. 1:

1. In compliance with orders and instructions from the General commanding, a military post will be established on this island, on whatever site the commanding officer may select.
2. All the inhabitants of the island are requested to report at once to the commanding officer in case of any incursions of the Northern Indians so that he may take such steps as he may deem necessary to prevent any future occurrence of the same.
3. This being United States' territory, no laws other than those of the United States, nor Courts, except such as are held by virtue of said laws, will be recognized or allowed on this island.

By order of Captain Pickett¹³⁵

This movement was met with outrage in Victoria. Calls for a response in kind were made. However, Douglas was instructed by the Colonial Office "not to land troops in the island, or to take any further steps without instructions from this Department or from Lord Lyons, unless the Americans should endeavour to remove by force the British Magistrate from the island, or unless such steps should be required for the protection of the lives and property of British subjects."¹³⁶ The principal officers at Vancouver Island and British Columbia met on August 1 to discuss their options. They determined "it appears probable that, if a collision take place at San Juan, insurrectionary and filibustering movements will ensue both in Vancouver's Island and British Columbia, the great majority of the inhabitants being either citizens of the United States or imbued with their feelings." Therefore the committee concluded, "it is in our opinion impossible

¹³⁴ Hornby to Captain De Courcy. July 30, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 59.

¹³⁵ British Government, *Correspondence*, 13.

¹³⁶ Newcastle to Douglas. Sept. 29, 1859. British Government. *Correspondence*, 44.

to raise any local militia which could be depended upon, without exciting a number of foreigners, most of whom are extremely well-affected in time of peace, but, under the pressure of filibustering expeditions, would be compelled to declare on their side... We consider it under these circumstances more prudent to abstain from everything that can excite a collision at present.”¹³⁷ Combating filibustering had become a recurrent activity for the Royal Navy in the 1850s. In the spring of 1857, the British aided Cornelius Vanderbilt in defeating William Walker’s conquest of Nicaragua.¹³⁸ Frequent confrontations between American filibusters and the Royal Navy in Central and South America made the naval officials in Victoria nervous about exciting a large American population in Victoria at the time. No troops were sent.

Instead, the Royal Navy deployed warships stationed at Esquimalt to keep a close eye on American activities. On August 2, the *Plumper* was sent to Griffin Bay with 46 marines and 15 Royal Engineers.¹³⁹ In total, over the following two months, five ships were emplaced, hosting artillery of 167 guns and personnel of 1,940 sailors.¹⁴⁰ The ships were positioned in the bay to watch the American camp with their broadside guns targeted, thus threatening the hold Pickett had over the island. Captain Granville Haller lamented: “we had violated the military maxim: ‘Never do what the enemy would like you to do!’ for we had concentrated in a place where the enemy could keep us as completely as if we had been corked up in a bottle- a la General Butler on the James River.” In Haller’s view, the Americans were trapped on the island and “the English were masters of the situation... They knew it.” This was “a threat far more humiliating than if they had landed, because neither Pickett nor Casey had means to force the *Tribune* to withdraw from their American harbor, nor from its insulting menace.”¹⁴¹

An American soldier noted the same mismatch in his journal: “files of the *New York Herald* gives anything but a correct view of the situation here. It represents the forces, land and naval, of

¹³⁷ British Government, *Correspondence*, 69.

¹³⁸ Robert E. May. *Manifest Destiny’s Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002

¹³⁹ Vouri, *The Pig War*, 117.

¹⁴⁰ These ships were; The Flag-ship *Ganges* (840 guns, 84 men), the *Tribune* (31 guns, 325 men), the *Pylades* (21 guns, 325 men), the *Satellite* (21 guns, 325 men), and the *Plumper* (10 guns, 125 men); United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*. 167.

¹⁴¹ Haller, Granville O. *San Juan and Secession: Possible Relation to the War of the Rebellion- Did General Harney Try to Make Trouble with English to Aid the Conspiracy?- A Careful Review of his orders and the Circumstances Attending the Disputed Possessions During the Year 1859* (Tacoma: The Tacoma Sunday Ledger, 1896), 13.

each side about equal, whereas the British have at the very least four times as much as much in either land or sea force as ourselves, and in case of an encounter, will whip us like the devil, and we shall have the pleasure of being told we did not fight when we get home. Indeed, if we should be so fortunate as to get there at all.”¹⁴² The situation looked grim and a military confrontation appeared likely.

To avoid bloodshed, Douglas made an appeal to Harney. He wrote: “I must call upon you, sir, if not as a matter of right, at least as a matter of justice and of humanity, to withdraw the troops now quartered upon the island of San Juan, for those troops are not required for the protection of American citizens against British authorities, and the continuance of those troops upon an island the sovereignty of which is in dispute, not only is a marked discourtesy to a friendly government, but complicates to an undue degree the settlement in an amicable manner of the question of sovereignty, and is also calculated to provoke a collision between the military forces of two friendly nations in a distant part of the world.”¹⁴³ Although war was likely not Harney’s primary objective, he was too immersed in his role as protector of American interests to withdraw any troops. Later commentators, such as Haller, would speculate that Harney desired a war with the British for political reasons.¹⁴⁴ When General Winfield Scott arrived, he commented, “if [the dispute] does not lead to a collision of arms, it will again be due to the forbearance of the British authorities; for I found both Brigadier General Harney and Captain Pickett proud of their *conquest* of the island, and quite jealous of any interference therewith on the part of higher authority.”¹⁴⁵ Harney and Pickett had brought Manifest Destiny to this tiny island without permission from their government.

¹⁴² Coulter, *The Pig War, And Other Experiences of William Peck*, 132.

¹⁴³ Douglas to Harney. Aug. 13, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 172.

¹⁴⁴ Haller believed that Harney and Pickett, as Southerners, attempted to drag the U.S. into a war with England so that the South could succeed in their aspirations of independence. Haller, *San Juan and Secession*, 5. Another American officer on the island during the dispute, Captain Lewis Hunt, believed that it was a conspiratorial plot to give the Americans a common enemy. He said in a letter, “I am confident that this whole imbroglio is a disgraceful plot involving General Harney, a dull animal, Mr. Commissioner Campbell, a weak, wordy sort of man; Captain Pickett, to some extent, whose main fault perhaps has been bad judgment in allowing himself to be used as a tool by the main conspirators.” Keith Murray, “Pig War Letters: A Romantic Lieutenant’s Account of the San Juan Crisis.” *Columbia: The Magazine of Northwest History*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Fall 1987), 11, 17; Vouri cautions that there is no proof that a conspiracy ever existed. Vouri, *The Pig War*, 84.

¹⁴⁵ Scott to the Secretary of War. May 14, 1860. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 213.

In Victoria, citizens wondered why the British claim to San Juan was not asserted with more urgency. They saw the American military movement as a direct threat to their sovereignty as a British colony. The *British Colonist* reported: “every new feature in the movements of the forces of the United States, in relation to the occupation of San Juan, indicates a disposition to fortify, colonize, and render it as much a part and parcel of the United States, as San Francisco.”¹⁴⁶ And then a few days later: “we must defend ourselves for the position we occupy to-day, would make the iron monument of Wellington weep, and the stony statue of Nelson bend his brow.”¹⁴⁷ *British Colonist* editor, Amor De Cosmos, claimed “our forces should have been landed.”¹⁴⁸ This was a suggestion that did not seem unreasonable to Douglas, but his superiors and his council all warned him against such action. As Captain Michael De Courcey explained, “in consequence of the territorial right of the Island of San Juan being still in dispute between the two nations, I considered it highly essential to do everything possible to prevent a collision with the United States’ forces, and not disturb the amicable relations existing between the two countries, more particularly at the present time when it was not improbable that Great Britain might be involved in the war raging in Europe.”¹⁴⁹ Since it was still not in the British interest to wage an overseas war with the Americans, British officials sought peaceful solutions. The Foreign Office was greatly relieved when they heard General Harney was to be replaced by General Scott in order for more amicable negotiations to proceed.¹⁵⁰

Scott’s solution, eventually accepted by Victoria’s officials, was to set up a joint military occupation. He said: “without prejudice to the claim of either nation to the sovereignty of the entire Island of San Juan now in dispute, it is proposed that each shall occupy a separate portion of the same by a detachment of Infantry, Riflemen, or Marines, not exceeding 100 men, with their appropriate arms only, for the equal protection of their respective countrymen in their

¹⁴⁶ The British Colonist. August 15, 1859. University of Victoria, *The British Colonist: Online Edition, 1858-1910*. <Accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁴⁷ The British Colonist, “Reply to Governor’s Message about San Juan,” August 17, 1859. University of Victoria, *The British Colonist: Online Edition, 1858-1910*. <Accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁴⁸ The British Colonist, “Why Were Not Troops Landed at San Juan!” August 17, 1859. University of Victoria, *The British Colonist: Online Edition, 1858-1910*. <Accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁴⁹ British Government, *Correspondence*, 54-55.

¹⁵⁰ Russell to Prevost. Oct. 5, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 52.

person and property, and to repel any descent on the part of hostile Indians.”¹⁵¹ Appropriate arms meant that there would be no “employment of cannon.”¹⁵² Thus, a joint military occupation of the island by both nations commenced.

During this occupation of San Juan, General Scott reported “everything tranquil in these islands.”¹⁵³ However, the political tensions on Vancouver Island and Washington Territory heightened as both sides viewed the dispute as a sign that their respective governments were not doing enough to protect their rights. Editorials in the press showed an intense dislike for each other. The *British Colonist* suggested a bribe to Americans would have been better than allowing them to set foot on the island. De Cosmos said: “common sense and dollars should have been sent. The dollar, the Americans worship. If dollars had been used, a different interpretation of the treaty might have been made.”¹⁵⁴ From Washington Territory, the *Pioneer and Democrat* claimed, “we firmly believe that no Representative of British authority should be permitted for a moment upon that soil, if his presence there was to indicate British dominion. We believe the floating of British colours as a token of British occupancy over the Island of San Juan offensive, invasive, and unjustifiable.”¹⁵⁵ The editor of this paper clearly saw the San Juan Island Dispute as a continuation of the epic battle between America’s Manifest Destiny and the antagonisms of John Bull. The previous day, the paper stated, “it remains to be seen if the Government of these United States are of the same complexion, or if we are the legitimate sons of the men of ’76 and ’12 ‘who knew their rights, and knowing dared maintain them.’”¹⁵⁶ The *New York Herald* agreed:

The aggressive spirit of the British Government, always encroaching where it can find a pretext, must be resisted, and now is the opportune time to do so effectively... but the fact is, that they neither know nor care what the lawful boundary is; if they can acquire an additional piece of territory by bamboozling or bullying us, that is all they care. She must be watched and checked, or she will filch her neighbour’s territory upon some pretext or other. Hence the necessity of meeting her claims

¹⁵¹ Scott to Douglas. Oct. 25, 1859. British Government, *Part II. Correspondence Relative to the Occupation of the Island of San Juan by United States’ Troops. October 1859 to July 1860* (London: The Foreign Office, 1860), 35.

¹⁵² Hammond to Secretary of the Admiralty. Dec. 22, 1859. British Government, *Part II. Correspondence*, 29.

¹⁵³ Scott to Floyd. Oct. 27, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 190.

¹⁵⁴ The *British Colonist*, “Reply to Governor’s Message about San Juan,” August 17, 1859. University of Victoria, *The British Colonist: Online Edition, 1858-1910*. <Accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁵⁵ The *Pioneer and Democrat*. Aug. 13, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 86.

¹⁵⁶ The *Pioneer and Democrat*. Aug. 12, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 95.

to the Haro Islands boldly, and upholding our right to every inch of ground on the north-western frontier to which the Treaty stipulation entitle us. There must be no compromising or yielding, though we should be compelled to bring the controversy to a bitter end.¹⁵⁷

Both British and American press were sure of their right to the island and urged decisive action.

The public's militancy was acknowledged by both political entities. Lord Russell issued a memorandum to the Foreign Office which stated, "Sir E.B. Lytton considered the possession of that island so indispensable to the safety of British Columbia, and, if surrendered to the Americans, so certain to result in feuds, and even war, that he regarded it of the highest importance that the claim of the British Government to the island should be firmly adhered to."¹⁵⁸ Marshall Moore, Governor of Washington Territory, argued, "having already conceded from the line of 54-40 to that of the 49, for the sake of peace, neither the honor nor the interests of the United States will admit of further surrender of right."¹⁵⁹ Senator Jacob Howard agreed: "we must reckon with her hilt to hilt; we must then mark down the future boundaries of this country with the point of a sword."¹⁶⁰

Victorians saw the concessions the other way. They argued that Britain had already given up British interests below the 49th parallel by agreeing to the Oregon Treaty and further concessions would be an insult to British interests in the area. They insisted, "the Island of San Juan is of no importance to the United States, except in an aggressive point of view in case of a rupture between the two nations, which God forbid should ever happen; but in case of such a calamity the possession of it would be of the most vital importance to us, for without it, communication with British Columbia could be cut off, the prosperity of Vancouver Island completely destroyed, and the magnificent project for connecting it with the British North American Provinces frustrated."¹⁶¹ Although immediate action was requested by settlers in the area, the San Juan

¹⁵⁷ The New York Herald. Sept. 29, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 97.

¹⁵⁸ British Government, *Memorandum*, 22.

¹⁵⁹ Marshall F. Moore, *Memorial of the Governor of Washington Territory and other Citizens of said Territory*. 40th Congress, 3rd Session. <accessed 02/19/12> http://ia600404.us.archive.org/10/items/cihm_16426/cihm_16426.pdf.

¹⁶⁰ Howard, Jacob M. *Speech delivered in Executive Session of the Senate, April 16, 1869*. <accessed 02/19/12> http://ia600404.us.archive.org/0/items/cihm_15254/cihm_15254.pdf.

¹⁶¹ The British Colonist, "Memorial of the Inhabitants of Vancouver Island. Sept. 5, 1859. University of Victoria, *The British Colonist: Online Edition, 1858-1910*. <Accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

water boundary question was not pressing enough in London or Washington to find a quick resolution.

Soon after, the island question became a side note in greater affairs between the United States and Great Britain. In the wake of the American Civil War, and the subsequent *Alabama* claims, in which the U.S. demanded compensation for British participation on behalf of the Confederate Army, San Juan became an afterthought. This concerned British colonists and the Canadian government. In 1869, George Cartier and William McDougall wrote a letter to London urging them not to forget about the island, as past reparations and negotiations between Great Britain and the United States resulted in a great loss of territory on the Canadian side, such as a large portion of New Brunswick.¹⁶² In Victoria, while the matter of Confederation with Canada was being discussed, De Cosmos reminded the legislature how unsafe they had felt during the San Juan stand-off.¹⁶³ The lack of any decisive action by the British government over the island made it clear that the colony was not a priority.

One legislative member argued that Confederation was an “Imperial necessity.” He said to his fellow colonists: “we must look to our own interests... We are told that Great Britain desires to get rid of all her Colonies.”¹⁶⁴ His observation was astute, as the Colonial Office indeed found its many overseas colonies a heavy financial burden, including Vancouver Island and its “de facto” dependency. After receiving the news that Douglas paid the marines stationed at Esquimalt £2000, Blackwood asked, “is it necessary to maintain the Royal Engineers or Marines any longer in V. Couver Isd on acct [sic] of the San Juan difficulty? It is prejudicial to the interests of B. Columbia where the services of the Engineers are so pressingly wanted for the laying out of Roads... to keep them away from the Colony.”¹⁶⁵ And Douglas reported to the CO that “the Wagon Road from [Port] Douglas through the valley of the Harrison River to the upper Fraser, beyond the mountains, has been necessarily retarded by the withdrawal of the Royal Marines for

¹⁶² Canadian Government, *San Juan Island.- Claims of Canada for losses and damages sustained by Her Majesty's subjects, in repelling Fenian Invasion.- Protection of the Fisheries. Laid before Parliament by Command of his Excellency the Governor General* (Ottawa: Hunter, Rose & Co., 1869), 3.

¹⁶³ British Columbia Legislative Council, *Debates on the Subject of Confederation with Canada*. Reprinted from the *Government Gazette Extraordinary* of March, 1870 (Victoria: Richard Wolfenden, Government Printer, 1888), 75.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁶⁵ Blackwood in Douglas to Newcastle. Dec. 3, 1859. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

service on the Island of San Juan, but the work is still being prosecuted by a Detachment of Royal Engineers under the command of Captain Grant. That force is however insufficient to make much impression this season, on a work of such magnitude.”¹⁶⁶ Without enough man power to build the infrastructure of the new colony, colonial officials viewed marines on San Juan as a heavy and questionable expenditure.

Payment for idle marines represented a major point of contention within the British government on the status of the colonies. Many British politicians such as Gladstone and the Peelites were wondering why they had to pick up the bill for these colonial concerns. The payment of troops created such a large bill for the Colonial Office that when Merivale was authorised to allocate £5000 for more military support to San Juan, he was also instructed to inform Douglas that the colony was to ask for no more money.¹⁶⁷ Blackwood concurred and pointed out that “the former charge [of] £2000, having arisen in consequence of the American occupation of San Juan, the War Office was asked to provide for it.”¹⁶⁸ This reflects the CO’s resistance to paying for the military occupation of the island. As McCabe observed, the objective of the CO was to encourage colonies to prepare for independence for their own sake and to spare the mother country from her burdens.¹⁶⁹ Margaret Ormsby comments, “the suggestion of the Colonial Office that Canada might assume the financial and military responsibility for British Columbia was not unwelcome at Ottawa, where the national ambitions of the new government, and of the business interests which supported it, extended to the outer limits of the continent.”¹⁷⁰

British officials did not see the island as important to the needs of the Empire as local colonists did and the matter was allowed to go to arbitration under the Treaty of Washington of 1871.¹⁷¹ McCabe considers the Treaty of Washington “a triumph for the principle of arbitration

¹⁶⁶ Douglas to Lytton. Aug. 23, 1859. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁶⁷ Hamilton to Merivale. Sept. 5, 1859. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁶⁸ Blackwood in Douglas to Newcastle. Dec. 3rd 1859. University of Victoria, *Colonial Despatches: The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1846-1871*. <accessed 10/10/11> <http://bcgenesis.uvic.ca/>.

¹⁶⁹ McCabe, *The San Juan Water Boundary Question*, 17.

¹⁷⁰ Margaret A. Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History* (Vancouver: Macmillan, 1964), 236.

¹⁷¹ For a detailed treatment of the negotiations and subsequent Treaty of Washington see: Long, *The San Juan Island Boundary Controversy*, 331-563; Hunter Miller, *Northwest Water Boundary: Report of the Experts summoned by the German Emperor as Arbitrator Under Articles 34-42 of the Treaty of Washington of May 8, 1871, Preliminary to his Award dated October 21, 1872*. Miller, eds. and trans. (Seattle: University of Washington, 1942).

[and] undoubtedly represented a great step forward in Anglo-American relations.”¹⁷² As European nations, such as Italy and Germany, were uniting and militarizing, friendly American relations became crucial to England; therefore the matter of San Juan was not as important as a strong economic and military partnership with the United States.

Britain accepted a German arbitration decision, following the logic of Dr. Ferdinand Grimm, which stated, “most in accordance with the true interpretation of the treaty... is the claim of the Government of the United States that the boundary line between... should be drawn through Haro Strait.”¹⁷³ In 1872, the British troops on the island were ordered to vacate their garrison and the island became officially American territory.

This saga, to become known as the “Pig War,” is today considered a minor event in Anglo-American relations. Because there was no war, it does not receive the same kind of attention as the Revolutionary War or the War of 1812. But, as the language used by the nineteenth century press and officials suggests, the occupation of San Juan was seen as the marshalling stage for a third major war. American soldiers, such as William Peck, were mildly amused by the pig shooting story; but this amusement was overshadowed by a real concern that they would soon be embroiled in a futile and costly battle with the British.¹⁷⁴ British officials were even less amused, and very much alarmed that they may be engaged in further continental warfare on the “edge of empire.” And yet, despite all this concern, San Juan would soon be forgotten as the United States dealt with the trauma of a civil war while Great Britain re-evaluated her colonial situation. The San Juan Island Dispute would be “relegated to the status of a vignette, a footnote in history.”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² McCabe, *The San Juan Water Boundary Question*, 104.

¹⁷³ Miller, *Northwest Water Boundary*, 29.

¹⁷⁴ Coulter, *The Pig War, And Other Experiences of William Peck*, 93-132.

¹⁷⁵ Tim O’Gorman, *The Pig War*, MA Thesis (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho, 1980), 4.

Chapter 2

“A Pig That Nearly Caused a War:”¹⁷⁶

How a Berkshire Boar Went Down in History.

Historical writing on the San Juan Island Dispute went through what I identify as four distinct phases leading up to the Postwar period. First, there was a construction of memory, where details of the event were foggy and the story was told to amuse more than anything else. The second period was of nation-building type histories; early twentieth century historians placed the dispute within the context of forming Washington State and British Columbia. The third period, from approximately 1920-1950 (with some overlap from the second period and into the fourth), is more difficult to define. It was a period of mid-twentieth century historical writing which did not find the San Juan Island Dispute particularly important, and its significance almost forgotten. After World War II, however, a new resurgence of interest in the dispute, with a focus on the peaceful settlement, led to the fourth period of Postwar (or Pig War) historians. This last period perseveres up to the twenty-first century and represents the dominant perspective on the meaning of the Pig War.

By the end of the nineteenth century, stories of the San Juan Island Dispute were few. Some were early prototypes of state forming histories, such as Hubert Howe Bancroft’s version in his well known “History of British Columbia.” Others were written for political purposes to justify personal actions taken during the dispute, such as presentations made by Granville Haller in the 1890s. And still others were written for general amusement and recreational purposes, such as a piece, in 1896, by a retired American officer promoting the island as a sportsman and nature lover’s “paradise.”¹⁷⁷ The story was also told as an amusing anecdote to entertain late-nineteenth-century youths.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Ralph, *A Pig That Nearly Caused a War*.

¹⁷⁷ Brooke, *San Juan Island*.

¹⁷⁸ Ralph, *A Pig That Nearly Caused a War*.

In 1888, an article by long time contributor to *Harper's Magazine*, Julian Ralph, appeared in the *St. Nicholas Magazine for Young Folks*. Ralph discovered an event so strange and yet unheard of, a mere seventeen years after its conclusion, that he felt it would be a wonderful little piece of anecdotal history to share with a younger generation. He wrote: "in no history that I have been able to find, and in no popular book of reference that I have seen after a great deal of searching, is there any account of the fact that in the year 1859 a pig almost plunged us into a war with Great Britain. Yet when I was in the beautiful, rose-garnished English city of Victoria, on Vancouver Island, close to the Pacific coast of Washington Territory, I found many English subjects who had a great deal to say about that pig, and about the mischief caused by it."¹⁷⁹ Ralph's tale was a mix of historical facts and hearsay and an example of how quickly events and actors can be forgotten, altered, and/or mythologized. After recognizing a dearth in historical material on the San Juan Island Dispute, Ralph relates his version of the story, complete with inaccurate geographical locations, wrong names and incorrect occupations.

Ralph's version of the main event went as follows: "a man named Hubbs, who was pasturing sheep on the southern end of the island of San Juan, had for a neighbour, on the north end, a man named Griffiths. This Griffiths was employed to raise pigs for the Hudson's Bay Company, that old and famous institution which has existed for two hundred and fifty years."¹⁸⁰ (See appendix A for a great illustration of the pig's demise). This beauty of a sentence incorporates all the errors above noted. To quickly assess the damage: Hubbs was a customs collector residing on the island near Charles Griffin's (not Griffiths) sheep farm. Griffin was not there to raise pigs and Lyman Cutlar (not Hubbs) was not there to raise sheep. Griffin had a sheep farm and Cutlar was a homesteader with a potato patch. Finally, the HBC farm was established on the south end of the island; the British garrison, built for the joint-military occupation, was situated on Garrison Bay at the North-Western end of the island.

In Ralph's defense, documents on the event were not as readily available to him as they were to twentieth century and current historians. And the correct names of the immediate actors in the

¹⁷⁹ Ralph, *A Pig That Nearly Caused a War*, 371.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 372.

pig incident were not even known by everyone at the time of the dispute.¹⁸¹ But the interesting aspect of this version is that he recounts this story after interviewing citizens from Victoria. What his piece shows is how a collective memory can quickly mythologize an event. Victorians were no longer sure who did what exactly, but they were able to recount the general idea of what happened and that the story starred a pig.

This article offers some early signs, in the semiotic sense, of how the dispute would be historically constructed over the next century. During this time, the event was never referred to as the “Pig War” but there are similar connotations surrounding how Ralph presents his story. His emphasis on the “pig that nearly caused a war,” connotes mere mischief or a delightfully innocent story from America’s past in the 1860s. The absent signifier in this manner of presentation is that the 1860s were an incredibly turbulent and violent time in American history. The tragedy of the American Civil War profoundly shaped the psyche of the American people in the late nineteenth century. This story was a distraction from the generally violent memories of the 1860s. Ralph commented:

Our country was then on the eve of a war the most awful in all history, and this comparatively slight incident made but little impression upon our people, all wrought up, as they were, over the great questions which turned upon the issue of that terrible conflict. It was very different with the people of Victoria and the great island of Vancouver. Theirs was then, and has since been, a peaceful existence, and the shock and excitement caused when one of their pigs all but brought war to their doors made a deep impression on their minds.¹⁸²

Ralph suggests that this “war that was never fought,” was a merely a “slight incident.”¹⁸³ It was only fretted over by Victorians who generally lived a “peaceful existence.” Hence his framing of the Pig War story was also about peace, not in a didactic sense, but in a therapeutic sense for an audience dealing with the fallout of a devastating war. This is not very dissimilar from the Postwar Dream, but it lacked the prescriptive function that historians would give to their histories

¹⁸¹ William Peck records in his military journal that it was a “Mr. Sawyer” who shot the pig instead of Cutlar. Coulter, *The Pig War, And Other Experiences of William Peck*, 99.

¹⁸² Ralph, *A Pig That Nearly Caused a War*, 371.

¹⁸³ Dawson, *The War That Was Never Fought*.

a century later. But to suggest that Victorians' existence in the middle of the nineteenth century was "peaceful" ignores the violent process of colonization of the time. Ralph was likely unaware, or neglectful of the fact, that during this period Aboriginal peoples were dying from disease, being moved from their homes, threatened with "gunboat diplomacy," and violently resisting colonial efforts as well, as in the case of the Chilcotin War of 1864.

Ralph's piece reflected how the San Juan story was largely anecdotal at the end of the nineteenth century. But as the United States and the British Commonwealth moved toward rapprochement, the greater impact of the San Juan Island Dispute was on the verge of becoming part of American and Canadian history. The turn of the century saw a rise in interest for the San Juan story. Historians wanted to show how this dispute fit into the larger history of their nation-states. A state-forming political context, unique to Bancroft's work in the nineteenth century,¹⁸⁴ became in vogue by the early twentieth century. It was within a desire to form national, provincial and state identities that early twentieth century historians followed Bancroft's example.

Bancroft was the first historian to recognise that the dispute held positive implications for American-Canadian international relations. In a very small part of his extensive histories on the Pacific Coast, he concluded his section on San Juan by stating, "great was the disappointment of the people of British Columbia, [but] the award was most courteously accepted, and within a few weeks orders were given by the imperial government for its troops to evacuate San Juan. The greatest good feeling had all along existed between the officers and soldiery, and three hearty cheers were given by the Americans on the departure of the royal marines."¹⁸⁵ This celebration of an amicable settlement would become a large part of the "Pig War" story, but for early twentieth century historians it was not nearly as important as how the event was part of their own local history. This kind of history emphasised the important role pioneering families had in the development of the modern society. The pig held very little weight to the story and was seen as a minor side note in the larger story of settlement.

¹⁸⁴ Chad Reimer observes that Bancroft's "unifying theme [was] the region's move into civilization and into history itself." Chad Reimer, *Writing British Columbia History, 1784-1958* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 37.

¹⁸⁵ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: Vol. XXXII, History of British Columbia 1792-1887* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1887), 638.

Early twentieth century interpretation of the Pacific Northwest comes predominantly from prominent historians, Frederick Jackson Turner and Edmond Meany. According to John Findlay, although Meany was friends with, and greatly influenced by, Turner, these men had different perspectives on the significance of the West. Where Turner saw the frontier as “closed,” Meany saw it as a land of vast potential. Findlay also argues that Meany was “disinclined to think in such interpretive terms” as Turner because he had a closer association with “living pioneers.”¹⁸⁶ While they may have had differences in interpretation, these men did share a belief that American settlement of the area was natural and inevitable, and that it was the inherent desire of Americans to be free which shaped this settlement. The settlement of the West by pioneers was what gave the region its identity.

In an effort to show how Turner shaped American historical thought, Rush Welter argues that Turner’s interpretation of the frontier lay in the mythical standing Manifest Destiny and Jacksonian Democracy had on the American psyche. These two phenomena were closely related through their common western orientation, and have been viewed as what protected America from the detrimental effects of overgrowing metropolises witnessed in Europe.¹⁸⁷ As BC historian Richard Mackie observes, “the Oregon Trail migrations of the early 1840s provided an evocative founding myth of a promised land won through endurance and struggle.”¹⁸⁸ Indeed, for Turner, Meany, and other Pacific Northwest historians up to World War II, the region was not entirely unique from American history but *was* American history. The West was where all the grand American ideals were realized.

Turner identified “pioneer individualism” as the basis for successful democracy,¹⁸⁹ and of utmost importance in American history.¹⁹⁰ Meany likewise applauded the pioneer spirit, proclaiming, “let us, in profound gratitude, clasp the hands of the white haired remnants of that

¹⁸⁶ John Findlay, “Closing the Frontier in Washington: Edmond S. Meany and Frederick Jackson Turner.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* Vol. 82, No. 2 (April 1991), 67.

¹⁸⁷ Rush Welter, “The Frontier West as Image of American Society 1776-1860.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (January 1961), 2-3.

¹⁸⁸ Richard Mackie, *Trading Beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific 1793-1843* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), xxiv.

¹⁸⁹ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin), 15. <accessed 2/25/12>

http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/pdocs/turner_frontier.pdf.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 2.

noble band of men and women, but above all let us press forward, carrying the torch of enlightened progress given to us by the pioneers.”¹⁹¹ The Pacific Northwest of this time was saturated with pioneer culture. Meany viewed the San Juan Island Dispute as a great victory of American pioneers over the “bravado and grasping boldness on the part of the Hudson Bay Company and its backers.”¹⁹²

A pioneer identity for the Pacific Northwest during Meany’s period was constructed as a Manichean battle between Americans and the HBC. The San Juan Island Dispute offered a perfect model of this conflict. As there existed one HBC farm surrounded by a smattering of American settlers on the island, it was a microcosm of the larger battle. In 1931, Alfred Tunem placed the blame for the dispute squarely on the shoulders of the HBC observing “later on, when conflict actually began, the Hudson’s Bay Company did everything within its power to have England hold San Juan Island, and the British Government did everything possible short of war to make her claim for Rosario Straits as a boundary effective.”¹⁹³ He also claimed that “the Hudson’s Bay Company’s officials urged the Indians of the north to molest the American citizens in order to frighten them from the island. The British subjects were never disturbed.”¹⁹⁴ There is no proof that the HBC or Douglas ever did such a thing; in fact, there is more evidence that the British aided settlers in the Puget Sound region with defense from such attacks.¹⁹⁵ The scapegoating of the HBC was typical for American historians of the time.

The nation-building historians of the early twentieth century were able to build on the abundant evidence of hostility between pioneers and the HBC in the nineteenth century. At the time of the San Juan Island Dispute, they were indeed very suspicious of each other. For example, in 1859, Commissioner Campbell wrote back to Washington, “the British government,

¹⁹¹ Edmond Meany, “First American Settlement on Puget Sound.” *The Washington Historical Quarterly* Vol. 7, No. 2 (April 1916), 143.

¹⁹² Meany, *History of the State of Washington*, 242.

¹⁹³ Alfred Tunem, “The Dispute over the San Juan Island Water Boundary.” *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (January 1932), 45.

¹⁹⁴ Alfred Tunem, “The Dispute over the San Juan Island Water Boundary.” *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (July 1932), 196.

¹⁹⁵ Tunem cites an unknown source speaking at the 35th Congress; his evidence amounts to little more than political hearsay. Alfred Tunem, “The Dispute over the San Juan Island Water Boundary.” *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (July 1932), 196; Evidence of the British helping Americans can be found in a memorial of the San Juan residents to General Harney in which they thank the British authorities for protection given. *Memorial of American Citizens on San Juan To General Harney*, United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 149.

instigated by the Hudson's Bay Company, have long coveted the possession of the island."¹⁹⁶ Despite American citizens praising the HBC for protecting them from attack by Native Americans, General Harney informed his superiors that he ordered troops to San Juan to "protect" Americans from HBC "indignities."¹⁹⁷ The resentment Harney harbored for the HBC is shown in the many dispatches he sent about them. Harney was a hero to the pioneers and more importantly his character and actions provided the early Pacific Northwest historians with an iconic HBC conqueror, despite the fact that his anti-HBC obsessions were inconsistent and incoherent.¹⁹⁸

At the turn of the twentieth century, British Columbian historians were also in their "pioneer" phase of historical writing.¹⁹⁹ But at the same time they were intent on differentiating themselves from the American experience. Like American historians they wanted to legitimize their society, but wanted to do it in a way that was uniquely Canadian.²⁰⁰ Frederick Howay defended the HBC from American historians by pointing to the violent American experience on the frontier.²⁰¹ And E.O.S. Scholefield argued "with the advent of the Hudson's Bay Company the history of British

¹⁹⁶ Campbell to Cass. Sept. 3, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 119.

¹⁹⁷ Harney to the Adjutant General. Aug. 7, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 150.

¹⁹⁸ Vouri asserts that much of this hatred stems from the mentorship provided to Harney by Andrew Jackson. He says, "the influence of Old Hickory manifested itself time and again in Harney's stormy career. Jackson harbored a hatred for the British resulting from a trauma suffered as a boy during the Revolutionary War... Harney took notes and soon formed his own pathological hatred for all things British," Vouri, *The Pig War*, 53; Harney was never able to decide how much influence the HBC had on the British government or if it was the British government controlling the HBC. In August 1859, he was convinced that Douglas "commands the British navy in the Sound. This accounts, in some measure, for the use of the British ships of war in the supervision of the interests of the Hudson's Bay Company. Harney had been informed that the Royal Navy has never been used for HBC services, yet he was not sure he believed this. Later that month, he would accuse the HBC of instigating Native attacks to drive Americans from lands they occupied. He said, "I knew the exacting policy of the Hudson's Bay Company would not hesitate to adopt any measure deemed necessary to insure their success, for their history has shown this." The next month, Harney downgraded the HBC's level of power, stating, "I trust the British government will see how useless it will be for them to attempt to maintain a course of conduct that exposes them to the reflection of having used unworthy means to obtain that which they have no claim, and showing the Hudson's Bay Company to be a willing cat for extracting the chestnuts from the fire." Harney now figured the HBC was simply a pawn in the control of the British Empire. Either way, the Hudson's Bay Company was an obstacle to what John O'Sullivan referred to as America's "high destiny." Harney to the Adjutant General. Aug. 7, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 151; A.G. Dallas to Harney. May 10, 1860. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 260; Harney to Adjutant General. Aug. 29, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 178; Harney to Scott. Sept. 14, 1859. United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 182; John L. O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity" in *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations Volume I: To 1920* (Dennis Merrill and Thomas G. Peterson eds. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2005), 198.

¹⁹⁹ Reimer, *Writing British Columbia History*, 34.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 34, 44.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 92.

Columbia really commences. The early history of Canada on the Pacific is, in fact, but the story of the occupation of this western land by that company.”²⁰² For these historians, the men of the HBC and the British authorities were the heroes. The British actors of the San Juan Island Dispute were lionized for their heroics in the same manner Americans worshipped their champions. Scholefield proclaimed, “great credit is due to Sir James Douglas for the manner in which he conducted affairs during this crisis. It is certain that only by his diplomacy and tact a great disaster was averted.”²⁰³ Thirty years later, assessments of Douglas became more balanced; Walter Sage noted Douglas’s attitude was “more bellicose than that of the naval commanders.”²⁰⁴

The next phase of San Juan history is one of a slight dearth. The major work done on the San Juan Island Dispute primarily was that of David Hunter Miller. Miller was a well-known American lawyer and treaty expert, who famously drafted the covenant of the League of Nations and headed the U.S. delegation to the 1930 Hague Convention for a codification of international law. His work on the dispute was to publish verbatim some of the official correspondence from the dispute as well as the arbitration decision.²⁰⁵ For historians of the period, the San Juan Island Dispute was not seen as an event worth spilling much ink over. For example, in Donald Creighton’s well known works on Canadian history, San Juan is not mentioned once, despite both the *Alabama* claims and the Treaty of Washington being discussed.²⁰⁶ Edgar McInnis couches San Juan within the claims and the treaty, but does not explain what the dispute was.²⁰⁷ In *Colony to Nation*, Arthur Lower dedicates a subordinate clause in one sentence to San Juan.²⁰⁸

More locally to BC, Margaret Ormsby offered a handful of sentences to San Juan, framed in the older state-forming historical context. She concludes: “now that San Juan Island had been awarded by the Emperor of Germany to the Americans, everyone on Vancouver Island was determined, for reasons of security, prestige and commercial benefit, to have the railway terminus

²⁰² Scholefield, E.O.S. *British Columbia Before Confederation: Some odds and ends of early history, from 1776 to 1864* (Victoria BC?: s.n., 1899? Microfilm), 64. <Accessed 28/05/12> http://archive.org/details/cihm_14299 .

²⁰³ Ibid., 68.

²⁰⁴ Walter Sage, *Sir James Douglas and British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1930), 280.

²⁰⁵ Miller, *Northwest Water Boundary*; Miller, *San Juan Archipelago*.

²⁰⁶ Donald Creighton, *Dominion of the North: A History of Canada* (Toronto: The Macmillan Co., 1957); Donald Creighton, *The Story of Canada* (Boston: The Riverside Press, 1959).

²⁰⁷ Edgar McInnis, *Canada: A Political and Social History* (Toronto: Rinehart and Co., 1958), 317-322.

²⁰⁸ Lower, Arthur. *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), 361.

at Esquimalt.”²⁰⁹ Ormsby’s perspective was shaped by her mentor Sage and the writing style of Creighton.²¹⁰ Her analysis of San Juan was a reiteration of the early twentieth century position and written with a large scope as in Creighton’s work. By writing a BC history, San Juan clearly needed to be addressed, but in a similar fashion to her contemporaries it did not get a very close look, for reasons I cannot explain.

By the end of this mid-twentieth century period, there was also development in the American perspective on the HBC. In 1960, George Frykman proclaimed, “the time is propitious for a careful consideration of the basic concepts involved in the writing and study of American history and particularly, of the history of the Pacific Northwest.”²¹¹ He criticised earlier historians for adopting a focus too negatively influenced by the perspectives of pioneers, asserting, “historical thought in the pioneer phase provides the people with a poor vehicle for interpretation since it is all anchor, with no sail or rudder.”²¹² Frykman argued that historians needed to look beyond the pioneer settlement and recognize other aspects of the region’s history.

When the *Washington Historical Quarterly*, previously edited by Meany, was cancelled after Meany’s death, the emergent *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (PNQ) was designed to be much more methodologically professional. Consequently, the PNQ “devoted less attention to Northwest pioneers than its predecessor and far more attention to the scholarship of historians.”²¹³ The works of Meany and Turner were put under a critical lens and their assertions scrutinized. Rush Welter applauded Turner for being an interpretive visionary, a “poet,” but not a very good historian.²¹⁴ Missing from Turner and Meany’s vision of the Pacific Northwest was how intimately, and positively, linked this American history was with the Canadian history of the HBC.

Keith Murray’s 1961 article, “The Role of the Hudson’s Bay Company in the Pacific Northwest History,” answered the call and placed a greater, more positive, emphasis on the HBC influence in Pacific Northwest history. Murray argued, “while [the HBC] no longer plays a

²⁰⁹ Ormsby, *British Columbia*, 256.

²¹⁰ Reimer, *Writing British Columbia History*, 129-134.

²¹¹ George Frykman, “Regionalism, Localism the Pacific Northwest in American History.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (October 1952), 251.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 254.

²¹³ Findlay, *Closing the Frontier*, 69.

²¹⁴ Welter, *The Frontier West as Image*, 6.

significant role in Northwest affairs, its first decades were of such profound importance to the opening of the old Oregon Country and British Columbia that it is difficult to tell of its contributions without seeming to indulge in wild exaggeration.”²¹⁵ Murray identified the early pioneer emphasis as a reason for the lack of scholarly attention to the HBC. He commented:

Curiously, the Americans who wrote the early history of the Northwest were singularly reluctant to give the Company credit for the role that it did play in the governing and development of the region. Partly, of course, this was due to the fact that many of those who wrote the accounts had unhappy personal quarrels with the management of the Company, or were so deeply suspicious from prior indoctrination that every act of the Company was looked upon as part of a sinister conspiracy by an organization of foreigners to destroy honest American citizens going about their daily business on American soil.²¹⁶

Murray recognized many grievances recorded against the HBC. But he disproved these arguments.²¹⁷ Tying his work into a Pacific Northwest identity, Murray concluded that, “the hundreds of thousands of adults who have moved to the state of Washington in the 20th century and their children, born in the last few decades, need constantly to be reminded of the past in order to understand the present. An unprejudiced study of the Hudson’s Bay Company is essential to this understanding.” He pointed to a project by the *Washington State Historical Society*, in which they searched for descendants of employees of the HBC, as an example of the importance to include the HBC in the historical narrative.²¹⁸ By the early 1970s, more historians publishing in the PNQ were writing about the HBC and British influence on the territory, thus solidifying this historiographical “turn” in Pacific Northwest history.²¹⁹ Murray’s book, *The Pig War*, is exemplary of this HBC turn and the new positive imagining of the HBC’s role in Pacific Northwest history. He rejects Tunem’s assertion that the HBC was to blame for the conflict over

²¹⁵ Keith Murray, “The Role of the Hudson’s Bay Company in Pacific Northwest History.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Vol. 52, No. 1 (January 1961), 24.

²¹⁶ Murray, *The Role of the Hudson’s Bay Company*, 30.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

²¹⁹ Stuart Anderson, “British Threats and the Settlement of the Oregon Boundary Dispute.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Vol. 66, No. 4 (October 1975), 153-160; Barry Gough, “British Policy in the San Juan Boundary Dispute, 1854-72.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Vol. 62, No. 2 (April 1971), 59-68.

the island. He cites Thomas McCabe's earlier work affirming an international relations oversight as the cause of the ownership confusion.²²⁰ Murray argues that any aggressive or potential war mongering came from American military personalities, such as General Harney and Captain Pickett, and to a lesser extent British Columbian Governor James Douglas.²²¹ This interpretation has been shared by subsequent historians.²²²

Murray's book is also the first influential work to explicitly refer to this event as the "Pig War." The new use of this term appears to coincide with a shift in emphasis on the event; by the mid-twentieth century the event goes from being the San Juan Question, a small part of a larger battle for state and territory, into the "Pig War," a story of negotiation and peace. The pig would become the focal point of the story and the "hook" to catch potential readers, while the overall theme of peace is emphasised and intertwined with this new moniker. From this point on, historical writing on the San Juan Island Dispute carries this theme of peace. How this theme came to dominate the narrative, and what meaning comes with such a particular construction of the story, warrants further investigation.

²²⁰ Murray, *The Pig War*, 23.

²²¹ Ibid., 7, 5.

²²² Vouri, *The Pig War*; Kaufmann, *The Pig War*; Coleman, *The Pig War*; Neering, *The Pig War*.

Chapter 3

“The So-Called Pig War:”²²³

Language and History

On October 15, 1859, four months after the pig was shot, *The London Illustrated Times* published an article titled, “The San Juan Difficulty.”²²⁴ During the same year, *The New York Herald* and *The New York Times* were trying out a wide variety of names: “The Boundary Difficulty,”²²⁵ “Affairs at San Juan,” “The Boundary Question,” and a more actor specific, “Commissioner Campbell and the San Juan Difficulty.”²²⁶ Other variations included, “The North-Western Boundary Dispute With England,”²²⁷ “The San Juan Quarrel,”²²⁸ and the popular, “Imbroglia at San Juan.”²²⁹ British actors at the event largely referred to it as “the difficulty.”²³⁰ Viscount Milton termed it the “San Juan Water Boundary Question,” which would also be used by early historians.²³¹ But whether it was called “The Affair of the Hog,”²³² “The Episode of the Pig,”²³³ a “dispute,”²³⁴ “trouble,”²³⁵ a “controversy,”²³⁶ or nothing at all,²³⁷ one thing is clear, in print, it was not being called the “Pig War.”²³⁸

²²³ United States Government. An act to authorize the establishment of the San Juan Island National Historical Park in the State of Washington, and for other purposes. (80 Stat. 737) Sept. 9, 1966. In Kelley June Cannon, *San Juan Island National Historical Park Administrative History* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1997), 165.

²²⁴ *The Illustrated London News*, “The San Juan Difficulty,” October 15, 1859.

²²⁵ *New York Times*, Sept. 24, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 83.

²²⁶ *New York Herald*, Sept. 24, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 85-86.

²²⁷ *New York Herald*, Sept. 27, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 91.

²²⁸ *New York Times*, Sept. 30, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 97.

²²⁹ *The Washington Intelligencer*, Sept. 24, 1859. British Government, *Correspondence*, 81.

²³⁰ Commander R.C. Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island. An Account of their Forests, Rivers, Coasts, Gold Fields, and Resources for Colonisation* (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1862), 39. Scott to Douglas. Nov. 2, 1859. British Government, *Part II. Correspondence*, 40; A.G. Dallas to Harney. May 10, 1960. British Government, *Part II. Correspondence*, 82.

²³¹ Milton, *A History*, 8; H.F. Angus, F.W. Howay and W. Sage. *British Columbia and the United States: The North Pacific Slope from the Fur Trade to Aviation* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1942), 128; Brooke, *San Juan Island*; E.H. Wilson, “San Juan Island,” *The Beaver* (September 1927), 70.

²³² Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft*, 616.

²³³ Sage, *Sir James Douglas and British Columbia*, 265.

²³⁴ Scholefield, *British Columbia Before Confederation*, 68.

²³⁵ F.W. Howay, *British Columbia: The Making of a Province* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1928), 183.

One of the earliest documents to use the term “Pig War” in print is a 1949 PhD dissertation by John Long Jr. His thesis is called “The San Juan Island Boundary Controversy,” which shows that Long did not think of the whole dispute as the Pig War. However, he labelled one chapter of the paper the “‘Pig War’: the Harney-Douglas Conflict”²³⁹ (see appendix B). For Long, the immediate fallout after the pig shooting was the Pig War. How he came to know this term, or whether by some coincidence he coined it, is unknown. The mystery is that no scholar prior to Long made use of the term and its use did not immediately catch on after the publication of his thesis. It is also strange that Long wrote his thesis at Duke University and lived his life on the East Coast of the United States.²⁴⁰ All other use of the term, before its universalization in the 1960s, comes from the Puget Sound region, which has led to my speculation, and that of some San Juan Islanders, that the term originates from the island. Long admits that all his knowledge of how the dispute was seen at the local level comes from outside sources and not from his own research.²⁴¹ So how Long came to know or employ the term is very odd. Perhaps his time in the American military during the Second World War exposed him to some of the region’s vernacular.

In 1958, Lucille McDonald published an article in the *Seattle Times* titled, “Where Did San Juan Island’s ‘Pig War’ Begin?”²⁴² As far as my research reveals, this is the first time the term “Pig War” appeared in print in the Pacific Northwest. It comes after Long’s thesis, but it is significant that it appears in a Seattle newspaper and not from any paper out of state. This is my first clue that it may, in fact, be a local term. In 1955, Joseph Howard Kinsey published an article titled, “Manifest Destiny and the British Empire’s Pig” for *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*.²⁴³ Although separated by one state line and a mere three years, there is no use of the

²³⁶ Sage, *Sir James Douglas and British Columbia*, 235.

²³⁷ Ormsby, *British Columbia*, 129, 185-6, 235, 256.

²³⁸ Vouri’s research has produced the same hypothesis. In a 2008 interview he says: “It is a 20th century iteration... I have never seen it in 19th century documents.” *The San Juan Journal*, “The Pig War: Little-known facts about the joint military occupation of San Juan Island.” July 27, 2009. <accessed 25/07/12> <http://www.sanjuanjournal.com/lifestyle/51619202.html>.

²³⁹ Long, *The San Juan Island Boundary Controversy*, 200.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 594-595.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, iii-iv.

²⁴² Lucille McDonald, “Where Did San Juan Island’s ‘Pig War’ Begin?” *The Seattle Sunday Times Magazine*, November 2, 1958.

²⁴³ Howard, *Manifest Destiny and the British Empire’s Pig*.

term “Pig War” which suggests that there existed a geographical barrier to the term’s use. But this still does not offer proof that the term originates from San Juan Island itself.

During my research trip to San Juan in August 2012, the name’s origin was among the questions I hoped to address. After discovering McDonald’s article, I gained confidence that the term was from the Pacific Northwest, but I still needed some kind of evidence that it was being used on the island before McDonald wrote her piece. While digging through the archives at the San Juan Island National Historic Park, I found exactly what I was hoping for. In one of the many files on the Pig War residing at the American Camp office, tucked away in a folder, lay an age-stained manuscript authored by Sylvia Rank Landahl. Written in 1943, this unpublished document contains “The Pig War” as one of its sub-headings (see appendix C). With no previous use of the term in print elsewhere across the globe, this virtually unknown document is strong evidence that the term was first being used on the island.²⁴⁴ Long’s almost simultaneous use of the term remains a mystery, but Landahl’s connections to the island and to the Pig War are solid.

In 1930, Landahl married Frank Rosler and joined one of the oldest pioneer families on San Juan.²⁴⁵ Frank’s grandfather was Christopher Rosler, who, as a 26 year old man, first came to the island in Captain Pickett’s infantry force.²⁴⁶ The Rosler homestead still stands nearby the American Camp. As a part of this family, Landahl undoubtedly heard many of the tales from the pioneering days and was likely immersed in the colloquial language used to describe the event. Thanks to her efforts to write a history of the island, I have some evidence that the term “Pig War” was floating around the island before it dominates print histories in the 1960s.

Further proof that this term is an island term comes from the *Loyal Order of the Moose, Friday Harbour Chapter*. In 1964, the Order issued a resolution on the value of a national park stating that “the sites concerned in the border dispute, *known locally* as the Pig War, are in danger

²⁴⁴ There are two other events that have been called the “Pig War.” One took place in the same era in Texas between a French diplomat and a hotel owner over the Texan’s “marauding pigs,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mgpp01>; the second, also referred to as the “Customs War” took place in 1909 Serbia, and was a blockade on Austro-Hungarian imported pork. It is seen as one of the many causes of World War I, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pig_War_\(Serbia\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pig_War_(Serbia)); Sylvia Rank Landahl, *San Juan County*, unpublished, at SJINHP Archives, 1943.

²⁴⁵ Sylvia Rank Landahl, *Some Rosler- Landahl Family History*, unpublished, at SJINHP Archives, Jan. 1972.

²⁴⁶ 1860 U.S. Census, San Juan Island Precinct, San Juan P.O., Enumerated 27, 28, 29, June 1860.

of being lost [my emphasis].”²⁴⁷ The Order appears proud to take ownership of the term for the island, but it has not always been employed so positively by all San Juan residents. In a mysterious newspaper article, with great tongue in cheek, Al Cummings wrote:

Some of us who live in the beautiful San Juan Islands tend to bridle a bit when someone refers to our area as ‘The Pig War Islands.’ It’s hardly an appellation to be proud of. It summons up fantasies of porkers wearing funny hats and marching around with muskets over their pork shoulders- all very Orwellian. It seems a trifle unfair, too. After all, nobody calls San Francisco ‘The Earthquake City,’ or Chicago ‘Fire Town.’ It’s one of those little historical tidbits without which we could live quite nicely.²⁴⁸

Cummings likely wrote this in the 1980s, but it reflects the attitude some residents also took in the early 60s when the creation of a “Pig War” National Park was being discussed.

In April 1965, at the 89th National Congress, San Juan Island resident Sam Buck testified that he wished to go on record as being opposed to the park being named the “Pig War National Park.”²⁴⁹ The mayor of Friday Harbour agreed. He said, “on this matter of the pig, we have tried to appease our British Columbia neighbours. We have sent pigs over there. They have sent them back. They have sent pigs over here, and we have sent them back. So the ‘Pig’ part should be forgotten.”²⁵⁰ The shooting of the pig was seen as a distraction from the theme of the park that residents of the island hoped to emphasize. Etta Engeland, of the San Juan Historical Society, clarified, “a few years ago, a little ceremony took place down at the water front, in which a pig was given back to the Canadians. It was all in the spirit of geniality and good fun, but how many other places in the world can boast of such a relationship between two countries? The affair of the pig has been remembered over the years, probably because it piques the imagination; but it should be seen in its proper perspective; as a symbol of the much larger issue.”²⁵¹ Peter Ristuben,

²⁴⁷ United States Government, *Pig War National Historic Park Hearing before the subcommittee on the Interior and Insular Affairs, United States Senate; Eighty-Ninth Congress. First Session on S. 489. A Bill to Authorize the establishment of the Pig War National Historical Park in the State of Washington, and for other purposes, April 17, 1965* (Washington: US Government, 1965), 142-143.

²⁴⁸ Al Cummings, “Where the Boaring War was Fought,” From a newspaper, at SJINHP Archives, no date or name.

²⁴⁹ United States Government, *Pig War National Historic Park Hearing*, 79.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 80.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

of the Washington State Historical Society agreed: “I would recommend the name ‘San Juan National Park’ rather than ‘Pig War National Park.’ The significance of the jurisdictional dispute is that it did not escalate into war but was settled by pacific means.”²⁵² Much of the argument circled around the use of the word “war” in a park about peace.

Proponents for the park being called the “Pig War” National Park used the same argument to support their cause. Roger Pegues, representing the *Western Outdoor Clubs* testified: “I must say that I prefer the colorful title of ‘Pig War’ to the mundane and meaningless title, ‘San Juan.’ The words ‘Pig War’ add meaning. They connect the park to a crucial occurrence in our history. In addition, the very significance which those words connote symbolizes the irrationality of going to war when disputes can otherwise be solved.”²⁵³ The chair of the committee, Senator Alan Bible, was willing to defer to Senators Henry Jackson and Warren Magnuson on the name.²⁵⁴ Jackson claimed that “it has always been described as the Pig War Monument, but this does cause some problems, because they think we are spending a lot of money on a pig war out here. But from a historical point of view, the area and the problem has been referred to as the ‘Pig War Conflict.’”²⁵⁵

In 1966, it was decided to nix the “Pig War” moniker. The enabling legislation declared that the park “shall be known as the San Juan Island National Historical Park and shall commemorate the final settlement by arbitration of the Oregon boundary dispute and the peaceful relationship which has existed between the United States and Canada for generations.”²⁵⁶ The name may not have survived but the important message of peace and the friendly relations the U.S. held with Canada remained and would become the dominant trope of histories written about the “Pig War” from the 1960s on.

In 1971, the National Park released a prospective which outlined this important message. The prospective presented “the park’s major interpretive theme to be the Pig War, ‘its cultural and political circumstances, and most important, the idea... that discord and dissension between

²⁵² United States Government, *Pig War National Historic Park Hearing*, 34.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 86.

²⁵⁴ Bible said: “so far as I am personally concerned, I will defer to Senator Jackson and Senator Magnuson on this problem. I have had four children and I have had more trouble finding names for them, and I lost every battle with my wife; my wife has won every battle;” *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁵⁶ United States Government. *An act to authorize*, 165.

nations can, if subjected to rational behaviour, lead to justice and friendship and a feeling of well-being, and also to a realization of the senselessness of freewheeling attitudes and clashes of arms.”²⁵⁷ The park maintains this thematic position today. In a resource guide the park designed for Washington State school teachers, the park reaffirms the importance of their message. In the introduction to the curriculum package, they state:

The best lesson about the Pig War is that there was no war. In the end, the dispute was resolved peacefully through arbitration. Although one country won control of the San Juan Islands, both countries were winners. The British and Americans together surveyed the international land boundary line and next resolved the water boundary by agreeing to arbitration in the Treaty of Washington. Today, the international border between the United States and Canada is the longest unfortified boundary in the world and certainly the most peaceful. This the greatest lesson of the Pig War.²⁵⁸

From academic histories to children’s literature, this theme would become the main focus of what the pig means to the Pacific Northwest. The pig becomes a symbol of peace and anti-imperialism.

In his 1955 article, Joseph Howard connected anti-imperial attitudes to the San Juan story. Howard views the shooting of an “imperial pig,” and the backlash that ensued, as a symbolic example of the aggressive nature of imperialism. Written at the end of the McCarthy era, Howard connected the slogan of “Manifest Destiny” with other slogans his American readers would associate with pejorative connotations such as “For Fuehrer and Fatherland” and “All Power to the Soviets,” thus displaying his left leaning politics and disdain for American imperialism.²⁵⁹ His explicit message was that war happens when land ownership is contested by belligerent nations and that this will always occur as long as countries are imperialist. This was a pressing concern for Howard’s generation as memories of the Second World War and the Korean War were fresh, and international tensions between the U.S.A and the Soviet Union threatened to take

²⁵⁷ Cannon, *San Juan Island National Historical Park Administrative History*, 137.

²⁵⁸ San Juan Island National Historic Park, *The Pig War: Conflict and Resolution in the Pacific Northwest, A Resource Guide for Washington State Teachers*. (Friday Harbor: San Juan Island NHP), 98. <Accessed July 23, 2012> <http://www.nps.gov/sajh/forteachers/upload/Trunk-1.pdf>.

²⁵⁹ Howard, *Manifest Destiny and the British Empire’s Pig*, 20.

the two nations to the brink of head-to-head conflict. Howard called for rationality and an awareness of political action so that war could be prevented.²⁶⁰

Howard was an early proponent of the conclusion that the “rational” decision makers in the dispute were those who sought to prevent violence, such as Baynes and Scott. He states: “Harney and Pickett were spoiling for a fight; but on the other hand, it was the forbearance and common sense manifested by two other professional fighting men which saved America and Britain from plunging blindly into the silliest war ever fought, a war over a pig.”²⁶¹ As discussed, the erroneous, or perhaps ironic, claim here is that the war was over a pig and not the island itself. Keith Murray, however, followed this line of thinking and credited “responsible men” from each country for preventing war. He echoes Howard stating, “in 1859, as it is in the last third of the twentieth century, such rational behaviour in international affair was rare, and the incident deserves more attention than it has received by historians.”²⁶²

Murray, at the height of the Vietnam War, argued the world was still being plunged into “irrational” wars. He concluded his book:

In his very long life [James Crook] witnessed other wars started over incidents as trivial as the killing of the San Juan pig mushroom into murderous affairs which destroyed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people... He was also aware that here, on his own land, men of good will and common sense had not allowed such a catastrophe to begin. Thus this tiny dot of earth on the beautiful bay will always be a reminder that senseless wars over insignificant causes do not need to happen.²⁶³

The last sentence from this quote was also printed inside a 1972 brochure from the National Park, commemorating Centennial Day (see appendix D). During the ceremony held that day, the park reaffirmed its purpose to commemorate the peaceful settlement of the Pig War. This message had heightened importance for Americans as the Vietnam war divided the public on the war’s impact at home.

²⁶⁰ Howard, *Manifest Destiny and the British Empire’s Pig*, 23.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁶² Murray, *The Pig War*, 7.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 77.

The Vietnam conflict also had a significant influence on the purpose and design of the national park. In 1965, while US troops were being deployed overseas, Congressman Lloyd Meeds announced that the park “will stand at the westernmost end of the longest unguarded international border in the world to signify a milestone in the history of our national maturation. By this monument to a petty incident that nearly brought war between two nations, we make an important contrast with the 105 years of peaceful co-operative negotiation of mutual problems and differences between the United States and Canada. That is a record all the world should carefully note.”²⁶⁴ The message was that international border disputes could be peacefully resolved as opposed to developing into multi-nation war.

The new General Management Plan for the park, issued in 2008, revitalized this message in the post-911 climate. The plan states that the “San Juan Island National Historical Park is the only site that illustrates, in its dramatic and largely intact physical setting, how war can be averted and peace maintained through positive action by individuals and governments- a powerful message in unsettled times.”²⁶⁵ In the same year, when asked about his book on the Pig War, and what he hoped would be the lasting impact of the book, Mike Vouri, a Vietnam veteran, replied, “world peace. I’m not kidding. The Pig War could’ve escalated into a tragic conflict.”²⁶⁶

The fact that there was no war is the essence of this story. Historians of the Pig War, following Murray, recognised this. Vouri said, “despite the word ‘War’... the story is about peace.”²⁶⁷ The Pig War stands as this ideal of “rational” thinking overcoming “irrational” behaviour and avoiding war. E.C. Coleman continues the accepted discourse, describing the event as “an act that found governors and generals eager for war, politicians and diplomats vying for position, presidents and prime ministers posturing, whilst sailors, soldiers and marines, from both sides, learned the value of co-operation and common sense- a lesson still to be learned by their leaders.”²⁶⁸ His final thought displays the didactic element of the Pig War narrative.

²⁶⁴ United States Government, *Pig War National Historic Park Hearing*, 8-9.

²⁶⁵ National Park Service, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*. (Friday Harbor, WA: San Juan Island National Historical Park, 2008), 1.

²⁶⁶ *The San Juan Journal*, “Interview with ‘Pig War’ author Mike Vouri; book signing Friday, 6:30 p.m. at museum.” August 21, 2008. <accessed 25/07/12> <http://www.sanjuanjournal.com/lifestyle/27247989.html>.

²⁶⁷ Vouri, *The Pig War*, acknowledgements.

²⁶⁸ Coleman, *The Pig War*, 212.

Another good example of this prescriptive function lies in the subtitle of a colorful article by Tom Inkster titled, “The War of the Pig: The Peaceful San Juan Dispute of 1859... A War in which the only casualty was a pig- the way all nations may eventually learn to conduct their wars” (see appendix E).²⁶⁹ Clearly this is a suggestion that the best war is no war. Attempts to have this message of peace taught to children also go back to the 1960s. In 1969, Betty Baker published a children’s book titled “The Pig War.” Although loose with historical details, it stayed true to the message of peaceful negotiation over violent conflict²⁷⁰ (see appendix F). Currently, this book is listed on a website, organized by a group called *Teach Peace Now*, which features recommended “peace education books.”²⁷¹

This message of peace, dominant in the twentieth century, was not the universal message during the San Juan Island Dispute. As a measure of the extent of change, consider the words of a former HBC employee who witnessed the events of the conflict:

War is the order of nature! Race upon race, fish upon fish, the sea upon the shore and the shore upon the sea. To do, is to undo; organized life would over-people the world. Yes rot it out, without this war of life on life. Yet no nation should be permitted by man to overgrow his good. The British Empire, Russian America and China are already too prolific with overgrown monsters. There is too much room there and the more they grow, the more they are insatiate. Strange, but our happiness is in destruction. A good appetite is to consume. Love is to consume, inventions to consume. Universal peace would never do. It would in the march of centuries eat up its own farrow, as the Scotch lady said to the sow.²⁷²

This attitude, so contrary to the message of the Pig War National Park and the modern histories of the event shows how the message of peace was a re-framing by mid to late twentieth century

²⁶⁹ Tom H. Inkster, “The War of the Pig: The Peaceful San Juan Dispute of 1859... A War in which the only casualty was a pig- the way all nations may eventually learn to conduct their wars.” From a newspaper, at SJINHP Archives, no date or name.

²⁷⁰ Betty Baker, *The Pig War: An I CAN READ History Book*. Pictures by Robert Lopshire. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.

²⁷¹ *Teach Peace Now*, “Great Books,” <accessed 05/07/12> <http://www.teachpeacenow.org/>.

²⁷² Howay, F.W., William S. Lewis and Jacob A. Meyers, “Angus McDonald: A Few Items from the West.” *Washington Historical Quarterly*, 8:3 (July 1917), 226.

historians and the public. Due to the horrific lessons learned after both World Wars and the Vietnam War, an antiwar rhetoric became the prevailing lesson of the Pig War.

Anti-war rhetoric is key to understanding the ideology behind naming this event the “Pig War.” A semiotician would view the significance of the term “pig” within the surrounding connotations it has in “webs of meaning,” to use a Geertzian phrase.²⁷³ First, the term “pig” is often used derogatorily to describe a person who is uncouth and unrefined. To use the term “Pig War,” then, suggests that to go to war over a pig would have been a decision made by people who possess these negative qualities. This is Young’s “value-laden” aspect of the name. By calling this event the “Pig War” there is an implicit argument that people who start wars are pigs and piggish in their behaviour.

This is what Pierce would call the “interpretant” of the sign. It is the sense that is made of the sign.²⁷⁴ When people use terms such as “Pig War,” negative connotations towards war are generated. It is similar to British expressions “I’ve had a pig of a day,” or “I’ve made a pig’s ear of it.” Or another term, “pigs on the wing,” which refers to unexpected and unwanted company, deriving from World War II aviation lingo signifying an enemy approaching on a pilot’s blindside.²⁷⁵ All of these statements feature the word “pig” and contain pejorative connotations which are the essence of the interpretant.

In order to further appreciate this use of the term “pig,” it is necessary to take into account what Saussure emphasises as “paradigmatic relations” in signifiers. Paradigmatic relations exist along with syntagmatic relations. As Daniel Chandler explains, “the ‘value’ of a sign is determined by both its paradigmatic and in syntagmatic relations. Syntagms and paradigms provide a structural context within which signs make sense; they are the structural form through which signs are organized into codes.” Whereas the syntagmatic relations refer to other words within the text, which allow statements to make sense, the paradigmatic relations are concerned

²⁷³ Geertz says, “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one is search of meaning;” Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Towards an Interpretive Theory of Culture.” In *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. Clifford Geertz (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 5.

²⁷⁴ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 27.

²⁷⁵ “Pigs on the Wing” is also the name of a two part song in the 1977 Pink Floyd Album, *Animals*. Thus tying Roger Waters in to this thesis once more.

with intertextual signifiers which are absent from the text.²⁷⁶ In other words, the choice of using the term pig, whether conscious or not, has a direct impact on how recipients of the message perceive the event. It would not have this same impact if another word was chosen, for example “sheep.” Although it could have been the “Sheep War,” this choice of term will not garner the same emotional and intellectual response as the “Pig War.”

Chandler maintains “there are no ideologically neutral sign-systems: signs function to persuade as well as to refer. Valentin Voloshinov declared that ‘whenever a sign is present, ideology is present too.’ Sign-systems help to naturalize and reinforce particular framings of ‘the way things are,’ although the operation of ideology in signifying practices is typically masked.”²⁷⁷ This is the sign function of labelling the dispute “Pig War.” It is an ideological attempt to shame people with any proclivity to justify war. In the framework of Pig War histories, there is no such thing as a justifiable war. As observed earlier, this message becomes the moral of the story; and Hayden White asks rhetorically, “could we ever narrativize without moralizing?”²⁷⁸

White provides another analytical framework within which the language and troping of the “Pig War” histories can be evaluated.²⁷⁹ In White’s terms this story can be considered a “romantic comedy.”²⁸⁰ The narrative of the Pig War follows that there was a romantic emplotment of good triumphing over evil after a series of comedic errors. As Murray argues, “the whole affair has been treated as a huge joke... but there were almost as many possibilities for international catastrophe when the pig was shot as when an heir to the throne of Austria was shot fifty-five years later.”²⁸¹ Unlike the devastating result of Duke Ferdinand’s assassination, the fatality of the pig avoided catastrophe and through its comedy of errors produced a story of peace. In the language of the Pig War historians, it was a victory of the “cool heads,”²⁸² who

²⁷⁶ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 84.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 214.

²⁷⁸ Hayden White, *The Content of Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1987), 25.

²⁷⁹ White adopts his “theory of emplotment” with the four modes as “romance,” tragedy,” “comedy,” and “satire,” from Northrop Frye; Chandler, *Semiotics*, 159.

²⁸⁰ Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973), 10.

²⁸¹ Keith Murray, *The Pig War*, 7.

²⁸² Scott Kaufman, *The Pig War: The United States, Britain, and the Balance of Power in the Pacific Northwest, 1846-1872* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004.), 184.

avoided bloodshed, over the “hotheads”²⁸³ who demanded military action. Still in White’s terms, this tale is troped in an ironic mode, meaning that it represents the opposite of what happened.²⁸⁴ Simply put, the “Pig War” was not a war.

According to Chandler, irony is the “most radical” of the four main literary tropes.²⁸⁵ This is because, while irony often works within clear binary oppositions, it is not always easy to decipher statements that are ironic, or to tell when people are being ironic. Chandler explains: “the evaluation of the ironic sign requires the retrospective assessment of its modality status. Re-evaluating an apparently literal sign for ironic cues requires reference to perceived intent and to truth status. An ironic statement is not, of course, the same as a *lie* since it is not intended to be taken as ‘true.’”²⁸⁶ The Pig War, once explained, is understood not to be a war. Chandler asserts that use of irony, such as the case for the Pig War, is often intended as a form of humour. But “frequent use may be associated with reflexiveness, detachment or skepticism.”²⁸⁷ Perhaps the Postwar use of the term Pig War suggests a dark skepticism towards the notion that a world of peace could actually exist. Yet Pig War histories contend that peace is possible.

Finally, within White’s framework, the ideological function of the story is one of liberalism and progress. The story imagines a time in the future when things will improve, not through radical means but by a gradual change.²⁸⁸ In the Pig War story, this change is a move from international conflict to peaceful settlement. For White, ideological work is also a trait of the contextualist mode of explanation, which seeks to explain an event within the “context” of its occurrence. The context Pig War historians emphasize is that in the mid-nineteenth century, war between Great Britain and the United States was perceived as a very real threat. Yet, this event was a rare case of peace, an element that historians of the San Juan Island Dispute acknowledge as the essence of this story and the ideal method of conflict resolution for the future.

²⁸³ Keith Murray, *The Pig War*, 7.

²⁸⁴ Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973), 34.

²⁸⁵ Chandler, *Semiotics*, 134

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 135.

²⁸⁸ White, *Metahistory*, 25.

Allan Megill identifies three purposes of historical writing: a state-affirming function, a critical and negating function, and a didactic function.²⁸⁹ The early histories of the San Juan Dispute fell under the first category. However, the Pig War story which has emerged in the Postwar period is of the third variety, hope for a better future. Megill personally prefers the second function; he finds the didactic function to be honourable yet somewhat unjustifiable.²⁹⁰ This is because he wonders if historians have the authority to prescribe for the present and future.²⁹¹ His is a valid concern. In troubled times, however, many people often find comfort in stories such as the Pig War, as it reflects their desires for a better, safer, future than the past or present.

²⁸⁹ Megill, *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error*, 27.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

Chapter 4

An “Imperial Pig”²⁹² in the Pacific Northwest:

San Juan Island and Colonial History

The theme of peace makes the Pig War story an important component of Pacific Northwest history. Will Dawson concludes his book by stating, “discussions between nations over problems may take up time, but they are infinitely preferable to the impetuous, warlike behaviour of men like General Harney. Where war leaves bitterness, peaceful settlement leaves friendship. Instead of forts bristling with guns looming over the Puget Sound and British Columbia, there stands near Blaine, Washington State, the 67-foot-high Peace Arch, the only arch of its kind in the world.”²⁹³ Dawson makes the important connection between the Pig War story and the monuments of peace that stand along the 49th parallel, giving credence to the idea that the Pacific Northwest is a uniquely peaceful place in the world. But this narrative serves to obscure much of the violence that accompanied the colonial experience. It suggests that the region was settled by Europeans with diplomacy and was relatively bloodless, a theme that encompasses the larger story of settlement in the Pacific Northwest.

This theme of peaceful settlement has found a home in the historiography of the Pacific Northwest. George Frykman concluded his 1960 article on regionalism and nationalism, by stating that “the initial British American rivalry for this Oregon Country and the subsequent unique joint-occupancy and peaceful division gave the Pacific Northwest a traditional homogeneity which might well serve as the inspiration for international cooperation in many spheres.”²⁹⁴ The same year, Herman Deutsch proclaimed that Oregon, or “Old Oregon,” the fur trading region before it was divided into Oregon State and Washington State, “was the product of

²⁹² Howard, *Manifest Destiny and the British Empire's Pig*, 20-21.

²⁹³ Dawson, *The War that was Never Fought*, 107.

²⁹⁴ Frykman, *Regionalism, localism*, 256.

natural expansion and was neither purchased nor won by force of arms.”²⁹⁵ With the exception of the Whitman Massacre, and a few other skirmishes, this settlement was seen as relatively free of violence, something that hasn’t been said for the California experience.²⁹⁶

There has been a push, over the last fifty years, to recognize the Pacific Northwest as a distinct cultural region.²⁹⁷ California is often held up as the antithesis of this region. William Lang observes that the Pacific Northwest identity is “a mixture of who we say we are to ourselves and what others perceive us to be, plus this equation’s feedback- who we say we are not.”²⁹⁸ It seems people from the Pacific Northwest are not Californians. John Findlay, at the *Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest*, observes that people from this region “have developed strong opinions about California and Californians in recent times. Oregon actually led the way during the 1970s, with a both humorous and serious campaign to keep Californians away. Washington and Idaho became more vociferous during the 1980s and 1990s.” Findlay identifies this antagonism as a nativist response to an influx of Californians into the Pacific Northwest. He argues that this “anti-California sentiment” has had detrimental effects on the cultural identity and represents an “ugly form of bigotry.” He also suggests that this distinction between Pacific Northwesterner and Californian may be “mistaken,” as Californians have been migrating into the region for a long time and migration is not a recent phenomenon.²⁹⁹

In a 1973 study, Raymond Gastil asks “how useful is it to think of Oregon, Washington, and parts of Idaho and Montana as forming a region distinct from that of California?”³⁰⁰ After taking stock of prior attempts to label geographic areas as regions, such as Howard Odum’s “sociological-economic” approach and Daniel Elazar’s religious and “population origin”

²⁹⁵ Herman J. Deutsch, “The Evolution of the International Boundary in the Inland Empire of the Pacific Northwest.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (April 1960), 64.

²⁹⁶ Obviously this ignores native experience.

²⁹⁷ For this essay, I follow Frykman’s 1952 assertion that this region consists of “Oregon, Washington, Idaho, western Montana, and British Columbia.” Frykman, *Regionalism, localism*, 251.

²⁹⁸ William Lang, “Failed Federalism: The Columbia Valley Authority and Regionalism.” In *The Great Northwest: The Search for Regional Identity*. William G. Robbins eds. (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2001), 66.

²⁹⁹ John Findlay, “Lesson 1: Who Belongs in the Pacific Northwest?” *Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest*. <accessed 02/03/12>

<http://www.washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspn/Website/Classroom%20Materials/Pacific%20Northwest%20History/Lessons/Lesson%201/1.html>.

³⁰⁰ Raymond Gastil, “The Pacific Northwest as a Cultural Region.” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 4 (October 1973), 149.

approach, which he prefers.³⁰¹ Gastil takes his own cultural/ locational tack to this topic. He argues that migration from different eastern regions led to a difference in Northern Pacific and Californian cultures. He acknowledges that there are linguistic similarities between all residents of the West Coast, but, despite these similarities, “a good case can be made for dividing the area at the Oregon line.”³⁰² There is a strong suggestion in literature that southern California has a different culture from the rest of the coast.”³⁰³ A large part of this distinction is the settlement of the Pacific Northwest by farmers, traders, and lumberjacks, as opposed to gold prospectors. The California gold rush experience lends itself to the image of lawlessness in the settlement of the West, an image not shared by those in Oregon and Washington State. Suggestions of a unique cultural identity for the Pacific Northwest, as well as cultural connections to British Columbia, have been debated for decades.³⁰⁴

The strong aversion to any association with California reveals an idealistic position embedded in twentieth century Pacific Northwest historiography. This position believes that the region has developed culturally and materially distinct histories from that of California. However, the historical record shows that there were many links between the Golden State and the Pacific Northwest, particularly British Columbia. For a start, Oregon farmers benefited from the

³⁰¹ Gastil, *The Pacific Northwest*, 147-148.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 149.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 156.

³⁰⁴ At the 1941 *Pacific Northwest History Conference*, no historians from British Columbia were invited. Attending historian, Vernon Carstensen suggested that this was because BC was unlikely to be thought of as part of the Pacific Northwest. But, a couple years prior to the “HBC turn” in Pacific Northwest historiography, at the 1957 *Pacific Northwest History Conference*, keynote speaker, John Binns declared, “British Columbia, by reason of its political allegiance, is a special case, but I cordially invite it to join [in the scholarship of the Pacific Northwest], and I hope that the presence of Canadians here indicates something more than associate membership.” This presence of Western Canadian scholars suggests that BC was becoming a part of the regional identity. In 1996, this link between BC and the American region was addressed by the *Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest* at a conference titled, “On Brotherly Terms: Canadian-American Relations West of the Rockies.” The name suggests that this conference positively viewed the historical connection between the two nations on the West Coast. An excellent iconographic example of this shared history exists in the symbol that appears on the 1972 Centennial Brochure for the National Historic Park. This symbol is the American and British national flags cross cut and fused together. It also adorns the cover page of the *San Juan National Historic Park Administrative History*, on the maps provided in the book, and is featured prominently at the park, on all of the signage and pamphlets. Vernon Carstensen, “The Good Old Days or the Bad Old Days? History and Related Muses in the Northwest in the 1930s” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 1977), 105; John H. Binns, “Northwest Region- Fact or Fiction?” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (July 1957), 68; Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest, *Mission and History*, <accessed 02/03/12> <http://www.washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspn/Website/About%20Us/Mission%20&%20History.html>.

California goldrush through trade of flour, fresh meat and lumber.³⁰⁵ Secondly, the nineteenth century trade communication between San Francisco and Vancouver Island is well known.³⁰⁶ Finally, the Fraser River gold rush brought much traffic and influence from California. During the rush, Mathew Begbie observed that this temporary migration brought to the colony a “great preponderance of the California or Californized element of the population, and the paucity of British subjects.”³⁰⁷ Commander Mayne lamented, “the new-found mineral wealth of British Columbia had attracted from California some of the most reckless rascals that gold has ever given birth to.”³⁰⁸ But Californian’s transient nature was equally matched by other pioneers to BC who have also been characterized by their “high level of mobility associated with a male frontier.”³⁰⁹ As Jean Barman asserts, “the transient male labourer symbolized British Columbia just as farmer still characterized much of the rest of Canada.”³¹⁰

Even though many of these Argonauts would leave as the gold fields dried up, their influence and presence would not completely disappear. Many of these disappointed fortune seekers, such as Lyman Cutlar, would come to settle in the Puget Sound region and on San Juan Island. Others, such as British born brothers, William and Thomas Ladner, founders of the small community on the Fraser Delta which holds their name, would stay in British Columbia. Their political and philosophical ideas, and that of their children, were indelibly shaped by their experiences on the California Trail and in the gold mines.³¹¹ Also, Daniel Marshall argues that “California mining culture appropriated the Native cultural landscape of the Fraser and brought with it the ethnic and

³⁰⁵ Ormsby, *British Columbia*, 142.

³⁰⁶ John Belshaw shows that the Nanaimo coal industry relied on the San Francisco market equally with San Francisco’s reliance on Nanaimo coal. John Douglas Belshaw, *Becoming British Columbia: A Population History* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 33. Barman calls nineteenth century San Francisco, “British Columbia’s gateway to the world;” Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 99.

³⁰⁷ Quoted in Sage, *Sir James Douglas and British Columbia*, 249.

³⁰⁸ Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia*, 52.

³⁰⁹ Ruth Sandwell, *Contesting Rural Space: Land Policy and the Practices of Resettlement on Saltspring Island, 1859-1891* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005), 138.

³¹⁰ Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 132.

³¹¹ In his family history, Leon Ladner spends a great deal of time rejecting Marxism. He says, “the ultimate result, in my opinion, unless restrained by an informed, educated public, will be dictatorship of one kind or another for Western countries attempting to superimpose state socialism in democratic institutions born of freedom and requiring freedom if they are to persist.” He holds his father and uncle’s pioneer experience as an example of positive individualism. Ladner asserts, “the lives of the Ladners will tell the story from the point of view of the ordinary ‘self-made-men’ who faced almost insurmountable obstacles, life-and-death struggles. They pioneered in a virgin country and succeeded by virtue of great strength of character and determination;” Leon Ladner, *The Ladner’s of Ladner: By Covered Wagon to the Welfare State* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1972), 3, 9.

racial tensions that marked the California goldfields.” He asserts that it was Joseph Trutch’s experience in California that gave him “an affinity for California-type place names” which he used to name some of the reserves laid out for BC Aboriginals. He argues “the erasure of Native sovereignty through the use of California-like place names not only disconnected Natives from the physical geography of the river but also from the very soul of Native culture.”³¹² Thus, the California experience had many tangible effects on the psyche of European settlers to the region as well as its original inhabitants.

Another similarity between the California experience and that of the Pacific Northwest, underappreciated by early twentieth century historians, is the amount of violence that characterised them both. It is well known, through stories about lynch mobs and Vigilance Committees that California was a bloody settlement. And wars with Native Americans were often discussed. In 1885, A.J. Bledsoe wrote a 450 page tome about the violent struggles to protect settlers in Northern California from attacks by Native Americans. Pacific Northwest history, at this time, mitigated the importance of wars with Native groups, choosing rather to emphasize an exceptionally quiet settlement. However, the 1850s were ripe with Native conflict in the Washington Territory; and, as B.A. McKelvie’s 1926 study shows, the BC experience also had its fair share of “Indian Troubles.”³¹³

Measurements of violent experience have often been used to further distinguish American from Canadian western settlement. Jeremy Mouat notes that the British Columbian gold rush experience has given the “common dichotomy” of “lawful Canadians” versus “unlawful Americans,” or in the words of Donald Worster, the “Wild West” of the US and the “Mild West” of Canada.³¹⁴ But *Making Western Canada*, edited by Elizabeth Jameson, contains articles which challenge “uncritical histories of a peaceful, orderly, and Anglo-centric Canadian West.” Jameson argues scholars need to analyze how the two conceptions of settling the West differed. Why was America lawless while Canada lawful and orderly? She asks, “were these differences

³¹² Daniel Marshall, “Mapping the New Eldorado: The Fraser River Gold Rush and the Appropriation of Native Space.” In *New Histories for Old: Changing Perspectives on Canada’s Native Pasts*. Ted Binnema and Susan Neylon eds. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 135-136.

³¹³ B.A. McKelvie, *Early History of the Province of British Columbia* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1926), 70.

³¹⁴ Donald Worster, “Two Faces West: The Development of Myth in Canada and the United States,” In *Terra Northwest: Interpreting People and Place*. David H. Stratton eds. (Pullman, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 2007), 25.

real, or were they narrative strategies to explain national development?”³¹⁵ The historical record suggests that each settlement experience produced its share of violence.

For the Pig War, the notion of a pig as the only casualty of the conflict is not entirely correct. It was a coincidental death during a dispute that also coincided with a few violent deaths of humans in its duration. For example, Isaac Ebey, customs inspector of the island during the 1850s, had his head removed by a group of Native Americans he quarreled with. Also there was the bizarre murder of two men near the island during the occupation;³¹⁶ as well as the tragic case, at the very end of the joint-occupation, of a San Juan resident, known by the nickname Kanaka Joe, who robbed and killed a few people on the island, most notably the Dwyers, leaving an orphaned child.³¹⁷ There were also deaths (accidental as well as natural) of a few of the soldiers who served during the occupation. These are a few examples, beyond the pig’s death, of fatalities during the settlement of the San Juan Question. These are not generally connected to the “Pig War” as they contradict the single fatality thesis.

The emphasis of this San Juan story and the general settlement of the Pacific Northwest as a peaceful endeavour can be seen as a form of what Mary Louise Pratt calls “anti-conquest.” In her

³¹⁵ Elizabeth Jameson, “Introduction” in *Making Western: Essays on European Colonization and Settlement*. Catherine Cavanaugh and Jeremy Mouat eds. (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1996), xv.

³¹⁶ Commander Mayne describes the incident in his 1862 essay: “Mr. Griffin told the story thus. He was sitting in his balcony one summer afternoon, watching a vessel working her way up the Strait, when he saw two boats, each containing one man, pull past in the direction of Victoria. He was rather surprised at seeing them thus single-handed, but at that time, when the gold-fever was raging fiercely, every sort of boat was employed to cross the Strait, and he concluded that they were two Americans, making their way from Bellingham Bay to Victoria. They had hardly rounded the point, just beyond the farm, and passed out of his sight, when a small canoe with a single Indian shot past in the same direction. There was nothing in all this to attract particular notice, and Mr. Griffin was surprised when, an hour or so later, two boats, which he at once recognised as those that had so lately passed, drifted into view, floating back, to all appearance, empty. A canoe was at once sent out to them, when one was found empty, and in the other lay the body of a white man, shot, but not pillaged, - even the provisions that were in his boat being untouched. Who shall say who his murderer was? Had his white companion shot him, landed, and pushed off his boat? - for, except in the boat in which the murdered man lay, not a drop of blood could be seen. Or had the Indian killed him, and had his companion, on seeing the fatal shot fired, leapt overboard, and been drowned? If so, it was revenge, for nothing was taken from the boats; perhaps in the performance of that duty which is still considered ‘sacred’ - if one may use the word - among the Indians - of taking a life for a life;” Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia*, 40-41.

³¹⁷ Although the Dwyer murder happened immediately after the San Juan dispute was settled, David Richardson reports that the Dwyer murder deeply affected Victorians and that Charles McKay, a participant in American activities during the 1859 stand-off, knew the convicted murderer, Kanaka Joe, very well, but was also a long time friend of Henry Dwyer so he went to Victoria to testify. Kanaka Joe was hanged in March 1874 at Port Townshend. For detailed accounts of the murders see: Richardson, *Pig War Islands*, 159-175; and for a first-person account see: Jo Bailey-Cummings and Al Cummings. *The Settlers’ Own Stories: San Juan: The Powder Keg Island* (Friday Harbor, Washington: Beach Combers, Inc., 1987), 121-127.

study of eighteenth century European travel writing, Pratt observes that the rhetorical strategy of the authors was to portray foreign land in South Africa as virtually uninhabited to give the impression that European presence was uncontested.³¹⁸ She argues, “as the Khoikhoi are deterritorialized- extracted from the landscape in which they still live- they are thus taken out of economy, culture, and history too... the anti-conquest ‘underwrite[s]’ colonial appropriation, even as it rejects the rhetoric, and probably the practice, of conquest and subjugation.”³¹⁹ English poet Rupert Brooke, in 1913, described BC as “an empty land” where Europeans “can find nothing to satisfy the hunger of the heart. He requires haunted woods and the friendly presence of ghosts.”³²⁰ Chad Reimer comments that Brooke was clearly “blind” to the “history of the peoples who had occupied the region for millennia and had created a land more truly spiritualised than any newcomer could fathom.”³²¹ As Adele Perry observes, historians of BC tend to “neutralize colonialism by describing it as ‘settlement.’”³²²

Colonists at the time of settlement would not have been worried about this process. For them, the dispossession and displacement of the previous inhabitants was inevitable- the peaceful settlement of the island was a reality because the United States and Great Britain did not go to war and Europeans did not die in bloody conflict. For the San Juan story, as the focus remains on the pig and the peaceful negotiations, the actual violence and land appropriation of the region by European settlers gets lost in a narrative about rational and successful division of territory by a colonising body. This position ignores the experience of the colonised.

This is not to say that Pig War and San Juan histories have been completely void of acknowledging Native presence on the island. But mentions of Natives have been short with reference only to the historical record of the European colonisers. This record recognizes a single antagonistic role for Natives during the dispute. For example, the American Government, in the 1860s, reported: “it was often made the cause of complaint by the American citizens that these pirates [natives] received too friendly a welcome at the Hudson’s Bay Company’s station on Vancouver’s Island, where the authorities seemed to accord to them belligerent rights...

³¹⁸ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 59-60.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 53.

³²⁰ Quoted in Reimer, *Writing British Columbia History*, 3.

³²¹ Ibid., 3.

³²² Perry, *On the Edge of Empire*, 196.

allowance, however, should be made for the excited state of feeling naturally arising from the fact that while the American citizens were being plundered and murdered, the Hudson's Bay Company were almost entirely exempt from these outrages, and comparatively on friendly terms with the Indians, whose incursion may be said to have had for their object plunder of Americans, and traffic with the Hudson's Bay Company."³²³ HBC "meddling" was a common complaint of American settlers and proponents of Manifest Destiny throughout nineteenth century westward expansion.

Much of American settlers' concerns came from the violent greeting they received from "Northern Indians." But attacks were not as common as settlers feared. Vouri, relying on the work of BC historian Barry Gough, asserts that these groups of Natives never attacked HBC facilities for fear of reprisal from the company's "gunboat diplomacy."³²⁴ Although attacks on Americans did occur, the HBC presence in the area mitigated large-scale attacks. Despite the American government's concern over the HBC involvement in Native raids, settlers on San Juan praised the HBC for its help. In a memorial to General Harney, they wrote: "in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-eight, the house of the United States inspector of customs for this island was attacked and fired into in the night by a party of Indians living on this island, and known as the Clallams, and had it not been for the timely aid of the Hudson's Bay Company, the inspector would have fallen a victim to their savage designs."³²⁵ A few nineteenth century European and American documents are the bulk of information on the Native perspective of the dispute. Most historians have not viewed the island as very important to Natives because at the time of the dispute it was only being used as seasonal fishing grounds and not inhabited in the European sense. Richardson comments that it was "recurring outbreaks of disease" which led to the abandonment of the island as a place to live.³²⁶ The tacit understanding of this comment is that San Juan was once a thriving hub of Native activity and due to increased European presence was almost entirely abandoned by its previous inhabitants.

³²³ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 135-136.

³²⁴ Vouri, *The Pig War*, 34.

³²⁵ United States Government, *The Northwest Boundary*, 149.

³²⁶ Richardson, *Pig War Islands*, 235.

To this day, the Pig War narrative remains consistent in its Eurocentric perspective. When tourists, arriving at Victoria Harbour, disembark from their cruise ships, and enter one of the many curio shops, they will find, on a rack of history books about Victoria, Rosemary Neering's 2009 book, "The Pig War: The Last Canada-US Border Conflict." This book, as well as Scott Kaufman's academic study, is one of the latest books to be written on this topic, and it merely continues the same "peace" theme that originated in the 1960s. Ultimately what has been presented in the standard Pig War story is an erasure of the colonial implications entwined in this narrative. A great example of this can be seen in Betty Baker's children's book. While there is no harm intended, it is striking to see images of a bemused Native on the island, witnessing the dispute. What was likely an attempt to acknowledge the presence of Natives comes across as a naïve conception of colonialism in nineteenth century Pacific Northwest. While settlers dispute an "unoccupied" island, this young Native boy, oddly wearing the attire of people from the Plains, is seen smiling, or in this particular case laughing, throughout the book, as he watches the conflict unfold; as if he approves of the whole matter (see appendix G). While the narrative of the Pig War stresses peace, and this is a noble perspective, the violence and turbulence which surrounded the settlement of the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, including San Juan Island, cannot be ignored.

In the twenty-first century the story is slowly approaching a new re-framing. The San Juan National Historic Park has reconfigured its historic prospectus "to incorporate a broader range of themes, including pre-European history and the natural environment."³²⁷ This is the third significant shift in interpretation for the park. In 1971, the park's major interpretive theme was the Pig War and the theme of peace which I have framed as part of the Postwar Dream.³²⁸ Since 1984, the park has been guided by an interpretive prospectus which focused solely on the military period of San Juan history. However, thanks to visitor feedback, the park discovered that, more recently, "many also wanted the interpretive program of the park to be expanded to include American Indian history and cultural practices, which would add some 'historic realism and

³²⁷ National Park Service, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*. Friday Harbor, WA: San Juan Island National Historical Park, 2008), 163.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 137.

interpretive balance' to park programs.”³²⁹ In 2008, in response to visitor input, the park proposed “Alternative C” which was the park’s preferred direction. This plan was designed to “broaden the scope of resource management and interpretation programs to emphasize the connections and interrelationships between the park’s natural and cultural resources. New facilities, trails and programs provide opportunities for visitors to understand the importance of the park’s natural resources in defining the cultural landscapes and influencing the settlement and historic events of San Juan Island.”³³⁰ Diana Barg, cultural resource program manager for the Samish Indian Nation commented, “enhancing the interpretation of Native American culture and prehistory through consultation will strengthen an important element of the Park, San Juan Island and the visitor experience.”³³¹ She supported Alternative C. With the support of local Native groups, as well as the public and businesses, the San Juan National Historic Park enacted Alternative C which will address most of my postcolonial concerns mentioned in this thesis.

³²⁹ National Park Service, *San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 237.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 29.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 268.

Conclusion

The Pig and the Postwar Dream, Part 2.

In my rear view mirror,
 The sun is going down.
 Sinking behind bridges in the road.
 And I think of all the good things,
 That we have left undone.
 And I suffer premonitions,
 Confirm suspicions,
 Of the Holocaust to come.

The sun is in the east,
 Even though the day is done,
 Two suns in the sunset,
 Could be the human race is run.

- Roger Waters (Pink Floyd), "Two Suns in the Sunset"
 From the album, *The Final Cut*, 1983

Roger Waters holds little hope for the future of mankind. His apocalyptic vision suggests that he does not believe the Postwar Dream is possible. The historians of the Pig War have a much more optimistic outlook. In their opinion, world leaders could follow the example of their heroes and choose peace over war. This positive imagining of the Postwar Dream is couched in the mythology of a peaceful settlement in the Pacific Northwest, an image that this thesis has shown to be problematic and questionable.

Myth is laced into the Pig War story in many forms. For example, a famous Admiral Baynes quote, utilised by most Pig War historians, was likely a colourful fabrication. According to the popular version of the story, when Admiral Baynes arrived at Victoria, and heard of the tribulations on San Juan, in particular about how war was looming, he purportedly sighed, “tut, tut, no, no the damned fools.”³³² No historian has been able to find this quote in the historical record, except in the memoirs of HBC servant, Angus MacDonald.³³³ It is likely that Baynes never uttered this fantastic phrase, yet due to its elegance and laconic simplicity, it finds its way into the history pages. Reasons for this are likely connected to the same logic that has guided historians of the Postwar Dream framework. Baynes is touted as one of the “cool heads” who diffused tensions and saved the island from military conflict. His famous phrase becomes the slogan for proponents of peace. As the narrative goes, his experience in war made him wise and he knew that peace was preferable to bloody war. Therefore, the Pig War story needs this mythical phrase, because those who solve conflicts violently are “damned fools.”

But there is no part of the narrative as largely mythological as the pig’s role. There are no images of the actual pig, just as it had no recorded name. Yet it became venerated, as if it was an unknown soldier. As Murray declares “the only fatality in the affair was an unnamed and nondescript pig. This unwilling sacrifice on the altar of international discord has achieved a local kind of swinish immortality, however, and in the Pacific Northwest the conflict that developed after his death bears a reference to him- as indeed it must- since there was no other victim to honor.”³³⁴ When people visit the park, often their first question is where was the pig shot? I confess that my first trek through the park was also to the supposed site of the pig’s demise. It has become a pilgrimage to those who wish to honour the life and death of a simple animal that got caught up in an intense rivalry for territory and conquest.

The pig becomes a reminder, albeit an odd one, of the senselessness of war. “War is war no matter how you slice it,” says Howard, “and the instant case is often forgotten in the problems war brings with it. America’s Manifest Destiny, however, no longer dictates that we shall fight

³³² Interestingly, Murray does not use this quote, but all the subsequent Pig War historians do. Vouri uses it as his heading for chapter 11 in his book. He is careful to note that this quote came “purportedly” from Baynes, but not conclusively; Vouri, *The Pig War*, 126; Coleman, *The Pig War*, 97; Neering, *The Pig War*, 78.

³³³ Howay, *Angus McDonald*, 196.

³³⁴ Murray, *The Pig War*, 7.

over a pig.”³³⁵ Howard, in 1955, declared the West frontier closed and, therefore, American settlement complete. In naïve optimism, Howard imagined the end of American imperialism, which should have ushered in an era of peace. Through hindsight we know that this was not the case. Vietnam was around the corner and two wars with Iraq punctuated half a century of American military involvement abroad. This suggests that Waters may be more correct in his portrayal of a mythical and unattainable Postwar Dream.

At the time of the dispute, people saw a real danger for international conflict, a third war between the United States and Great Britain in less than a century. But more pressing political concerns for each nation made the San Juan Question, ultimately, a minor one. This is how the event was treated for the following hundred years; historians wrote little about it as compared to “bigger” events such as Canadian Confederation and the American Civil War. The San Juan Island Dispute was intertwined with both these events and, consequently, the settlement of the dispute was recognized as an insignificant by-product of them. But a semiotic study of the mid-twentieth century re-framing of the narrative shows that after World War II a greater, more significant, story emerges. This story generates a didactic message of how leaders ought to solve conflicts diplomatically as opposed to violently. This powerful message has come to be the main point historians have when writing about the event; the dispute was not just a minor incident in nineteenth century Anglo-American relations, but a great example of peaceful conflict resolution. “Pig War” historians elevated the subject from near historical obscurity to greater humanist importance. In this process some of the colonial implications of the event are often forgotten but the mission of Pig War historians is laudable for its commitment to peace.

When people are first told of the San Juan Island Dispute, naturally, their first question is, why do we call it the Pig War? The straightforward answer is because in 1859 an American settler shot a pig owned by the HBC and this was the only casualty of the conflict. Offered in this thesis is a more complex answer. It involves the historical and political context of the term’s genesis, as well as the didactic message intended by its use. By analyzing the logic behind the Pig War story and how it was constructed, this thesis shows how something as simple as a name can carry powerful and persuasive ideological meaning.

³³⁵ Howard, *Manifest Destiny and the British Empire’s Pig*, 23.

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Appendix A



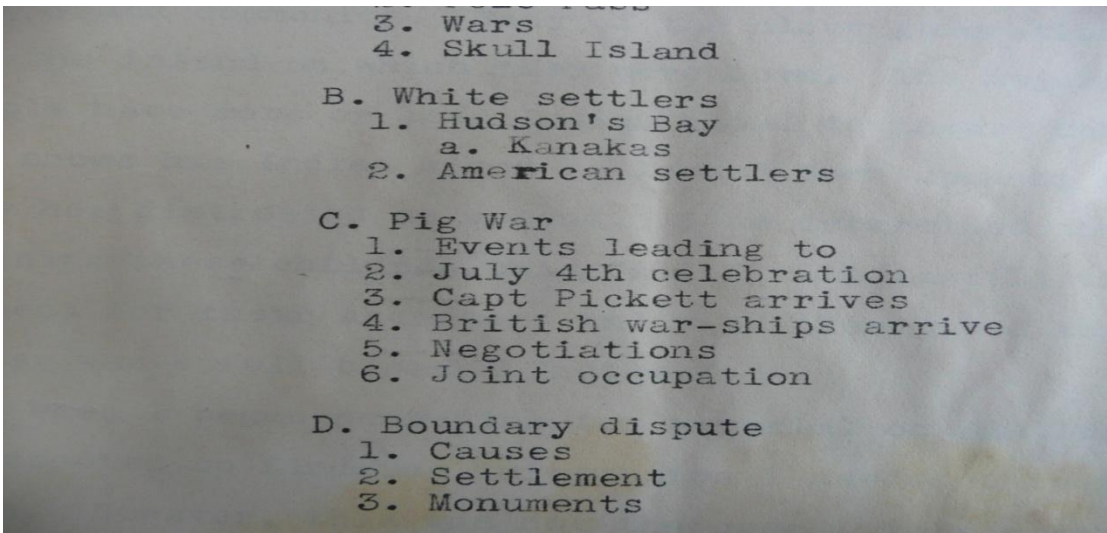
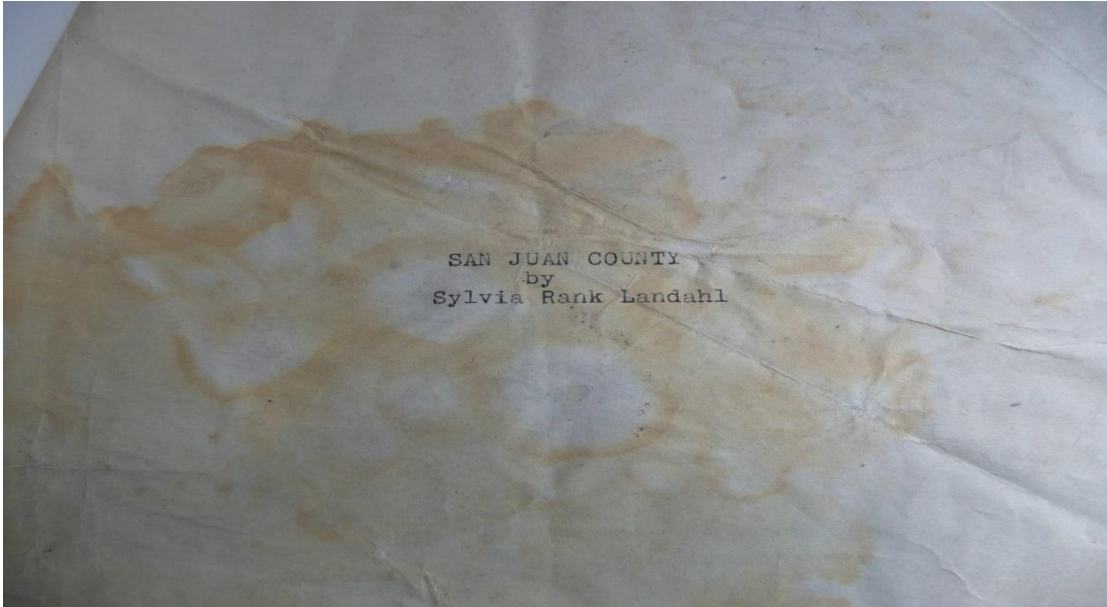
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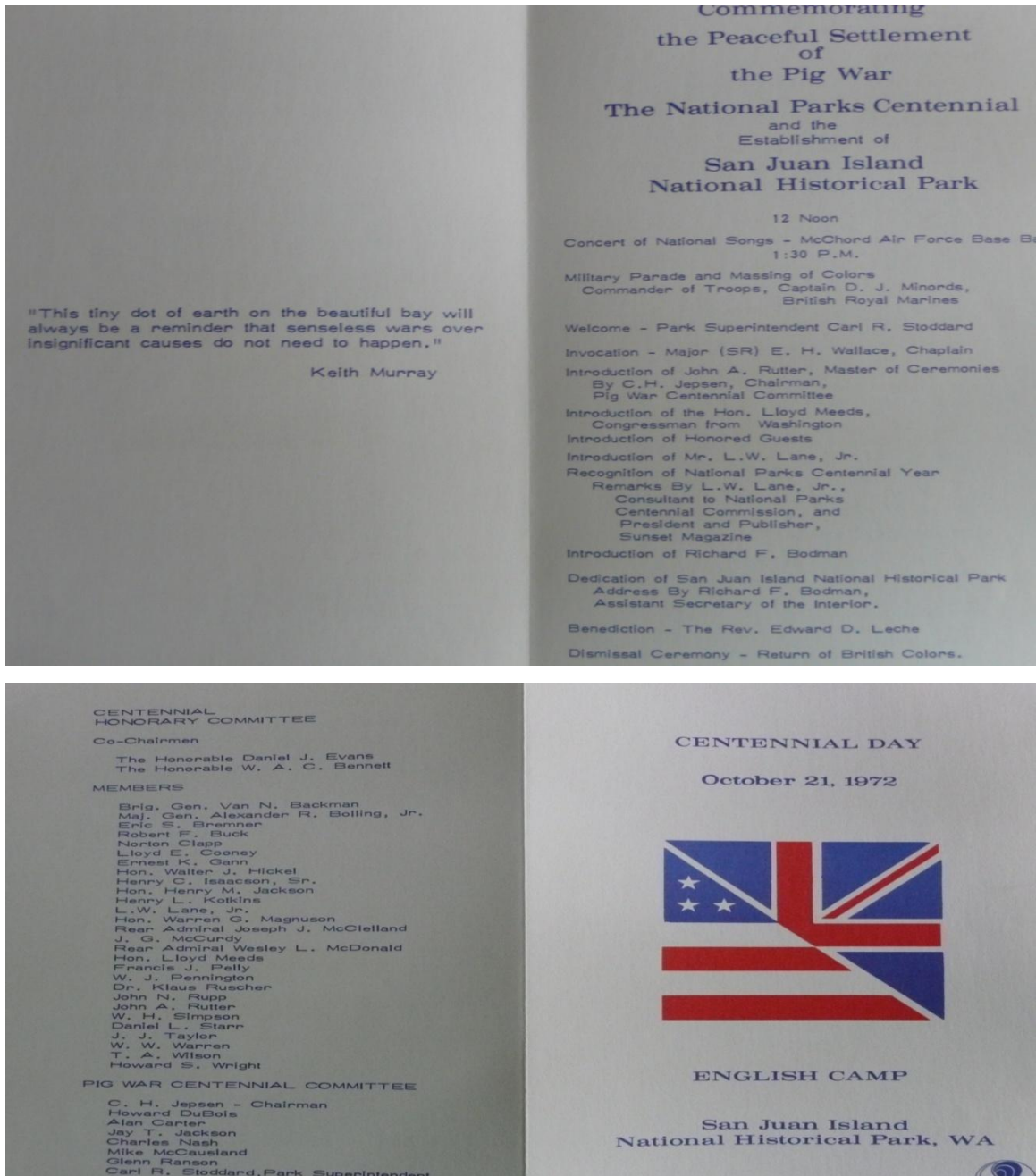
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Appendix C



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Appendix D



Appendix E


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THE WAR OF THE PIG THE PEACEFUL SAN JUAN DISPUTE OF 1859...



A war in which the only casualty was a pig— the way all nations may eventually learn to conduct their wars.

by Tom H. Inkster

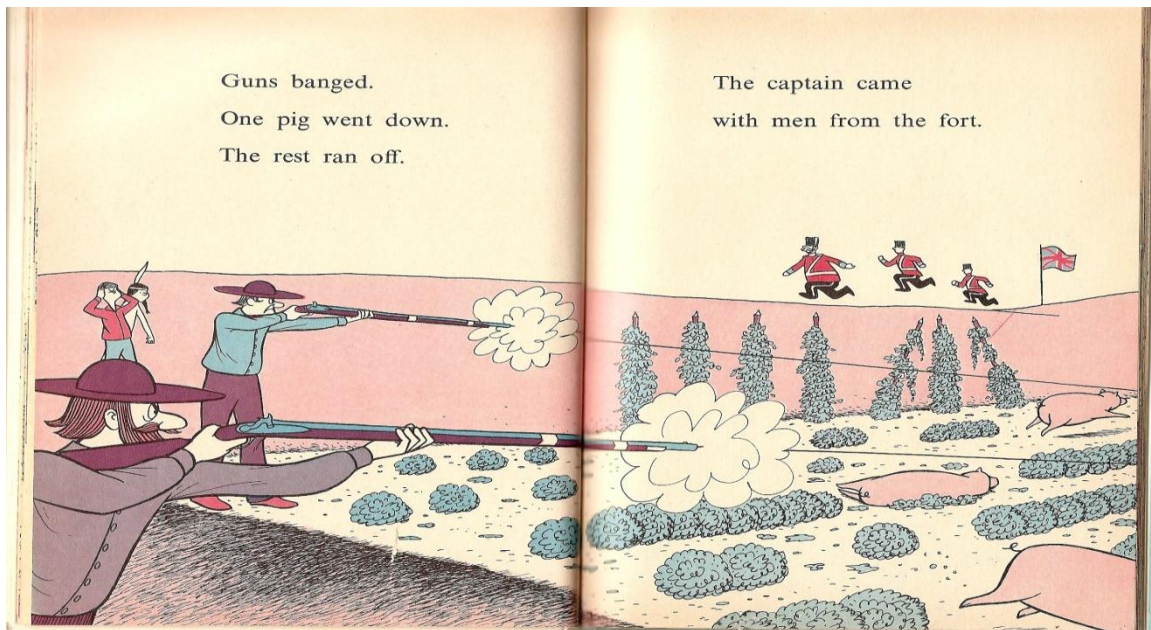
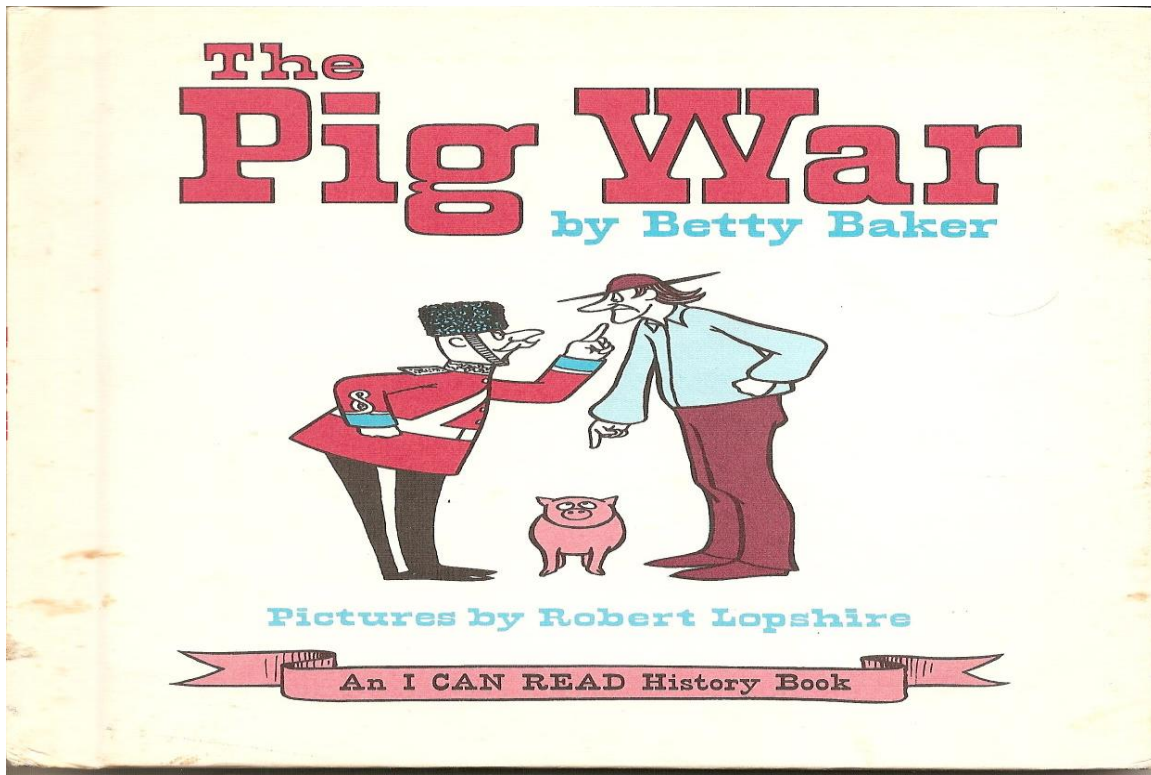
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Appendix F



Appendix G



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