



The Chantland Blanket

A Navajo Masterpiece

by Joshua Baer

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Everyone who saw the blanket asked the same questions: “Do you really think it can bring a million?” “Do you think the stains will come out?”

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In April of 2012, collectors and dealers of Native American art began to hear rumors about a Navajo first phase chief's blanket. The blanket had been collected in 1870 by John Chantland, a Norwegian immigrant who had owned a dry goods store in Mayville, North Dakota. Loren Krytzer, the current owner, was an amputee who lived in a trailer park in Antelope Valley, California. Krytzer was John Chantland's great-great grandson, which meant that the blanket had been in the same family for one hundred and fifty years. In March, after emailing pictures to several auction companies and getting no response, Krytzer walked into John Moran Antiques and Fine Arts Auctioneers in Altadena, California, unrolled the first phase, and asked for an appraisal. The auction was in June. There was a picture of the blanket on Moran's web site. Their estimate was \$100,000 to \$200,000, which was nonsense. A dealer had already offered Moran's \$500,000 to pull the blanket—an offer which the auctioneers had refused. The first phase was in original condition, with no restoration, though it did have some bad stains. If the stains came out, the piece could be worth \$1,000,000.

Moran's auction was scheduled to start at 3:00 p.m. on June 19, 2012, at the Pasadena Convention Center in nearby Pasadena, California. During April, May, and the first eighteen days of June, collectors and dealers from all over North America flew to Los Angeles, rented cars, drove to Altadena, and spent an hour with the Chantland first phase. Each visit produced a fresh round of rumors. The blanket was a true classic, circa 1840, with lac-dyed bayeta and indigo-dyed handspun blues. On their web page, Moran's described the blanket as a "Ute style first phase" but the blanket had thin red stripes, which meant it was a bayeta first phase. Ute Style first phases were rare, but there were at least fifty Ute Style first phases in museum and private collections, and one or two examples came up for sale each year. A bayeta first phase was the rarest type of classic Navajo blanket. There were five bayeta first phases in museums and four in private collections, including the Chantland blanket. The last bayeta first phase to sell at auction was

the Walentis First Phase, which set the all-time auction record for a Navajo blanket on November 28, 1989, when it sold at Sotheby's, New York, for \$522,500. The Chantland first phase was smaller than the Walentis first phase, but its colors were more intense, especially the blues.

The Chantland blanket did have issues. There was a collection tag sewn onto one of the corners, with the name "Chantland" handwritten in black ink on the white tag. The handwriting looked old but the cotton fabric of the tag looked new. In person, the blanket was breathtaking, and it was a thrill to see a bayeta first phase come out of the woodwork in unrestored condition, but the stains were in the white stripes and they looked like they had been there forever. If the stains came out, \$1,000,000 was a foregone conclusion, but Moran's was not about to clean the blanket, and neither was the owner.

What if you paid \$1,000,000, hammer, which meant \$1,200,000, with the buyer's premium, had the piece cleaned, and the stains turned out to be permanent? Your only option would be to send your seven-figure first phase to Turkey, have the stained areas removed, and replace them with new white yarn. At that point the blanket would no longer be in original condition, and white was the hardest yarn to match, even for the Turks. Moran's was doing a terrific job promoting the piece—which they had every right to do—but bidding on the blanket was a huge gamble. The auction record for the Walentis first phase had stood for twenty-two years, and that had been for a bayeta first phase in pristine condition. At the end of the day, how many collectors were going to risk a million dollars on a problem piece?

In 1828, the Swiss artist Karl Bodmer left his home in Zurich and traveled to the German city of Koblenz. Bodmer was nineteen years old. He had studied painting and drawing in Paris, and his uncle and mentor, Johann Meier, had studied painting under the Swiss romantic artist Heinrich Füssli, but Bodmer had no reputation to speak of, either as an artist or as a prodigy. Bodmer's attributes were his curiosity, his intelligence, and his superb draftsmanship. If the young man was asked to draw a landscape, portrait, or still life, he could produce a realistic drawing or watercolor of his subject in less than an hour.

In Kolbenz, Bodmer came to the attention of Prince Maximilian of Wied-Neuwied, Prussia. Prince Max, as he was known, was a Prussian aristocrat,

ethnologist, and naturalist. Between 1815 and 1817, he had led a scientific expedition to southeastern Brazil. After meeting Bodmer and watching him draw, Prince Max invited the artist to join him on the prince's next adventure, an expedition through the Missouri River Valley in North America. Prince Max was fascinated with indigenous cultures. In Brazil, he had discovered a tribe, the Botocudos of Espirito Santo Bay. The prince was convinced that the Native American tribes of central North America were on the verge of extinction. It was only a matter of time before they were assimilated by the western migration of Anglo-Americans. His mission, as he saw it, was to explore the Missouri Valley and document its tribal cultures before they disappeared.

On May 17, 1832, Karl Bodmer and Prince Max set sail from the Netherlands. On July 4, 1832, they arrived in Boston. From Boston, they traveled by stagecoach to New York City, and then west across Pennsylvania to Pittsburgh. From Pittsburgh, they traveled by riverboat down the Ohio River to the town of Mount Vernon, Indiana, one day's sail northeast of the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. After spending the winter in New Harmony, Indiana, Bodmer and Prince Max arrived in St. Louis on March 24, 1833. On April 19, 1833, they boarded *The Yellow-Stone*, a steamboat belonging to the American Fur Company. That afternoon, *The Yellow-Stone* sailed north from St. Louis and entered the waters of the Missouri River.

For the next twelve months, Bodmer and Prince Max took every opportunity to visit and document Native American villages in the Missouri Valley. Both men were inveterate explorers, in that they were more interested in what they did not know than in what they knew. On June 1, 1833, at Fort Pierre, South Dakota, Bodmer painted a portrait of Chan-Ccha-Nia-Teuin, a Teton Sioux woman. In the portrait, Chan-Ccha-Nia-Teuin is wearing beaded moccasins, beaded leggings, a leather dress, and a buffalo robe decorated with stylized human figures. At her neck and shoulders, the robe has been folded back against itself, creating a collar of buffalo fur. When Prince Max offered to buy her dress, Chan-Ccha-Nia-Teuin said no, but later agreed to sell him her buffalo robe.

(continued...)



Dacota Woman and Assiniboin Girl by Karl Bodmer, 1844.

Aquatint, from an original Bodmer watercolor done in June of 1833.
Illustrated as Plate 9 in *Travels in the Interior of North America*
by Prince Maximilian, Kolbenz, 1849.

On June 19, 1833, Bodmer and Prince Max boarded a larger steamboat, *The Assiniboine*, and sailed north from Fort Pierre. *The Assiniboine*'s destination was Fort Union on the Missouri, the northernmost point reachable by steamboat. Among their fellow passengers was a Blackfoot man named Kiasax—literally, “Bear-on-the-Left”—who was on his way to Fort Union to reunite with his family. Kiasax wore a large, striped woolen blanket around his shoulders. The blanket was woven in blue, brown and white stripes. Kiasax wore his blanket with its top edge folded back, in the same manner that Chan-Ccha-Nia-Teuin had worn her buffalo robe. After getting to know Kiasax, Bodmer painted a watercolor portrait of the Blackfoot man. The watercolor is the earliest known painting of a Navajo first phase chief's blanket.



Kiasax (Bear-on-the-Left) by Karl Bodmer, 1833.

Watercolor on paper. Currently in the collection of the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, Nebraska.

Anthropologists believe that Navajo women learned the art of upright loom weaving from their Hopi or Zuni neighbors during the late 1600s. While Navajo women have been weaving versions of the chief's blanket since the 1750s, virtually all of the chief's blankets woven prior to 1830 were worn until they disintegrated. Navajo women did not weave chief's blankets for family members or for other Navajos. There are no early nineteenth century drawings, paintings, or photographs of Navajo men or women wearing chief's blankets. Chief's blankets were woven to be sold or bartered to members of other tribes.

In terms of design, the chief's blanket was the Navajo version of what the Hopi Indians referred to as a *pösaala*—literally, “a man's blanket.” The Navajo word for a *pösaala* was a *hanochalde*, or a “man's shoulder blanket.” Anglo-Americans referred to the *pösaala* as a “Hopi bachelor blanket.”



A Classic Bachelor Blanket or Pösaala, Hopi, circa 1800-1850.

The blanket measures 54 inches wide by 45 inches wide, as woven.
Currently in a private collection in Evanston, Illinois.
Photograph by Joshua Baer – ©2012 by Joshua Baer & Company.



A Classic First Phase Chief's Blanket, Ute Style, Navajo, circa 1830.

The blanket measures 72 inches wide by 56 inches long, as woven.
Currently in a private collection in St. Louis, Missouri.
Photograph by Joshua Baer – ©2012 by Joshua Baer & Company.

Hopi bachelor blankets were twill-woven shawls, woven wider than long. Materials were un-dyed handspun brown and un-dyed handspun white wool yarns. The twill was usually a diamond twill, which revealed the alternating brown and white colors of the blanket's warp as well as its weft.

The traditional composition of the Hopi bachelor blanket was a series of alternating horizontal brown and white stripes overlaid with vertical white stripes. The horizontal brown stripe at the center of a bachelor blanket was usually twice as thick as the horizontal brown and white stripes above and below the center stripe. A bachelor blanket's vertical white stripes tended to be more narrow than its horizontal brown and white stripes. The arrangement of horizontal and vertical stripes created the illusion of intersecting bands, like the bands in a Scottish plaid.

Prehistoric cotton textiles excavated in the vicinity of what is now the Hopi Reservation exhibit the same plaid effect that appeared in Hopi bachelor blankets woven between 1800 and 1850. After the arrival of the Spanish, Hopi weavers began to weave woolen bachelor blankets. During the late seventeenth century, when they learned the art of upright loom weaving from Hopi and Zuni weavers, Navajo women were exposed to Hopi bachelor blankets. During the mid- to late eighteenth century, Navajo women began weaving a plain-woven, woolen blanket that was also woven wider than long. The blanket's only designs were horizontal brown and white stripes overlaid with horizontal thin blue stripes. The illusion of thin horizontal blue stripes lying on top of the thicker horizontal brown stripes was a Navajo innovation. Over time, the innovation made the Navajo version of the bachelor blanket a more desirable trade item than its Hopi counterpart.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Navajo version of the Hopi bachelor blanket became popular among high-ranking members of the Ute Tribe, probably because the Utes were the Navajos' immediate neighbors to the north. By 1830, the Navajo chief's blanket was well established as a trade item throughout the west, southwest, northern plains, and upper Missouri Valley. The going rate for a Navajo chief's blanket was either one hundred buffalo hides, twenty horses, ten rifles, or five ounces of gold. Among high-ranking members of the Plains and Prairie tribes, including the Arapahoe, Assiniboine, Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa, Mandan, and Sioux, a Navajo chief's blanket was a form of currency. You could trade twenty horses for one chief's blanket, wear

the blanket for a year, and then trade it for hides or rifles. Chief's blankets were expensive—by 1830, they were the most expensive garments in the world—but they held their value. If you were one of the leaders of your tribe, you owned a chief's blanket. It was during this period that the Navajo version of the Hopi bachelor blanket came to be known as a “chief's blanket.” Due to their popularity among the Utes, chief's blankets with blue, brown and white stripes were called “Ute style blankets.”



Ute Man Wearing a Navajo First Phase Chief's Blanket, Los Pinos, Colorado, 1874.

Photograph by William Henry Jackson.
Currently in the collection of the Museum of the American Indian,
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. [NMAI #P00426].

Navajo chief's blankets fall into four categories: first phases, second phases, third phases, and variants. First phases have horizontally striped fields with no foreground designs. Second phases have horizontally striped fields with rectangular foreground designs, usually in the form of rectangular bars or concentric squares. Third phases have horizontally striped fields with diamond-shaped foreground designs that appear to float above their stripes. Variants either combine second and third phase designs or appropriate diagonal designs from Navajo dress halves, mantas, or serapes.

With a few exceptions, most first phases date 1860 or earlier. A handful of second phases were woven during the 1840s, but most second phases date from the 1850s or 1860s. A handful of third phases and variants were woven during the 1850s, but most third phases and variants date from the 1860s or 1870s.

There are approximately sixty Navajo first phase chief's blankets in museum and private collections. Approximately fifty of those first phases have blue, brown, and white stripes, which qualifies them as Ute Style First Phases. Nine of those first phases exhibit the same blue, brown and white striped pattern as Ute Style first phases, with the addition of thin red stripes woven between their brown and blue stripes. First phases with red stripes are known either as "Bayeta First Phases" or, less often, as "Navajo Style First Phases."



*A detail of the central panel of the Chantland Bayeta
First Phase Chief's Blanket, Navajo, circa 1840.*

Photograph by Joshua Baer – ©2012 by Joshua Baer & Company.



The Berlant Ute Style First Phase Chief's Blanket, Navajo, circa 1840.

The blanket measures 60 inches long by 78 inches wide, as woven.
Illustrated as Plate 5 in Berlant & Kahlenberg, *Walk in Beauty*, 1977.

Currently in a private collection in Lake Forest, Illinois.

Photograph by Joshua Baer – ©2012 by Joshua Baer & Company.



The Walentis Bayeta First Phase Chief's Blanket, Navajo, circa 1840.

The blanket measures 57 inches long by 76 inches wide, as woven.
Sold by Sotheby's, New York, for \$522,500, on November 28, 1989.

Currently in the collection of David Walentis in New York City.

The term “bayeta” refers to bolts of machine-woven red flannel. Bayeta also refers to red yarns raveled from bolts of red flannel. By 1830, Navajo weavers were accomplished at dyeing handspun yarns with indigo but lacked the ability to dye handspun yarns with cochineal, which produced a deep red color in woolen yarns. The weavers’ only sources of red yarns were the yarns they raveled from bolts of red flannel imported either from England or Spain. Known among the Navajo and the Spanish as “baize” or “bayeta,” and among Anglo- Americans as “red stroud” or “red trade cloth,” red flannel was used for garment insulation by Anglo- American and Spanish-American settlers. Winter coats, dresses, pants, and petticoats were often lined with a layer of red flannel.

Bolts of bayeta were produced by woolen mills in England and in Spain. In both countries, mills wove un-dyed white woolen fabrics on mechanical looms and then submerged those fabrics in vats of red dye. This process, known as piece-dyeing, was the most common European way of dyeing silk or woolen fabric. Dyeing in the wool—prior to spinning the dyed wool into yarn—or dyeing in the yarn were more labor intensive and time-consuming than dyeing in the fabric.

Spanish bayeta was dyed with cochineal, a dye made from the dried and powdered larvae of *Dactylopius coccus*, a wingless lady bug which fed on *Nopalea cochenillefera*, the nopal cactus common to Mexico and Central America. Almost all of the cochineal used by the Spanish woolen mills was imported from Mexico. Between 1600 and 1700, cochineal was Spain’s second-most valuable import from Mexico. Spain’s most valuable import was silver.

English bayeta was dyed either with cochineal, with lac-dye, or with mixtures of cochineal and lac-dye. Lac-dye was the resinous secretion of *Kerria lacca*, a scale insect or mealy bug common to northern India, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. Since ancient times, dried and powdered lac-dye had been used as a skin cosmetic, as a fabric dye, and as an ingredient in shellac, the compound used to varnish rifles, violins, and wooden trays. (The verb “to lacquer” means “to apply shellac.”) England began importing lac-dye from India during the 1600s.

After 1757, when India became a British Colony, industrial quantities of lac-dye were imported by English woolen mills. After the American Revolution, English mills started exporting red flannel to North America. After the Mexican Revolution in 1821, Spain’s loss of its monopoly on Mexican cochineal curtailed the production of Spanish bayeta, which made Spanish bayeta more expensive.

Between 1825 and 1850, lac-dyed English red flannel became the more popular bayeta in the United States and Canada.

By 1830, Navajo weavers were producing poncho serapes with red backgrounds and blue and white foreground elements. The red fields of these poncho serapes were woven entirely out of red yarns raveled from bolts of English bayeta. Many of these poncho serapes were either sold or traded to Spanish settlers in the upper Rio Grande Valley, who preferred the poncho serape's intricate designs to the simple stripes of the chief's blanket. Because Spanish settlers referred to red flannel as bayeta, Navajo poncho serapes came to be known either as "bayeta ponchos" or as "bayeta serapes."



A Classic Bayeta Poncho Serape, Navajo, circa 1840.

The blanket measures 72 inches long by 50 inches wide, as woven.
Currently in a private collection in Lake Forest, Illinois.
Photograph by Joshua Baer – ©2012 by Joshua Baer & Company.

Between 1831 and 1840, the interpreter and journalist Josiah Gregg traveled extensively along the Santa Fe Trail. In his book *Commerce of the Prairies* (Henry G. Langley, New York, 1844), Gregg wrote one of the earliest published descriptions of the Navajo and their blankets:

They reside in the main range of the Cordilleras, one hundred and fifty to two hundred miles west of Santa Fe, on the waters of the Rio Colorado of California, not far from the region, according to historians, from whence the Aztecs emigrated to Mexico; and there are many reasons to suppose them direct descendants from the remnant, which remained in the north, of this celebrated nation of antiquity. Although they live in rude *jacalets*, somewhat resembling the wigwams of the Pawnees, yet, from time immemorial, they have excelled all others in their original manufactures; and as well as the Moquies [the Hopis], they are still distinguished for some exquisite styles of cotton textures, and display considerable ingenuity in embroidering with feathers the skins of animals, according to their primitive practice. They now, also, manufacture a singular species of blanket, known as the *Sarape-Navaho*, which is of so close and dense a texture that it will frequently hold water almost equal to gum-elastic cloth. It is therefore highly prized for protection against the rains. Some of the finer qualities are often sold among the Mexicans as high as \$50 or \$60 each.

By 1840, the Navajo had been weaving and selling blankets for one hundred and fifty years. While Navajo weavers had a practical understanding of how to weave a desirable blanket, they also understood the market for their blankets. Given the prestige and value associated with first phase chief's blankets and bayeta serapes, it was only a matter of time before a Navajo weaver decided to add thin stripes of red bayeta to a first phase chief's blanket. While it is impossible to say when the *first* bayeta first phase was woven, the nine known examples suggest that the innovation occurred between 1830 and 1850. The fact that the majority of Navajo poncho serapes containing quantities of lac-dyed bayeta were woven between 1830 and 1850 supports this theory.

In 1848, following the end of the Mexican American War and the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, sovereignty over Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California passed from the Republic of Mexico to the United States. In 1850,

Congress authorized an expedition to map the rivers in the New Mexico and Arizona Territories, including the Zuni, Little Colorado, and Colorado Rivers. Captain Lorenzo Sitgreaves of the Army Corps of Engineers was named commander of the expedition. Sitgreaves was assigned fifty Army infantryman, along with a support crew of artists, naturalists, porters, and topographers. Included in the support crew was Samuel W. Woodhouse, a naturalist, naval officer, and surgeon associated with the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

On August 15, 1851, the Sitgreaves expedition marched south from Santa Fe. On September 1, 1851, the expedition reached Zuni Pueblo, one hundred and forty miles west of what is now the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico. On September 24, 1851, after spending three weeks at Zuni Pueblo, the expedition continued west along the Zuni and Little Colorado Rivers until it reached the Colorado River.

During his three weeks at Zuni Pueblo, Samuel Woodhouse bought two Navajo chief's blankets, a classic bayeta first phase and an early classic second phase. Both chief's blankets were collected in pristine condition. The bayeta first phase had tightly braided corner tassels, an indication that it had seen little or no use as a garment. In 1851, Zuni Pueblo was an active trading center for all of the tribes in the area. Navajo weavers probably used Zuni Pueblo both as a selling venue for their blankets and as a source for bayeta. The Woodhouse chief's blankets' immaculate condition raises the possibility that Woodhouse collected both blankets directly from the Navajo women who wove them.

The two chief's blankets remained in Woodhouse's collection until his death in 1922. In 1923, the two blankets were purchased from Woodhouse's son, S. W. Woodhouse Jr., by the George Heye Foundation in New York City. The blankets are currently in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C. The Woodhouse bayeta first phase is the earliest documented first phase chief's blanket collected by an Anglo-American, and is widely regarded as the crown jewel in the National Museum of the American Indian's collection of Navajo blankets.

There are nine bayeta first phase chief's blankets in museum and private collections. In terms of colors, designs, size, and yarns, the Woodhouse Bayeta First Phase resembles the Chantland Bayeta First Phase more closely than any of

the other seven examples. Its raveled bayeta is lac-dyed, and its medium blue handspun yarns exhibit a luminous depth of color. Examination of the Woodhouse Bayeta First Phase's warps reveals three bands of white handspun warp alternated with two bands of dark brown handspun warp. The two bands of dark brown handspun warp appear as dark vertical bands on either side of the white vertical band. The deliberate arrangement of alternating white and dark brown bands of warp is a direct link to the *pösaala* or Hopi bachelor blanket which originally inspired Navajo women to weave first phase chief's blankets.



The Woodhouse Bayeta First Phase Chief's Blanket, Navajo, circa 1840.

The blanket measures 71 inches wide by 51 inches long, as woven.
Illustrated as Plate 14 in Bonar, *Woven by the Grandmothers*, 1996.
Currently in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian,
Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C. [NMAI #11.8280].

At 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 19, 2012, the lower level of the Pasadena Convention Center began to fill up with a who's who of collectors and dealers of Native American art. The Chantland bayeta first phase was displayed on a table at the center of the room. The table had a velvet skirt, and a rope and stanchion

perimeter had been set up around the table. Collectors and dealers filed by the blanket the way mourners file by the casket at a funeral. Everyone asked the same questions: “Do you really think it can bring a million?” and “Do you think the stains will come out?” While there were differences of opinion about the blanket’s condition and about how much it would bring, everyone agreed that it was a masterpiece.



The Chantland Bayeta First Phase Chief’s Blanket, Navajo, circa 1840, as it appeared at auction. The stains in the blanket’s white stripes are visible in the lower left-hand corner of the blanket.

Photograph by Joshua Baer ©2012 by Joshua Baer & Company.

At 2:45 p.m., fifteen minutes before the Moran auction was scheduled to start, Loren Krytzer arrived with his girlfriend, Lisa, and her two daughters. The Krytzer party took their seats near the back of the south row and waited. Sixty-one lots were scheduled to sell before the first phase. Jeffrey Moran, John Moran’s son and the Vice President of Moran’s, had told prospective bidders that Lot #1062 would come up around 3:45 p.m.

On the table, the Chantland Blanket had a certain glow. The light coming

out of the blanket was both physical and metaphysical. Each stripe was its own source of light. When you stood next to the blanket, you saw the depth of color in its yarns. When you saw the blanket from the mezzanine above the room, you saw its radiance. While the blanket had an obvious foreground and background—its red stripes appeared to float above the edges of its atmospheric blues—the blanket’s sense of balance was its most memorable quality. No matter how long you spent looking at the blanket, you always wanted a few more minutes of that balance.

While the Navajo have no words for “art” or for “beauty,” they do have a word for “balance.” In Navajo, *hozho* refers to a state of being where the natural and the supernatural coexist, similar to what Catholics call “a state of grace.” When a Navajo expresses admiration for a person, place, or thing, he or she will say that that person, place, or thing is “in *hozho*.” The Navajo phrase *sa’ah naaghaii bik’eh hozho*—literally, “in-old-age-walking-the-trail-of-balance”—expresses the Navajo ideal of a life that comes to a harmonic resolution while the person is still alive. This idealization of balance appears in classic Navajo blankets. It also appears in the Navajo creation myth.

The Navajo believe that their women learned the art of spinning and upright loom weaving from *Na'ashjéii Asdzáá*, or Spider Woman. While Spider Woman is regarded as a deity, and as a key figure in the Navajo creation myth, she is also revered as the first Navajo weaver, and as a source of *hozho*. Through Spider Woman, the origins of Navajo life and the origins of Navajo blankets are intertwined. Life begins with weaving, and weaving is the beginning of life.

The following account of Spider Woman’s role in the Navajo creation myth is adapted from *Mythologies—A Polytheistic View of the World*, by the Wikimedia Foundation. In the account, the term *Dineh* refers to the Navajo. In Navajo, *Dineh* means “the people.”

Spider Man and Spider Woman lived near *Tó Alnáosdlíí*, the Crossing of the Waters. They both knew how to weave the fibers of cotton, hemp, and other plants. First Woman asked Spider Man and Spider Woman to teach the *Dineh* how to weave the fibers of plants so the *Dineh* would not have to depend on animal skins for clothing. Cotton seeds were planted, and the cotton was gathered. Spider Man

taught the *Dineh* to shape a little wheel, three or four inches in diameter, and to place a slender stick through the wheel to spin the cotton.

First Woman said, “You must spin towards yourself, not away, if you want the balance to come to you. If you spin away from yourself, the balance will be taken from you.”

Spider Man named the spindle *yódí yit̄ ya 'hote*, meaning “Turning with the balance.” But Spider Woman said, “No, it shall be called *nto is yit̄ ya 'hote*, turning with the mixed pieces.”

After they spun the thread, Spider Man and Spider Woman rolled the thread into balls, and brought straight poles and tied them to make a rectangular frame. Spider Man wound the thread on two of the poles from east to west, over and under the poles. Then Spider Man said the ball of thread should be called *yódí yit̄ nasma aghaa*, “rolling with the balance.” But Spider Woman said, “No, it shall be called *ntsilí yit̄ nasma aghaa*, rolling with the mixed pieces.”

After the loom was finished, cross poles were erected and other poles were placed on the ground to hold the loom frame. After the loom was stretched into place, Spider Man said, “It shall be called *yódí ilth na dai 'di*, raising with the balance.” But Spider Woman said, “No, it shall be called *nilt̄'iz na dai 'di*, raising with the mixed pieces.”

There was a notched stick running sideways across the loom, with a notch holding every other thread. Spider Man said, “It will be called *yódí bit̄ neston*, looping with the balance.” But Spider Woman said, “No, it shall be called *nilt̄'liz bit̄ neston*, looping with the mixed pieces.”

Then they used a narrow stick about two and a half feet long, and wound the yarn or thread over it. They also used the wide flat stick for tapping down the thread. Spider Man said, “It shall be called *yódí na 'ygotte*, tapping down the balance.” But Spider Woman said, “No, it shall be called *nilt̄'iz na 'ygotte*, tapping down the mixed pieces.”

Spider Man said, “Now you know all that I have named for you. It is yours to work with and to use following your own wishes. But from now on, when a baby girl is born to your tribe, go and find a spider’s web, then take the spider’s web and rub it on the baby girl’s hands and arms. This way, when she grows up, she will weave, and her fingers and arms will never tire from weaving.”

Bidding on Lot #1062, the Chantland blanket, began at 3:48 p.m. John Moran, the auctioneer, spoke briefly about the blanket's condition and provenance, then he opened the bidding at \$150,000. Floor bidders took the bidding to \$750,000. After a phone bid for \$800,000, Loren Krytzer said "Oh, my fucking God" to Lisa. Bidding moved quickly to \$900,000. After a pause, two phone bids took the blanket to \$1,000,000. At \$1,000,000, with his arms around his own torso, Loren Krytzer was literally holding onto himself.

A phone bid followed by a floor bid took the bidding to \$1,200,000. At \$1,300,000, Krytzer embraced Lisa, who was in tears, then he looked back up at the podium where John Moran was standing with his right hand in the air, pointing at the bank of phones to his left. Moran took a phone bid for \$1,400,000, and said, "A million-four, a million four-hundred thousand," then he pointed at the back of the room and took a bid of \$1,500,000 from a floor bidder. Moran said, "And through, and selling then, at a million, five hundred thousand." After bringing down his gavel, he said, "Congratulations, sir. Buyer number one-ten, one-ten was the buyer."

The bidding—from the opening bid to the final bid—took seventy-seven seconds. Buyer number one-ten was Donald Ellis, owner of the Donald Ellis Gallery in New York City. With Moran's twenty percent buyer's premium, Ellis had just paid \$1,800,000 for the Chantland blanket.

The evening after the auction, Jeffrey Moran took Loren Krytzer, Lisa, and Lisa's daughters to dinner at a restaurant in Pasadena. A month later, Moran reflected on the dinner. "Loren ordered a margarita with a triple shot of Patron Gold, and he drank the whole thing. I asked him what his fondest memory of the blanket was. He said he'd been raised by his grandparents, in a house in West Hills, and that his grandmother had inherited three heirlooms from her father: a Hudson Bay blanket, the first phase, and a meteorite the size of a bowling ball. His grandmother loved the Dodgers but his grandfather wouldn't let her watch them on TV. She wasn't allowed to touch the dial. So, at night, when the Dodgers were playing, she and Loren would go sit in her sewing room and listen to the game on a transistor radio. His grandmother liked to open all the windows, and sometimes it got chilly, so she would wrap the Hudson Bay blanket around her shoulders and hold the first phase on her lap. She had a Dodger pennant, and whenever the Dodgers scored, or hit

a home run, she would sit in her chair with the blanket on her lap, wave the pennant, and cheer. That was his fondest memory. And as he told it to me, he had tears streaming down his cheeks.”

The stains were removed by Robert Mann of Robert Mann Oriental Rugs in Denver, Colorado. Over the past decade, Robert Mann has cleaned and restored more classic Navajo blankets than any other textile restorer. Prior to the auction, Donald Ellis had paid Mann to fly to Los Angeles and examine the Chantland Blanket at Moran’s offices in Altadena. After seeing the blanket, Mann had told Ellis that he was “reasonably sure” the stains could be removed without doing harm to the blanket. After Ellis bought the blanket and brought it to Denver, Mann went to work on the stains.

“At first,” said Mann, “it was touch and go. We weren’t sure if they were going to come out, but then they did.” After cleaning the blanket, Mann had one of his conservators tighten its corner tassels and loose selvages.

In person, on a table in Robert Mann’s office, the Chantland blanket looked older and more distinguished than it had looked prior to being cleaned. Its white stripes had a soft, ivory color. Its variegated brown stripes anchored the blanket’s bold composition. Up close, the red and blue stripes seemed more connected to the blanket than they had in Pasadena. From a distance, they appeared to float above the brown stripes. The blanket’s extraordinary balance was unchanged.