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Dressing the Part: Clothing and Gender Identity on the Frontier

Artifacts from Steamboat *Bertrand*

By

Kami Ahrens

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

Major: Anthropology

Under the Supervision of Professor Effie Athanassopoulos

Lincoln, Nebraska

June 2017

Dressing the Part: Clothing and Gender Identity on the Frontier

Artifacts from Steamboat *Bertrand*

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University of Nebraska, 2017

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This study re-examines established views on gender divisions in the nineteenth century and further investigates the relationship between identity construction and material culture, with an emphasis on clothing. Using artifacts from the Steamboat *Bertrand* collection as a case study, the project explores the maintenance and performance of Victorian gender ideals in Montana mining communities. Steamboat *Bertrand* sank in 1865 on its maiden journey to Fort Benton, Montana, carrying a variety of goods for commercial sale, as well as the personal goods of passengers aboard the ship. The artifacts excavated from the ship provide a unique examination into the lives of men and women on the frontier. Artifact analysis and historical research serve as the primary methods for exploring concepts of gender and identity. Representative textiles for analysis were sourced from both the commercial and personal cargos to better understand the fluidity of gender role performance and translation of Victorian values into western communities. Clothing, as the most personal form of material culture, provides an accessible avenue to understand concepts of both individual and community identities. Additionally, the imbalanced demographics of mining towns, such as those in Montana, provide unique scenarios for interrogating the relationship between material culture and identity construction in the mid-nineteenth century. The written narrative of this thesis is accompanied by a digital exhibit hosted on *Scalar* which explores similar concepts through an object-centered investigation. The project makes use of digitized

primary documents, photographs, and 3D models of artifacts to present a multimedia narrative that engages the audience in a critical examination of the past. Though the digital exhibit utilizes a broader artifact set than this thesis, both projects engage in similar analyses that re-examine the experiences of men and women on the frontier. These projects engage with narratives of the past to deepen the understanding of lived experiences in western communities.

To Riley, my constant companion

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the incredible community of scholars who have supported me through this journey, especially Dr. Effie Athanassopoulos who has provided me with direction and motivation when I needed it most. Thank you for your confidence in me and for challenging me to explore new opportunities and ideas.

Also to Dr. Carrie Heitman for her wealth of knowledge on gender and for always asking the questions I missed. To Dr. Claire Nicholas and her incredibly rich background in clothing, textiles, and community, and for her unfailing enthusiasm. You each brought unique and enlightening approaches to my research. I am honored to have been given the chance to work with such strong, intelligent women. You all have inspired me to further my academic and career goals and have challenged me to be relentless in my pursuit of knowledge.

To Dr. Wayne Babchuk, for his incessant confidence in me and infectious positivity. I am grateful to have found friendship among such a notable scholar.

I would be remiss without extending my sincerest thanks to Dean Knudsen, curator of the *Bertrand* collection. I am incredibly grateful for your willingness to assist me, for sharing the collection and your knowledge with me, and the countless hours of great classic rock.

I would not be where I am now without the mentorship and friendship of Dr. Steve Dasovich, who knew I was an archaeologist long before I ever did. Your continued dedication to my success is humbling and I thank you for always pushing me towards the next goal.

Lastly, my greatest thanks to my friends and family who have supported me through these past two years and patiently served as sounding boards for my many ideas. To my many friends and colleagues who helped make Lincoln home. Most of all, to my parents, who never stopped encouraging me or pushing me, even when I thought I had met failure. My success is fueled by your faith and love. I am forever grateful.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: PROJECT OVERVIEW

On April 1, 1865, the Steamboat *Bertrand* sank in the Missouri River while carrying supplies to be distributed to Montana mining communities. It remained buried in mud and silt until it was excavated in 1968. Since then, the collection has been conserved and displayed at the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge in Iowa. However, it has received little attention from researchers in the past forty years. This project helps correct this oversight by examining, analyzing, and cataloging the collection's textiles and related domestic materials in order to explore structures of gender and identity on the American frontier.

Project Goals

The collection is a perfect time capsule of life on the American frontier in 1865. It provides a substantial data set for researchers and is culturally valuable to the public. The artifacts serve as resources to explore research questions involving gender, class, and cultural ideals on the mining frontier. The primary research questions for this project include:

- 1) What did household structures in Montana look like in the 1860s and 1870s?
What percentage of these homes had traditional nuclear families? How many 'white' women were present in the selected communities?
- 2) To what degree were Victorian gender roles and division of public and private spheres of gendered interactions maintained in these communities? Were gender ideals fluid or rigid and how did residents negotiate the associated roles in a venue with social and material limitations?

- 3) How were gendered tasks reassigned in all-male households?
- 4) How did commercially versus domestically manufactured clothing shape or impact gender identity construction?
- 5) Catalog and re-house select artifacts from the collection.
- 6) Expand the accessibility of the collection by analyzing and promoting it on both print and digital platforms.

This study re-examines established views on gender divisions in the nineteenth century and further investigates the relationship between identity construction and material culture, with an emphasis on clothing. Artifact analysis and historical research serve as the primary methods for exploring these concepts. The objects selected are items from both the commercial cargo of the ship, destined for wholesalers and stores in Montana, and the personal effects of passengers. Representative textiles for analysis were sourced from both the commercial and personal cargos. Steamboats typically carried a diverse crowd, including single and married men, married women with children traveling to reunite with their husbands, and, occasionally, single women venturing west with independent aspirations. Among the many *Bertrand* passengers were at least three women with children and two single sisters, journeying westward to join family members. The personal possessions of these individuals supplement the commercial, mass-produced artifacts included in the ship's main cargo. Both categories of objects were recorded and analyzed to better understand the fluidity of gender roles and translation of Victorian social norms and values into western communities.

Documentary and Material Resources

Historical and theoretical information is sourced from primary and secondary resources. Repositories for primary resources include the Montana Historical Society, the Library of Congress, the South Dakota Historical Society, U.S. Federal Census Records, and several published volumes (e.g. Sanford 1915, Stuart 2004, Bird 1960). Secondary resources provide an overview of *Bertrand's* history, trade on the Missouri River (e.g. Switzer 2013, Corbin 2000, 2006, Petsche 1974), and gender approaches in archaeology (e.g. Beaudry 2006, Conkey and Spector 1984, Geller 2009, Insoll 2007, Nelson 1997, Scott 1994, Seifert 1991, Spencer-Wood 2013, Voss 2006, Wall 1994, Hardesty 1998). Approaches to identity construction and consumption are also explored as underlying factors tied to artifact analysis (e.g. White and Beaudry 2011, Wilkie 2000, Mullins 2011). As identity is a dense and diverse subject, for the purposes of this study, it is limited to gender with some consideration given to socioeconomic status. The different theoretical perspectives provide a framework to analyze cases of divergent gender roles that often occurred on the frontier during this period. While many artifacts within the *Bertrand* collection can be attributed to men or women, based on known associations, some items cannot be assumed to be tied to normative use patterns characteristic of the Victorian period. With around 80-85% of the adult population being male in many mining or isolated camps, gender imbalances often resulted in a reversal or ambiguity of roles (Montana. 1870. US Census). Men without wives took on additional domestic tasks or outsourced these duties to businesses created by women who moved outside the private sphere (Petrik 1987:6, 11). Women who came west to rejoin husbands, fathers, or brothers, however, often retained values associated with Victorian

gender roles, regardless of their ability to actualize these ideals in challenging conditions. They did not dismiss contemporary ideals of femininity and the domestic sphere (see Jeffrey 1998). Items from the Atchison and Campbell families, the two families with larger quantities of artifacts within the collection, are incorporated to provide case studies of some women's experiences on the frontier and their methods of mediating the transition away from 'civilization.' The Campbell family consisted of two sisters journeying to Montana to join with their father, mother, and siblings after completing their education in St. Charles, Missouri. The Atchison family, which consisted of Mrs. Atchison and her two children, similarly, was moving to reunite with the male head of household (Switzer 2013: 61-3, 73-83). Artifacts from these families include school books and a Bible, personal trinkets such as a memento heart and hat pins, silk and wool dresses, parasols, a corset busk, and artist's charcoal. Such items illustrate the type of objects brought to the frontier to recreate a sense of home. These artifacts enrich the analysis and understanding of domestic life in the western territories by serving as case studies.

However, the mining frontier was largely dominated by men, who were the first to establish mining towns. Both single and married, these individuals came seeking fortune and property. Without wives present, men took on additional household duties, such as washing the dishes and churning butter. These adaptive strategies, however, were temporary for most men, as they sought out wives to help with the household. Therefore, many of the commercial domestic artifacts cannot be directly attributed to a specific gender. These objects include butter churns, candles, cookware, tableware, ceramics, glass lamps, bolts of silk and wool cloth, and foodstuffs such as butter, yeast powder,

brandied fruit, coffee, and various types of alcohol (see Corbin 2000 and Switzer 2013 for complete list of cargo). While some of these artifacts were necessary and functional, more ornate objects such as ironstone china and decorative clocks mellowed the harshness of frontier life by bringing material comforts of the east into western homes. Artifacts such as these communicated middle class status and values to both the family and visitors, suggesting that the ideal of the domestic sphere was upheld within the territories. These concepts are explored in the digital project *Making the Frontier Home: Stories from Steamboat Bertrand*, conducted in conjunction with this thesis (see Appendix C).

However, some artifacts, specifically clothing and objects for adornment, have direct gender attribution based on known comparative sources. These include women's woven shawls, men's and ladies' wool coats, women's wool and silk dresses, and men's ready-to-wear clothing, such as wool flannel shirts and wool trousers. In order to establish these distinctions, analysis of gendered artifacts is conducted throughout this thesis, guided by historical research and context of use (following the example of Beaudry 2006). Contemporary newspapers and personal journals provide supplementary material for establishing these relationships (e.g. Sanford 1915, Stuart 2004, *The Montana Post*, *The Benton Weekly*). An analysis of the artifacts and these documents concludes the project.

Digital Outreach

In addition to the written document, this project is accompanied by a digital exhibit that supplements research with photographs and 3D models of representative

artifacts (see Appendix C: *Making the Frontier Home*: Methodology for Creating a Digital Exhibit). The digital project, like this thesis, focuses on investigating the degree to which performance of Victorian gender roles were maintained on the frontier. Using artifacts from the *Bertrand* collection and primary documents from various sources, the project constructs a narrative that guides the audience in a critical examination of the past. The project primarily focuses on gender through the lens of household structure and material consumption habits by examining domestic goods such as ceramics and foodstuffs. Gender-specific artifacts, such as men's hats and women's shawls, are included in the items presented. Many of these artifacts were replicated as 3D models using photogrammetric methods. The models allow for wider dissemination of the objects and enable researchers and the general public to interact with the object in a non-invasive manner. Along with photographs, excerpts, and a written narrative, the models are incorporated into a digital exhibit created with *Scalar*, an open-source program. The models themselves are hosted on *Sketchfab*, which allows them to easily be shared through other programs. *Scalar* easily integrates media from various sources and present the material in an attractive, non-linear format. This resource was an appealing option for hosting a project on the *Bertrand* collection that utilized different forms of media and needed room to grow in the future.

While the goal for the digital project was to develop a resource directed at sustaining and promoting this facet of cultural heritage, the project also contributed to the development of this thesis. The framework for *Making the Frontier Home*, an investigation of cultural ideals through the case studies of men, women, and children's experiences on the frontier, was used as a similar approach to the question of dress and

gender role performance in the same region. As the studies overlapped thematically, much of the material produced from the digital project influenced the study presented in this thesis. However, different artifact sets are included in the two projects in order to pursue varying lines of inquiry. Additionally, the digital platform provides a more accessible and appealing format that allows for wider dissemination of the topics investigated. The layout of *Scalar* encourages the viewer to interact directly with primary source excerpts and digital models, engaging the audience in a critical examination of the past rather than the simple reading of a narrative. The two projects correspond, though, and are intended to enrich each other with different methods of investigation and different media for presentation.

Project Contributions

While both gender and identity have been recurring conversations within the discipline of archaeology, few archaeological projects integrate the remains of historic clothing into this ongoing investigation due to the lack of preservation of such materials. The project proposed here enriches this study within archaeology. The strategies developed through this investigation further interrogate the ways in which dress was constructed or altered, whether as a conscious action or not, to communicate facets of individual and gendered identity in western communities. The frontier provided a venue for individuals to challenge culturally dominant ideals. Without the pre-established socio-cultural structures characteristic of eastern cities and with an adult population approximately 85% male, mining communities, such as those found in Montana, allowed individuals some behavioral flexibility without the severity of social repercussions

(Montana. 1870. U.S. Census). However, despite this relative freedom of self-identification and fluidity of gender roles, as populations increased and demographics normalized, or as more families settled in the territory, acceptance of culturally prescribed gender roles became more evident through dress and embodiment (Petrik 1987). While physically representative of a larger American culture, documentary evidence suggests that nuances in identity still existed beneath the material culture, allowing for a more progressive society characterized by agency and acceptance to emerge in western territories.

CHAPTER 2: STEAMBOAT *BERTRAND*: TRADE AND TRANSPORTATION ON THE MISSOURI RIVER

Along the Missouri River, mountain boats, hardy steamboats created to endure northward travel, transported people, goods, and ideas into the west, connecting the frontier both tangibly and intangibly to the rest of the nation. Mountain boats provided an invaluable mode of trade and transportation for western settlers. Throughout the middle of the nineteenth century, these boats serviced forts, settlements, and mining camps. Historians estimate between roughly 100 and 150 steamboats made the arduous journey between St. Louis, Missouri and Fort Benton, Montana between 1865 and 1870 (Corbin 2006:24-5). However, many never reached their destinations and instead sank along the Upper Missouri (Corbin and Rodgers 2008:35-9). One such steamboat was *Bertrand*, which hit a snag and sank on its maiden voyage near DeSoto Landing less than a month after its departure in March of 1865 (see Figure 2.1). *Bertrand* was one of several steamboats in the "Mountain Fleet" of the Montana and Idaho Transportation Line (Corbin 2000: 11-12). While it was not uncommon for steamboats to wreck along the shallow Missouri, *Bertrand* remains a unique specimen in that it was located and fully excavated in 1968. Its contents, now housed at the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, provide an invaluable glimpse into life on the American frontier.

The dominance of the fur trade in Montana territory was replaced by discoveries of gold early in the 1850s. Large-scale migration to Montana, however, did not commence until the late 1850s and early 1860s, after the arrival of notable pioneer Granville Stuart and the “discovery of rich placer and quartz mines” that encouraged success-seeking men and women to journey to this relatively isolated area (Corbin 2006:21; Switzer 2013:29). Without access to established farms or manufacturing centers, new emigrants had to rely on supply lines from distant cities, such as Salt Lake City or St. Louis (Switzer 2013:30). While steamboats traveling up the Missouri from St. Louis were more efficient deliverers of goods, their propensity to sink made them risky and sometimes unreliable. When these tragedies struck, settlers in Montana had to rely on overland transportation of goods from Salt Lake City that traveled around 625 miles along the Montana Trail (Corbin 2006:22). A journal entry from brothers James and Granville Stuart captures the dismay and stress such a loss caused:

“The American Fur Company’s steamboat burned and blew up at the mouth of Milk river. Cargo total loss, no lives lost... There were no supplies of food at the fort, all having been eaten up and everybody waiting for the arrival of that steamboat to procure more. Now it is destroyed and those people, as well as ourselves, will have to get food supplies from Salt Lake City, five hundred miles away.” (Stuart 2004:181-2).

However, the economic benefits of steamboating outweighed the risk and river trade remained dominant throughout most of the nineteenth century. Merchants in the urban, eastern United States took advantage of the opportunity to profit from supplying mining equipment and other goods to miners and their communities. About three-fifths of groceries and supplies that reached these areas came by steamboat (Switzer 2013:31). Transportation companies similarly recognized the chance to economically benefit from passengers, merchants, and consumers connected to the western territories (Switzer

2013:29, 31). In 1865 one such company, the Montana and Idaho Transportation Line, formed. Ultimately, it became the largest company sending steamboats out from St. Louis. Initially, high costs of shipping restricted what consignees, the Montana store owners, could supply in their stores; though they provided necessities, the objects for sale were not always “necessarily what they wanted” (Switzer 2013:35). Improvements in boat design and increasing competition between transportation companies, however, reduced freighting costs from \$0.10-\$0.18 per pound to the low price of \$0.06-\$0.08 offered in 1865 (Switzer 2013:31). The decrease in shipping prices allowed consignors to send a larger diversity of goods and some luxuries, such as the canned oysters on *Bertrand*, to consignees in frontier towns.

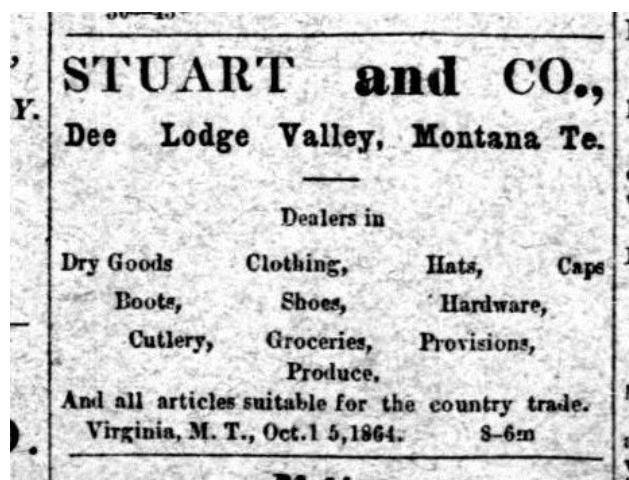


Figure 2.2: Ad for Stuart and Co., *Montana Post*, 20 May 1865²

Most of these buyers stocked stores in well-established towns, such as Fort Benton, Montana, that serviced satellite mining camps or smaller communities like Deer Lodge or Hell Gate in Montana. The known consignees of *Bertrand* included Vivian & Simpson, G.P. Dorris, and M. Kingman & Co. of Virginia City, Montana; brothers James

² *Montana Post* [Virginia City, Montana]. 1865 “Advertisement for Stuart and Co.” 20 May. Virginia City, Montana Territory. *Chronicling America*.

and Granville Stuart & Co. of Deer Lodge (see Figure 2.2); J. Murphy of Fort Benton; Worden & Co. of Hell Gate; and J.J. Roe & Co. of an unknown city. Goods bound for Virginia City included “sugar and syrup, canned goods, champagne, bitters, honey, fireplace tools, candles, matches, indigo, boots, coats, trousers, vests, sweaters, cigars, smoking pipes, tools, and sewing supplies” (Switzer 2013:96). Similar objects were destined for Hell Gate, Fort Benton, and Deer Lodge. Previous researchers, like Ronald Switzer, established these associations based on relationships between goods and marked crates, as no known shipping documentation for *Bertrand* exists (Switzer 2013). The commercial cargo of *Bertrand* includes a variety of objects to facilitate daily tasks in the Montana territory. High quantities of standardized mining and construction equipment, such as shovels, blasting fuses, picks, froes, planes, hammers, and more highlight the efforts dedicated to converting the Montana landscape into a habitable and profitable environment according to American standards. Vital to this process were the numerous manufactured goods designed to create a comfortable home. Curtain fixtures, locks and latches, window glass, stoves, colored glass lamps, ironstone ceramics, and household textiles would have visually softened the seemingly coarse and isolated life of mining towns.

In addition to commercial goods, steamboats carried passengers and their personal belongings out west. Travelling via water as opposed to land reduced travel time and fares. The cost of overland transportation to Montana was around \$350 per passenger, while traveling on a steamboat averaged about \$150 for transportation upriver (see Figure 2.3; Switzer 2013:30; *The Montana Post*, 2(5):1). Ticket prices could be further reduced if the individual opted out of a cabin and meals. The affordability of steamboat travel

made it an appealing and accessible option for a diverse group of individuals, including both single and married men and women (Switzer 2013:31). Census records document the varied background of individuals who moved to Montana in the 1860s and 1870s from other states or countries (Montana. Deer Lodge County. 1870. U.S. Census). Among these were ‘white’ women who journeyed to the territories with families or to rejoin relatives and spouses (e.g. Hampsten 1980; Myres 1982; Sanford 1915). However, there are some accounts of single women traveling west independently (e.g. Bird 1960) with various motives. Many of these women found employment as domestic servants or boarding house keepers (Montana. 1870. U.S. Census; Petrik 1987:12). Among the known *Bertrand* passengers, however, were women with children and two single sisters, all of whom were joining male family members who were already settled in Montana (see Appendix B for selected passenger list).



Figure 2.3: Ad for Montana and Idaho Transportation Line, *Montana Post*, 23

September 1865³

³ *Montana Post* [Virginia City, Montana]. 1865 “Advertisement for Montana and Idaho Transportation Line.” 23 September. Virginia City, Montana Territory. *Chronicling America*.

The known women aboard *Bertrand* included Mary Atchison, mother of two; Mary Elizabeth Walton, mother of five; Caroline Millard, mother of two; and Fannie and Anne Campbell, two single sisters in their teenage years. All of these women were joining families or husbands out west (Switzer 2013:49-50, 61-83). Though the personal possessions recovered from *Bertrand* indicate that the female passengers conformed to contemporary middle-class standards, travel aboard the steamboat would have served as a transitional phase before a period of acclimatization to the frontier. Artifacts such as an engraved bamboo parasol and silk dresses suggest a delicacy and leisure time that could be afforded by many middle-class women. The newness of many Montana communities, though, required economic and labor contributions to the household by women which would have allowed for minimal leisure time. In-depth analysis of additional goods on the steamboat and primary resources provides further insight into this process on the frontier and an understanding of women's roles and responsibilities away from the material comfort of urban centers.

Previous Research

Despite the massive size of the collection—nearly 300,000 artifacts—limited research has been dedicated to the *Bertrand* cargo. In the early 1970s, a wave of short articles and publications emerged in response to the 1968-1969 excavation and initial analyses of the conserved artifacts (Petsche 1970, 1974; Switzer 1971, 1972, 1974; Schweiger 1971). A second wave of research projects followed in the 1990s and early 2000s, mostly from master's and doctoral students at various universities (e.g. Meyer 1990; Corbin 2000; Guilmartin 2002). The variety of studies and different theoretical

approaches to *Bertrand* have left gaps in the literature, although each research project provides new insight and perspective to the artifacts. This project endeavors to expand on the resources available by analyzing and promoting the collection on both print and digital platforms.

The fundamental text on *Bertrand* was written by Jerome Petsche, who was closely involved in the excavation, conservation, and accession of the artifacts. Petsche (1974) provides essential background material, an overview of the cargo, and a detailed description of the boat's construction. Included appendices supply case studies related to the conservation, preservation, and analysis of certain features of the boat and cargo. Some black and white photographs are also included in this volume. While the images of artifacts are difficult to discern, the pictures of the excavation clarify the layout of the vessel and its hold.

Ronald Switzer also worked closely on the excavation and early analysis on the *Bertrand* artifacts. In the 1970s, he wrote a series of articles that covered ammunition, bottles, and buttons from the collection (Switzer 1971, 1972, 1974). Switzer revisited his early studies and released a new book on the collection in 2013 (Switzer 2013). His study includes a comprehensive list of artifacts and detailed information on known manufacturers of some commercial goods. While it is information rich, Switzer's book does not fully engage in analysis of the artifacts. However, his research serves as a solid foundation for other studies and raises awareness of the collection.

Aside from these two primary researchers who have been involved with *Bertrand* since its resurrection from the mud, a small number of scholars have conducted analyses on different aspects of the collection. The most prominent of these researchers is

Annalies Corbin who converted her master's thesis into a book (Corbin 2000). She compares the personal effects of passengers on *Bertrand* to *Arabia*, another Missouri River steamboat that sank nearly a decade before *Bertrand*. Her analysis provides insight and detailed documentation into a select group of artifacts, primarily those belonging to the Campbell sisters and the Atchison family. Another master's thesis completed in 1990 focuses specifically on the coats within the collection (Meyer 1990).

In 2002, Lore Ann Guilmartin completed her dissertation on *Bertrand*'s textile collection. While Guilmartin investigates a similar research question, that of "the relationship between the gender systems existing at the *Bertrand* cargo's intended destination and the clothing items being shipped aboard the *Bertrand*," her methods and primary investigative questions differ from the path explored in this project (2002:17-8). Her volume focuses on gender-attributed artifacts to white men and women and does not address the fluidity or inversion of gender roles. Although she does propose that binary divisions are less rigid in mining communities, she suggests this flexibility arises out of need to support their families, which still confines women to a gendered sphere or ideal; it does not address agency and the circumstances of single women. She also focuses on the impact of clothing on physical mobility and gendered activities. Despite the value of these analyses, Guilmartin's work does not provide a substantial inquiry into men's experiences and concepts of masculinity. Lastly, Guilmartin does not substantially discuss the overlying structure of class and its relationship to gender ideals in the nineteenth century. Middle class values were directly tied to Victorian notions of gender divisions and are an essential consideration to any examination of gendered identities during this time. These issues are addressed through this project. Nevertheless,

Guilmartin's volume serves as an entry point into the investigation between gender roles in Montana and clothing from *Bertrand*.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: GENDER, IDENTITY, AND CONSUMER CULTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the past thirty years, gender in archaeology has come to the forefront of theoretical debates. Emerging largely from the post-processual movement of the late twentieth century, gender theories explore the ways in which archaeologists, both men and women, interpret gender differentiation through artifacts. Prior to post-processualism, archaeologists, overwhelmingly male, tended to simply associate specific artifacts with men or women without further investigating the artifacts themselves or supporting their inferences. These are often referred to as material-correlate studies whose interpretations are undermined by circular reasoning (Vermeer 2011: 322). Later approaches directly challenged these traditional practices by exploring other methods for interpreting gender through the study of material culture that do not necessarily assign gender to artifact types (Hays-Gilpin and Whitley 1998:5-7). Some artifacts can be gendered, though, provided the associations are supported with research. This approach can illuminate circumstances that deviate from the social norm, leading to a more accurate and diverse historical record.

The complexity of gender identity and roles in the nineteenth century, however, cannot be fully understood without a discussion of both femininity and masculinity, as well as the interactions between the two. A broader theoretical framework that incorporates both dimensions of gender is essential to this study of western mining towns characterized by gender imbalances. An approach that incorporates theoretical perspectives and historical research on ideals for both men and women, and the nuances between the two, is utilized in this study to investigate the degree to which Victorian gender ideals were upheld in the Montana territory.

Defining Gender

Foundational to an examination of the emergence of gender in archaeology is a clear understanding of gender itself. Gender can be described as a cultural construction that is “the social correlate of sex class” (Nelson 1997:15). Gender is often confused with sex, which is determined by biological attributes, generally male or female, although biological sex is not confined to this dichotomy (e.g. Fausto-Sterling 2000). Unlike sex, however, gender is not biologically determined. It is a “symbolic system that structures social and economic relations” between members of society (Hendon 1996:49). This culturally constructed dichotic division that sculpts self-identity also influences the construction of perceived reality and influences divisions and hierarchies throughout society (Smith 1991:86-7). According to theorist Judith Butler, gender is the product of a series of repetitive acts, or a performance of cultural fictions by individuals who subscribe to the ‘naturalized’ order promoted by society (Butler 1988:520-1, 524). Gender is based on a “collective agreement” for how individuals operate within a shared experience of society (Butler 1988:522-5). Butler suggests individuals become “entranced by their own fictions whereby the construction compels one's belief in its necessity and naturalness” (Butler 1988:522-5). However, these gendered fictions are not fixed; they vary geographically, culturally, and temporally (Nelson 1997:16; Butler 1988:519). In the western tradition during the nineteenth century, gender was aligned with the two dominant sexes of male and female. This dichotomy governed, and still does, gender roles, ideology, and identity. According to archaeologist Elizabeth Scott, gender roles dictate socially acceptable behaviors and define gender identity as an

individual's self-association with notions of male and female (Scott 1994:10).

Understanding these concepts as they apply to historical settings creates a framework from which gender theories can be constructed.

Gender roles are the primary focus of this case study; rather than personal artifacts, the commercial nature of most of the cargo limits the extent to which individual gendered identity can be examined. Instead, historical research and primary documents supplement the investigation of the artifacts by providing a lens with which to examine gender roles and ideals in nineteenth-century American culture. Contemporary primary resources supply a window into the structuring of self-identity in relation to socio-cultural influences disseminated through outlets such as print media and material products. This framework is applied to understand the consumption of and relationship with material artifacts which influence the gendering of society. Suzanne Spencer-Wood provides an example of this process; she examines the performance of nineteenth-century gender roles and the subscription to segregated spheres of influence (2013). She marries historical research with archaeological investigation to illustrate "that a form of material culture does not have a single fixed meaning...but instead has potentially multiple flexible and contingent meanings that are negotiated situationally over time" (2013:175). Using the nineteenth-century domestic reform movement, Spencer-Wood analyzes gendered clothing, artifacts, and spaces to interrogate how women resisted patriarchy and the separation of spheres (2013:176). Though her project employs structuralist-feminist theory that focuses on the socio-cultural impact and implementation of patriarchy unlike this thesis, the latter utilizes a like approach to the examination of material culture and gender ideologies. In the demographically imbalanced and environmentally harsh

conditions of the Montana frontier, it is possible that distinct male and female gender roles were necessary to support the life and growth of the community. Simultaneously, however, it is likely individuals broke away from the encouraged fictions of gender ideals and determined their performance of roles based on necessity, such as when men performed the roles or identities of women, without compromising what was considered ‘natural.’ Such questions are explored and developed throughout this project using gendered clothing and related artifacts, following the considerations of Butler, Spencer-Wood, and other leading gender theorists.

Gender in Archaeology

Until the 1980s, archaeology tended to either categorize artifacts according to gender stereotypes, such as simply assigning needles to women, or largely ignoring gender (Brumfiel and Robin 2008:2). The processualist methods of the 1970s and early 1980s “de-gendered and de-cultured the past” and focused on “statistical regularities” (Claassen 1992:2; Beaudry, Cook, and Mrozowski 1991:151). In the 1980s and 1990s, though, the framework of post-processualism allowed for new perspectives to develop. Suzanne Spencer-Wood’s “*both/and* feminist theoretical perspective” similarly investigates the influences of patriarchy, but devotes more consideration to the intersection and influence of both gender roles (Spencer-Wood 2013:173-4). Associated with third-wave feminism, her approach is radical in its critique of male dominance. Other prevailing post-processual theoretical camps that incorporate gender include Marxism, which addresses gender through a political and economic scope, relegating gender as “another kind of ‘class’” (Nelson 1997:52). This dualistic approach assumes

“simplistic worldwide gender relationships” and stratified classes within power structures (Nelson 1997:52-53). However, Marxism fails to incorporate the complexity and importance of male and female identities, roles, and interactions (Anderson 1992:487). Consideration of class and consumption patterns are important to consider, though, when investigating gender ideals in the mid-nineteenth century, in the age of mass production and Victorian ideals. Though they provide useful methods for examining the historic record, these theories fall prey to archaeologists’ “tendency to isolate the experiences of men, women, and others,” or gender polarization (Voss 2006:123; Nelson 1997:26). While gender differences were culturally emphasized in the nineteenth century, such as in gendered print media like *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, the lived experiences of men and women were often not neatly divided into the public and private spheres (e.g. Rotman 2006). Consideration must thus be given to the relationships between men and women as well as relationships within each gender. In western mining towns, these interactions were layered with the elements of class and ethnicity and are vital to understanding how gender roles develop and change over time. Additionally, the study of relationships can highlight specific circumstances where role reversal or anomalies may appear, all of which are visible in the material record. Gender imbalances in western communities often resulted in the suspension or relaxation of dominant gender roles, creating a unique environment that must be approached in a different manner than their urban counterparts. Analysis of the *Bertrand* collection serves as a case study to understand how complex gender roles and relations manifested themselves in material culture in these outlying communities.

Gender Attribution

The identification of women in the archaeological record is traditionally marked by attributed items. Before feminism collided with post-processualism, “gender attribution was assumable, normative, and common,” largely based on male inferences of female roles in the past (Claassen 1992:2). The development of gender theory contested this practice in one of two ways. Some archaeologists rejected gender attribution all together, arguing it limits gender roles and ideology (Gilchrist 1999:40-41). Others, however support attribution as “signatures of gender groups in the context of a specific historical situation” (Vermeer 2011:321). Though gender attribution was originally biased, informed artifact association can illuminate how gender constructed and impacted political, social, and economic roles and relationships (Costin 1996:115). Research, contextual studies, and other relevant data should be used to support attributions to avoid perpetuating gender “stereotypes and limits” (Costin 1996:115). By attaching gender ideologies to specific historic artifacts, the archaeologist can begin to understand the roles men and women played in society, how those roles contributed to the overall function and structure of society, and how male and female interactions sculpted their daily lives. Although this approach follows a binary model, as it generally dominated historic America, gender attribution can highlight gender anomalies in the archaeological record. In this study, analysis focuses on examining the maintenance of dichotic gender roles as men and women moved from towns in the eastern United States and abroad into the western territories, through the use of material culture. Background research on gender roles in the nineteenth century provides a foundation for understanding the experiences of these emigrant men and women, primarily those from other American cities.

Archaeologist Mary C. Beaudry's comprehensive work *Findings* provides case studies for how to successfully employ this investigative approach to gender attribution (2006). Her work specifically focuses on artifacts traditionally connected with women's crafts, but may have other associations that are often hidden by biased assumptions. Personal artifacts, such as sewing notions, provide the opportunity to examine "the multifaceted aspects of identity bound up with a person's actions and appearance" (Beaudry and White 2011:213). Beaudry uses needlework and sewing objects to explore the complexity of gender and how "gender identity can be signaled and can shift according to context" (Beaudry 2006:4). She accomplishes this by "reconstructing, through critical analysis of documentary and pictorial sources, the ethnographic contexts" of use and through "close reading of instances in which the 'usual' symbolic import of sewing implements is subverted through symbolic inversion and anomaly" (Beaudry 2006:4). Resources, primarily textual, in this case study are approached in a similar critical manner, a view that is then married with the available artifactual evidence to examine communication and performance of gender roles, or deviations from these. Beaudry uses pins and needles to construct a "contextual analysis" of the ways in which both genders utilized the artifacts and "to consider the multiplicity of meanings these everyday items conveyed" (Beaudry 2006:7). These methods can be applied to artifacts from *Bertrand* to re-examine the actualization of gender roles and alternative uses of 'gendered' material culture on the frontier. Primary resources enrich the history of specific artifact sets and provide evidence for diversified uses that can complement or contest the existing record. Artifacts such as the scarves and needles aboard *Bertrand* may have assumed gender associations that can be challenged through extensive research

and interrogation, as modeled by Beaudry, as both artifact categories could have been utilized by both men and women.

Previous research suggests that outlying communities, such as the mining towns included in this project, often provide contrasts to culturally-prescribed gender roles that can enrich or disprove gendered artifact associations. In a previous study conducted on brothels in Virginia City, Nevada, archaeologists re-examined the historical and archaeological record for evidence of women's activities based largely on comparison with gender activities. By placing this information within the context of the gender system, "material things acquire meaning, uses, and functions not otherwise apparent" to archaeologists and historians (Hardesty 1998:284). Though this system cannot be applied to all males and females living in the territories due to the ethnic and cultural differences, it is a useful tool for examining sites in these regions, like the brothels in Virginia City (Hardesty 1998:293). In these dwellings, gender attribution reveals a superior amount of "female-specific artifacts" which coincides with the female-dominated space (Hardesty 1998:296). However, remains of alcohol consumption are also present archaeologically in these records, suggesting women bent traditional gender practices to drink with their male customers or partake in spirits with fellow prostitutes (Hardesty 1998:296). In frontier towns like Virginia City, Nevada, "traditional social circumstances and expectations" were suspended as settlers strove to survive in an emerging and outlying society (Raymond 1998:16). Similar patterns can be expected to characterize the Montana mining towns as well.

These approaches to gendered artifacts serve as a framework for the proposed investigation of the *Bertrand* artifacts. Textiles in both the commercial and personal

cargoes serve as the primary objects of investigation. These, combined with relevant domestic objects, can illuminate the degree to which traditional Victorian dichotic gender roles and ideals were upheld in the Montana territory. Historical research contextualizes the artifacts, providing for well-supported attributions that enable a clear investigation into the lived experiences of men and women on the frontier. This case study enriches the historical record and provide further methodology for analyzing gender through material culture.

Additionally, discussions of masculinity and males are included to balance the investigation into the performance of gender roles in Montana. Only a few studies (e.g. Kryder-Reid 1994, Starbuck 1994, Hardesty 1994) address the other half of the population. For the present project, men comprise the bulk of the population destined to receive goods from *Bertrand*. Therefore, men serve as an important and large portion of the investigation at hand. Equal historical and contextual research is provided to support artifact attributions for both sexes. Inversion of gender roles will likely be more common among men due to the gender imbalance of mining communities. Evidence for or against this hypothesis is essential to developing a thorough understanding of the perception and performance of gender ideology on the Montana frontier.

Research-supported gender association, as exhibited by Beaudry, also can mark where men and women broke away from prevailing cultural concepts of public and private spheres, the latter of which was dominated by notions of virtuous domesticity (Spencer-Wood 2013:180). Archaeological evidence supporting women as consumers of alcohol contrasts the traditionally accepted notion that this activity belonged largely in the realm of men, illustrating instances where women deviated from the social norm.

This anomaly also contests the documentary record and creates a more accurate historic record. This study attempts to similarly investigate attributions and anomalies in Montana mining towns during the mid-nineteenth century and account for the larger effect these factors had on sculpting the local communities and their values. By employing such a method, this project endeavors to construct a comprehensive examination of past societies that enriches the existing historic record.

Class and Consumption

Consideration is also be given to the influence of class structures in nineteenth-century America and constructs of identity. Although class becomes complex when intertwined with concepts of gender and identity, it is relatively straightforward when connected to economic status. Identity, however, is “complicated, paradoxical, and culturally situated in time, place, and society” and proves more difficult to untangle (White and Beaudry 2011:210). Identity is relative to the individual and varies by scale and situation. The body, though, is the most prominent and effective means for communicating identity through manners of behavior and adornment (White and Beaudry 2011:212). In order to understand perceptions and enactment of gender roles on the frontier, theoretical approaches to class, economic status, and identity must be considered. Isolation of one facet ignores how individuals exerted agency to merge and select identity. Identity analysis must employ “the holistic integration of the different faces of identity into one archaeological portrait” to create a substantial understanding of agency and culture in the past (Wilkie 2000:6). Consumer identity, somewhat unique to historical archaeology, incorporates elements of class and cultural distinctions. Paul

Mullins suggests consumer choices are the way in which an individual or household's "material acquisition, possession, and discard forge and reflect identity" (2011: 11). His view on consumer identity links abstract concepts of self-perception and ascribed titles to material selections, an approach that enhances studies of historic artifacts. When combined with historical research on class, consumer power, and idealized gender roles, a more comprehensive understanding of gendered identity emerges. This framework provides an approach to the material remains of the *Bertrand* cargo that procures a detailed understanding of gender roles and relations in outlying territories.

Dress and Embodiment

Finally, theories of dress and embodiment, as laid out by Joanne Entwistle (2000), provide a lens for up-close examination of these behaviors and concepts. Though the *Bertrand* collection is unique in that the textiles, aside from those in passengers' cargo, were never worn, the artifacts still provide useful tools for understanding processes of identity construction through dress. However, this study lacks a key visual aspect, namely images of outfits in the communities of study. Theoretical perspectives on the process of dress and embodiment guide this investigation, drawing together archeological, textual, and limited visual forms of evidence to interrogate the past. Theorists such as Entwistle provide a framework for situating the body within a social and cultural context. Utilizing the work of Foucault and phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty, Entwistle explores how the body, as "an envelope of our being in the world" and a physical entity, mediates movement and experiences between the body and culture (2000:27-8). The physical expression of these manifests in dress, a tool to navigate

socio-cultural relationships as well as allows for expression of the self. During the nineteenth century, tension between individual and cultural values and industrial influences resulted in a struggle for authenticity that reflected the inner self (Entwistle 2000:121). The body was, and still is, situated “between production and consumption” and integrates “fashion as a cultural industry” visibly into society (Entwistle 2000:238). Emerging in response to social influences such as industrialization, dress was used to create and “recreate oneself” among all classes, but especially the middle classes at this time (Entwistle 2000:131). A concern for “authenticating narratives” emerged from this relationship between clothing and identity, and guided choices in dress among men and women (Entwistle 2000:73). However, despite this quest for individuality and authenticity, appearance was, and still is, heavily influenced by various social factors, making dress a confluence of competing tensions between inter- and intrapersonal elements.

Expanding on the relationship between bodies, dress, and consumer society, Tim Edwards explores contemporary constructs of masculinity as related to fashion and dress. He suggests that modern ideals of masculinity are “increasingly reconstructed as part of consumer society” and result from processes of consumption (Edwards 1997:1). These habits grew out of the nineteenth century and the rise of industrialization and mass consumption practices. For men especially, dress was manufactured early and distributed broadly across the United States, imbued with cultural concepts of male gender roles and attitudes. Though his study is situated in the twentieth century, his focus on how masculinity is “bought, sold, and marketed” remains relevant to this investigation into nineteenth-century mining towns, as clothing and accompanying cultural concepts were

mass consumed by men in remote areas (Edwards 1997:7). Understanding these processes of dress consumption and embodiment provide a method for redressing the past to produce a more comprehensive examination of the role of clothing and communication of individual and gendered identities on the frontier.

CHAPTER 4: DOMESTICITY AND THE FRONTIER: VICTORIAN GENDER ROLES AND MONTANA MINING COMMUNITIES

The nineteenth century was defined by the interplay of family, gender, and consumerism. The transatlantic Victorian culture shaped by these themes produced polarized spheres for each sex. While men sought wealth and fame in the public sector, women were relegated to the confines of the home. The Victorian era, the international cultural phenomenon associated with the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1901, is often characterized by the separation of spheres and the Cult of Domesticity, driven partly by the rise of Protestant teachings and middle-class values (Flanders 2003:4-5; Spencer-Wood 2013:180-2). Despite generally being thought of as constraining to women, these polarized segments of society were considered by contemporaries to each be “as distinct, as honourable, as difficult” in their own ways (Craik 1858:14). Even though they lost power in society, women gained considerable authority within the home (Wall 1994:9). Victorian middle-class women in England and the United States became guardians of the family, responsible for fostering the physical and moral health of their families. They effectively sculpted their gender roles by operating within a comfortable territory and helped influence both their “household’s standing and their children’s class advance” (Mullins 2011:152). In industrial cities, this ideal structured gender interactions and roles and sculpted the American nuclear family, trends that resonated in material culture. The home, a haven of domesticity, fell under the guardianship of the woman. The domestic realm became a counterbalance to the public, capitalist life led by the father (Spencer-Wood 2013:180). However, women still “participated in capitalism” and were responsible for purchase of household goods, selecting mass-produced household and personal objects such as ceramics or clothing (Spencer-Wood 2013:180;

Wall 1991:70; Wall 1994:10). The consumption of these goods enabled women to move outside the home and engage in the public sphere.

As active participants in performing and shaping gender roles, Victorian women were central figures in the shifting family dynamic. The domestic sphere became an “emotional counterweight” to the capitalist sphere inhabited by the working father (Flanders 2003:4-5). At home, the family was centered on the wife and mother, who was looked at as the “source of refuge and retreat, but also of strength and renewal” (Flanders 2003:4-5). The belief that “all women, whether biological mothers or not, had a maternal instinct” made raising children and caring for the home naturally their duty (Davidoff and Hall 1987:335). Women’s positions and identities as mothers and wives became tied to the heightened consumption of material culture. Manufactured goods became important tools in consumer efforts to participate in and sculpt social and cultural values, as well as necessary artifacts in the creation and representation of gendered identity.

Wives who came west to reunite families often retained values associated with Victorian gender ideals, as observed through artifacts and primary documents (e.g. Sanford 1915), regardless of their ability to actualize these ideals due to material or time constraints. Separation from eastern markets limited accessibility to manufactured goods and additional household or economic duties essential to the formation of new homes restricted the amount of time women could dedicate to cultivating domestic ideals. However, they did not dismiss contemporary ideals of femininity and the domestic sphere (Jeffrey 1998). Despite living in communities perceived to be lacking “even some society” and primitive homes made from logs or sod for the first years on the frontier, women made the best of their lack of resources and comforts (Sanford 1915:39).

Pioneers embraced Victorian notions of order and domesticity by incorporating material comforts of urban centers, like ornate glass lamps and ironstone china, into the home, or using bolts of silk cloth and painted ceramic buttons to construct fashionable garments following eastern trends.

On the frontier during this period, however, gender and age imbalances prevented the neat transcription of dominant cultural ideals into these regions. Reproductive-age men dominated demographics in Montana (see Appendix D), a characteristic which often resulted in an ambiguity of roles. Men without wives took on additional domestic tasks or outsourced these duties to businesses created by women or men. The drastic gender imbalances, as discussed below, allowed more flexibility for men and women in the performance of gender roles.

Men and Masculinity

Following the discovery of gold in western territories, men of various ages and ethnicities were the first to move from more urbanized areas into these regions.⁴ The founding of placer and quartz mines in Montana in the early 1860s attracted many men to the region. Western towns grew rapidly throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, though they remained small compared to their eastern counterparts. Despite being characterized as “instantly urban,” the entire state of Montana had only a population of 20,595 individuals recorded for 1870, significantly less than the population

⁴ For the purposes of this study, investigations will be made into the heteronormative associations and behaviors of western settlers. Refer to Boag 2011 for information on divergence from these trends in western communities throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Selection of ‘adult’ based on an arbitrary number, although most working and/or married adults above this age. However, some exceptions are present in data and there are working men and married women younger than 18, though present in small quantities.

of major cities like St. Louis which in 1870 had 310,864 residents and ranked only fourth largest in the nation (Petrik 1987:4; Resident Population and Apportionment of the U.S. House of Representatives: Montana; Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1870). Though women followed the initial westward wave of men into the territories, men still dominated demographically in 1870. In the towns destined to receive goods from *Bertrand*, men comprised, on average, around 80% of the adult population (see Table 6.1). In smaller, more removed communities like Deer Lodge, a town about 200 miles southwest of Fort Benton, males made up about 84.5% of the adult population 18 and older (Montana. Deer Lodge County. 1870. U.S. Census).

<i>Town</i>	<i>Males 18+</i>	<i>% Adult Pop.</i>	<i>Females 18+</i>	<i>% Adult Pop.</i>	<i>Total Adults</i>	<i>% Total Pop.</i>	<i>Total Pop.</i>
Virginia City	1619	81.47%	370	18.60%	1989	74.10%	2684
Deer Lodge	538	84.46%	99	15.54%	637	80.74%	789
Ft. Benton	234	81.53%	53	18.47%	287	78.20%	367
Missoula	466	85.20%	81	14.80%	547	72.60%	753
*Source: Montana. Deer Lodge, Chouteau, Madison, and Missoula Counties. 1870. U.S. Census							

Table 4.1: Adult Population by Gender in Select Montana Towns, 1870

The high numbers of men necessitated the establishment of all-male households (see Table 6.2). While dominated by young, white American men, these households were also comprised of men with mixed heritage. Rather than grouped by ethnicity, men appear to have sought housing with others in the same trade. In Deer Lodge, William E. Payne, a 21-year-old white male, is listed as living with 37-year-old Robert Plummer, a black man. Both, however, are barbers (Montana. Deer Lodge County. 1870. U.S.

Census). Similarly, in Fort Benton, Rock Govert, M.A. Laugwoine, L.T. Marshal, and Adolph Meisberger all work in the brewing business but are each from different places: Switzerland, Canada, Missouri, and Saxony, respectively (Montana. Chouteau County. 1870. U.S. Census). The mixed cultural backgrounds seemed to create no barrier among men in mining towns, with the exception of Chinese immigrants. Male or female Chinese residents are usually only found in all-Chinese households, unless they worked as a domestic servant or cook for a white family (Montana. Deer Lodge, Chouteau, Madison, and Missoula Counties. 1870. U.S. Census).

<i>Deer Lodge, MT</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Single-male households⁵	68	25.8%
Multiple-male households	104	39.5%
Families⁶	61	23.1%
Female head of house	30	11.4%
Total	263	100%

***Source: Montana. Deer Lodge County. 1870. U.S. Census**

Table 4.2: Household Structures of Deer Lodge, Montana, 1870

⁵ Households determined by gender alone, not race or occupation, for the purposes of this study

⁶ Families designated by presence of at least one male/female pair of comparable ages or single male with children

<i>Fort Benton, MT</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Single-male and multiple-male households	65	57.0%
Families	44	38.6%
Female head of house	5	4.4%
Total	114	100%
*Source: Montana. Chouteau County. 1870. U.S. Census		

Table 4.3: Household Structures of Fort Benton, Montana, 1870

However, the American or European all-male homes lacked the counter-balance of idealized domesticity, a characteristic of the urban middle class. Some of these largely working-class homes were able to secure a housekeeper or servant, but such domestic help was hard to come by and even more difficult to keep (Petrik 1987:12). Without women supporting men through the domestic sphere, male households had to divide gendered tasks among them. These workers “often undertook tasks which were not normally theirs [i.e. those associated with women] and so their male identities altered” (Walsh 1995:249). Some men took advantage of the demand for such services in these communities and outsourced their skills. In later decades, there are accounts of male cross-dressers who performed these activities in disguise, thereby taking on not only female-attributed tasks such as needlework, but also transforming their very identities to fit the feminine characterization of these activities (Boag 2011:74). No direct evidence is available for Montana, but it is probable that such occurrences were not recorded. Other tasks like food production were instead distributed among members of the home, whether relatives or roommates. Brothers James and Granville Stuart shared a journal of their experiences in Montana and document completion of tasks traditionally associated with women or servants: “Woke up by having to return to earth and wash the dishes and roast

some coffee” and “October 14. I churned five pounds of fine quality butter” (Stuart 2004:173, 189). Although some butter could be purchased pre-made, as found among the cargo of *Bertrand*, there was a limited supply and it was likely more common for households to produce their own (Switzer 2013:141). Evidence of these activities occurring in male-dominated frontier communities are reflected in the material culture. Among the *Bertrand* cargo are butter churns, coffee grinders, and coffee pots. These objects would have enabled individuals of both genders to produce the necessary goods for nourishment and comfort. The Stuarts’ account, though, illustrates that such artifacts cannot be attributed to a single gender.

The imbalance of genders impacted leisure time as well. Activities such as drinking and gambling emerge in the literature and material culture. With disposable income and generally no families to support, many men engaged regularly in poker and other gambling activities (Stuart 2004:223). Alcohol consumption was typically present at these and other gatherings. Excess indulgence was common and too often disrupted society. The *Bertrand* stores alone contain over 2,000 bottles of various alcohols and liquors including gin, beer, and bitters (Switzer 2013:148-154, 161-3). Though a profitable commodity for merchants and consignors, alcohol consumption became a critical target as more women began to arrive in the region and the national temperance movement gained support. This cause allowed women to engage in the public sphere and disrupt the realm of men without deposing the ideal image of feminine domesticity (Spencer-Wood 2013:174).

However, before the increase in women throughout the territory, other leisure activities had to be modified to account for the imbalances. The Stuart brothers record

incidences of dances, which generally required relatively equal parts men and women, that were characterized by too many men. In some of these circumstances, men suspended concepts of masculinity, and with the addition of an armband, donned female gender roles and served as substitute dance partners to other men (Stuart 2004:194). This example, though not evident through the material culture, demonstrates the extent to which gender roles were altered to fit the needs of the community. However, according to this account, men did not physically change their appearance in any other way that would suggest the acceptance of an alternative gender identity. Rather, performance of gender roles was fluid and negotiable, particularly in times of necessity. While cross-dressing did occur on the frontier, this particular circumstance does not seem to imply such habits, but rather resulted as a social need and demonstrates flexibility between gendered roles and actions, rather than identity (see Boag 2011).

Without the presence of 'white' women, many male settlers in Montana found wives among the Native American tribes in the region. Among Hudson Bay Company workers who moved to the Pacific Northwest, marriage or conjugal relations with Native American women was encouraged as a means of forming beneficial bonds with surrounding tribes (Milliken 2005:95). However, aside from the economic benefits for the company, relationships with native women had additional advantages that translated to other communities, like those in Montana. Native American women were familiar with the territory and were knowledgeable on the extraction of resources from the environment. Women also provided additional assistance within the household and fulfilled services men were unable or unwilling to perform, such as sewing. However, early marriages to native women were not always bound by the rigid religious and social

laws that governed nuptials between men and white women. Marriage rites were often informal and attitudes towards native wives were leisurely (Guilmartin 2000:207-9; Stuart 2004:198). The lax approach to these unions afforded native women more agency and mobility than seen among marriages with white women. Native American women had the ability to leave their husbands and return to their families, behavior that would be relatively unusual for white American women. The Stuarts record a story of a native woman who took her son and returned to her tribe, leaving her white husband (Stuart 2004:227). These types of anecdotes depict the different nature of relationships between white men and native women in these removed communities. However, as frontier towns grew, Victorian cultural values began to influence social structures more, especially as more white women moved west. These ‘mixed’ marriages were either replaced with bonds between white men and women or legitimized, resulting in lasting marriages between white men and native women, such as that of Granville Stuart and his Shoshone wife Aubony (Stuart 2004:vii). Within the Montana territory, concepts of gender roles and fluidity between these ideals altered in scope and rigidity as demographics normalized, largely as a result of westward migration of women from the eastern United States and European nations.

Women and Westward Movement

In her study of women living in Helena, Montana around the turn of the century, Paula Petrik provides a brief historiography of frontier history and women. She groups previous research into three theoretical camps: Turnerian, Reactionist, and Stasist. Following Frederick Jackson Turner’s 1893 address “The Significance of the Frontier in

American History,” scholars developed the Frontier or Turner thesis, which attributed the development of democracy to the advancement of the western frontier. In regards to the study of pioneering women, this approach exalted women and “attributed the higher status of frontier women to their ability to emulate masculine accomplishment and character,” setting them apart from their restricted eastern counterparts (Petrik 1987:xiv-xv). Contrarily, a Reactionist approach focused on the destructive and derogatory impact of harsh western conditions that wore women down. Finally, Stasists interpret the impact of frontier conditions as little to no different than life in the east. Petrik critiques all three approaches for failing to fully embrace the diversity and complexity of women’s experiences in the west. She instead divides women’s experiences between the rural and urban frontier and provides Helena as a case study for investigating a new manner of approaching western women’s history. Her resulting study incorporates several generations and documents temporal change while still preserving women’s agency. In a similar manner, this study avoids generalizations about western women’s history as a whole, but instead provide a case study that examines gender structures and relationships on the frontier, recognizing that historical women were actors in their own right and not passive players in history. However, unlike Petrik and other western scholars, this project relies heavily on material evidence rather than solely documentary evidence. Instead, primary resources are used to supplement and guide the interpretation of historical artifacts.

Documentary sources, such as census records and journals, though, are necessary to understand what type of women moved to the territories and why. Census records from 1870 show that most women moving into the selected Montana communities were

classified as white and moved from either more eastern states or emigrated from western European countries (see Tables 4.4-4.6). In Virginia City, over 80% of females were listed as white in 1870, with about half of these being individuals over the age of 18. Journals from the period depict women who were both willing and skeptical of moving to the frontier, usually with at least one other adult male family member. Teenager Mollie Dorsey describes fearful and lonely wives who fail to adjust to the new style of life: “She [Mrs. Allen] will not be reconciled to this frontier life and will soon leave Mr. Allen to enjoy it alone (poor soul)...she does not sleep for fear of wild beasts and Indians. It is more lonely [*sic*] than where we are, and they have no children” (Sanford 1915:43). Dorsey, later Sanford, moved to Nebraska with her parents and siblings and recounts the transition as a bittersweet experience with ultimately a positive outcome, though she struggled with some adjustments. Historian Christiane Fischer suggests women’s lives prior to westward movement impacted the degree to which they experienced “loneliness, insecurity, anxiety, homesickness, and dismay”; “the more ‘genteel’ their background and education, the more repelled they were by their new environment” (Fischer 1977:13). However, these emotions are difficult to assess on a large scale without appropriate data—the recording of such feelings in contemporary letters and journals. Certainly, with such a drastic move, women would have experienced some variety of emotions in response to change, but the longevity of these feelings and the degree to which they manifested is largely unknown. Despite these feelings, women still elected to move and remain in the territories, as evidenced by the census data.

<i>Virginia City, MT</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
United States and Territories⁷	579	81.1%
Europe	103	14.6%
Asia	7	0.9%
North America (other than US)	24	3.4%
Total	715	100%

**Source: Montana. Madison County. 1870. U.S. Census*

Table 4.4: Nativity of Females, All Ages, Virginia City, Montana, 1870

<i>Virginia City, MT</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
White⁸	699	97.8%
Black	5	0.7%
Chinese	7	0.9%
Indian	3	0.4%
Total	714	100%

**Source: Montana. Madison County. 1870. U.S. Census*

Table 4.5: Race of Females, All Ages, Virginia City, Montana, 1870

⁷ See Appendix D for detailed counts by locale.

⁸ Races as listed in original census

<i>Deer Lodge, MT</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
White	146	89.0%
Black	1	0.6%
Chinese	5	3.0%
Indian	10	6.0%
½ Indian/White	2	1.2%
Total	164	100%
*Source: Montana. Deer Lodge County. 1870. U.S. Census		

Table 4.6: Race of Females, All Ages, Deer Lodge, Montana, 1870

Among mining communities, these rapidly growing urban environments provided many of these women with economic opportunities, though they were “still governed by ideas of women’s place in society” (Nicoletta 1998:65). Domestic tasks were given “commercial value” based on high demands from skewed demographics (Walsh 1995:249). Women found engagement and distraction in a diversity of both profitable and necessary tasks. Many women worked within their homes, leasing rooms to boarders or taking on sewing projects from neighbors. Several women in the territories also managed households without a male head of house, making it even more vital that they engage in economic activities, as many had children to support. Though most do not have specific occupations listed aside from keeping house, some women with dependents had job titles more associated with the public, or masculine, sphere. In Virginia City, several women operated stores or sold goods, including groceries and dry goods (Montana. Madison County. 1870. U.S. Census). Among these twelve women were five “Chinawomen” with no names recorded, but occupations listed as “merchanteel” [*sic*]. Other women in town worked as washers, housekeepers, or prostitutes, while one unique

woman is listed as a miner. Margaret Murry, aged 50, was an Irish immigrant who lived with a J. Murry of the same age, presumably a husband, or perhaps a twin (Montana. Madison County. 1870. U.S. Census). Despite this unusual occupation for a woman, there is little other information available on her, but proves that women were not restricted to the domestic sphere in these new mining communities. Historian Susan Hallgarth notes that the acceptance of additional responsibilities among women in the west allowed men and women to cooperatively “create new cultural patterns, where traditional institutions of marriage and work roles were challenged” (1989:30). Cooperation was key in these towns and both sexes played essential roles in building and sustaining the community.

However, most women, as mentioned above, remained in domestic-related occupations. In frontier communities, hired help was rare to find and hard to keep, as the young women who worked as servants often married soon after arrival or found other, more profitable occupations (Jackson 2005:53). As a result, women’s duties increased both inside and outside the home, in order to support their families. Manufactured goods, such as the pre-made butter, canned goods, candles, and clothing aboard *Bertrand*, provided these busy women with labor and time-saving shortcuts that allowed them to dedicate their efforts elsewhere (Petrik 1987:5). Though women did not have access to manufactured clothing and had to dedicate their own time or hire seamstresses to make clothing for them, the availability of men’s manufactured clothing decreased the responsibility of clothing production for the household. The relationships between these material goods and the performance of gender ideals, alongside Victorian middle-class values, are explored in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 5: ARTIFACTS AND METHODOLOGY

The artifacts which comprise the *Bertrand* collection offer valuable insight into the economy and community of western territories. Though the commercial cargo was never possessed and utilized by households or individuals, the objects still provide a representative sample of the consumption habits and cultural ideals present in this region. Research-supported analysis can reconstruct the lives these artifacts may have had if they reached their intended destinations. This insight supplies a clearer understanding of gender identity and relationships on the frontier. Due to the breadth of the collection, only a limited sample of artifacts is examined in this project. Following the research goals, this study focuses on textiles from the collection and some associated domestic artifacts. The following table summarizes the selected textiles and associated artifacts, their quantities, and destination if known.⁹ The artifacts are presented with basic, objective information sourced from both pre-existing catalog records and in-person examination. Full catalog records and images can be found in Appendix A. Analysis of large groups of artifacts is conducted on representative artifacts from that selection. Any relevant details on variation within the grouping are provided. A cultural analysis of the artifacts, directed by the theoretical framework described above, follows.

⁹ Artifact inventory counts are based on Corbin 2000

<i>Object</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Cargo/Personal</i>	<i>Destination (if known)</i>
Cloth bolts	Silk, wool	9+	Cargo	unknown
Women's dress	Silk		Personal	various
Men's work shirts	Wool flannel	80+	Cargo	unknown
Men's trousers	Wool	103	Cargo	Virginia City (53)
Men's vests	Wool	24	Cargo	Virginia City
Stockings	Wool	125	Cargo	Unknown
Pins	Metal	12 +2lbs	Cargo	Unknown
Needles	Metal	115	Cargo	Unknown
Thread spools	Wood	44	Cargo	Unknown
Hooks and eyes	Metal	3986	Cargo	Unknown
Woven shawls	Wool	6	Cargo	Virginia City (1)
Scissors	Metal	24	Cargo	Virginia City
Thimbles	Metal	118	Cargo	Unknown
Dye, indigo	Indigo	2 cases	Cargo	Virginia City

Table 5.1: Textile and Clothing Production Artifacts for Analysis

Data for the artifacts was collected over a long-term internship conducted at DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge under the guidance of curator Dean Knudsen. Data collection began in March of 2016 and continued through April 2017 as part of a volunteer internship with the collection. The majority of the work was conducted over the summer of 2016 as part of a fellowship with the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. A digital exhibit containing images and photogrammetric models was produced as part of the program, but also allowed for regular interaction with the collection. Data was collected following a Dublin core format, the standard metadata for most database systems. Catalog records were completed or updated for the artifacts of interest and entered into the museum's Rediscovery database. Information from these records are included in this project.

The practical goals of this project include:

- 1) Catalog and analyze the textiles and related domestic artifacts in collection while creating better solutions for permanent housing.
- 2) Expand reach of collection by employing low-cost digital technologies.
- 3) Examine translation of Victorian gender roles and relationships on the mining frontier.
- 4) Formulate understanding of identity concepts among genders and larger communities within the western territories using Montana as a case study..

The first goal was achieved during the internship period. Candidates for analysis and rehousing were identified from the database Rediscovery or from walk-throughs in the collection. During this process, artifacts were removed from the storage area and transferred to the lab where they were carefully documented and photographed. Optimal housing solutions were individually identified in order to provide each artifact with the best care for permanent storage. The artifacts were then returned to their permanent locations and the database records were digitally updated.

The second goal was achieved during the fellowship period, although the digital nature of the project allows for continual improvements and updates. The exhibit created focuses on both textiles and domestic goods, with emphasis on the latter, to create a better understanding of household and family structures on the frontier. Three-dimensional artifacts such as ceramic bottles or foodstuffs more readily lend themselves to digital recreation, as opposed to two-dimensional textiles. The goal of the project was to establish a new venue for access to information on *Bertrand* while experimenting with

methods of digital preservation and dissemination of artifacts. More information on the methodology and outcomes of the project are provided in Appendix C.

The final two objectives are pursued in this project, following the methodology outlined above and presented in a succinct narrative that incorporates evidence from the artifacts as well as both primary and secondary resources. Using examples provided by historical archaeologists like Mary Beaudry, analysis of gender-attributed artifacts is guided by historical research and context of use. Knowledge of Victorian concepts of gender is compared with contemporary accounts that recount possible uses of artifacts in mining towns to assess the fluidity of gender roles and activities.

Artifact Categories

Men's Clothing

Roughly 80% of the wearable textiles aboard *Bertrand* were intended for use by men (Guilmartin 2002:53). These categories include shirts, trousers, vests, coats of various form and function, sweaters, underwear, and stockings. However, the fragmentary nature of some artifacts, especially the knit goods, makes it challenging to determine if they were gender-specific or not. Stockings especially could have easily been intended for both men and women. The artifacts that do have positive gender attribution, such as shirts, were determined as such based on contextual research. During this period, women were expected to wear skirts and dresses while men wore clothes more suited for a wider range of motion and activities.

Men's fashions changed little throughout the century and were characterized by the simple costume of pants, shirt, vest, and coat, similar to the suit still common today.

Colors prominent during the middle of the century were dark, muted neutral tones (Stamper and Condra 2011:161). The styles of coats altered slightly throughout the century, with a morning coat gradually being replaced by the frock coat and then the sack or suit coat (Stamper and Condra 2011:161). Variation among the three largely consisted of different trends in cut, length, and tailoring. The frock coat generally had wide lapels and was long, usually hitting near the knee, while the sack coat was shorter and more similar to a contemporary suit jacket (Stamper and Condra 2011:161). Both frock and suit coats are included in the *Bertrand* collection, along with some caped coats (61), dusters (5), and slickers (13) (Corbin 2000:123). Vests, or waistcoats, changed little throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century as well (Stamper and Condra 2011:162). Vests were made from a variety of materials such as wool or silk brocade and typically featured pockets, especially two watch pockets (Stamper and Condra 2011:163). Trousers similarly could be made from different materials, although these tended to include wool, cotton, and linen rather than silk (Stamper and Condra 2011:164). Pants were held up by suspenders which attached to buttons on the waistband and closed in front with a button fly (Stamper and Condra 2011:164). Some styles tapered in the leg, but pants were generally loose fitting, which allowed more movement for the lower working classes or active upper classes (Stamper and Condra 2011:164). Finally, shirts varied considerably based on style and intended function. These could be constructed from “cotton, linen, light wool, or perhaps flannel” (Stamper and Condra 2011:164). Shirts could also serve multiple functions with the addition or removal of a collar, which attached to a standard band collar (Stamper and Condra 2011:164). The versatility of

shirt design and size allowed new commercial manufacturers to target a variety of audiences and produce goods on a large scale.

Wool Trousers

Around 103 pairs of men's pants are represented in the collection. The style sampled for this research project are dark brown wool and fasten at center front with a rusted metal closure, likely a button. The pockets on the front sides of pants also close with small metal buttons. There is an adjustable band at center back with a metal buckle.

Guilmartin notes the presence of gray, black, and light brown pants with fly fronts, two of which are lined, though she does not specify which color (2002:53-4). The trousers are straight-legged, approximately 40.5 to 45 inches long. The waist measurements range from 26 to 31.5 inches. According to available sources, the majority of the trousers were destined for Virginia City, which had a population of 2,684 in 1870, over half of which were men above the age of 18. These adult men, and likely many younger than 18, would have needed warm and durable pants for various activities.



Figure 5.1: Men's Wool Trousers (DESO 3236_3)

Men's Plaid Shirts

Another item found in high quantities are men's shirts made from plaid wool. Over 80 of these are represented in the cargo (Corbin 2000:123). The shirts, based on primary analysis of a sample set and research conducted by other scholars, are all of the same style. The shirts are long-sleeved with a short band collar and opening with a placket at the neck. The sleeves are gathered slightly into cuffs at the wrist. The shirts are long and boxy, made into a size that would fit men of different shapes without tailoring. Like the trousers, the shirts were intended for men of all ages and sizes, though their destination is unknown.



Figure 5.2: Men's Plaid Shirt (DESO 3318_1)

Men's Wool Vests

Twenty-four vests of two different styles, one dark brown and one black. An essential part of the gentleman's three-piece suit, these wool vests are muted in color and style, yet fashionable for the period. However, the use of wool for vests contrasts with more fashionable trends which favored silks and brocades (Guilmartin 2002:61). A heavier

fabric like wool suggests that these vests were intended for colder climates and to withstand more wear, as would be expected in the western territories. Only the vest fronts remain, indicating that the backs were likely constructed from a cellulose fiber, such as cotton. Both styles of vests have waist pockets on both sides of center and a left breast pocket. Only the welts for the pockets remain, suggesting that these two were constructed from a cellulosic material. Both vest styles have lapels, though they differ slightly, with the brown lapels being narrower and rounded whereas the black lapels are wider and angular. There is some decorative edging on the black vests, although this trim is deteriorated and indistinguishable.



Figures 5.3 and 5.4: Men's Wool Vests (DESO 2828_1 and DESO 3201)

Women's Clothing

The majority of women's clothing represented in the collection comes from either passengers' possessions or manufactured accessories, such as shawls (2) or a loose-fitting style of coat known as a paletot (3). Women's clothing was not mass-produced until later

in the century, and during this period remained primarily homemade. Styles were based off current fashions that were promoted and disseminated through print publications such as *Godey's Lady's Book*. The lack of dresses, however, is not a direct correlation to lack of women in Montana. Numbers of women are more accurately represented by artifacts that could be commercially produced, such as shoes. Within the collection, there are about 62 boots and 513 shoes specifically labeled as women's. When compared to the four dresses found in passengers' belongings and the six shawls for sale, among other small quantities of wearable women's textiles, shoes indicate a much larger presence of women. However, these numbers are still low when considering the quantities of male-designated artifacts. There are nearly 1,600 boots and shoes for men. This 1:3 ratio is only slightly over the population statistics for mining communities of Montana in 1870. The lack of clothing for women thus suggests that women were producing their own garments, bringing items with them above deck, or acquiring goods from overland trade systems. While women likely brought some items with them, the first option is most probable. Other artifacts within the collection, such as the numerous pins, needles, and spools of thread, indicate the commonality of apparel manufacturing in the territory.

Women's Dresses

The women's dresses within the collection come from the personal cargoes of the Campbell and Atchison families. Within the Campbell belongings were two similar dresses, thought to possibly be school uniforms (Corbin 2000:118; Guilmartin 2002:106). The dresses consist of two pieces each, a bodice and a skirt, both made from blue wool, with waist measurements of 23 inches. The bodices have long sleeves and high necks

and the skirts are pleated, made from rectangular panels. Guilmartin notes that these are machine-made (Guilmartin 2002:106-8). Evidence of wear and repair, as well as the shorter skirts, 34 inches, suggests these dresses were from when the Campbell sisters were younger and at school.

The Atchison dresses are not well preserved and consist primarily of fragments. One is made from plaid silk of red, blue, and black. The bodice fastens in the back with buttons and the skirt was constructed from 15 rectangular panels (Guilmartin 2002:110). The second is made from brown wool with a front closure of hooks and eyes. The sleeves are long and the skirt is constructed from rectangular panels. Guilmartin notes on the length of the skirt, about 53 inches, which may indicate the use of the dress as a riding habit and communicate more information about the economic status of the Atchison family (Guilmartin 2002:113-4).

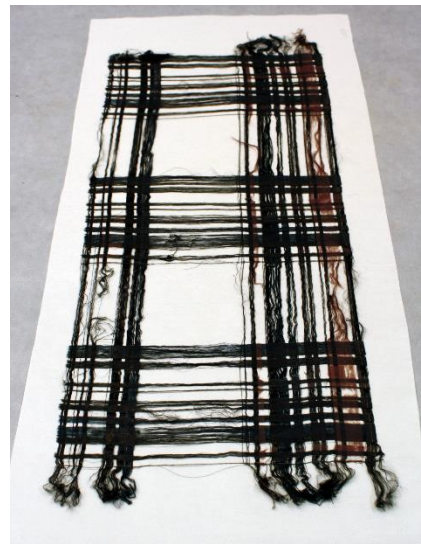


Figure 5.5 and 5.6: Campbell Dress and Atchison Dress Fragment
(DESO 2846_1 and DESO 2924)

Women's Shawls

Approximately six shawls were recovered from *Bertrand*, two of which were intended for commercial sale, the others being associated with passenger possessions. This latter group includes a fur wrap and a black silk cape, both belonging to Mrs. Atchison, as well as two capes belonging to the Campbell sisters, one of which was brown and black silk, the other of black lace. The two manufactured shawls, identified as capes in Switzer 2013, are made from dark pink or faded red wool. These artifacts have a long fringe and a bold, black zigzag trim on the border. The woven pattern is made up of squares with black centers. The shawls tie closed with a pair of pink and black two-ply strings, one on each side of center front. While fairly light, the wool yarn would have provided added warmth during the cooler months within Montana. The style and size of the shawls, current with contemporary trends, would have appealed to and fit different types of women who may have been living in these western regions. The coverings identified within passenger belongings are of higher quality and more formal than those being shipped as commercial cargo. This suggests that luxury items for women were more difficult to come by in mining communities.



Figure 5.7: Women's Woven Wool Shawl (DESO 2841_2)

CHAPTER 6: DRESS AND GENDER: ANALYSIS OF THE *BERTRAND* TEXTILES

Fashion in the Nineteenth Century

Fashion in 1865 grew out of cultural and social trends that evolved throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Industrialization, urbanization, and emerging middle-class values characterized popular fashions of the period. New methods for manufacturing goods increased accessibility of materials for all classes and gave birth to a new consumer culture (Entwistle 2000:108). An influx of individuals and households into urban and suburban settings at the same time of increasing commercialization also influenced the development of consumerism. In the realm of fashion, these factors served to increase uniformity among styles and heighten the pressure to conform. However, new middle-class values, influenced by cultural phenomena such as the Second Great Awakening and Romanticism, stressed authenticity and individuality amidst the rise of manufactured culture (Entwistle 2000:109). These seemingly contradictory themes were negotiated partly through dress, a method for both construction and representation of identity. With the many social changes of the early to mid-nineteenth century, both women and men's fashions altered to incorporate prevailing cultural ideals. In contrast to the classical and ornate Regency fashions of the 1800s and 1810s, styles of the mid-nineteenth century featured cumbersome layers and tightly laced corsets. The waistline dropped to its natural location and wider skirts emphasized the smallness of the waist, the wideness of the hips, and restricted the wearer. The corset sought to narrow the waist of the wearer, drastically narrowing the shape of the bodice by the mid-1830s. In addition to the confinement of the torso, women were subjected to long, weighty skirts (see Figure 6.1). By the 1840s, a cage crinoline, which consisted of concentric circles of

boning suspended by fabric, was implemented to maintain the full shape with fewer underskirts (Fandrich and Wass 2010:299-300). Women struggled to navigate their numerous layers and, on windy days, “[assumed] all the gyrations of a ship’s sails in a storm” as the breeze blew their skirts around (“Female Attire.” *The Lily*. February 1, 1851). While the confining nature of mid-century clothing reflected cultural trends of social and gender stratification, the rigidity of dress also served to provide a standard silhouette that ensured social conformity. However, this style also provided a blank canvas upon which customization and individualization could be designed.



Figure 6.1: Fashion Plate from *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, 1865¹⁰

¹⁰ 1865 Robe Jardiniere. *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, July: 107. Philadelphia, PA.

Standardization of style was more prominent among men's clothing, which diverged little from the standard suit still worn today. Though engaged with fashion, men's wear was dictated by "serviceability, appropriateness, and possibly comfort" (Stamper and Condra 2011:155). Especially on the frontier, men needed clothing that afforded them mobility, protection, and durability. Men's clothing consisted primarily of variations on the three-piece suit, as is still worn by men today (see Figure 6.2). Pants allowed for mobility and protected legs during hard labor and intense environments. Shirts served a similar role for the upper body. The simple straight lines of pants, shirts, and jackets were easily standardized and produced on a large scale. Manufacturing of men's clothing began shortly before the Civil War and exploded during the latter half of the nineteenth century with westward expansion and transportation developments (Stamper and Condra 2011:158-9). This male-dominated market provided an ideal venue for the dispatch of a mass-produced identity, however, despite the standardization of clothing and gender roles, men in these outlying communities were still able to manipulate fashion and dress to communicate individual concepts of identity that still were socially acceptable within the male gender role.

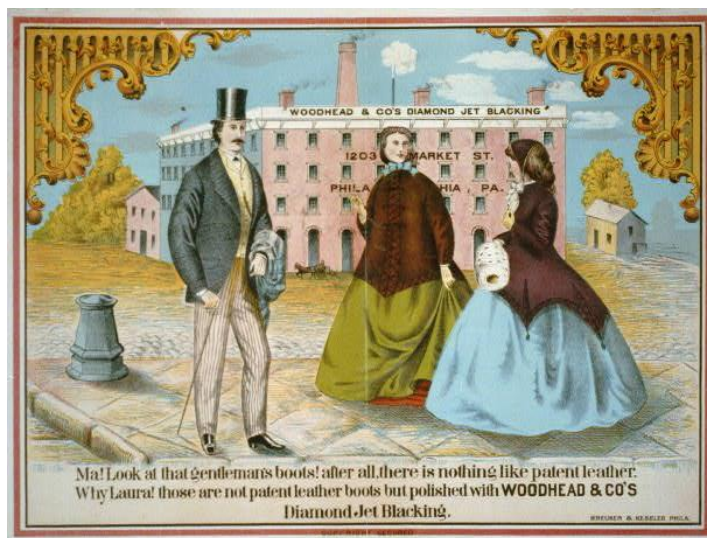


Figure 6.2: Advertisement for Woodhead & Co. Diamond Jet Blacking Shoe Polish¹¹

The Bertrand Textiles

The majority of the textiles present in the *Bertrand* cargo are ready-to-wear men's clothing items, such as the numerous wool flannel shirts, wool trousers, and wool vests.¹² This biased collection is reflective of the gender imbalances at the final points of destination. In 1870 at Fort Benton, the first stopover for the goods, around 85% of the adult population consisted of males. A similar trend characterized the outlying towns of Deer Lodge, Virginia City, and Hell Gate/Missoula (refer to Table 4.1). The "indigo, boots, coats, trousers, vests, sweaters...and sewing supplies" marked for Virginia City were most likely intended for use by men, who made up about 81.5% of the population 18 and over (Switzer 2013:96). While gender attribution is evident for the constructed textiles, based on form and known fashions of the time, the dye and sewing notions are

¹¹ Breuker and Kessler. 1867 Ma! Look at that gentleman's boots! *Library of Congress*.

¹² Soil conditions favored the preservation of protein fibers as opposed to plant-based textiles such as cotton. However, the survival of some cellulose fibers, namely stacks of oval cotton scraps, suggests that the presence of other mass-produced textiles would be represented to some degree.

more typically associated with women. However, indigo dye, while traditionally used to produce shades of blue, was also used for laundry or to create shades of black (Switzer 2013:247; Schweiger 1971:32-3). This product may have been purchased by men to dye faded trousers, shirts, or vests, rather than for the exclusive use by women for washing or dyeing homespun or purchased ecru fabrics. Among these communities, the use of dye for laundering purposes often had ethnic implications as well. Several male Chinese immigrants worked as laundrymen or ran “wash houses,” a much-needed service in communities dominated by men (Montana. 1870. U.S. Census).

High quantities of men’s commercially produced clothing also correspond with manufacturing trends of the early to mid-1800s. While men traditionally did not produce clothing at the household level, as small-scale textile production within the home is normally ascribed to women, men’s clothing was the first to be commercially manufactured as ready-wear. The simplicity of basic form and size made their garments easier to construct and distribute without individual tailoring (Stamper and Condra 2011:158). By the middle of the century in New York, men’s wear made up the “largest manufacturing enterprise” and was even exhibited at the 1853 Crystal Palace exhibition in the same city as a mark of progress and democracy (Zakim 1999:62-3). The introduction of the sewing machine in the early 1850s expedited the production process and moved clothing production out of the home and into factories (Zakim 1999:64). This trend towards pre-made garments began at early in the century, though, when access to European markets re-opened after the close of war with Britain in the 1810s (Zakim 1999:68). The flood of cheap British cloth into American production system enabled manufacturers to create a surplus of clothing, which could then be sold to a wider

audience at lower costs. This “clothing revolution” or democratization of consumption allowed men of all classes to purchase similar styles and move towards a standardized national identity (Zakim 1999:63, 83). The advent of the Civil War heavily impacted the development of standardized sizing for men, as both the North and South needed efficient means for providing soldiers with uniforms (Zakim 1999:157). The government executed a study to collect data for uniform sizes during the war years, information that was also made available to manufacturers who began commercially producing ready-wear clothing for men (Zakim 1999:158). Market development and transportation improvements expanded the distribution of these goods westward. Settlements on the frontier provided an ideal market for these new goods, as most men did not have the time, training, or resources to dedicate to sewing clothes (Zakim 1999:159). Additionally, the creation of a consumer culture led to new settlement systems on the frontier; no longer did outlying communities have to organize “a system of household production” but instead relied on “networks of continental exchange to make their new life out west a better one” (Zakim 1999:83).

These patterns are evident through the commercial and personal artifacts within the *Bertrand* cargo. As demonstrated by Corbin, the effects of the female passengers aboard the steamboat do not contain substantial materials for crafts or cottage industries (2000:43, 65-6). While it is likely that some small-scale handiwork tools, such as knitting or sewing, were kept with the individuals above deck, there is little evidence to suggest these women intended to manufacture clothing or other goods as a trade. No cloth bolts or related artifacts were contained in the passenger boxes. Rather, cloth bolts and mass quantities of needleworking tools—straight pins, needles, buttons, scissors—

were contained within the commercial cargo (Catalog records DESO 162_1, 1847_1, 717_1, 2854). The overwhelming quantities of men's pre-manufactured clothing, though, reinforces the concept that pioneers relied heavily on eastern markets to supply necessities and luxuries, instead of producing these goods locally (see Figure 6.3).

KEEP constantly on hand and are receiving from Eastern Markets, a fine and well selected Stock of

CLOTHING!

AND

Gents' Furnishing Goods!

SUCH AS

COATS,

PANTS,

VESTS,

HATS,

UNDER SHIRTS,

DRAWERS,

OVERSHIRTS OF ALL STYLES,

SOCKS, &c., &c.,

Which I offer to sell both

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL,

AT THE

Lowest Prices

Merchants are particularly requested to give me a call before purchasing, as my facilities are such that I can at all times supply them with goods just from the East, at very low prices.

Remember the "CALIFORNIA STORE!"

Corner of Bridge and Main Streets,

Helena, Montana Territory.

G. GOLDBERG.

32-44

Figure 6.3: Ad for California Store, *Montana Post*, 1865¹³

¹³ *Montana Post* [Virginia City, Montana]. 1865 "Advertisement for California Store." 23 September. Virginia City, Montana Territory. *Chronicling America*.

The dependence on eastern manufacturers in western communities also necessitated that individuals subscribe to a manufactured identity that characterized contemporary culture. Evidence from primary documents and artifacts suggests that men on the mining frontier in Montana did not produce their own clothing, but depended on supplies from these eastern markets, which dictated what fashions men would be able to access. Though supplying only a portion of the male population, the ready-wear articles aboard *Bertrand* illustrate what men on the frontier would have been wearing. The work shirts are simple, one-sized wool flannel checked long-sleeve shirts of various colors, including red and blue, each accented by black check. The shirts have a $\frac{1}{4}$ length opening at the neck with a short band collar which closes with buttons. The long and boxy shape of the shirt suggests they were manufactured in a simple fashion to fit men of varying widths and heights. The wool pants and vests are even plainer; fading from exposure to soil and oxygen make it difficult to discern the original colors, but the darker shades suggest that both the vests and pants were originally a range of black, gray, or dark brown. These plain colors are characteristic of the period and would have easily paired with other clothing items possessed by the individuals. The durable wool fabric used for both the shirts and pants, as well as the plaid patterning, distinguish these items as suited for the working class. However, the presence of other clothing items like vests and various coats suggests some upward mobility and middle-class standards, as men would have had to have disposable income to purchase these additional, non-utilitarian clothing items. Additionally, the vest and suit are key elements for the gentlemen's three-piece suit, which was valued at the time as a characteristic feature of the middle class (Kasson 1990:118-121).

The standardization of men's clothing reflects larger cultural trends. Clothing manufacturers and merchants were consciously or unconsciously creating and marketing a community identity to these western territories. Dress and embodiment serve as the primary vehicle for communicating identity, yet the limited availability of clothing forced men on the frontier to accept and adorn the image fashioned for them. The ethnic diversity characteristic of mining communities was subdued and united by uniformity of dress. However, men were afforded some agency through consumer power despite this "cohering national identity" (Zakim 1999:83). Brothers Granville and James Stuart elected to purchase Canadian shirts from the Hudson Bay Company rather than the "American things called 'hickory'" which were seen as poorer quality (Stuart 2004:241). They later express their dismay when they receive boots for their store that "are not what are liked here by the miners" and will not earn them any profit (Stuart 2004:261). Standardized dress was also modified with the adoption of some native dress. The Stuarts comment on adding decorated buckskin suits to their flannel shirts for special occasions in the early 1860s, especially before many 'white' women emigrated to the frontier (Stuart 2004:194). These modifications or rejections to ready-wear clothing expose the ways in which men protested or altered the manufactured identity proffered to them by eastern merchants.

Approaches to dress, though, changed as the population increased and gender imbalances began to normalize in Montana. As remarked upon by the Stuarts and noted by Guilmartin, men associated civilization with the appearance of white women, a notion that translated into personal appearance (Stuart 2004; Guilmartin 2002; Towns 2009). Men reduced their modifications to dress and more fully accepted the manufactured

clothing available to them: “we are approaching civilization or rather civilization is coming to us... The blue flannel shirt with a black necktie has taken the place of the elaborately beaded buckskin one. The white men wear shoes instead of moccasins and most of us have selected some other day than Sunday for wash day” (Stuart 2004:215). According to this passage, men sacrificed agency to more fully accept cultural norms accompanying the increase and normalization of population in the territories.

However, despite their willing or unwilling acceptance of manufactured clothing from urban centers, men did not always actualize the Victorian ideals carried through manufactured clothing. Elements of the quintessential gentlemen’s suit are evident in the materials aboard *Bertrand*. The cargo contains trousers and vests, as mentioned above, as well as assorted frock and suit coats. These elements comprise the three-piece suit that was associated with middle and upper-class ideals—that of the Victorian gentleman. While such articles were purchased by men of various occupations on the frontier, documentary sources record the ways in which men deviated from the laudable standard of the supportive husband who toiled in the public sphere to provide for and maintain a haven of domestic bliss. Instead, both primary accounts and census records relate several instances of men who actively left or deserted their families, often leaving a wife to support children on her own. In the 1860s and 1870s, “desertion ranked as the most common reason for divorce” in Montana territory, usually as the result of the husband leaving his wife (Petrik 1987:98-99). Various reasons characterized these cases of abandonment, although in many circumstances, the men simply left without explanation. Other causes for divorce included marital violence, adultery, and sometimes simply the lack of felicitous relations (Petrik 1987:98-99). As a result of high quantities of cases of

desertion or other causes of marital tension, divorce laws quickly became more liberal in western territories than in the conservative east. Society also had to adapt in other ways to allow single women with children to support themselves. These alternative narratives contest the manufactured identity and indicate that despite maintaining appropriate appearances, behaviors were more fluid and could diverge from socially prescribed gender roles.

The growing gender balance and shift away from Native American to white wives within these communities also influenced trends in dress and style. White women moving westward likely carried contemporary notions of eastern fashion and the skills necessary to manufacture or alter textiles to fit these socially prescribed trends. Native American women were rooted in a fundamentally different culture that manifested itself in a different form of dress. As wives to white men, they experienced a diluted version of American culture as presented by their husbands, other men in the mining community, or fur traders already established in the area. Necessarily, the understanding of Victorian ideals and practical skills differed between the two female populations and would result in different influences on the community. Whereas Native American women displayed their skill by decorating buckskins and blankets for themselves and their families with “ornaments of feathers, shells, silver money, beads” and quills for public gatherings, white women presented embroidered or carefully constructed garments from wool, silk, or muslin (Stuart 2004:194; *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 1865). Though equal in skill and dedication, the products of these differing craft traditions ascribed to separate group identities. As more white women moved west and the children of white men and Native American women grew, nationally accepted Victorian ideals became more entrenched in

these outlying societies and were reflected in the shift to unadulterated adornment of manufactured clothing for men.

Though men primarily relied on the commercial production of clothing, women in mining communities produced their own clothing. Although the first sewing machines were patented in the 1840s and 1850s, there is little evidence to indicate that these tools were available on the frontier (Patent Models: Textiles and Sewing Machines). The *Bertrand* cargo contains no parts for sewing machines and use of this technology is not explicitly mentioned in most primary sources, suggesting that women instead utilized hand-sewing techniques (Guilmartin 2000). The 5,000 steel needles aboard the steamboat would have likely been used by some women to construct garments for themselves, their families, or for sale (See DESO 1847). Without the aid of sewing machines, the mending and making of clothing would have cost women a considerable amount of time and labor. Not yet part of a mechanized process, the creation of clothing remained subject to the choices and preferences of the women who performed the task. This process was influenced and guided by both social and environmental conditions. Contemporary print publications for women, such as *Godey's Lady's Book*, provided seasonal updates on styles and techniques that dominated eastern urban centers. These comments were distributed through narratives in women's magazines across the nation, including the western territories (Myres 1982:150-1). Publications like *Godey's* served as the authority on fashionable dress and endeavored to guide women not only in the practical concerns of dress construction, but in the moral responsibility of appropriate dress and gender role fulfillment. The 1865 editions of *Godey's* alternate updates on "cloaks, dresses, mantillas, talmas, etc." and "embroidery for a flannel skirt" with

segments on “moral courage,” “self-respect,” and “learn the sanctity of duty” (*Godey’s Lady’s Book* 1865:553-4). These articles reinforce middle-class gender ideals and connect textiles and clothing directly to women’s roles. Pre-drawn patterns also became available commercially after 1863 when Ebenezer Butterick created graded patterns, although patterns for women were not formulated until 1866 (Butterick History 2017). Sharing of styles and patterns via print and emigration ensured that despite regional differences, throughout the United States there “was still a basic homogeneity of silhouette and form” (Stamper and Condra 2011:14, 67). The dissemination of these would have expedited the process of clothing construction for women and increased uniformity of style, even in outlying towns.

The evolution of styles in eastern towns, however, often resulted in impractical fashions unsuited for life and labor on the frontier. Guilmartin notes how long dresses and corsets would have restricted women’s mobility and presence in the public sphere within mining communities (Guilmartin 2002:191-3). Wind, rain, and mud threatened to damage and dishevel a well-put together woman. Mollie Sanford, who moved to Nebraska with her family as a teenager, recounts the impracticality of fashion on the blustery Plains:

“Duly rigged in my new spring bonnet and other finery, I expected to create a sensation. It was calm when I started, but before I ascended the hill, there came a gust of wind that sent my bonnet flying and flapped my garments about my form until I looked more like a liberty pole, than the dashing belle I had started out to be.” (Sanford 1915:16)

In Montana, wind, combined with snow and muddy streets, limited the outings of women who wore stylish and socially-accepted long dresses with full skirts (Guilmartin 2002:192). These dresses were also unsuited for the various labor tasks women took on

to assist spouses or support themselves on the frontier. Most women cooked over open fires, which presented a hazard for long dresses; many ended up with singed skirts (Myres 1982:147). There is no evidence among the *Bertrand* cargo that suggests crinolines were supplied in frontier stores. However, while they may not have been for sale, women may have brought hoops with them or creatively fashioned their own out of local resources, like Mollie Sanford who replaced worn out manufactured hoops with “small grapevines” (1915:76). The full skirts exhibited by the few *Bertrand* silk dresses would have fit over a crinoline or layered petticoats, which may have been reserved for special occasions. However, despite the perseverance of fashion against the practical and environmental constraints of frontier life, there were some circumstances in which women elected to modify their dress to better suit their activities. This degree of dressing down varied from simply removing corsets and crinolines to the adornment of men’s clothing (Stamper and Condra 2011:82-3). Mollie Sanford recalls donning her father’s clothing in order to milk their cow: “it occurred to me how much easier I could get through the tangled underbrush if I were a man!” (Sanford 1915:53). The ease of movement granted by pants instead of skirts was better suited for labor and chores in these territories. However, as frontier towns grew, social pressure to adhere to cultural ideals increased, resulting in stricter adherence to gender roles, whether externally or internally imposed. Sanford’s day in men’s clothing was cut short when she encountered a group of men traveling through the country and her fear of being found out kept her in women’s clothing from then on (1915:53).

Unlike men, women on the frontier were literally making and remaking their own identities when reaching the frontier through the construction of new clothing or

modification of garments brought with them, such as the dresses accompanying the Atchison and Campbell families. This active process of assertive agency is reflected in the economic opportunities women could take advantage of, the appearance of households without a man at the head, and material choices of dress and adornment (Petrik 1987:11-13, Montana. 1870. U.S. Census). The prominence of men within mining territories brought domestic-related services into high demand, opening many economic opportunities for women. Services such as needlework, laundry, and housing were necessary in these communities, yet hard to come by before the arrival of white women in high numbers. A small percentage of women among the four towns, though, pursued other occupations. About nine women worked as schoolteachers, some of whom were nuns, others did washing or served as domestics, but a minority had businesses, such as dry goods or mercantile (Montana. 1870. U.S. Census). While the options for women's work outside the home was limited largely to domestic-related services, these careers provided economic agency and an entrance into the public sphere.

Through these tasks, women "extended the boundaries of traditional work roles in order to expand economic opportunity," thereby preserving traditional domestic ideals associated with nineteenth-century middle class values, yet affording themselves more agency within the family structure (Nicoletta 1998:44). These economic categories allowed women from working class families, with husbands who were miners or laborers, to "support their husbands' respectable masculine identity and pride in having a 'nonworking, domestic wife'," a characteristic feature of "domestic womanhood" performed by "elite and middle-class housewives" (Montana. 1870. U.S. Census; Spencer-Wood 2013:177). However, many of these tasks are missing on the census data,

as women's occupations were often listed as what the head of house (usually male) or the woman herself chose to list that fit the data collection requirements. This could be the task that dominated her time or what she deemed to be "most prestigious" (James and Fleiss 1998:21). Among the four towns examined in Montana, most women were listed as "keeping house," a generalized statement that could incorporate a plethora of duties and responsibilities. This often involved supporting and caring for not only their spouses and children, but generally multiple boarders as well (Montana. 1870. U.S. Census). Some, however, were explicitly denoted as keeping boarding houses or working as housekeepers, which implies similar activities and responsibilities.

Individual records, though, demonstrate that women on the frontier actively pursued work in order to fill their time and keep loneliness at bay. By the time she reached adulthood, Mollie Dorsey Sanford had a strong sense of autonomy and agency and felt that she "ought to be doing something or making something of myself," feelings which she combats by serving as a "cook, general bottle washer, milk maid, school marm, seamstress, nurse, or Poetess" (Sanford 1915:61, 102). Other various chores would require women's help, some of which would have been impractical or difficult to perform in long dresses. Cold and wind additionally would have challenged women's performance of tasks while wearing long and constricting clothing. Though not typically documented in written resources, some photographs depict women working in modified dresses and pants to perform necessary activities (See Stamper and Condra 2011:83). While the trousers aboard *Bertrand* were intended for sale to men, it is possible that women occasionally wore these artifacts as well, whether intentionally purchased for such usage, borrowed from male relatives, or copied and recreated by women. In the

isolated and sparsely populated western territories, women were essential to the growth of these towns and were required to take on random tasks to help support themselves and the community.

Despite the varying degrees of agency afforded to white women emigrating to the frontier, these wives, mothers, and daughters maintained division of spheres and domestic concepts. These ideals were replicated by a unique class of women, prostitutes, yet in a manner that afforded even more fluidity and mobility than women of other occupational classes. Prostitutes in Montana and other mining communities were employed by a wide range of men, both single and married, and generally found steady employment in these imbalanced regions (Petrik 1987:25, 38). Historian Paula Petrik argues that the presence of prostitutes in these communities enabled “legitimate women” more freedom to engage in the public sphere by “segregating ‘bad women’ in one sector of the city” (1987:26). While the layout of Deer Lodge and the other cities identified from the *Bertrand* cargo is unknown, the commonality of red light districts within nineteenth-century mining towns suggests a similar geospatial patterning. On the 1870 federal census for Deer Lodge, the seven prostitutes of this town are listed in individual dwellings, rather than a brothel, yet these dwellings are marked as adjacent or close to one another (dwelling numbers 97-107) suggesting a similar pattern of segregation. In eastern, urban communities, a fear of “social counterfeits,” or women who “were involved in a masquerade of class as well as virtue,” restricted other women’s ability to navigate the public sphere in order to protect their reputation, further restricting them to the domestic space (Kasson 1990:100). Prostitutes in these areas were hard to visually identify, as most dressed elegantly and according to contemporary styles, although many were known to push the boundaries of

acceptable fashions by “disdaining the muted colors of respectable middle-class women” and opting for brighter tones or patterns (Kasson 1990:130). However, such differences may not have been as distinct or evident on the frontier, where options for material goods were limited and fashion updates were likely delayed.

Additionally, though their silhouettes followed contemporary standards, historic documents and archaeological excavations of prostitutes’ dwellings provide other evidence for ways in which prostitutes subverted middle-class domestic ideals. Such resources indicate heavy usage of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances associated with men’s activities during this time. Based on this evidence, it is possible that some of the male-attributed artifacts within the *Bertrand* collection, such as the bitters, gin, beer, and hand-carved pipes, would have been ultimately consumed or utilized by some of these women who elected to follow alternative career paths. Prostitution also provided an economic opportunity for women who might be subject to discrimination in other sectors, namely immigrants. In Deer Lodge, five of seven declared prostitutes were from China, the remaining two from Oregon and Mexico (Montana. Deer Lodge County. 1870. US Census). While some Chinese women were able to work as “mercanteel [*sic*],” prostitution offered women without male relatives a means to quickly establish their own profitable businesses (Montana. Madison County. 1870. US Census). In a region already characterized by fluidity of gender roles, prostitution, the antithesis of domestic purity, enabled women to further break down and negotiate barriers between sexes by providing a high-demand service in a male-dominated community.

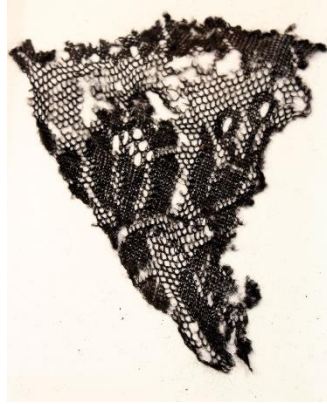


Figure 6.4: Lace Shawl Fragment (DESO 159)

Competing with, or perhaps correlating with, the relaxed performance of gender roles was a persistent desire among white women to recreate Victorian ideals of domesticity on the frontier, despite challenging conditions. The adherence to, and sometimes obsession with, eastern fashions despite their lack of suitability for frontier living, such as the silk dress brought by Mrs. Atchison or the lace shawl belonging to the Campbell sisters (Figure 6.4), indicates a strong attachment to the broader cultural phenomenon. Indicative of Entwistle's tension between conformity and individuality, women on the frontier expressed their own authentic selves through the creation of their own clothing, but subscribed to predominant trends and ideals through the maintenance of a common silhouette and decorative details as well as their consumption of fashion and domestic periodicals. Their consumer choices and written reflections relate their "desire to retain their domestic functions as wife, mother, and moral arbiter" (Walsh 1995:244). These goals expanded to the public sphere largely through the development of community organizations and reform groups, all which endeavored to "bring dignity, morality, and order to their towns" (Jackson 2005:54). These ideals, characteristic of the later Victorian period, grew out of earlier concepts rooted in the domestic sphere. Such notions were preserved and translated to the western frontier through distinct and

gendered clothing, despite the passive and flexible performance of gender roles in these communities. Women were essential in cultivating these ideals and contributed significantly to the structuring of western society and incorporation of these communities into a larger national identity that defined America in the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS

The imbalanced demographics of western frontier towns, such as those in Montana, provide unique scenarios for interrogating the relationship between material culture and identity construction in the mid-nineteenth century. Clothing, as the most personal form of material culture, provides an accessible avenue to understand concepts of both individual and community identities. However, the harsh, laborious culture characteristic of frontier life have left few articles of everyday-wear for analysis. Most clothing would have been worn through or discarded, therefore not being curated by families or institutions over time for future generations. The artifacts recovered from Steamboat *Bertrand*, however, provide an invaluable opportunity for conducting such analyses, as the many textile articles within the cargo were intended for everyday use among men and women. Select groupings of artifacts have provided a case study for developing a deeper knowledge of Victorian gender roles, gendered identity, and the translation of the concepts onto the frontier during the middle of the nineteenth century.

The gender imbalances often associated with these regions are represented in the types and quantities of clothing present within the *Bertrand* collection. As indicated in the 1870 U.S. Census, about 85% of the adult population (18+) within four Montana towns of varying size was comprised of males. This dramatic demographic bias necessarily influenced the social structure of these regions. Many homes did not have traditional nuclear families, as lauded by contemporary cultural standards, and instead consisted of all-male households or families with male boarders. Among the all-male households and community events, many males had to take on female-associated responsibilities, like washing and cooking, or substitute for women, such as in social

dances. In some circumstances, the fluctuation of gender roles was accompanied by changes in dress and appearance. Cross-dressing or the simple adornment of an armband was a visual signal to the community of a shift in male identities. To more evenly distribute duties and gendered responsibilities, among other reasons, some men married Native American women. While these relationships began to balance out community demographics, the difference in cultural backgrounds produced marriages that were informal and relaxed, and could result in early termination. Prior to the arrival of more white women, though, men exercised more freedom in dress. They altered the manufactured clothing shipped to the frontier, such as the goods in the cargo of *Bertrand*, through the addition of trade goods and native clothing. These behaviors produced an appearance that uniquely expressed the fusion of cultures in this region and rejected the strict gender ideals of the Victorian middle class. These hybrid appearances were better suited for a community that required fluidity of gender role performance in order to thrive.

However, with the arrival of more white women in the mid to late nineteenth century, men's clothing choices began to shift to reflect the increasing urbanization of frontier communities. As society developed with time and grew in size and diversity, the culture of the community responded by becoming increasingly representative of the broader national identity. Women maintained domestic ideals through their adherence to eastern fashions, as evidenced by the silk and wool dresses brought west by the *Bertrand* passengers. Their continued reliance on eastern fashions as distributed through print materials and new emigrants shows a desire to replicate the Victorian culture of the east on the frontier. Despite these concerns, though, women were able to redesign their own

identities after their move westward through the creation of their own clothing. Without manufactured clothing or widespread access to seamstresses, women had to rely on their own skills for construction of clothing. This process allowed them some agency over dress and adornment, providing a canvas on which they could craft their own identity.

Finally, while the archaeological record provides incredible insight into life on the frontier, this source of evidence is greatly enhanced through the consultation of written records. Primary sources challenge and enrich some interpretations of material culture, suggesting attribution of artifacts that seem obviously gendered may be more convoluted. Instances of cross-dressing and additional or alternative occupations for women and men suggest that artifacts like trousers, needles, or indigo dye could have been used by both men and women. These stories, preserved through journals and census records, illustrate the deep complexity of identity and embodiment as communicated through dress. This intimate category of material culture allows researchers to query the past and provides a narrative that enhances and often corrects the historic record. Through this vein of analysis, the multiplicity of stories present on the frontier can emerge and enhance the past, while returning value to individuals who provide an alternative narrative and who played essential roles in the creation of western communities.

APPENDIX A: ARTIFACT CATALOG

Included in this section are select catalog records of artifacts from the Steamboat *Bertrand*. Records and photographs are courtesy of DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, FWS. Photographs were taken by the author unless otherwise noted. For commercial artifacts, one object has been selected to represent the collection of identical goods.

Bodice and Skirt: *DESO 2925_1*



Description:

Fragments of brown dress, associated with Atchison family. Dimensions are various. Previous researchers suggest that the dress was hand sewn with some staining throughout. Bodice closes with brass hook and eyes; bodice is long. High neck has collar with possible decorative buttons. Long skirt made of three panels pleated at waist. (see Guilmartin 2002:112-4).

Medium: Wool

Bolt of Cloth: DESO 2854*Description:*

Bolt of red silk cloth patterned with bandana batik print of tan-colored blocks made up of smaller tan squares with small red circles in the center. Lighter dye has started to degrade fibers in some areas.

Medium: Silk

Cap, Ladies': DESO 2849_2*Description:*

Ladies' woven cap, made from maroon wool yarn. Decoration on front of cap is made from maroon yarn, knitted into loops and bunched tightly together. Two large strands of red yarn run parallel around the back and sides of cap. Cap has a narrow brim edged with knitted scalloped trim, also from maroon/red yarn.

Dimensions:

Height: 9 cm; Width 19 cm; Length: 24.5 cm

Medium: Wool

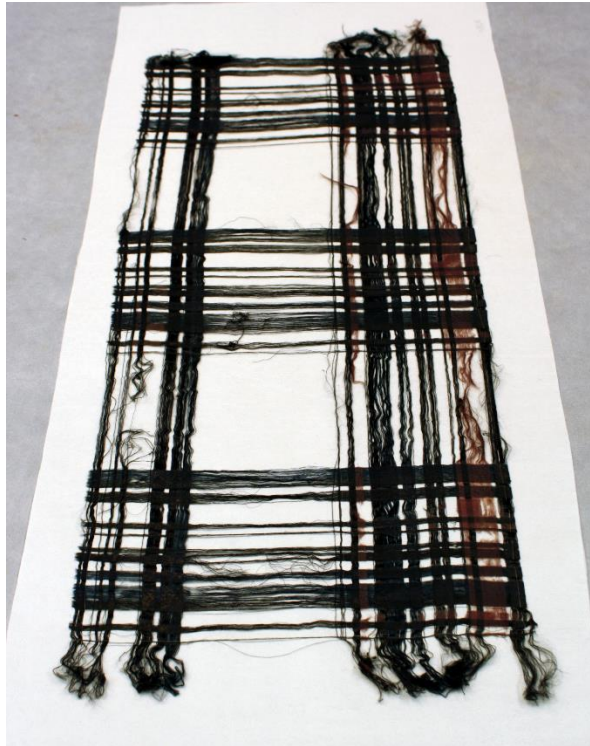
Corset Busk: DESO 149*Description:*

Seven corset fragments. Six iron strips and one loose brass plated fastener. Two loose studs. Longest strip has two fasteners still attached. Fragments are from corset busk. Associated with the Campbell sisters (Anna and Fannie).

Dimensions:

Width 1.5 cm; Length: 13.5 cm (for longest fragment)

Medium: Iron, brass

Dress: *DESO 2924**Description:*

Plaid silk dress fragments. Dress is associated with Atchison family. Plaid is comprised of black and red silk in satin weave; background of plaid is gone, indicating that this portion of the fabric may have been a cellulose fiber. The dress is extremely fragmented and difficult to interpret, but Guilmartin suggests the dress had a fitted bodice that buttoned in front and a skirt made of 15 rectangular pieces (see Guilmartin 2002:110).

Medium: Silk

Dress: *DESO 2846_1 and DESO 2846_2*



Description:

Two blue wool dresses, nearly identical (DESO 2846_1-2). Dresses associated with the Campbell sisters. Dress are fragmented, but bodices are still intact, although sleeves have separated. Fragments show signs of wear and appear to be machine sewn. Skirts are short, about 87 cm, and are made from four rectangular panels with pleats at waist. Guilmartin measures waists on the dresses at about 58.5 cm (23 inches). Dresses were long-sleeved with trimming at shoulder. Straight pins are still on the fragments in some areas, indicating mending and the possible remaking of these dresses. (see Guilmartin 2002:106-109).

Medium: Wool

Hat, Men's: DESO 2795_10*Description:*

Men's beaver hat. Hat has a wide brim, about 9 cm long, and tall, rounded crown. Hat is stitched around rim, but any trim is now gone. There is a small tear, about 2.3 cm long, on one edge of brim. Hat is unlined and has some creasing throughout.

Dimensions:

Height: 12.5 cm; Diameter: 35 cm

Medium: Beaver

Indigo Dye: DESO 4649*Description:*

One bag of indigo dye, possibly used for laundry bluing. Indigo is powdered, but has clumped in some areas. Currently in a large plastic bag.

Dimensions:

Weight: 2569 g

Medium: Organic

Pants: *DESO 3236_3**Description:*

Men's dark brown wool trousers. Pockets close with small metal buttons. Pants fasten at center front with four buttons, before rusting away. Top back of pants on the right side have a metal buckle attached by a looped piece of fabric. Small, corroded button on side.

Dimensions:

Width: 50 cm; Length: 100 cm

Medium: Wool; metal

Scarf: DESO 3144_2



Description:

Woven scarf with herringbone pattern. Warp is silk while weft is possibly wool or other fiber. Warp is made of black threads, while weft alters between light and dark tan or possibly faded maroon. Scarf patterned with alternating segments of three rows of lighter weft threads. In most areas, these weft threads are missing, leaving strips of the black weft thread. Scarf is trimmed on each end with 1 cm long fringe.

Dimensions:

Width: 14 cm; Length: 93 cm;

Medium: Silk; fiber

Shawl: DESO 2841_2*Description:*

One (1) shawl. Manufactured, woven wool shawl with fringe. Shawl is dark pink with a bold zigzag trim on the border. Woven pattern is made up of squares with black centers. Shawl ties closed with a pair of pink and black two-ply strings, one on each side of center front. The strings each have a tassel with cap. Cap on tassel has same black zigzag design as shawl border. One cord is fragmented and missing tassel. At center back is a bow made from same string with tasseled ends. Some staining and discoloration throughout.

Dimensions:

Width: 153 cm; Length: 70 cm; Neck circumference: 32 cm

Medium: Wool

Lace Shawl: DESO 159



Description:

Black lace net shawl fragments, associated with the Campbell family. Pattern is floral, made up of sprays and scrolls of leaves and flowers. Guilmartin suggests the lace was machine-made and inexpensive (Guilmartin 2002:120).

Medium: Silk

Shirt: *DESO 3318_1*



Description:

Plaid wool flannel men's shirt. Manufactured long-sleeve shirt of blue, black, and tan checked flannel. Shirt has a band collar that buttons at center. Front placket is trimmed with red piping and has three button holes to close. Back is plain. Bottom edges of shirt are rounded. Sleeves gather slight at wrist into a plain cuff.

Dimensions:

Width: 54 cm; Length: 82.6 cm

Medium: Wool

Stockings: DESO 3115_5-6*Description:*

Two knit wool, adult-sized stockings. Socks are identical. Each is striped red and black. The upper 9 cm of each stocking has tan threads worked into the red stripes. These appear to be from previous conservation efforts. Stockings are seamed along the back edge and back of heel. Sole of stocking is sewn to top of foot and heel.

Dimensions:

Width: 12 cm; Length: 52 cm

Medium: Wool

Thread Spool and Sewing Needles: DESO 717_1 and DESO 1847_1



Description:

DESO 717_1: One wooden spool for thread. Ends are darkened/stained. One edge is broken. Opposite end has several large chips. Center hole is oval, not circular.

DESO 1847_1: Long, narrow steel sewing needles. Metal is black with some very light rust. Original item count was 126 needles.

Medium:

DESO 717_1: Wood

DESO 1847_1: Metal

Vest: DESO 3201_1*Description:*

Men's vest front made from brown twill weave wool. Back of vest has disintegrated. Front has rounded lapels, but lapels are coming away from body of vest. Two waist pockets, one on each side of center, and a left breast pocket; each has a flap attached. Six button holes on the left side but buttons are now missing. Top-stitching detail done in dark brown thread.

Dimensions:

Width: 49 cm; Length: 61 cm

Medium:

Wool

Vest: DESO 2828_1*Description:*

Men's vest front made from black wool. Back of vest is missing. Vest front has rounded lapels. Waist pocket on each side of center and one breast pocket; all have flaps. Pockets and edges of vest has fraying trim. Vest closes at center front with six buttons and corresponding button holes; buttons are now missing.

Dimensions:

Width: 51.5 cm; Length: 56.3 cm

Medium:

Wool

<i>Object¹⁴</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Consignee</i>
Boots, men's	136	Deer Lodge	Stuart and Co.
Boots, women's	13	Deer Lodge	Stuart and Co.
Shoes, men's	21	Ft. Benton	J. Murphy
Boots, men's	40	Hell Gate	Worden and Co.
Shoes, women's	3	Hell Gate	Worden and Co.
Cap, women's	15	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Shawl, women's	2	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Mufflers	Numerous fragments	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Rubber slickers	12	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Rubber leggings	12	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Hat, men's	84	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Boots, men's	60	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Stockings	32	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Buffalo boots, men's	91	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Buffalo leggings	1	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Ribbon	Numerous fragments	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Black thread skeins	286	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Suspenders	39	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Scissors	24	Virginia City	G.P. Dorris
Coats, men's	70	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Paletot, women's	2	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Suitcoats, men's	63	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Trousers, men's	53	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Vest, men's	24	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Sweaters	28	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Rubber slickers	10	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Boots/shoes, men's	259	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Boots/shoes, women's	184	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Bolt, silk	1	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Bolt, wool	1 and assorted fragments	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Trim (knit, braid, ribbon)	Numerous fragments	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Straight pin	1	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Buckles	27	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Beads	266	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Buttons, assorted	744	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Indigo	2 cases	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson
Underwear	Numerous fragments	Virginia City	Vivian and Simpson

Table A: Artifacts for Dress and Adornment and Associated Destinations

¹⁴ Lore Ann Guilmartin. 2002 *Textiles from the Steamboat Bertrand: Clothing and Gender on the Montana Mining Frontier*, 261-264.

APPENDIX B: SELECTED KNOWN PASSENGERS OF *BERTRAND*

While a complete list of passengers is not available, evidence from the excavation of the cargo, personal accounts, and hotel ledgers provide some names of those aboard *Bertrand* when it sank on April 1st.

The Atchison Family

Mary (24), Charles (5), and Emma (4) Atchison were travelling to Virginia City, Montana to meet John Atchison (39), husband to Mary and father to Charles and Emma. John had emigrated to Montana a year prior to his family's arrival and settled in Virginia City as a banker.

The Walton Family

Mary Elizabeth (32), Joseph Talbert (4), Letitia Amanda (6), John Edward (8), Martha Elizabeth (10), and Virginia Annette (13), like the Atchisons, were heading west to join husband and father Moses Edward Walton (41). Moses, who had served in the Missouri State Guard during the Civil War, moved to Montana in 1864 to establish a home for his family.

The Millard Family

Caroline Grover (28), Willard (3), Jessie (2) lasted two weeks in Virginia City, Montana, before leaving the frontier for a more urban setting. Caroline's husband, Joseph, is credited as a founder of Omaha, Nebraska and opened a bank in Virginia City, Montana prior to his family's arrival. After Caroline left Virginia City, Joseph rejoined her in Omaha where he worked with the Omaha National Bank, the Omaha & Northwestern Railroad, and the local government.

The Campbell Family

Two sisters, Annie (19) and Fannie (16), left St. Louis on *Bertrand* to join their parents, James Blackstone (66) and Sarah Campbell, and their siblings Gurdon (30) and Helen in Gallatin City, Montana. The Campbell family had moved to Montana in 1862, but left Annie and Fannie to finish school in St. Charles, Missouri at the Academy of the Sacred Heart, where they boarded as well for the three year period.

Nicholas J. Beilenberg

Beilenberg (18), son of German immigrants, settled in Blackfoot, Montana, working as a butcher.

William McCoy Wheatley

Wheatley (38), a cobbler and farmer, moved to Montana to start a lumber business with his brother-in-law Joseph Humes. The business was unsuccessful and Wheatley returned to Missouri to settle some legal issues with his farm and to rejoin his wife Mildred and their two small children, John and Mary Eliza.

George Poole Dorris

Dorris (58) established a store in 1863 in Montana and traveled between Helena and St. Louis to oversee the shipment of goods.

John T. Murphy

Another consignee of the *Bertrand* cargo, Murphy (23) ran Murphy & Neal Co., a mercantile located in Fort Benton as well as another store in Virginia City.

Other passengers known to have boarded *Bertrand*:

James D. Lucas, businessman

John W. Noye

John Thornton, salesman

W. Burroughs, a lawyer, with his daughter, and grandchildren

Albert Rowe, occupation unknown

Archaeological evidence also suggests a female Chinese immigrant by the name of Yi-Shing

*Ages are listed as known to be at time of *Bertrand* sinking

For further information on passengers and names of crew members:

Corbin 2000

Petsche 1974

Switzer 2013

APPENDIX C: MAKING THE FRONTIER HOME: METHODOLOGY FOR CREATING A DIGITAL EXHIBIT

Making the Frontier Home: Stories from the Steamboat Bertrand seeks to understand gender roles and identity during the mid-nineteenth century on the frontier through the analysis and digitization of artifacts from the Steamboat *Bertrand*. This project utilizes the collection's textiles, ceramics, bottles, foodstuffs, and other domestic-related goods to construct a digital narrative that explores cultural themes of the western frontier. The project features digital 3D models, created using photogrammetric techniques, and 2D images, which are organized into an interactive format paired with excerpts from primary documents and other resources. *Making the Frontier Home* provides both models and information that work together to create a digital exhibit that expands access to a unique collection.

Project Background

The project was executed during a three-month period, beginning mid-May and ending early August of 2016, as part of the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities' Digital Scholarship Incubator Fellowship. This program brought together four graduate students from various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences to execute individual research projects that engaged with different digital techniques. A faculty moderator provided guidance and assistance during the program. The fellowship also supplied access to digital resources and tools and direction for utilizing relevant technologies, which proved extremely useful for the project presented here. This particular digital project grew out of a need identified by the author while working as a volunteer intern at DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge. The government-hosted website for

the refuge contains minimal information about *Bertrand* and catalog records for the artifacts are not available online nor is information related to the collection readily available to researchers digitally. A desire to meet these needs inspired the creation of a digital exhibit.

The project was structured to meet the three-month deadline, while still able to grow after the fellowship ended. Direction and flow were guided by goals outlined early in the fellowship period and previous experience. Exposure to photogrammetric techniques in the classroom inspired me to experiment with these processes among the *Bertrand* artifacts. By combining these models with research, I worked to produce a digital themed exhibit, rather than object-driven, to explore domestic life on the Montana frontier in 1865 using the cargo as a case study. The exhibit was based on 3D models and included digital photographs, exhibit labels, and context descriptions. A multimedia approach was essential to this project, as I believed it would offer an in-depth, unique experience that would be of value to both researchers and the general public who had an interest in the collection after a visit to the museum display. The models themselves are hosted on *Sketchfab* while the metadata for the artifacts is available through *Omeka*. These additional resources are linked through the main *Scalar* project to provide additional documentation for the collection. The relatively minimal costs of photogrammetric processes and these open-source programs make them ideal mechanisms for expanding access to and engagement with smaller collections on low budgets. The dynamic nature of the digital allows for projects such as this to continually be expanded; in particular, this project allows for increased public access to a unique

collection in a remote area, as well as a continually growing understanding of historical themes.

Project Goals

Historical themes and questions of gender roles and lived experience are explored through a re-interrogation of material remains. As Suzanne Spencer-Wood explains, meanings associated with material culture are not created by producers but rather are individually crafted by the consumer.¹⁵ In a mining community characterized by gender imbalance and non-traditional domestic situations, e.g. all-male households, re-examining commercially produced goods provides a counter narrative to the generally accepted binary division of gender roles. Museum collections consisting primarily of curated artifacts tend to support interpretations of segregated spheres. However, everyday objects, as generally recovered in the archaeological record, cannot be readily divided by gender. Additionally, museum objects are typically representative of the upper middle and upper classes of urban society. The *Bertrand* collection contrasts many collections by providing the opportunity to examine the material culture used in daily life that was available to households of varying socioeconomic status. Engaging with these themes digitally enables viewers to connect and experience artifacts in a way that critically examines accepted historical trends.

One of the most important aspects of this project is public outreach. The *Bertrand* collection is located at a National Wildlife Refuge that is fairly isolated and not well publicized. While some efforts to publish via social media have been made by the center

¹⁵ Spencer-Wood, Suzanne. 2013 Western Gender Transformations from the Eighteenth Century to the Early Twentieth Century: Combining the Domestic and Public Spheres. In *Historical and Archaeological Perspectives on Gender Transformations: From Private to Public*, edited by Suzanne Spencer-Wood. Springer, New York, pp. 173-214.

in the last few years, connecting with these existing outlets will enable the expansion of information being supplied in these areas. The curator of the *Bertrand* collection has fully supported this research and together we are working to integrate the models both as part of the collection records and as part of the physical exhibit, by presenting additional digital artifacts to the public using the Augment mobile application.

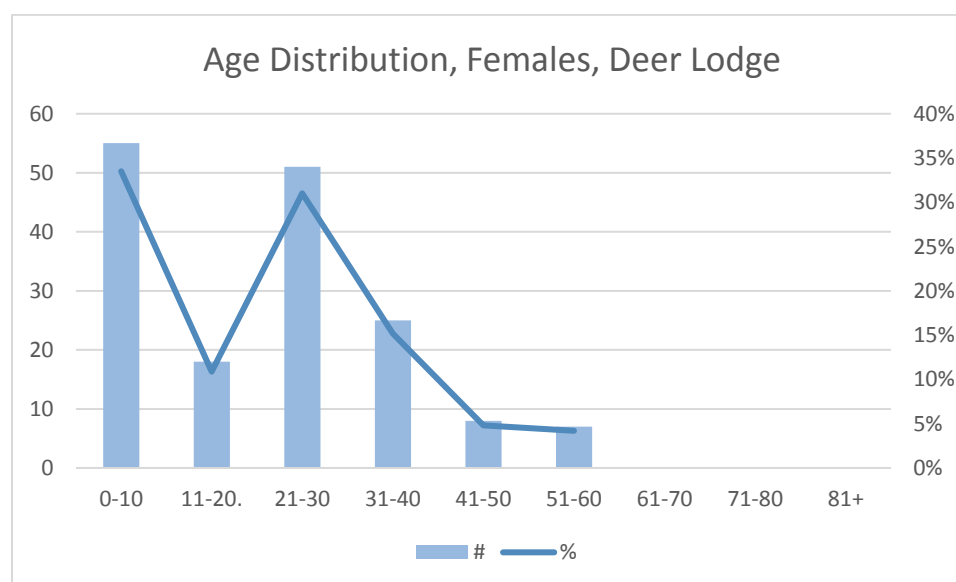
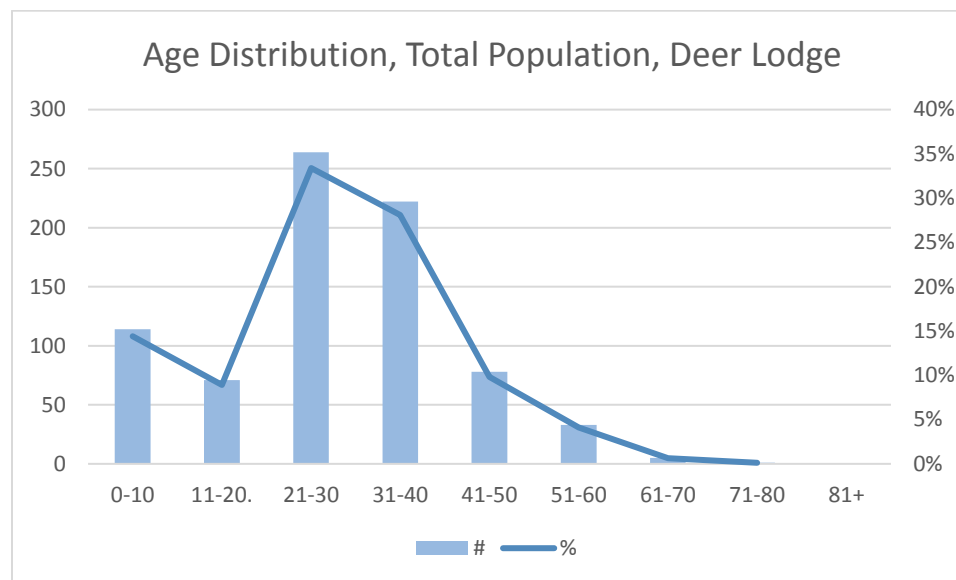
While experiencing an artifact digitally is not the same as seeing or holding the object in person, 3D modelling offers a more in-depth approach for distant researchers than photographs and descriptions. The models also have the potential to be printed, which could provide visitors and students the chance to handle a replicated artifact without threatening the integrity of the actual object. Printing also has the potential to engage with visually impaired visitors on a tactile, rather than aural, level. While this project is only in the beginning stages and does not fully explore these possibilities, it lays the foundation for future development in such areas.

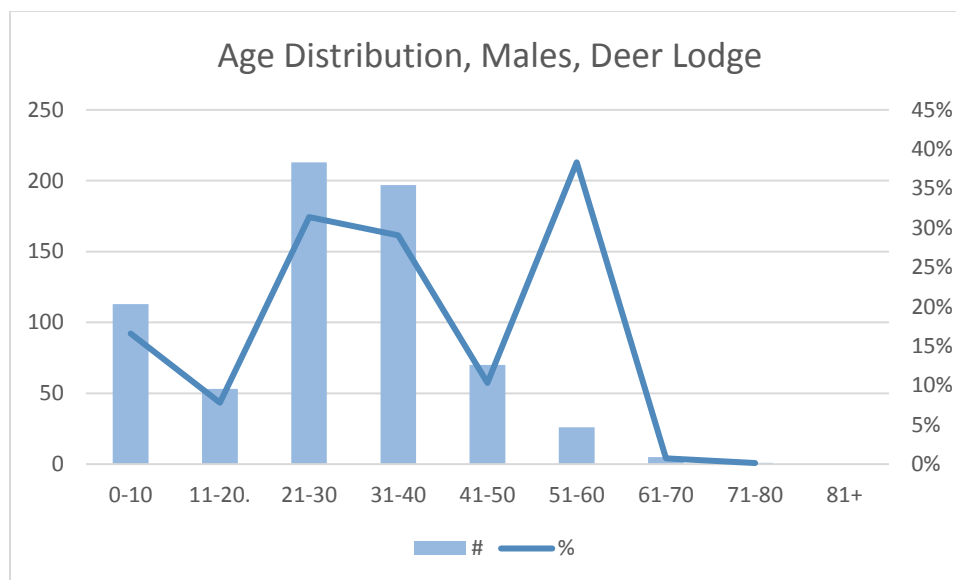
Exhibit link: <http://scalar.usc.edu/works/making-the-frontier-home-stories-from-the-steamboat-bertrand/index>

APPENDIX D: CENSUS DATA, MONTANA 1870

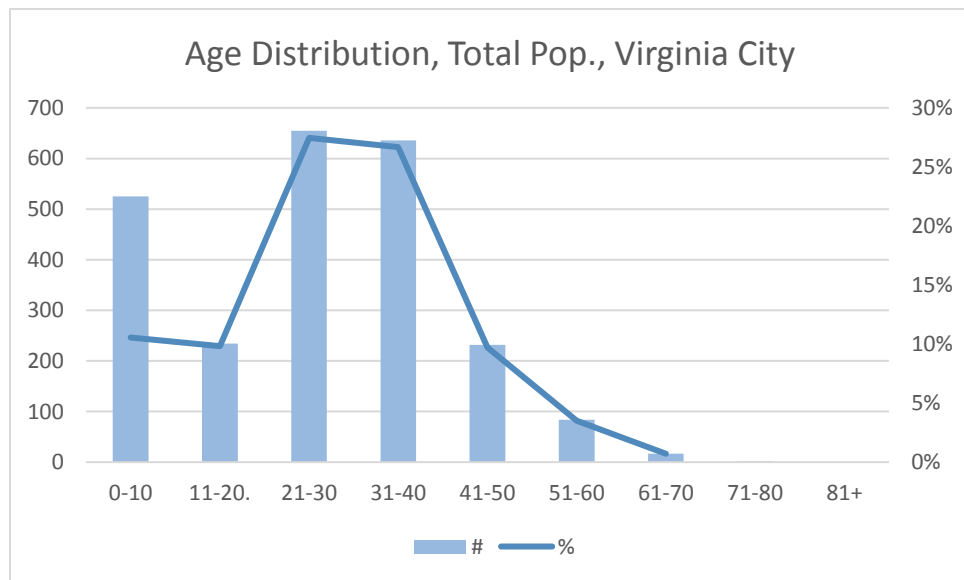
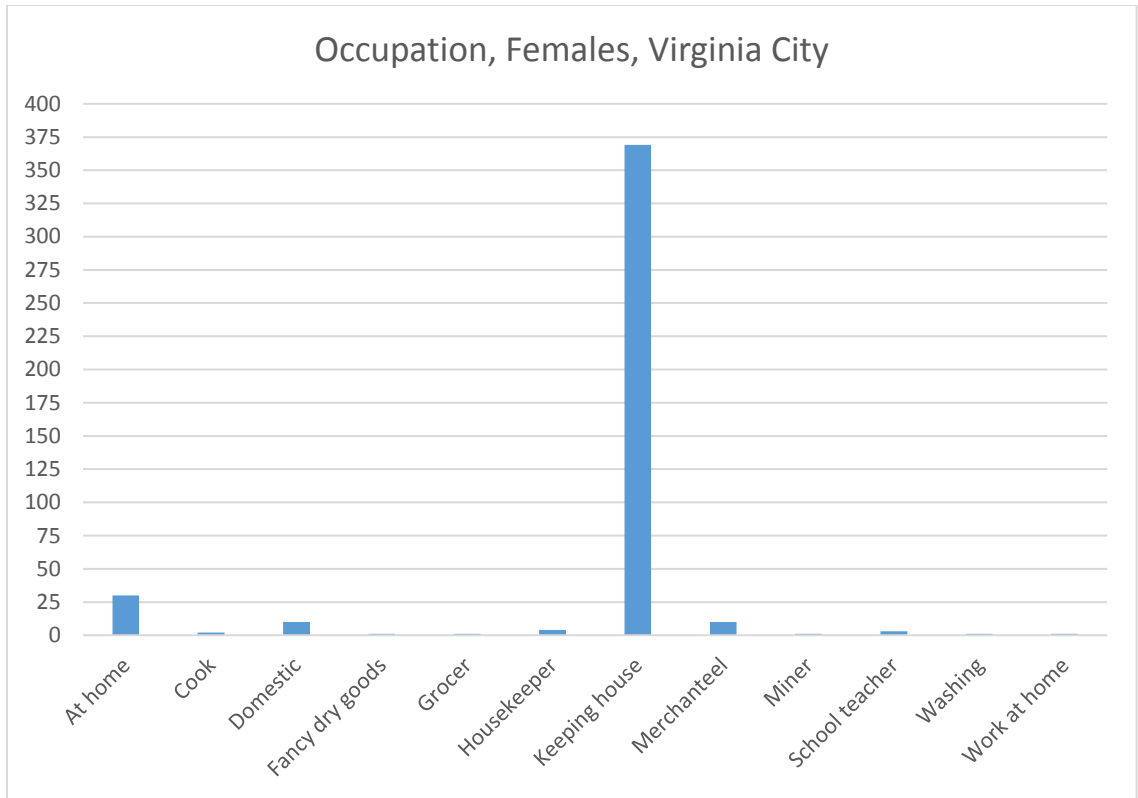
The following includes tabulated data from the 1870 U.S. Federal Census for the selected towns in the Montana territory.

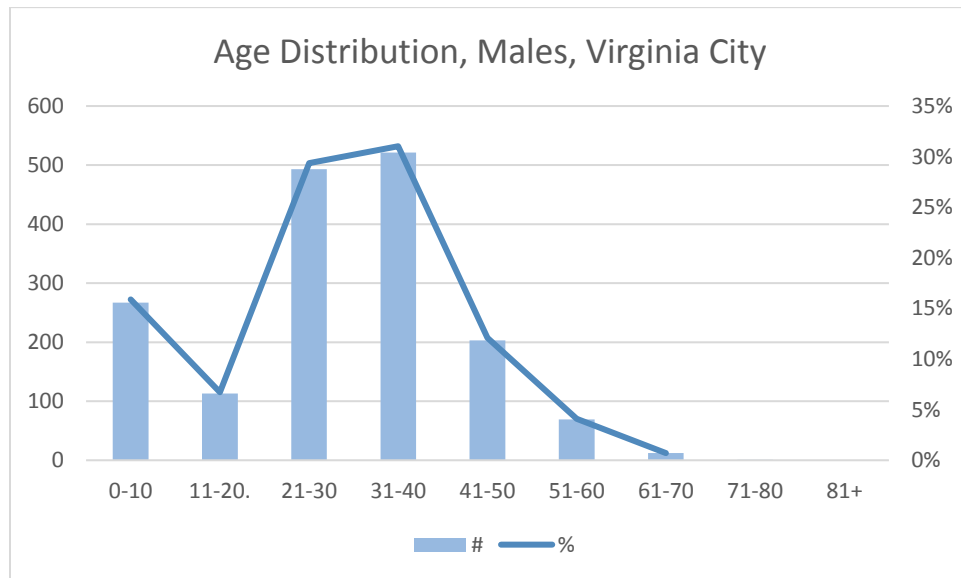
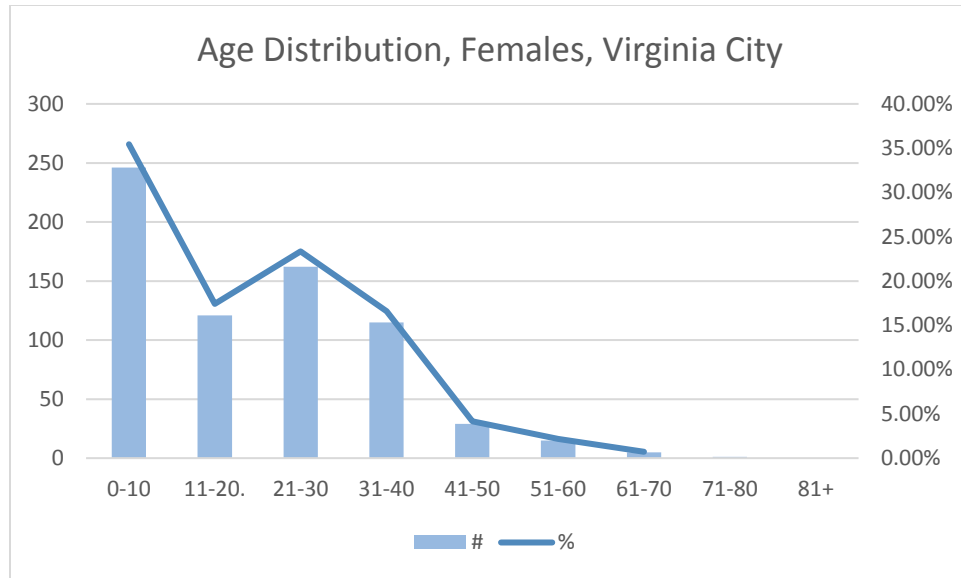
Deer Lodge





Virginia City

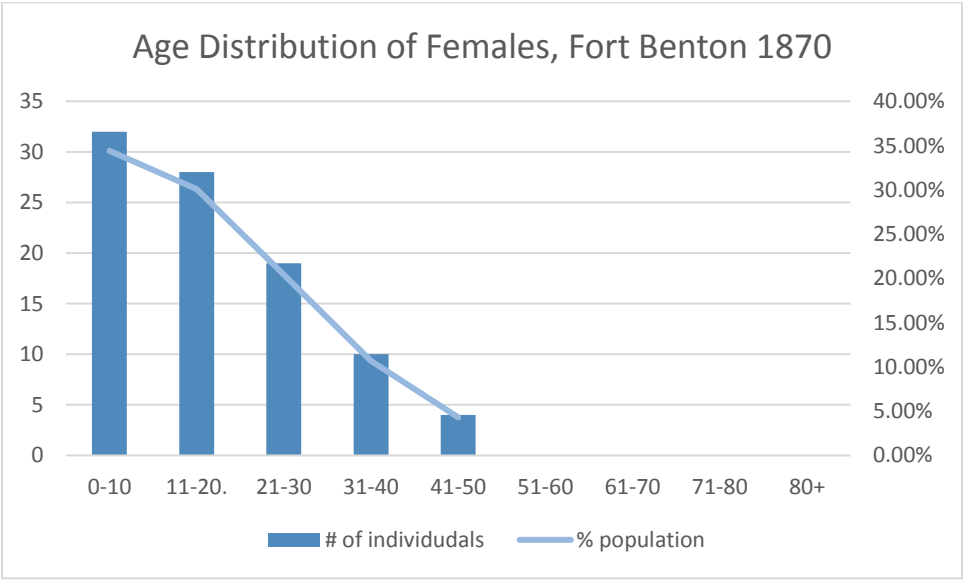
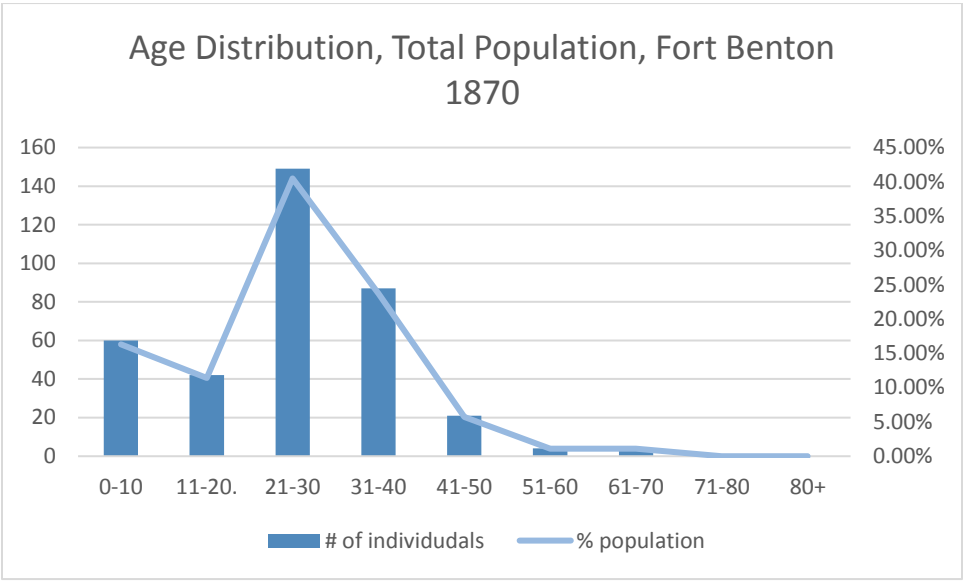


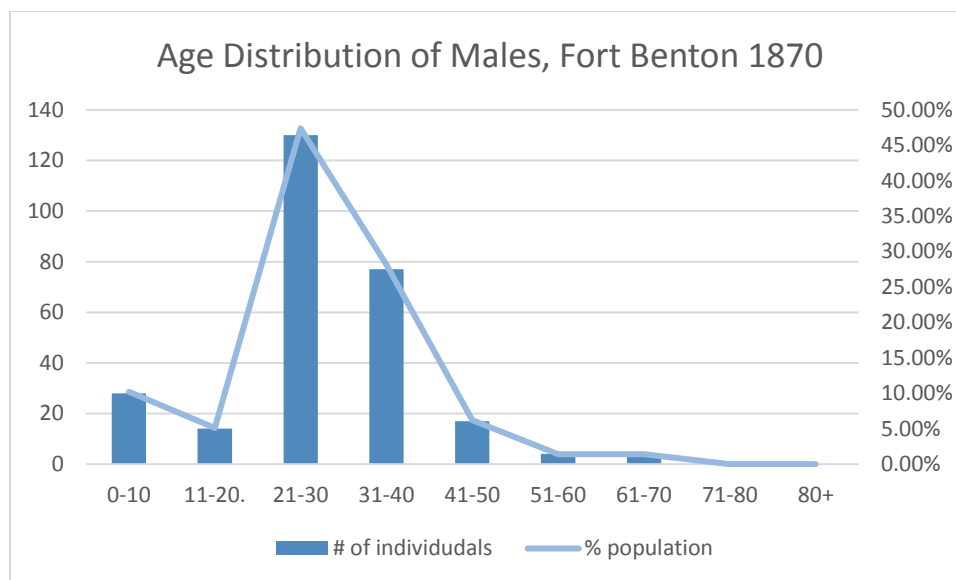


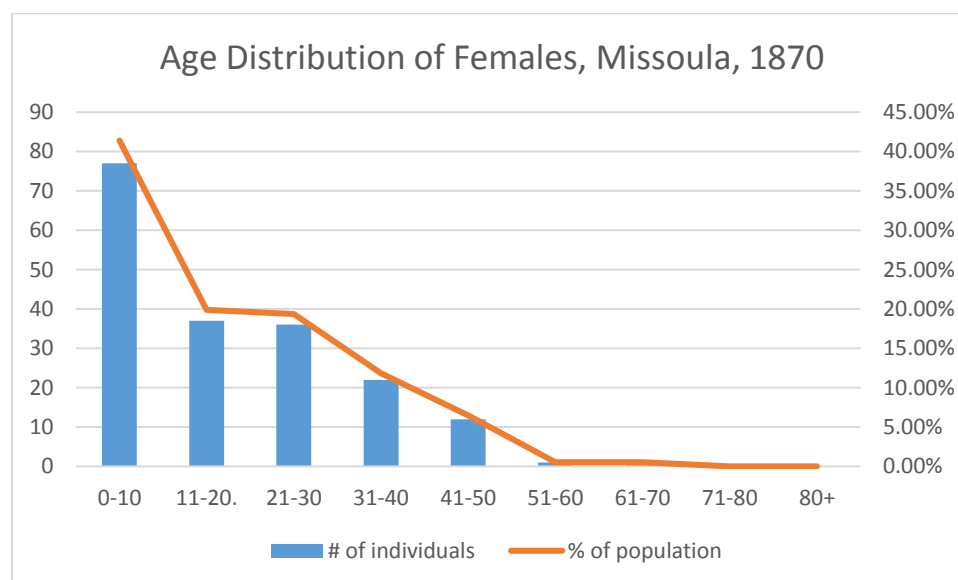
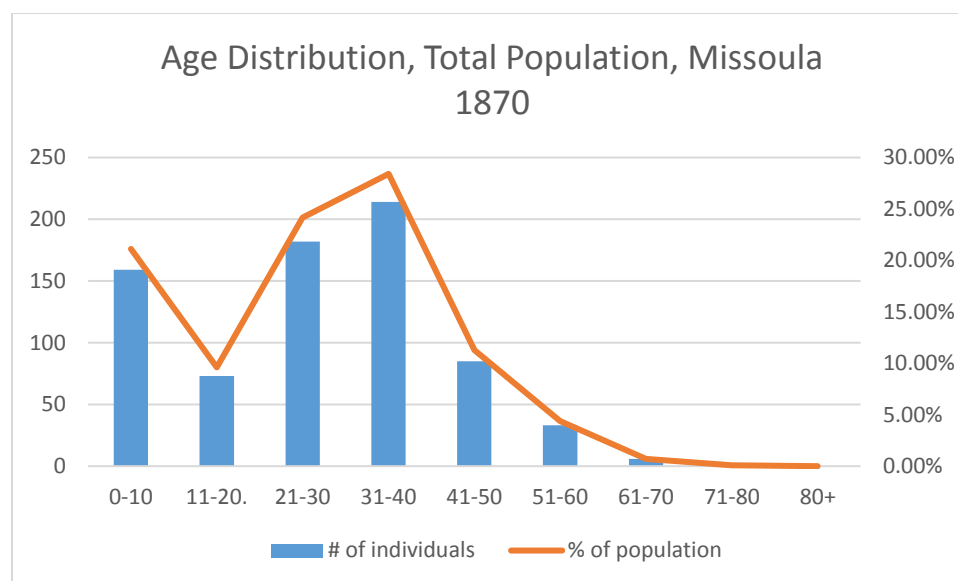
<i>Nativity of Females, All Ages, Virginia City, Montana, 1870</i>		<i>% Total</i>
<i>United States and Territories</i>	579	80.90%
Alabama	1	
Arkansas	2	
California	1	
Colorado	16	
Connecticut	3	
Illinois	40	
Indiana	10	
Iowa	39	
Kansas	3	
Kentucky	12	
Louisiana	1	
Maine	2	
Maryland	4	
Massachusetts	11	
Michigan	13	
Minnesota	3	
Missouri	59	
Montana	173	
Nebraska	7	
New Hampshire	3	
New Jersey	1	
New York	48	
North Carolina	2	
Ohio	40	
Oregon	2	
Pennsylvania	28	
Tennessee	4	
Utah	19	
Vermont	10	
Virginia	9	
Wisconsin	12	
Wyoming	1	
<i>Europe</i>	103	14.40%
Austria	1	
Bavaria	4	
Belgium	4	
Denmark	1	
England	20	
France	5	
Germany/Prussia	17	
Holland	2	

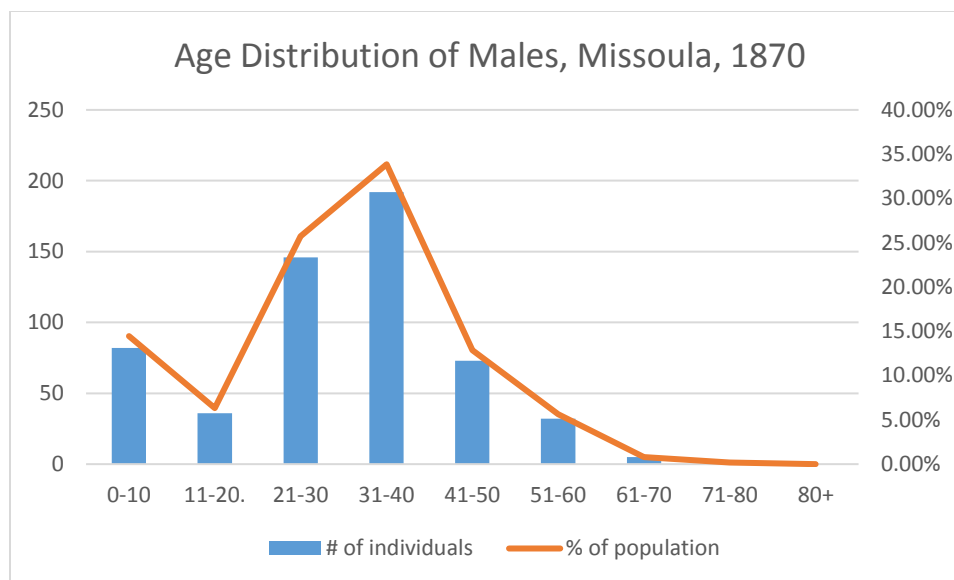
	Ireland	32	
	Poland	3	
	Prussia	9	
	Scotland	5	
	Sweden	1	
	Switzerland	5	
	Wales	3	
Asia		7	0.90%
	China	7	
North America (other than US)		24	3.30%
	Canada	24	

Fort Benton





Hell Gate/Missoula



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