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Hunting Narratives of the Age of Empire: A Gender Reading of Their Iconography

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ABSTRACT

The hunting-and-collecting mania of sportsmen from north-western Europe and the eastern United States is explored by focusing on the many hunting narratives that recount trips to the Canadian part of the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Shore during the Age of Empire (1875–1914). These narratives, many of which were lavishly illustrated, have remained largely unexplored as a source for the social history of hunting. Here the hundreds of frequently dramatic visual representations, in particular the trophy displays, are systematically scrutinised and major iconographic motifs identified. The point is made that the iconographic idiom did not primarily convey a meaning that related to the hunters' participation in the work of empire, but one that celebrated the hunters' character traits and masculinity, often by means of a conflation of victor-and-vanquished.

KEYWORDS

Iconography, trophies, hunting, gender, British Columbia

INTRODUCTION: GAME TROPHY REPRESENTATIONS

The display practices relating to game trophies can be subdivided into two different categories. Primary displays involve the objects themselves, often prepared by means of taxidermy, and put on show at special trophy exhibitions, in museums of natural history, and as part of private collections on the walls of hunting lodges and country estates. These practices and the meaning of their visual language have been discussed in previously published studies.¹ Secondary displays occur in the form of illustrations of the objects. The subject matter of the paintings, wood cut engravings and photographs can cover the

entire range of trophy objects, from living animals in nature, across various stages of the hunting practices, to the individual trophy items as well as their primary display, for example in the form of a pair of antlers above the fireplace in a hunter's den.

The richest sources of such illustrations are the many hunting narratives written by the sportsmen. Their account of the chase depended on illustrations to elucidate and authenticate the text. Illustrated hunting narratives were published in the form of articles in the popular press, of monographs, and of edited compilations. Often they were republished in literature that had other primary functions such as tourist guides, or the illustrations were recycled with a different text. During the Age of Empire (1875–1914), the veritable frenzy of collecting antlers, horns, skulls and animal hides from various parts of the British Empire – in particular in Africa and India – also reached the Canadian part of the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Northwest.

This paper deals with the hunting-and-collecting mania by examining the iconography of trophy display, found in British Columbia (BC) hunting narratives, written by the in many instances prominent and wealthy foreign sportsmen. The reason for taking BC as the geographical unit of analysis is that it produced a rich body of illustrated hunting literature. This in turn was due to the fact that the province was home to much of the last remaining wilderness on the North American continent, 'a Sportsman's Eden'.² To analyse the iconography of BC trophy display, some 25 hunting narrative monographs as well as several illustrated weeklies that contain visual representations of BC big game and BC hunting have been selected as sources.³ Typical examples include the following four books by prominent sportsmen, three American and one European: *Cruising in the Cascades* (1889) with 47 wood engravings, by George O. Shields (1846–1925), the founder of the American magazine *Recreation*, one of the earliest game law advocates and the head of the Camp Fire Club; *Sport and Life* (1900) with 77 photographs and wood engravings, by William A. Baillie-Grohman (1851–1921), a English-Austrian aristocrat, mountaineer and part-time BC resident; *Camp-Fires in the Canadian Rockies* (1906) with 61 photographs, by William Hornaday (1854–1921), a passionate American wildlife campaigner and the first director of the New York Zoological Garden; *Wilderness of the North Pacific Islands* (1912) with 63 photographs and five photogravures, by Charles Sheldon (1867–1928), an American industrialist and one of the first wilderness advocates. None of the 25 sources were published in Canada, but rather in London (13), New York (9), Philadelphia (1), Berlin (1), and Vienna (1). Some books were reprinted with additional illustrations, such as Paul Niedieck's *Mit der Büchse in fünf Weltteilen* (1905). The first edition had 32 full-page photographs by the author, while subsequent editions included an extra 174 illustrations in the text.⁴

Baillie-Grohman, a distant relative of the Duke of Wellington and the owner of a castle in the Austrian Alps, was probably the best-known and most influential

of the foreign sportsmen to write about big game hunting in BC, having earlier published a narrative of wilderness hunting in the American West, *Camps in the Rockies* (1882) that was often reprinted in both America and Britain.⁵ Described as ‘an ardent nature-lover and a keen sportsman’, his bag of over 1,100 Rocky Mountain big game trophies was considered one of the best ever obtained by European sportsmen.⁶ Baillie-Grohman published illustrated accounts of his hunting adventures in BC in journals such as *The Field*, *Wide World Magazine*, *The Century* and the *Fortnightly Review*, and repeated these in his *Sport and Life*, providing photographic representations of ‘the best trophies of North American big game killed by English and American sportsmen’.⁷

Gender is a useful category of analysis for hunting, in particular also when applied to the trophy iconography of the hunting narratives, because it helps answer the question of why well-heeled and in some instances aristocratic or politically powerful hunter-naturalists travelled long distances to climb the mountains, and to struggle through the thick underbrush and forests in pursuit of ‘big-heads’ and trophy specimens. The representational conventions that developed around the trophies, in verbal representations as well as in non-verbal, visual ones, contributed to defining the sportsmen and hunter-naturalists in terms of their essential masculinity. Thus the gender approach to the illustrations provides detail and specifics about the strategy of self-enactment of the hunters in the public sphere, as these showed to the public at large the ways in which the act of hunting confirmed masculinity.⁸

ICONOGRAPHIC MOTIFS

As a collective source of historical information on hunting, the narratives have as yet failed to attract scholarly attention, and their illustrations as well – only a few titles have entered the recycling process of secondary citation. This study contributes to opening up the genre of hunting accounts to the social history of hunting by focusing on its iconography. What can the illustrations tell us about the driving forces of the fervent passion for collecting antlers, horns, skulls and animal hides? At a mundane level, the visual representations of game trophies and trophy game served to authenticate the account and enliven the autobiographical story. Yet there exists a variety of other, more trenchant ways of ‘reading’ the illustrations. One of these relates to the process of production, by considering who the artists or photographers were, where and how the illustrations were produced and printed. The early hunter-naturalists made their own sketches in the field, which allowed them to make a claim to veracity – ‘drawn from nature’ – even though the illustrations were later transcribed for printing by professional draftsmen and engravers. In his path-breaking *Picturing Empire* (1997), James Ryan observes that already from the late 1850s ‘explorers, soldiers, administrators and professional hunters began to employ the camera to record images of

dead animals.⁹ During the 1870s, a technological transition began whereby the artist-produced trophy illustration was increasingly replaced by photo-mechanical methods of mass-reproduction, and after 1900 the trophy genre was dominated by photographic representations.

Another way of 'reading' the illustrations considers the extent to which these reflect contemporaneous representational conventions. The game animals were portrayed according to a variety of customs of visualisation: as hunting trophies known from a long tradition of European aristocratic-royal painting, as staffage in landscape scenes showing similarities with the primary, taxidermic displays of dioramas, as zoological specimens, or as scientific documentation of the natural history of game species and their habitats. The Austrian industrialist and sportsman Philipp von Oberländer (dates unknown), for example, depicted in some detail the embryo of *Ursus americanus*, while Hornaday illustrated the details of the feet of a mountain goat.¹⁰

A representational convention that grew increasingly popular with the advent of photography was that of hunters posing with their accoutrements and trophies. Such 'posing' of hunters with their game animals had symbolic cultural dimensions, and this brings us to a further, third 'reading'. Harriet Ritvo added to her by now classic *The Animal Estate* (1987) a section on 'Animals and Empire', densely packed with a miscellany of interpretations, seeing symbolic meaning invested in the game species, the hunters, the trophies, and the trophy displays (see below).¹¹

What idea or quality did the trophy iconography communicate? This approach to analysing the illustrations is followed here. The recent literature in the history of science on 'visual representation' is showing, among other things, that iconography, even when entirely accurate in the representation of its object, may communicate an ideological message and in many instances has functioned as a vehicle of information that is not or only partially expressed in accompanying texts.¹² As David Livingstone argues in his *Putting Science in Its Place* (2003), the iconography of geographical regions – how we choose to represent places, peoples, animals, plants and scenery – to ourselves and to others 'is of immense moral and political significance.'¹³ Visual representation has contributed to the construction in human consciousness of different global regions, and this capacity of representation 'has been fundamental to the practices of political supremacy.'¹⁴ Photography was a particularly powerful medium used to 'picture place'.¹⁵

Given the large number of illustrations and the multiplicity of their topics, there is a danger of arbitrary or selective use in support of special pleading. In order to move beyond the arbitrariness of such 'anecdotal' use of illustrations, a systematic – that is, non-selective – documentation of the hundreds of illustrations in the above-mentioned sources has been carried out. Furthermore, by means of an analysis of the principal iconographic motifs – of distinctive, dominant

elements in the composition of the illustrations – an attempt has been made to probe what messages were being transmitted.

Some five specific iconographic motifs of trophy animals and animal trophies have been identified in the hunting narratives of the period. The first of these is that of the dangerous inaccessibility of the home or habitat of a particular game species (Figure 1). The hunter is shown climbing precipitous rock faces in arduous pursuit of his quarry, risking life and limb to hunt down a nimble, strong animal. Most commonly depicted in such scenes are either the bighorn mountain sheep or the mountain goat, both elusive species found only on the highest and most isolated rocky peaks. Baillie-Grohman, an Alpine climber and a connoisseur of horns, poetically expressed those qualities that made the bighorn so desirable as a trophy:

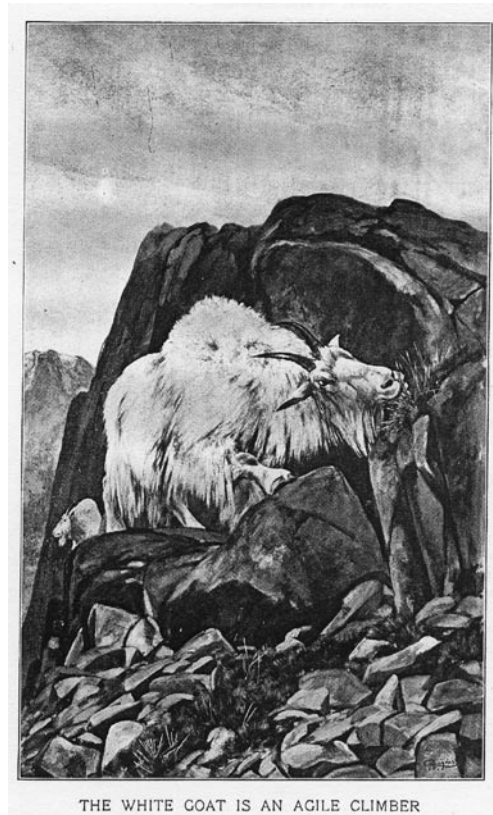


FIGURE 1. 'The White Goat is an Agile Climber', illustration by Carl Rungius in George Bird Grinnell and Casper Whitney, eds. *Musk-ox, Bison, Sheep and Goat* (1904).

The bold and majestic ram, standing motionless on yonder giddy shelf, showing in perfect repose the classic outline of his noble head against the blue of the Rocky Mountain sky, as if cut in cameo fashion by the deft hand of a Grecian sculptor. With his sturdy, massive body, his thick-set limbs firmly planted on the ledge, his small head carried light, as if the heavy horns were a mere feather's weight, he looks the emblem, not of agility, as does the chamois, but of strength. Of all game that calls the Rocky Mountains its home, he is the truest type of their grand solitude and barren vastness.¹⁶

The bighorn was considered the equivalent of the European ibex, a *Hochwild* species reserved for royal and privileged sportsmen. The mountain goat had a more ambivalent status as a grotesque oddity, virtually unknown even to science until the end of the century and without an Old World hunting *etiquette*. Baillie-Grohman made several trips in vain to the American West to kill a mountain goat. Finally in 1882, determined 'to find goat or perish in the attempt',¹⁷ he travelled to the Selkirk Range of the Kootenay district of south-eastern BC. Here he discovered that 'British Columbia, that very beautiful but hitherto singularly isolated corner of America, is the true home of this rare animal'.¹⁸ His 1884 account of hunting the mountain goat included six wood engravings by George Inness Jr. (1854–1926), an accomplished artist trained under his father of the same name, who was a founding member of the Hudson River school of American landscape painting. Inness depicted Baillie-Grohman as a 'wilderness' hunter struggling to overcome the harsh conditions of the mountain goat habitat.¹⁹ Another early description of the mountain goat was published in 1890 by John Fannin (1837–1904), an expatriate Briton and early BC settler who provided guiding and outfitting services to visiting foreign sportsmen.²⁰ Prominent New Yorkers who came to BC to hunt the mountain goat included the Harvard-educated western writer Owen Wister (1860–1938). His hunting narrative was illustrated by none other than Carl Rungius (1869–1959), an artist trained in the German tradition of trophy representation and hunting art whose American patrons included Hornaday and Roosevelt.²¹ Rungius was himself an avid big game hunter, especially of mountain sheep and goats, and his work has been linked to the birth of wildlife art.²² His illustration, 'The White Goat is an Agile Climber', emphasised the mountaineering qualities of the species that made it so difficult to hunt in the high often perpendicular alpine peaks.

The second motif is that of the confrontation of a hunter with a dangerous and difficult-to-shoot animal (Figure 2). Most commonly included in this category are predators such as cougars, black bears, and especially grizzlies. As Shields explained in *Cruising in the Cascades* (1889), 'the decidedly hazardous character of the sport [of grizzly hunting] is what gives it its greatest zest and renders it the most fascinating of pursuits ... no man ever felt his heart swell with pride, his nerves tingle with animation, his whole system glow with wild, uncontrollable enthusiasm ... as does the man who stands over the prostrate form of a monster grizzly that he has slain.'²³ In North America, from the early

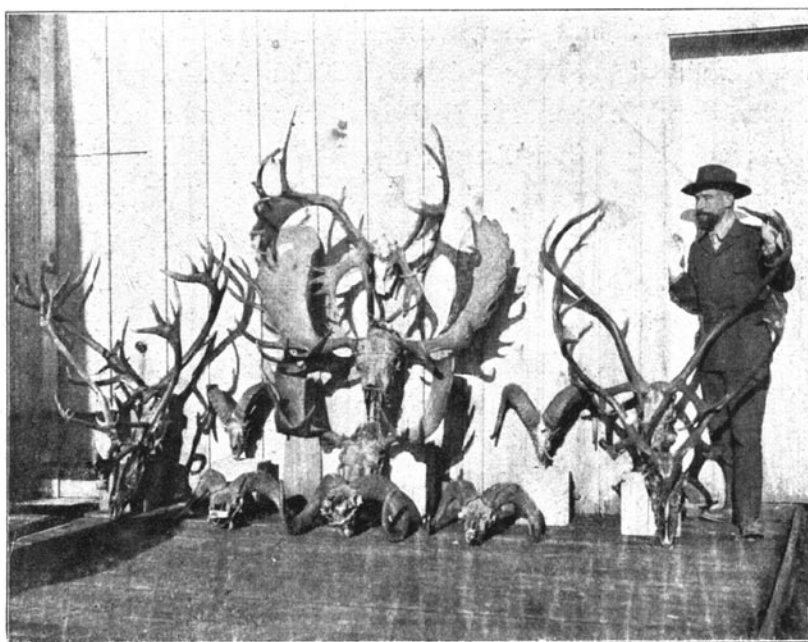


FIGURE 2. 'The First Shot at a Grizzly Bear', wood engraving in William Francis Ainsworth's *All Round the World* (1873).

days of exploration, grizzlies were closely associated with 'wilderness'. In his 1834 western exploration narrative, Prince Maximillian of Wied (1782–1867) pictured a ferocious, attacking grizzly, and this visual 'first' inspired a representational convention when later on hunters and adventurers such as George Catlin (1796–1872) and John Palliser (1807–1887) produced their dramatic grizzly illustrations.²⁴ In an ambitious four-volume narrative of travel around the world, the grizzly engraving from Palliser's hunting account of the American West was incorrectly 'recycled', being included in the section on Vancouver Island, which has no grizzlies.²⁵ The vicious nature of the colossal beast and the acute danger posed by the surprise attack is shown in the form of fright and panic of the hunter's horse. More variations on the grizzly attack theme can be cited, one of these entitled 'He had given me enough chances', printed in Warburton Pike's acclaimed narrative *Through the Subarctic Forest* (1896) and drawn by the London-based animal illustrator Charles Whympers (1853–1941).

The third motif is formed by various representations of a 'large bag', that is a miscellany of decapitated heads, horned skulls, antlers as well as skins. Such miscellanies might be temporarily put together in the hunting ground – a hunter's

campsite; a pack-train, a collection site for further transport – for the purpose of taking a photograph (Figure 3). Or they might be displayed permanently at home, on the walls of a hunter's den, above his fire-place or elsewhere in his country home (Figure 4). During the Age of Empire, many of the best BC trophies were shipped back to Europe for private display. In the words of Baillie-Grohman: 'American millionaires have for years past, it is well known, ransacked the picture galleries of Europe, where they garnered many of the masterpieces that once adorned the walls of England's mansions or the marble-flagged galleries of continental palaces. Europe has revenged itself by sending to the Western hunting grounds her sportsmen, who have succeeded in capturing there quite as many, and probably quite as irreplaceable, *chefs d'oeuvre*, not of man's but



Trophäen der Expedition.
(Nach einer Aufnahme des Postmeisters in Wrangell.)

FIGURE 3. 'Trophäen der Expedition', photograph in Paul Niedieck's *Jagdfahrten in Nord Amerika* (1911).

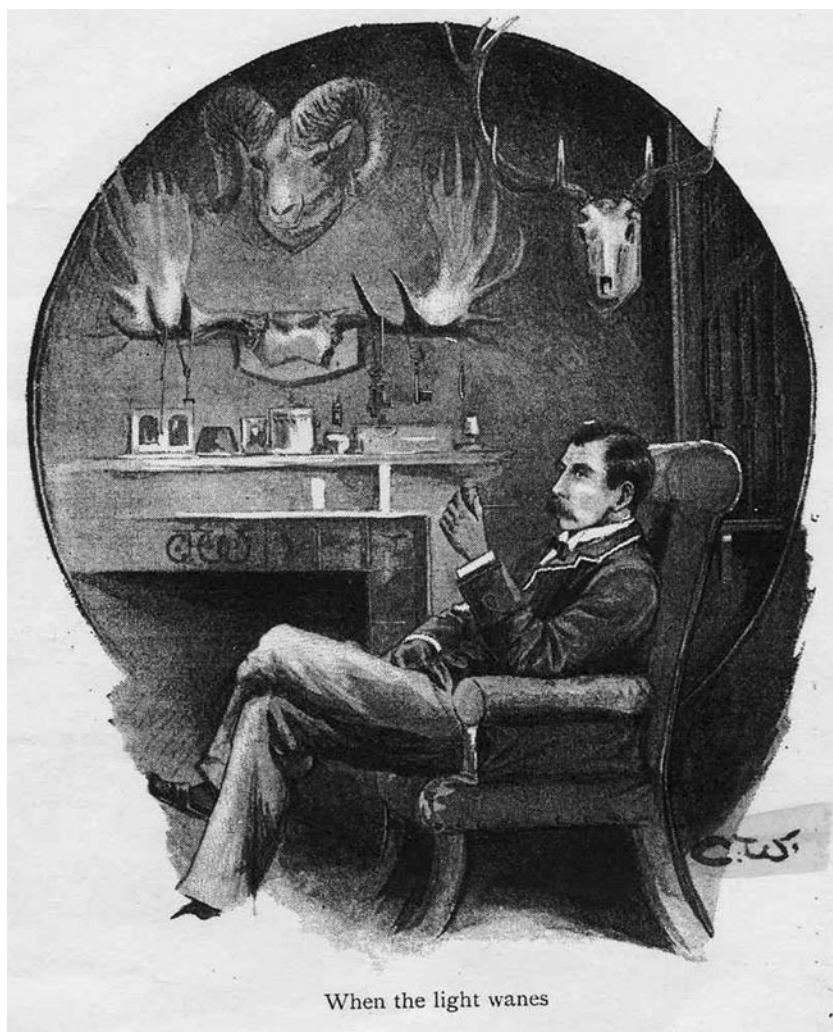
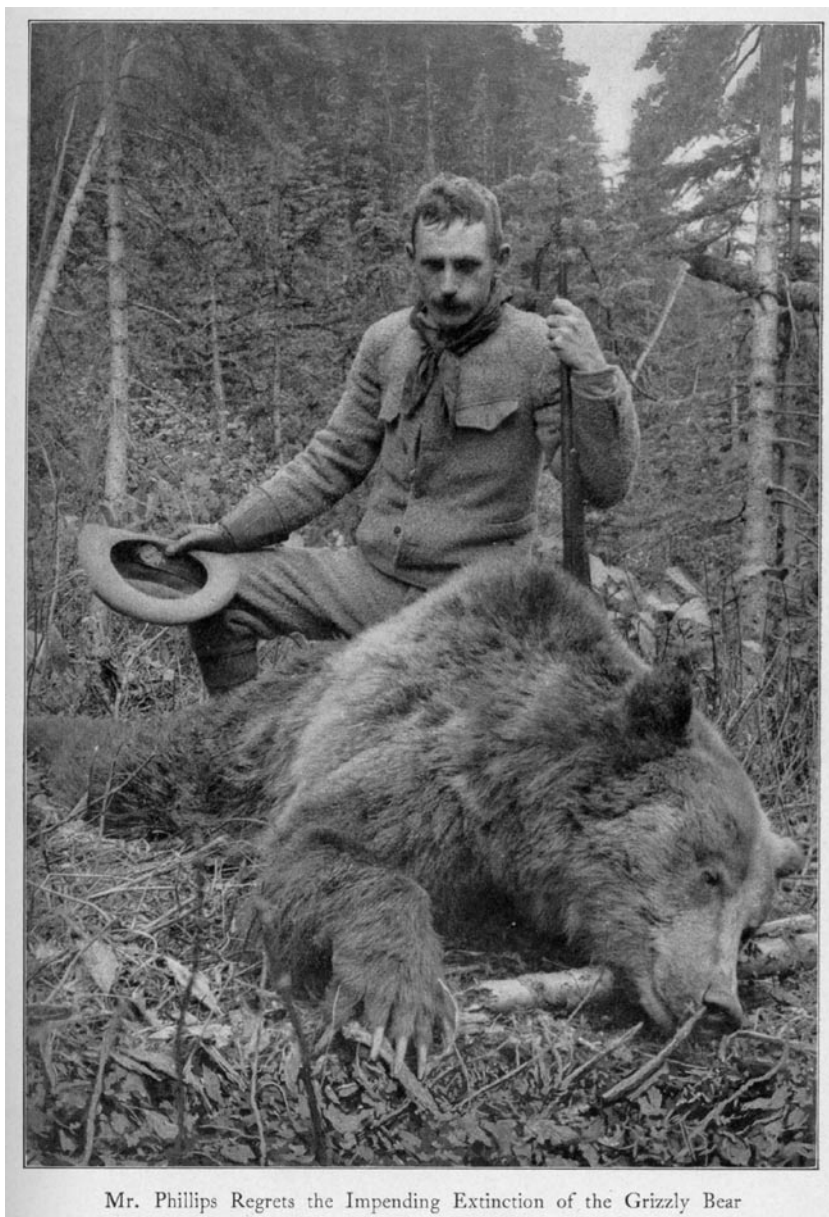


FIGURE 4. 'When the light wanes', illustration by Charles Whymper in Clive Phillipps-Wolley's *Big Game Shooting* (1894).



Mr. Phillips Regrets the Impending Extinction of the Grizzly Bear

FIGURE 5. 'Mr. Phillips Regrets the Impending Extinction of the Grizzly Bear', photograph by John M. Phillips in William Hornaday's *Campfires in the Canadian Rockies* (1906).

of Nature's choicest handiwork'.²⁶

An iconographic motif that became more dominant with photography was the sportsman himself, posed in 'victory-over-vanquished' portraits (Figure 5). This constitutes a fourth distinct category of representation, showing the hunter standing next to a slain game animal's body, rifle in hand, and victor's foot on vanquished's body. Large species are common, such as – once more – the grizzly, here shown in the case of John M. Phillips (1861–1953), hunting companion to Hornaday and a dedicated American conservationist, credited with having persuaded Canadian authorities to allocate Canada's first game reserve in 1906 in the Kootenays.²⁷

The motif of manly victory over the native game had similarities with the flag planting of mountaineers and other explorers of foreign parts. 'Monarch of the wilderness! Lord of the mountain! King of the plain!' began Shields' tribute to 'the elk' (as most Americans called the wapiti), 'What hunter, has sought thee in thy pine-embowered home, whose heart-beat does not quicken and who's eye does not brighten at the mention of thy name! For with it comes the recollection of boundless prairies, grass-robed and flower-decked; of pine-clad, snow-capped mountains; of sweet breezes, gentle melodies, grand trophies'.²⁸ The wapiti closely resembled the venerated 'royal' stag of the Old World, a semi-domestic species bred and guarded for centuries by the aristocracy on private game reserves. The fact that the wapiti was the largest deer in the world made it irresistible to sportsmen such as Baillie-Grohman, the sole aim of whose many hunting expeditions to the North American West was, as he put it, 'to bag big heads'.²⁹ An illustration for an article written by Baillie-Grohman, 'Wapiti Hunting in North America', published in 1886 on the front page of *The Illustrated London News*, shows the author as a wilderness hunter, dressed in a fringed buckskin jacket and accompanied by an Indian guide. He has just shot 'a master stag whose branching antlers need fear but few, if any, rivals, in the great collections made by the ardent sportsmen of Europe.' The inset illustration shows the prostrate stag lying under the rifle of Baillie-Grohman, his huge trophy head carefully delineated; the author noting that 'his antlers alone, on their arrival in Europe, turned the scales at 44 lb.'³⁰

A final and fifth motif is that of horns and antlers of exceptional size. Commonly exhibited were the horns of mountain sheep and the antlers of wapiti, moose and caribou (Figure 6). A photograph entitled 'My favourite Wapiti Head' was printed as the frontispiece to Baillie-Grohman's book *Sport and Life* and he described the trophy as his most cherished souvenir of the Rockies, 'a grand old fellow' who peered down with authority from his place of honour and 'stately exclusiveness' on the tapestried wall.³¹ The author was shown seated beneath another esteemed trophy, a bighorn sheep head. The book included a photograph of the largest bighorn on record, shot in the winter of 1892–93 in the Rocky



FIGURE 6. 'Largest Bighorn on Record,' uncredited photograph in William Baillie-Grohman's *Sport and Life* (1900).

Mountains near Fort Steele in the East Kootenay. Trophy mountain sheep were also sought in the Cassiar district, where in 1896 an American collector from New York discovered a new species, *Ovis stonei*. The Stikine River and Cassiar became known as the best big game hunting grounds on the North American continent; in a period from 1906 to 1931, of 40 trophy heads of the Stone sheep noted for their record dimensions, all but three (from the Yukon), were bagged in the Cassiar.³² Edward House noted that when he sailed from Vancouver in 1907, on a shooting trip to the Cassiar Mountains, there were 21 sportsmen from various parts of the world on board the steamer *Princess May*.³³

CONFLATING VICTOR AND VANQUISHED

To repeat: in addition to entertainment and instruction, trophy illustrations had symbolic value. The iconography of game trophies contributed to a celebration of conquest by Europeans and Euro-Americans. The main meaning that the secondary literature has read into hunting, its practices and its display culture is that of the connection with 'empire'. Big game hunting was an expression of domination, an emblem of the conquest of territories and, increasingly toward the end of the nineteenth century, a form of administration when big game hunting became connected to preservation. Hunting was, Ritvo says, the emblem of the style 'in which the English dominated the natural and the human world'.³⁴ A number of historians have made the connection between hunting and British imperialism in Africa and Asia.³⁵ With the rise of global imperialism at the end of the century, the collecting of exotic trophies from colonial possessions and far-off corners of the earth claimed by imperial powers became a passionate and unbridled activity spurred on by the international hunting competitions and trophy exhibitions held in European state capitals. Wealthy sportsmen, some of noble birth, were joined by members of the high-ranking military as well as the new capitalist élite in their aspiration to collect the most diverse and greatest numbers of record-breaking heads and horns, or 'big heads' as they were called. The sportsmen were celebrated as empire builders, and exhibitions of trophies and diorama displays became symbols of imperial power with territorial possession.³⁶

The connection with empire is apparent for the British American West, too, as recently described by Greg Gillespie for the mid-nineteenth century, and by F. G. Moyles and Douglas Oram in their earlier study of British views of Canada around the turn of the twentieth century, *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities* (1988).³⁷ From the beginning, the native big game species of BC, as of every other colony, were conceived as 'empire big game'.³⁸ Gillespie argues that hunting narratives were part of the larger work of empire, that the travel writings by big game hunters were a form of cultural appropriation and belonged to the broader cultural discourse of imperialism through which the British fashioned, maintained, and extended their empire. Moreover, the task of empire hunting evolved from territorial conquest to 'administration',³⁹ and hunting and wildlife conservation became causally related.⁴⁰

Focusing on the trophy display culture, this, too, was an integral part of the work of empire, which is particularly evident in the case of the primary trophy shows of exhibitions, museums and private collections.⁴¹ A recent work by George Colpitts, *Game in the Garden* (2003), shows how trophies were used to create an image of superabundant wild animals in western Canada to stimulate immigration.⁴² Yet in the case of secondary displays – the illustrations in hunting narratives – the empire connection, although not wholly absent, is weak and another one dominates. My interpretation of the iconographic mo-

tifs is that they contributed to defining the hunters in terms of their masculine virtues. Others already have taken the meaning of big game hunting beyond the 'spoils of empire' reading to that of 'sexual politics', arguing that big game hunting was to its practitioners an affirmation of masculinity.⁴³ With respect to BC one author concludes that big game hunting 'constituted its practitioners as masculine and bourgeois, while simultaneously racializing and sexualizing them' – a conclusion, which is based primarily on a study of the social identity of the men who came to BC to hunt its big game and on their relationships to the aboriginal guides.⁴⁴

The analysis of the hunting iconography of this study corroborates but also amplifies the gender interpretation. As stated in the introduction, the illustrations provide detail and specifics about the strategy of self-enactment of the hunters in the public sphere. They documented for the benefit of the public at large the various ways in which the act of hunting was a test of masculinity. Trophy iconography – I should like to argue – functioned as a major means of masculinity enhancement by giving content to the hunter's activities: picturing him in reference to particular animals, parts of animals and field situations. The iconography celebrates the sportsman hunter and his masculine qualities.⁴⁵ The trophy representations were instances of conflation of 'victor and vanquished' – and thus a means by which the hunter could appropriate some of the qualities associated with the trophy and its habitat.⁴⁶ The five motifs show that more was involved than physical appropriation of the specimens – that too, but '[a]long with the hide and the horns, the victorious sportsman assumed the admirable moral qualities of his vanquished foe'.⁴⁷ The depicted animal species are worthy adversaries, as indicated by their size, strength, agility or also ferocity. The five most frequently depicted genera of BC big game were: the wapiti, the mountain sheep, the mountain goat, the caribou and the grizzly bear. The wapiti – Shield wrote – was 'the noblest, the grandest, the stateliest ... in size ... in sagacity, caution, cunning and wariness ... He is always on the alert, his keen scent, his piercing eye, his acute sense of hearing ... His great size and powerful muscular construction give him almost unbounded endurance'.⁴⁸ Male moose and deer were also included as desirable ungulates.

Where sexual dimorphism is distinct and the males stand out because of size, large horns or massive antlers, these are the specimens that were thought to merit depiction. The game species most valued were represented as having those qualities most admired as exhibiting human male virtues such as aggressive displays of dominance and courage in battle, determined upon victory or death. The horns of a wapiti are at their best during the fall season when the animal is in rut and the desire for copulation drives the mature males to become ardent, restless and fierce. Wapiti stags are polygamous and fight mighty contests for the dominant possession of harems of up to twenty females. Likewise, mountain sheep rams are determined to defeat any competitors to become the undisputed master

of the field. They have large bands of ewes and are territorial and combative, head butting each other with their massive horns during the rut. Both horns and antlers are important for mating behaviour, without them the male cannot keep the females in his harem nor protect his territory from rivals. Baillie-Grohman explained that during rutting season, 'The proud stag, filled with the dominant instinct of the season – love and war – exhibits at this time the full virile vigour of his prime. His neck swells, and he steps with a consciousness of power ...'.⁴⁹ In contrast were the females, the 'coy hinds, ever watchfully guarding their lovesick masters, who are now careless of danger, and bent only upon gaining and keeping the mastership over their respective female bands'.⁵⁰

The five motifs speak to the reader with a single refrain, namely the glorification of the hunter in terms of the masculinity of game and landscape. The dangerous inaccessibility of a game species' habitat requires matching agility on the part of the hunter. A large, aggressive and dangerous animal demands a fearless man to conquer it in combat. The larger the sportsman's cache of slain adversaries, the greater a latter-day Nimrod he is. How great a victor he really can be, is symbolised by a juxtaposition of the hunter to the largest and most ferocious of his slain objects of pursuit. And the more spectacular and record-breaking the horns, antlers and hides are that a hunter has amassed, the more he can measure up to other great hunters, in his own and other countries. The secondary trophy display, in the form of illustrations in hunting narratives, were a superlative self-affirmation of the hunters, of their masculine character traits, as valued in a society that honoured those who went out to conquer and dominate.

The contextuality of the landscape in which the game species were depicted further confirms this reading. The big game animals of BC were used to reinforce the gendered perception of landscapes constructed as wilderness territories where exploration and adventure could take place and manhood could be tested. The landscape was portrayed as dangerous and a place for male challenge.⁵¹ Daily diaries or journals were carefully kept to record the chronological instances especially of the pleasures, excitements and dangers of the stalking of wild and fierce big animals. Personal sacrifice, hardship in extreme weather, miraculous escapes, severe cold, unceasing exertion, steep declivities of tremendous mountains, penetration of unknown canyons, fording swirling torrents, scaling perilous cliffs, descending precipitous slopes, wading treacherous torrents – these and more were the subject matter of the verbal and non-verbal communication of the gaming adventures. Scenes in which hunters confront their quarry are examples of how landscapes were made into settings for a celebration of masculinity and conquest. To stalk a big horn sheep ram on the loftiest summits of the Rockies or to track an elk bull through the deep forests of the lower mountain slopes involved manly solitude in rough and savage terrains of wild nature far away from the confines of the domestic world of women. These were uncivilised

primeval places where only men with great physical strength, perseverance and courage dared to go. Thus the physiography of the landscape conveyed the idea of men as conquerors of unclaimed territory and the presence of big game or hunters in the landscape represents nature as a wilderness playground for males. Big game trophies were not only symbols of imperial conquest but also of confirmation of the essential masculinity of European civilisation – confirmed in the remoteness of the BC wilderness.

As such, part of the hunting lore was mountaineering. In 1802, the German scientific explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859) had tried but failed to scale Chimborazo; not until 1880 was this Andean peak ‘conquered’, a feat performed by Edward Whymper (1840–1911), the London artist (and brother to Charles) and mountaineering hero who had earlier ascended the Matterhorn. Late in his life, at the invitation of the newly completed Canadian Pacific Railroad, he visited the Canadian Rockies (to the disappointment of his hosts, he did not write about his mountaineering feats – being too old and in ill health). The idea of the male conquest of nature communicated by the representing of big game trophies in a context of mountain iconography, was the leading theme of the visual representation of hunting adventures. This was clearly displayed in Hornaday’s Kootenay hunting narrative which includes many photographs of big game trophies with mountain landscape backdrops. A photograph entitled ‘Phillips Peak’ shows Hornaday and Phillips posed with their hunting rifles while surveying the panoramic vista of the Selkirk mountains. Again, by killing and exhibiting a particular species, the hunter conflated his abilities with those of the animal he had shot and killed. For example, the representation of species such as the mountain sheep and mountain goat celebrated the mountaineering skills of the person who had succeeded in slaying these adroit climbers, the denizens of the rocky wastes.

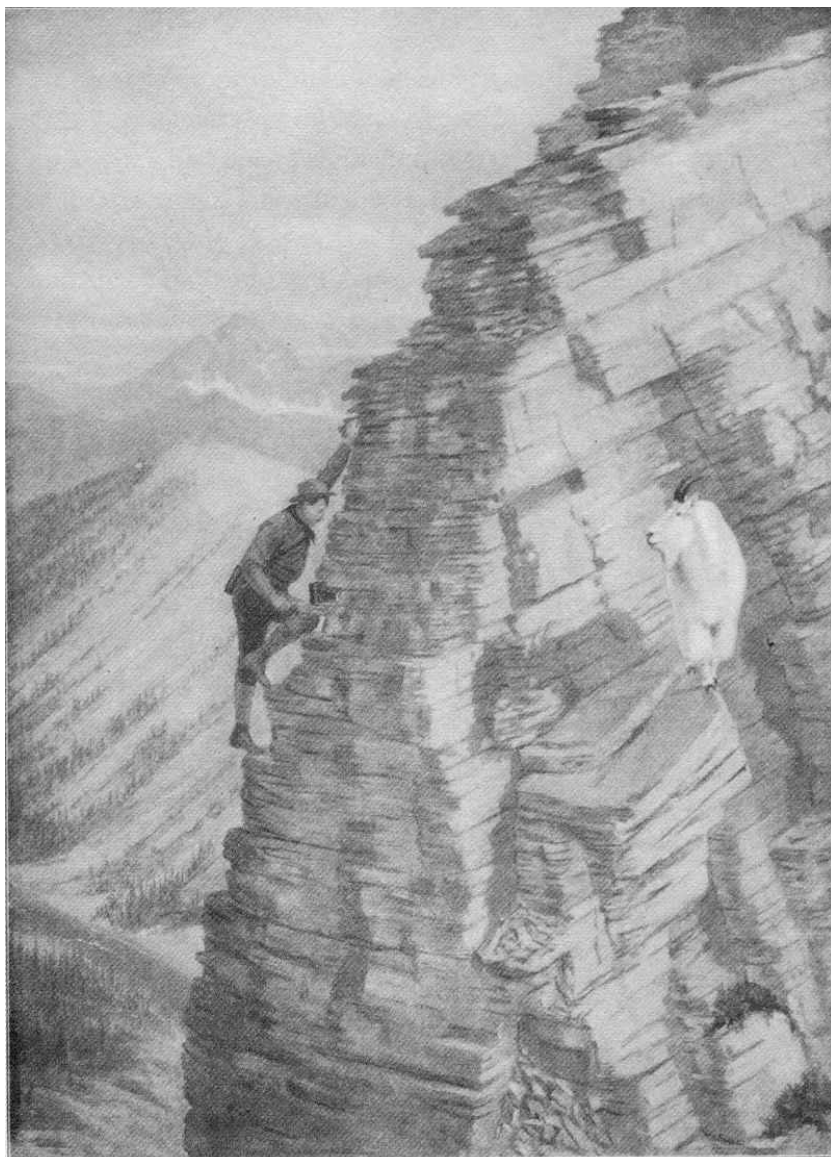
The Irish-born surveyor and sportsman Arthur O. Wheeler (1860–1945) was the first to introduce mountain climbing as recreation in North America. He played a leading role in founding the Alpine Club of Canada in 1906 and was its first president. His book, *The Selkirk Range* (1906), contained a chapter by Baillie-Grohman, a member of the prestigious British Alpine Club, who had written extensively of the sporting and mountaineering traditions of the Tyrolean alps.⁵² *The Selkirk Range* was illustrated by many photographs of mountain peaks and the mountaineers who conquered them and in addition there were photographs of big game trophies. Like Baillie-Grohman, Wheeler was an avid hunter who stalked the big game he encountered in the high altitudes of the Selkirks, including grizzlies: ‘The Selkirk Range in British Columbia offers a greater diversity of Big Game than anywhere else in the great dominion,’ wrote Wheeler ‘and hundreds of big game hunters from all parts of the world visit that district yearly, in order to add a few more specimens to their collection of trophies of the chase’.⁵³

A further instance of the fusing of trophy, landscape and hunter was formulated by Baillie-Grohman who described how his favourite wapiti head reminded him that there were 'few more inspiring sights than a fine stag in his true home, the beautiful Alpine retreats high up on certain of the great ranges of the Rocky Mountains. Scenery, grand as it may be, receives fresh charm when framed in by a noble pair of branching antlers; and I know no trophy of days spent in the far-off wilds that will recall stirring memories in more lifelike and warmer colours, or fill your soul with such longing desire to return speedily to the well-known glade in the forest, where in a fair struggle the bearer of yonder head found in you his master'.⁵⁴ Sheldon, too, blended his trophy with the landscape:

'Among the delights of a wilderness hunter are those of skinning and dressing the game high on the mountains. The supreme moments of joy comes immediately after the success of a difficult stalk. Then, while this state of exaltation continues, intensifying the beauty of the landscape, comes the fascination of examining the prize. Intense satisfaction merged with feelings of elation sustains one during the labor of taking off the skin to complete the possession of a scientific specimen or trophy'.⁵⁵

CONCLUSION

Thus the representational conventions that developed around the trophies, in verbal representations as well as in non-verbal, visual ones, contributed to defining the sportsmen and hunter-naturalists in terms of their essential masculinity. There existed a certain scientific interest in these animals, their antlers, horns, and dimensions. The connection with the work of empire was present, too. Yet the meaning of the secondary trophy representations went well beyond the parameters of science or empire. The restricted number of approximately half a dozen principal game species can not be explained in terms of the scientific value of just these kinds of animals, but only by reference to their subjective conflation value to the hunters. The picture of a heavy and well-palmated head of horns indicated expeditionary sway; a pair of large multi-tined antlers denoted masculine vigour; a stuffed rock-climber alluded to manly prowess in mastering precipitous terrain. In a naked instance of conflation, Phillips was shown in 'a most dangerous position' on a rock face in the Selkirk Mountains, in a situation of bilateral symmetry, the hunter matching the mountain goat opposite in fearless climbing agility (Figure 7). In another instance of undisguised conflation, Phillips-Wolley depicted himself on the title page to his *Big Game Shooting* (1894) not standing next to, and lording over, a slain game specimen, but merging with a trophy wapiti by covering himself with the animals enormous antlers: the victor fused with the vanquished, the sheer magnitude of the trophy conferring greatness on the human hunter (Fig. 8).



Drawn by Charles B. Hudson.

Mr. Phillips's Most Dangerous Position

FIGURE 7. 'Mr. Phillip's Most Dangerous Position,' illustration by Charles Hudson in William Hornaday's *Campfires in the Canadian Rockies* (1906).

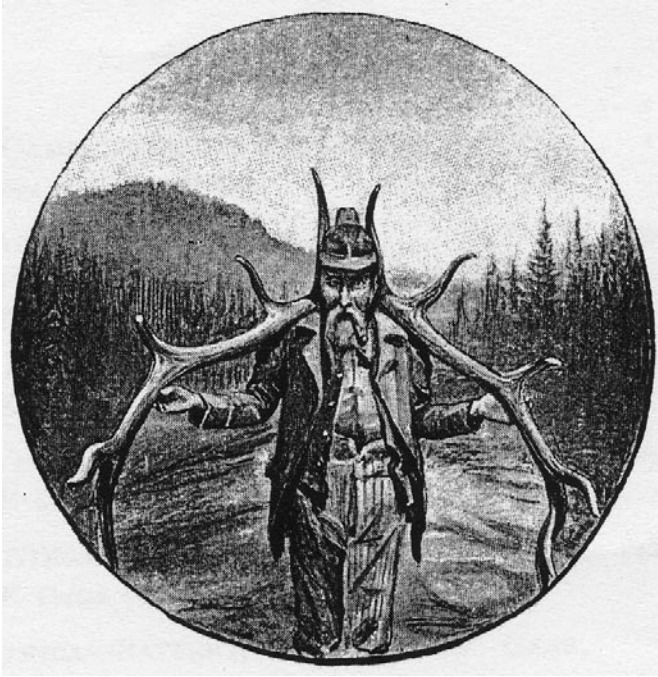


FIGURE 8. Title page illustration by Charles Whymper in Clive Phillipp-Wolley's *Big Game Shooting*, vol. I (1894).

NOTES

¹ On mounted animals as cultural icons, see Donna Haraway's deconstruction of the Akeley Hall, 'Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908–36', in *Primate Visions: Gender, Race and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 26–58. On the art history of dioramas, see Karen Wonders, *Habitat Dioramas: Illusions of Wilderness in Museums of Natural History* (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1993). On wild animal representation in general, including trophies, see John Dorst, *Framing the Wild: Animals on Display* (Laramie: University of Wyoming Art Museum, 2002).

² Karen Wonders, 'Sportsman's Eden: A Wilderness Besieged', *The Beaver* (Dec. 1999/Jan. 2000), 30–37, 'A Sportsman's Eden: A Wilderness Beckons', *The Beaver* (Oct./Nov. 1999), 26–32.

³ William Francis Ainsworth, ed. *All Round the World: An Illustrated Record of Voyages, Travels and Adventures in All Parts of the Globe*, 4 vols. (London: W. Kent, 1860–62); William A. Baillie-Grohman, *Fifteen Years' Sport and Life in the Hunting Grounds of Western America and British Columbia* (London: Horace Cox, 1900, 1907); J. R. Brad-

ley, *Hunting Big Game in Far Northwest British Columbia* (New York: Mail & Express, 1904); William T. Hornaday, *Camp-Fires in the Canadian Rockies* (New York: Scribners, 1906); Edward J. House, *A Hunter's Camp-Fire* (New York, Harper, 1909); Horace G. Hutchinson, ed. *Big Game Shooting*, 2 vols. (London: Country Life, 1905); A. E. Leatham, *Sport in Five Continents* (London: Blackwood, 1912); Thomas Martindale, *Sport Royal* (Philadelphia: Shaw, 1897); Thomas Martindale, *Sport Indeed* (London: Everett, 1907); Thomas Martindale, *With Gun and Guide* (Philadelphia: Jacobs, 1910); Paul Niedieck, *Mit der Büchse in fünf Weltteilen* (Berlin: Parey, 1905); Philipp von Oberländer, *Jagd-fahrten in Nordamerika* (Wien: Hubert & Lahme, 1911); Clive Phillippo-Wolley, ed. *Big Game Shooting*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, 1894); Warburton Pike, *Through the Subarctic Forest* (London: Edward Arnold, 1896); John Rogers, *Sport in Vancouver and Newfoundland* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1912); Heywood W. Seton-Karr, *Bear-hunting in the White Mountains* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1891); Charles Sheldon, *The Wilderness of the North Pacific Coast Islands* (New York, Scribners, 1912); George O. Shields, *Cruisings in the Cascades* (New York and Chicago: Rand, McNally, 1889); George O. Shields, ed. *The Big Game of North America* (New York and Chicago: Rand, McNally, 1890); Mrs. Algernon St. Maur [The Duchess of Somerset], *Impressions of a Tenderfoot* (London: John Murray, 1890); William S. Thomas, *Hunting Big Game with Gun and with Kodak* (New York: Putman's, 1906); J. Turner-Turner, *Three Years Hunting and Trapping in America and the Great North-West* (London: Maclure, 1888); *Life in the Backwoods* (London: Stereoscopic, 1888); Harold F. Wallace, *Stalks Abroad* (London: Longmans, 1908); George Bird Grinnell, Casper Whitney, eds. *Musk-Ox, Bison, Sheep and Goat* (New York: Macmillan, 1904).

⁴ Paul Niedieck, *Mit der Büchse in fünf Weltteilen; Beschreibung von 14 Jagdexpeditionen* (Berlin: Parey, 1905). 2nd edition 1905. Reprints 1906, 1907, 1909. 3rd. edition 1922. French translation 1907. English translation by H. B. Stanwell, *With Rifle in Five Continents* (London: Rowland Ward, 1908; New York: Scribners, 1909).

⁵ William. A. Baillie-Grohman, *Camps in the Rockies: Being a Narrative of Life on the Frontier, and Sport in the Rocky Mountains* (London: Sampson Low, 1882), reprint 1883. (New York: Scribners, 1882), reprints 1884, 1896, 1898, 1905, 1910). By 1900, Baillie-Grohman could report in *Sport and Life*, that his books had received over 57 reviews in the English and American press.

⁶ *British Sports and Sportsmen Past & Present*, 13 vols (London: Sportsman, 1908–38).

⁷ Baillie-Grohman, *Sport and Life*, frontispiece.

⁸ The animal-man symbolism of big game hunting as a celebration of masculinity is explored in my 'Caccia grossa nel XIX secolo: un trionfo della mascolinità', in Giorgio Verzotti, ed. *Il Bello e le bestie: Metamorfosi, artifici e ibridi dal mito all'immaginario scientifico* (Milano: Skira, 2004), 199–208.

⁹ James Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion, 1997), especially chapter 4, 'Hunting with the Camera', 99–138.

¹⁰ Oberländer, 59. Hornaday, 103.

¹¹ Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: the English and other Creatures in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge MA: Harvard UP, 1987), chapters 5 and 6, 205–88. See also Ritvo's recent overview of the role played by animals in environmental history, 'Animal Planet', in *Environmental History* vol. 9, no. 2, (April 2004), 204–20.

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¹² Michael Lynch and S. Woolgar, eds. *Representation in Scientific Practice* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1990); Renato Mazzolini, ed. *Non-Verbal Communication in Science Prior to 1900* (Florence: Olshki, 1993); Stephanie Moses, *Ancestral Images. The Iconography of Human Origins* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1998).

¹³ David Livingstone, *Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2003), 8.

¹⁴ Livingstone, 10.

¹⁵ Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan, eds. *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination* (London: Tauris, 2003).

¹⁶ Baillie-Grohman, *Sport and Life*, 142–3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁸ William Baillie-Grohman, 'Hunting the Rocky Mountain Goat', *The Century* (Dec. 1884), 193–203; 199.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* Another account by Baillie-Grohman is 'Stalking the Haplocerus in the Selkirks', *World Wide Magazine* (May, 1895), 127–33.

²⁰ John Fannin, 'The Rocky Mountain Goat', in G. O. Shields, *The Big Game of North America* (New York: Rand, McNally, 1890), 343–61. Fannin was a knowledgeable self-trained naturalist and in 1896 was appointed provincial taxidermist and curator of the new Provincial Museum.

²¹ Owen Wister, 'The White Goat and his Ways', George Bird Grinnell and Casper Whitney, eds. *Musk-Ox, Bison, Sheep and Goat* (New York: Macmillan, 1904), 227–76.

²² Karen Wonders, 'Big Game Hunting and the Birth of Wildlife Art', in *Carl Rungius: Sportsman Artist*, ed. M. Kjørlién (Toronto: Warwick, 2001), 17–38.

²³ Shields, *Cruising in the Cascades*, 180.

²⁴ Maximilian zu Wied, *Reise in das Innere Nord-Amerika in den Jahren 1832 bis 1834* (Koblenz: Hoelscher, 1839–41), 2 vols. and Atlas. Palliser published an illustrated hunting narrative of his expedition to the American West, *Solitary Rambles and Adventures of a Hunter in the Prairies* (London: Murray, 1853). Catlin's *Life Among the Indians* (London: Gall & Inglis, 1874) included an illustration of a grizzly bear attack, 'Grizzly bears overhauling us'.

²⁵ Ainsworth, *All Round the World*.

²⁶ Baillie-Grohman, *Sport and Life*, 43.

²⁷ *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. Phillips' large trophy collection was donated to the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh. In 1923 he received the gold medal from the Permanent Wildlife Protection Fund.

²⁸ Shields, *Cruising in the Cascades*, 181.

²⁹ Baillie-Grohman, *Sport and Life*, 44.

³⁰ William A. Baillie-Grohman, 'Wapiti Hunting in North America', *The Illustrated London News*, 6 Nov. 1886, n.p. The engraving is by Richard Caton Woodville, a London-based artist whose father was the American artist of the name, a well-known illustrator of western scenes.

³¹ Baillie-Grohman, *Camps in the Rockies*, p. 122.

³² Prentiss Gray, ed. *Records of North American Big Game* (New York: Derrydale Press, 1932), 73.

³³ House, 307.

³⁴ Ritvo, 287–88.

³⁵ John M. MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988); Peter Boomgaard, *Frontiers of Fear: Tigers and People in the Malay World, 1600–1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); William Storey, 'Big Cats and Imperialism: Lion and Tiger Hunting in Kenya and Northern India, 1898–1930', *Journal of World History* 2, no. 2 (1991): 135–73; and William Beinart, 'Empire, Hunting and Ecological Change in Southern and Central Africa', *Past and Present* 128 (1990): 162–86.

³⁶ For an example of how the notion of biological nativeness became invested with political meaning in the Swedish context, see my 'Habitat Dioramas and the Issue of Nativeness', *Landscape Research*, vol. 28, no. 1, (2003), 89–100.

³⁷ Greg Gillespie, "'I Was Well Pleased with Our Sport among the Buffalo': Big-Game Hunters, Travel Writing, and Cultural Imperialism in the British North American West, 1847–72', *The Canadian Historical Review* 83, 4, (2002): 555–84; and F. G. Moyles and Doug Owsram, "'Hunter's Paradise": Imperial-Minded Sportsmen in Canada', in *Imperial Dreams and Colonial Realities, British Views of Canada 1880–1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 61–85.

³⁸ This view persisted well into the twentieth century and included Canada, Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, India and East Africa. See Hugh Gunn, 'The Sportsman as an Empire Builder', in Hugh Gunn, ed. *Empire Big Game* (London: Simpkin, 1925): 1–26. An essay by Charles Hose, 'Big Game and Fur Animals of British Columbia', ends with a quote from Kipling to express the English hunter's longing for 'the wilder parts of our glorious Empire', 56.

³⁹ Ritvo, 287.

⁴⁰ Tina Loo, 'Making a Modern Wilderness: Conserving Wildlife in Twentieth-Century Canada', *The Canadian Historical Review* (2000), 92–121.

⁴¹ See Sharon Macdonald, 'Exhibitions of Power and Powers of Exhibition: An Introduction to the Politics of Display', in Sharon Macdonald, ed. *The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture* (London: Routledge, 1998), and Annie Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1994).

⁴² George Colpitts, *Game in the Garden: A Human History of Wildlife in Western Canada to 1940* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003).

⁴³ Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: a Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 136; MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature*; Tina Loo, 'Of Moose and Men: Hunting for Masculinities in British Columbia, 1880–1939', *Western Historical Quarterly* 32 (Autumn 2002), 296–319.

⁴⁴ Loo, 'Of Moose and Men', 296.

⁴⁵ This conclusion is supported by *trompe l'oeil* paintings of hunting trophies, a genre practiced by the influential American artist William M. Harnett (1848–1898). See David M. Lubin, 'A Manly Art: American Trompe L'Oeil Painting and the Manufacture of Masculinity', in *The Material Culture of Gender: The Gender of Material Culture* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997), eds. Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Ames, 365–89. A broader study in the same volume further supports the centrality of gender to hunting iconography: Ruth Irwin Weidner, 'Gifts of Wild Game: Masculine and Feminine in Nineteenth-Century Hunting Imagery', 337–64.

⁴⁶ The caption 'Victor and Vanquished' appears on an photogravure of a wilderness hunter dressed in buckskins and posed beside his massive grizzly trophy which is spread out so as to clearly show the sharp weaponry of claws and teeth possessed by the beast. This is one of many trophy representations in *Game of British Columbia, Official Bulletin No. 17*, Legislative Assembly, Bureau of Provincial Information (1906).

⁴⁷ Ritvo, 267.

⁴⁸ Shields, *Cruising in the Cascades*, 181.

⁴⁹ Baillie-Grohman, *Camps in the Rockies*, 123.

⁵⁰ Baillie-Grohman, 'Wapiti Hunting in North America' (1886), n.p.

⁵¹ 'Landscape and Gender: the Visual Representations of Alexander von Humboldt's "Views of Nature"', a paper presented by Karen Wonders at the European Society for Environmental History conference, St. Andrews University, Scotland, 2001.

⁵² A. O. Wheeler, *The Selkirk Range* (Ottawa: Government Printing Office, 1905). Chapter 5, 'Notes on the Upper and Lower Kootenay Valleys and Kootenay Lake' by Baillie-Grohman, was taken from an account published first in *The Field* (25 April and 29 May, 1885). See William A. Baillie-Grohman. *Sport in the Alps in the Past and Present* (London: A. & C. Black, 1896) (New York: Scribners, 1896).

⁵³ Wheeler, 47. Archival photographs taken in 1906, for example, show Wheeler proudly posed on a mountainside with three grizzlies lying at his feet as trophies (in the Wheeler papers at the Whyte Museum and Archives of the Canadian Rockies).

⁵⁴ Baillie-Grohman, *Camps in the Rockies*, 121–22.

⁵⁵ Charles Sheldon, *The Wilderness of Denali; Explorations of a Hunter-Naturalist in Northern Alaska* (New York: Scribners, 1930), 159.