

border divides nations, it in turn joins both sides together through interaction and trade, and common characteristics of the landscape and people. As a result, residents of the borderland region tend to be more closely linked to each other than to other citizens of their respective countries. In this way there is a blending which takes place along the border which creates a distinctive cultural landscape known as the borderlands. By utilizing this approach, we are following a trail not so much completed but as suggested by such fellow geographers as Donald W. Meinig (1968, 1993), Julian Minghi (1991) and Victor Konrad (1991, 1995), to name but a few. Among Pacific Northwest historians, the work of Carlos Schwantes (1979, 1996) and John Fahey (1965, 1986, 1994) has been essential. Our primary theme--geographical implications of the economic transition from fur trade to free trade--derives from observations, impressions, and the occasional lively argument arising from a three-year research project involving cross-border shopping, travel and trade in the greater Spokane-Coeur d'Alene region, and the Canadian economic "footprint" on the traditional "Inland Empire" hinterland of Spokane.

Integration and Fragmentation: Impact of the Border

This hinterland, consisting of eastern Washington, the Idaho Panhandle, and parts of Montana, Alberta and southeastern British Columbia, is postulated to have been, prior to 1846, a geographically distinct region both defined and dominated by the Columbia River, its tributaries, and the encompassing mountain ranges (Meinig, 1968). From the pre-contact period of the First Nations to the end of the great commercial monopoly of the Hudsons Bay Company, a regional economy based on natural resources and a