

HST 201: ONLINE History of U.S. F18 (Escobar Meta 20748 22964)

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Creatures of Empire

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, October 6, 2018, 5:29 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Creatures of Empire topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which one of the questions you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Creatures of Empire

Sum of ratings: -

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Re: Creatures of Empire: Are animals our property?

by [Tehya Curley](#) - Monday, October 8, 2018, 1:11 PM

Anderson sheds light on the problems that happened when the settlers brought animals to the Americas. Which before than I never thought it would have been a bad idea, but with her information in her book "Creatures of Empire" it has led me to think otherwise. Europeans caused a lot of distress with the natives from the very beginning, especially when it came to their religion "in one of history's many ironies, religious developments in

England encouraged greater disdain for non-Christian ways of viewing the world just at the point when English people encountered the inhabitants of the New world” (pg 57). The Europeans brought despair upon the natives not only by harming them physically, but by causing havoc within their personal beliefs.

Was it the Europeans intentions, probably not, but their beliefs clearly opposed the beliefs of the native people. This can be seen when it comes to the beliefs about animals. The natives believed that animals were like living beings or as Anderson stated that “other than human persons” (domestic podcast 2:29). As they viewed them as beings they also believed they had souls “major prey animals like deer were thought to have spiritual powers or spiritual protectors” (domestic 2:48). Natives also believed that animals can come in many forms; they call this manitou. According to Anderson “possession of manitou could make animals formidable adversaries”(pg 21) making animals an important part of their culture and religion. However, Europeans were curious about their beliefs, but it was completely foreign to them. They disagreed with the fact that animals can possibly have a soul and could be more than property. Europeans as a mainly Christian group viewed animals as property “for English colonists, in contrast, animals were property over which they had a biblically ordained right to assert dominion” (book review pg 1) essentially if they didn’t view it as human, they had the right to own and control the animal. Animals were the main problem of this time, and maybe if religion didn’t play a major role in how they viewed animals the natives and the English would have had less confrontations.

Confrontations that may have been lower if they didn’t have such opposing beliefs on animals. However, when It comes to the native’s standpoint on animals I would have to relate more with. In my opinion animals are a being we live side by side with and we should treat them more like a being than a piece of property. Although, I can see both point of views on animals and understand why they believed this way.

The problems that arose from bringing livestock to America was unpredictable, but If both sides were to agree in the middle ground would animals have been so problematic? Was the Europeans viewpoint on animals the backbone to their problems with their native neighbors?

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: Creatures of Empire: Animals added to the increased tension

by [Evan Brewer](#) - Saturday, October 13, 2018, 5:19 PM

I agree with you completely but I’m not convinced that the problem between the Settlers and Indians was solely based on the animals. The Settlers wanted to expand and grow (increase capital) since the beginning, and they didn’t need to pressure the Indians with their animals because their settlement already did (excluding livestock). Before bringing the livestock to America, Indians most likely felt threatened by these newcomers and since these new white englishmen came in acting like they owned this new land, the natives withdrew from the coastal towns. I believe when the livestock come to America, this added pressure made the Indians turn on the English settlers and

the death of livestock due to trespassing on Indian lands, made Settlers turn on Indians as well. According to Liberty, Equality, Power: A History of the American People, by John Murrin goes into detail about the Indian and English disputes. As said in the textbook, "Indians and colonists clashed over borders and proper ways of using the land. The settlers wanted clear pastures and fenced farms, while Indians needed extensive forests for hunting. English efforts to convert Indians and bring them into praying towns only increased the tension"(pg81). After reading this, the animals were not the entire problem. Increase pressure of conforming to religion, land loss, and now livestock damaging native crops pushed Indians to a breaking point and eventually starting Metacom's war. This sadly was only the beginning of the confrontations between Indian and English settlers. What do you think?

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3


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Re: Creatures of Empire: Animals added to the increased tension

 by [Tehya Curley](#) - Sunday, October 14, 2018, 10:50 AM

Animals were not entirely the problem and I can agree with that. There are many occasions before animals were brought to the Americas that Europeans and the natives had conflicts. This can be seen in the early 1600's "open warfare with Indians broke out. Powhatan's warriors picked off any settlers who strayed far away from Jamestown" (Liberty, Equality, Power pg 51). This can be seen also in the mid 1600's "in 1644, Opechancanough made a desperate bid to push back the settlers. His warriors killed more than 400 colonists, but soon lost the upper hand." (Liberty, Equality, Power pg 53). There were various amounts of conflicts between the two groups, but with the animals they brought to the land I wouldn't doubt that there would be added tension.

Before the animals came the settlers took up the Natives land, and most likely affected the way of life for the Natives. However, when they brought the animals it increased the tensions. This can be seen in 1675 "the colonists' growing settlements shrank the Indians' land base, and their free-running hogs and cows wrecked the Indians' cornfields." (Liberty, Equality, Power pg 81). Europeans wanted more land for their livestock which ultimately put pressure on the Indians' to the point it led to war. This war was named Metacom's war "the pressure of English colonialism was particularly hard on the Wampanoags, whose lands around the Narragansett Bay were invaded by colonists from Plymouth, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Led by Metacom, the Wampanoags began to prepare for war" (Liberty, Equality, Power pg 81).

In the podcast about the Creatures of empire she states that animals were the main problem between the two groups. Although I would have to state otherwise, the problems between the groups were already pre-existent.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3


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Re: Creatures of Empire: Are animals our property?

 by [Asa Tellschow](#) - Sunday, October 14, 2018, 8:12 PM

I don't see much evidence that animals were the primary source of tension between colonists and natives. Anderson does speculate that "in some ways, the animals maybe are more alien]" (Animals Podcast, about 0:30), but I just listened to the podcast again, and I didn't hear anything about animals being the primary cause of conflict. They were a noteworthy problem, but I would argue that they were far from the main cause.

Anderson notes "the culmination of tensions that had been building for years as the burgeoning English population has been encroaching on Indian lands, pressuring the Indians to move on..." (Animal Podcast about 5:30) In the Puritans video, we learn that Indian lands were given to Puritan colonists "free of charge" to settle on. I would argue that this sort of disrespect would eventually push the Natives to conflict, regardless of animal nuisances. Peace is a nice ideal, but in most cases (Quakers as the possible exception), it was a lower priority than expanding territories and claiming resources.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

2



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Inconsiderate Neighbors

by [Sarah Mackenzie](#) - Tuesday, October 9, 2018, 9:07 PM

Anderson brought up some fascinating points and aspects that I haven't considered before. She suggested the main problem was the European's domestic animals were encroaching on the Indian's land. The English would have these domestic animals, cows and pigs, running free about the land. The animals were causing all kinds of problems from eating the crops, to getting stuck in hunting traps that the Indian's had set up. The English perceived their animals as property and Indians didn't view living animals as anyone's property. They really didn't understand the concept of owning land or animals. Native views of animals were of animals were spiritual creatures and living beings that were sharing the world with human being. English animals sparked multiple conflicts. The animals often found themselves captured in the Indian traps and the Indian's would be the ones in trouble for it. The Indians would then kill animals the animals that were caught and would eventually be taken into court as the animals were English property. English told the Indians to move away, but the animals kept finding their way onto the Indian land resulting in King Philip's War.

I have mixed feeling pertaining to this topic. I can see the side from the English that the domestic animals were their property and that the animals were an important source of food and income. I also side with the Indian's. The English had no regard for the Indian's belongings. The English had taken over their land and now brought these animals that were ruining their crops, and ruining their hunting grounds. Even after the Indian's moved away from their settlement they still weren't free from the domestic animals. I currently have a fence that goes around my property and it keeps my animals in and my gardens safe. I know that if someone else's animals came onto my property and started destroying all the things in my yard it would make me extremely upset. The Indians saw the animals as a nuisance and would kill them, much like in today's society. We often hear of farmers killing deer, elk, cougar, and bear to protect their crops and livestock. The animals can be seen as a threat to people's livelihood.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Inconsiderate Neighbors**by [Hannah Cartwright](#) - Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 9:17 PM

I can see how this must have been frustrating for the Native as well. It was probably a hard adjustment for them considering they were used to always hunting and now there were supposed to treat these animals as if they are property, especially if they do not understand or agree with that view, it was all so new and probably confusing and frustrating, especially when these animals would destroy their property. Even when the Indians tried to get away, it still seemed impossible.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Inconsiterate Neighbors**by [Emily Gilman](#) - Saturday, October 13, 2018, 10:23 PM

This is an eye opening way to think. I never thought about the animals encroaching on the Indians land as well as the Englishmen. Todays way of thinking is that we would need to fence in the domesticated animals, but the Englishmen were just wanting the Indians to move further away. I dont know if i agree with the way the Englishmen handled that. I am very partial to native ways. I grew up going to my reservation and watching dances and other ceremonies. I loved it. It was a great way to live up, on both sides of the spectrum. I was a cowboy and an indian.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Different Opinions Regarding Domestic Animals**by [Hannah Cartwright](#) - Tuesday, October 9, 2018, 9:50 PM

Learning about the Indian's reactions to the animals brought by the Europeans (such as pigs, cows, etc.) was very interesting because of how common these kinds of animals are to us today. I never even thought about the way people in history were introduced and became comfortable with certain animals. It seems that DeJohn Anderson suggests that the main problem for Europeans and Indians and these new animals, outside of Indians feeling annoyed with these new animals going on their property and doing damage to their land, was that Europeans looked at these animals as their property, whereas Indians looked at animals as other beings they share the planet with and did not look at them as inferior. Indians also believed that animals and creatures have their own spiritual power, and the Europeans looked at these animals as property and the people had biblical rights to use them as economic resources. I hope this does not bring me too off subject, but the difference in opinions between Indians and Europeans about these animals reminds me of two topics brought up today. One is people who choose to be vegetarian for many different reasons but one being that they feel that we do not have the right to eat animals and they should not be killed for our benefit, Another topic being about Zoos where many people believe animals should not be exploited and used/owned, but that animals should

be free and many people also feel that human beings are superior to animals and have the right to control them. Coming back to the Indians introductory of the new animals and the Europeans opinion on their right to own these animals leaves me agreeing to both sides of the issue. I see how someone may ask who is to say animals are inferior and they do not deserve to live free lives as humans do, and I can also see how people find that we need to use certain animals to in some ways help with survival. Either way, I feel that animals are very important to be talked about in history and the way they have affected our country in American history because without these animals, who knows what our country would be like today.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

3


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Re: Different Opinions Regarding Domestic Animals

 by [Sarah Mackenzie](#) - Friday, October 12, 2018, 4:02 PM

I really enjoyed your post, it hit aspects that I would have never thought about. The parallelism between vegetarians and the animals in the zoo is uncanny. It's crazy to think that history has a way of repeating itself. Even though it is a completely different time period and not exactly a word for word type of scenario. It your comparison paints a more relatable image for those that missed it, like myself. I honestly would have never in a million years thought that animals could have played a role in history and shifted the way we view them.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

1


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Animals from a different world

 by [Christian Jakobsen](#) - Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 11:42 AM

I think she suggest that the Indians were more shocked about the animals moving and settling in the new land more than the English settling. (Audio video, Mark :35) The Indians saw the English before, but never really saw the new animals before. The Indians and English looked at animals in different ways. The English thought of them as property, but the Indians didn't see them that way. (Audio video, Mark 1:50). They believed that the animals were other than human persons, that the animal was a living thing living on Earth with them and had spiritual protector.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

1


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Re: Animals from a different world

 by [Christian Jakobsen](#) - Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 1:00 PM

They both only new their own way of life before they both had to live together on the same land. I can see how the English saw their animals as property, since it was their way to get food and money. I also see where the Indians are coming from. I also think it's interesting that when settlers pushed west often the leading edge was livestock.

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1

**The animals were just as important if not more!**by [Jessica Eckley](#) - Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 7:54 PM

Jessica Eckley

Week 3 Forum: Creatures of Empire

I actually agree of the concept "Creatures of Empire" and that the animals were very important. I agree because there is a lot of evidence that in the article "Creatures of Empire: How domestic Animals Transformed Early America." I believe that the controversy over the cows and hogs of the Colonists and the beliefs of the Indians played a big part in America's history. For example, if the livestock weren't there, there would probably have never been a one of the wars between the Colonists and Indians. As stated in the article: "English livestock destroyed the habitats that supported native game and the plants that provided medicines and utensils." That either ran the Indians off or provided more fuel for the war. Another example is that Indians had a different view of animals as did the Colonists. Native Americans thought animals, according to the audio file, "as another form of human beings." To Colonists, animals were simply property that they owned. Indians would have specific spiritual rituals in hunting or of killing the animal to show respect and grace about it. The Colonists would just hunt for sport. They did not treat the animals very kindly. The disagreements between the Colonists and Indians over the care of the livestock and the free roaming issues, caused a lot of problems. If the livestock wasn't there, the problems wouldn't have been either. So, who knows what would have happened if that war between the Colonists and Indian didn't happen. We could possibly have a different America today.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: The animals were just as important if not more!**by [Hannah Cartwright](#) - Wednesday, October 10, 2018, 9:11 PM

I agree with what you say about American possibly being different if it weren't for these animals. Even the smallest things have huge affects on the future, so bigger issued such as the disagreements between the Indians and The Colonists definitely had a huge affect on America. I think it is easy for people to disregard the affects animals may have had because issues with the people may seem more interesting, but really, as you said, a lot of the issues between the Indians and the Colonists would not have been there without these animals.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: The animals were just as important if not more!**by [Sarah Mackenzie](#) - Saturday, October 13, 2018, 9:48 PM

So it's pretty much like the butterfly effect. One thing happens and can change the course of history. If it wasn't for the animals then what issues do you think the Indians and Colonists would have had? Isn't it weird to think that history could have been completely different if they didn't have disagreements about animals. Although rightful disagreements.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0



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Re: The animals were just as important if not more!

by [Tehya Curley](#) - Saturday, October 13, 2018, 9:50 AM

I agree that animals are important, and that animals were the center of the problem for the colonists and the Indians. These animals were just a source of profit for the Europeans, but the Indians viewed animals differently. "Native Americans viewed themselves as part of, rather than distinct from, the natural world" (Creatures of Empire pg 1) which is all drained from the fact they believe animals have a spirit. For example, "there was no word to distinguish 'animals' in general from humans, simply words to identify separate species" (Creatures of Empire pg 1), but if they didn't believe that animals had spirits would they have considered making them livestock like the Europeans did?

Europeans did not believe in the concept that animals have spirits, but they did believe that they had control over the animals. Which is a opposite viewing of animals than the natives. They brought animals to the Americas and not only did they change history by doing this, but they changed their relationship with the natives. Animals were the main issue with the natives because they could not understand why someone would treat animals in such ways. The Europeans thought animals were their property. They even attempted to keep animals in captivity, but these animals caused havoc upon the land. "but as the number of English animals increased, so the instances of animals trespassing on Indian fields or of Indians killing feral hogs or cows increased" (Creature of Empire pg 1) this created conflict between the two groups and destroyed the Indians farming lands, hunting lands, and basically the way of life for them.

I agree, that the problems stemmed from the livestock that was brought with the Europeans.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2



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What do we have in common with the 17th Century?

by [Ruth Hyde](#) - Thursday, October 11, 2018, 6:49 PM

After listening to Professor Virginia DeJohn Anderson discuss the topic of her historic research book *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America*, I find myself in agreement with the idea that the animals brought to the Chesapeake Bay area in the 1600s would have been the cause of much confusion, disagreement and inevitable distrust between the indigenous peoples and the settling English. Professor DeJohn Anderson describes the animals that would have never been previously seen by the original inhabitants, and how bizarre and foreign they would have been. She also

discusses the most problematic issue was likely the “package of ideas” about the new animals – noting that the English perceived of their livestock as property, which was in complete contrast to native beliefs. The indigenous sense would be to see animals as other living beings, sharing Earth with humans, and not necessarily inferior. Animals were part of life, in diverse ways for both groups, but the English principles of owning or controlling animals was unfamiliar to Native Americans.

I believe that animals played a significant role in disrupting the culture of the indigenous peoples and radically changing the scope and future of the environment from the arrival of the settling English in the mid-17th century. Unlike other colonized parts of the world, the American continent was already home large, hard hoofed animals and some similar grazing areas, however the animals were not controlled or manipulated in the English way, nor were they part of defined fiscal or objectified possession.

As a nation, we continue to face similar issues in relation to ideas about what is, or is not, human domain. An example would be to consider the debate around use of the natural environment – and what some may consider resources for human consumption, others consider wilderness in need of protection and preservation.

The research that Professor DeJohn Anderson presents leads me to think about both perspectives and how we can learn from the turmoil of the past by using the information to possibly find middle ground in the future. What we have today, that the Native Americans didn't have in common with the English at the time, is shared language – would it be possible to alleviate some public disagreements with dialogue and idea sharing?

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Re: What do we have in common with the 17th Century?

by [Jessica Eckley](#) - Sunday, October 14, 2018, 2:27 PM

Before I read your post, I didn't really focus on the fact that the Indian people never saw the livestock before in their lives until the English brought them over. Nowadays people are so used to seeing a variety of animals and species. I can't imagine the confusion and the fear the Indians must have felt. For one these unknown, armed, different language speaking, white people showed u to their land demanding to take control over everything. If that wasn't enough, they brought over these ungodly animals that they have never seen or heard of before. These beasts just trampling and destroying their lively hood and the white people that “owned” these animals taking them to jury or killing them when all the Indians were doing was trying to live their lives as normally as they could despite the interrupting of the white people and their foreign animals. If I put myself in their shoes, I would have been deathly scared too, trying anything to survive an provide for the tribe. No wonder the nasty war between them broke out.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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The Settlers made the mistake of not looking after their property, it wasn't the Indians fault

by [Evan Brewer](#) - Thursday, October 11, 2018, 8:20 PM

DeJohn Anderson suggests the main problem of these animals and the relation of the Indians and Europeans is that the new animals aren't corralled or kept in a specific locations. They are free-ranging cows, pigs, sheep, and goats that are getting into Indian crop and causing a lot of problems with their land. I think that it was somewhat wrong of the settlers to do this because they saw these animals as property. Since these living properties were moving around, owners would lose their animals and eventually find them dead or in Indian territories causing trouble. In the audio file, Creatures of Empires, Anderson says, "An Indian might be tempted to treat that animal as he would any wild animal, which is to kill it. But if he does, it's not the same thing to kill a piece of property and that person may well be hauled into court as a criminal" (4:28). Since the Indians didn't see animals as property, they didn't think twice about killing such animal. The settlers made this situation a big deal and sent many Indians to court for damages, even though it was the settlers fault in the first place.

The Indians and Christian settlers were very different in many aspects but mostly with their religious beliefs. The settlers believed in the bible and Indians believed in a more spiritual being with no official book or readings. Since there was a big difference, Indians didn't believe in animals as property, but as "spiritual power or spiritual protector"(podcast 2:48). The English Christians thought of this as "heretical" and saw their livestock as property. I do understand why settlers saw their livestock as property because they owned, used animals for milk, food, or wool, and could sell them for profit. In today's' standard, early settlers and people now are very much the same when it comes to livestock. It was a form of income or supply of food. Indians didn't understand this because they would just go out and kill animals to survive and didn't put much more thought into it. I do closely identify with the spiritual power of animals and such because they are alike humans in a way and were created for a purpose. I also believe that our culture needs domestic livestock to survive as a whole. What do you think?

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: The Settlers made the mistake of not looking after their property, it wasn't the Indians fault

by [Jessica Eckley](#) - Saturday, October 13, 2018, 4:34 PM

I do agree with your post. It has always fascinated me ow the Indians viewed animals and livestock. I love that they look at animals spiritually and that the don't own a single one of them. It makes me think that the Indians believe each animal has a soul like each human does and souls can't be owned. I live on a ranch in the mountains and one of the things we practice here on the ranch is giving back to nature as the Indians did. For example, one of our steers passed away with unknown causes and besides just digging a hole and burying it, my boss decided to take it up the mountain side and let the wild animals have it as they would have done back then.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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**Domestic creatures in a Wild World**by [Emily Gilman](#) - Friday, October 12, 2018, 12:52 PM

This sound clip was WAAAY more interesting to me than the other. I am 9/64ths.... which is about 1/8th Navtive American. From the Hoopa tribe in Humbolt County in California. I also grew up on a 112 acre farm in Eagle Point, Oregon. I designate with both sides of the domestic and wild aspects. We consider our livestock as "property" but they are also allowed to roam free on our land. I also grew up hunting wild animals such as deer, elk, cougar, bear, turkey, grouse, etc... I can imagine how weird it would be to see domestic animals such as cows and pigs and chickens... there isn't much like those in the wild. Especially since their coloring is quite different as well. Putting myself in their shoes I wouldn't understand domesticating animals either. I spend a lot of time in the woods and on the river. My boyfriend is very in touch with his Native side as well. Animals are attracted to him. It's amazing to watch. But the way the Englishmen molded the future of America by bringing the livestock has enabled so much to become in our economy and shaped our entire way of living. Maybe things would be different if the thought of property was never to have come about. This has been my favorite thing to learn about so far. I never thought about this aspect of the immigration.

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Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Domestic creatures in a Wild World**by [Sarah Mackenzie](#) - Friday, October 12, 2018, 4:16 PM

I'm so glad that someone said this in their post. I was telling my husband the same exact thing. Your aspect of being able to designate with both sides was exactly how I was trying to explain it. I can relate to the livestock being property part as well as hunting. It's as though you're on both sides of the fence. I'm sure back then things had to be one or the other and there was no middle ground. Hence all of the fighting. Could you imagine that in today's society. I know there are issues that are black and white, but it's okay to be in the gray.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Creatures of Empire**by [Michael Bailey](#) - Saturday, October 13, 2018, 10:05 PM

The main problem Virginia DeJohn Anderson expresses in "Creatures of Empire" is the concept that animals had a much bigger effect on the way the first European settlers, and the Native American relations began. When the Europeans first arrived in North America treaties and deals were made with the Native Americans regarding land. Land was given to the Europeans, with the Native Americans having the belief that the Europeans would be confined to that land, their animals included. This was often not the case. Europeans brought with them many domestic animals such as cows, pigs, sheep, etc. These animals were completely new to these Native Americans, and they had trouble with these animals trespassing on their land and using the resources they

relied on. Anderson also states that Native Americans in New England hunted primarily using traps, rather than bow and arrow. While they would set traps for animals such as deer, sometimes the domestic animals of the Europeans would get into their traps. Though this was not intentional on part of the Native Americans, this caused tension between the two groups.

In addition to this, the religious difference in the way Native Americans and Europeans saw their animals was huge. Native Americans believed that animals had souls, and purpose. They gave something to nature, and they represented many different things to the Native Americans. Though Native Americans would still hunt animals, they were thankful for what the animals could give them, and worshipped them for that.

Europeans used their animals for their own benefit, and treated them as property. In the belief system of the Europeans, they didn't believe the same way the Natives did about animals. I personally more closely relate with the Native Americans in my belief about animals. I think all animals have a purpose, and though I am not a vegetarian, I do think that the way we consume animals needs to be restructured and more respectful towards animals. The way we mass consume and use farm animals, primarily cows is not only disgusting, but immoral. A few months ago driving through Southern California, between Bakersfield and Los Angeles, we got a sudden overwhelming scent of feces. We look out our windows to see a farm with hundreds of stalls of cows, the stalls were not much bigger than the cows themselves, and many of the cows were standing in inches of their own feces. These cows were waiting to be slaughtered. Similar scenes can be seen for the way dairy cows are used for their milk, and chickens for eggs. It's truly disgusting, and the way we as humans consume animal products needs to change.

I do agree with Anderson's concept in her book, as I think that overall the Europeans had a major negative impact on the Native Americans, disrupting their way of life and killing many of them. I agree with Anderson's idea that animals had a large impact on this. In addition to the statements Anderson makes, what I have also learned in class and from the textbook is that many of the animals the Europeans brought over carried diseases that Native Americans had never been exposed to, causing a lot of death in the Native communities. From the rats aboard the ships, to the farm animals.

While I do agree that animals had an affect on the first settlements in America, I do not agree that they were "the main characters" of early American history. Without the humans such as John Smith, the animals would not ever make it to the New World. Also, animals don't form society, they aren't capable of overtaking a continent, the way the Europeans did.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: Creatures of Empire

by [Ruth Hyde](#) - Sunday, October 14, 2018, 2:09 PM

Thank you for your detailed response, Michael - I enjoyed your perspective on the conflict experienced between Native Americans and English settlers in the mid-1600's and think you articulated the main causal factors of religion, resources and disease very well. I also agree that animals cannot be held accountable as the main players in the colonizing course of history, which is clearly shaped by humans but I keep being drawn back to DeJohn Anderson's phrase "package of ideas", and reflecting on overarching value systems that clashed when these two groups interacted for the first time.

I think DeJohn Anderson's research relating to animals give us a poignant viewpoint from which to assess the broader difference in cultures which made it almost impossible for these groups to understand each other during this moment of history. The different value systems shaped the decisions and priorities of each community - while English Puritan settlers were try to establish their livelihoods in their cultural way, Native Americans were having their cultural norms disrupted by newcomers. I agree that we cant blame or explain all change experience in the "New World" on animals, but I also think they are a great example of influential historical elements in effect.

-Ruth

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2



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A Continent Without Large Domestic Animals

by [Asa Telschow](#) - Saturday, October 13, 2018, 11:27 PM

This topic was interesting to me because I believe that domestic animals did a great deal to shape the events that unfolded on the American continent when Europeans arrived. As Jared Diamond points out in his book, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, there were very few animals in the Americas that were suitable for domestication, probably because early humans hunted them to extinction. The only domestic animals were guinea pigs and alpacas in Central America. He goes on to claim that the natives were much less likely to develop certain technologies than Europeans because they lacked draft animals. For instance, our textbook includes an image of a toy deer from Mesoamerica, which indicates that they "understood the principle of the wheel, but they found no practical use for it." (Murrin p. 18) Without an animal to pull it, there was little use for wheels or plows.

The influence of domestic animals was also important because of disease. Diamond argues that most of the plagues in Europe originated as pathogens in livestock. They affected humans primarily because Europeans lived in such close proximity to their animals. The only disease to reach Europe from the American continent, according to Diamond, was smallpox. The whole host of diseases to affect the American Natives however was so bad that "[for] the hemisphere as a whole, any given region probably lost 90 or 95 percent of its population within a century of sustained contact with Europeans." (Murrin p. 36)

This audio file with Professor Virginia DeJohn Anderson added a new element that I find intriguing: the tendency to try to dominate. The natives "did not conceive of any living animal as anyone's property" (DeJohn, about 1:55). The respect for animals as different, but not necessarily inferior stands in stark contrast with the European perspective toward livestock as possessions. I think that this psychology explains a lot about how Europeans found it acceptable to enslave and dominate other humans.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: A Continent Without Large Domestic Animals

by [Jessica Eckley](#) - Sunday, October 14, 2018, 2:15 PM

I found your points very interesting. One point that stood out to me was the point you made about the livestock carrying certain diseases that ended up transferring to the colonists and Indians with such close proximity. It makes me wonder what would have happened if the colonists acting did separate the animals in pastures mostly away from constant human contact as we do nowadays. Maybe in the early days, it could have not completely ruled out humans contracting the diseases but maybe would have prolonged the process a bit. It would have been interesting to see if the separation of the animals could have stopped or prolonged such a wipe out. Also, if the colonists actually did separate the animals into their own pastures, that may could have saved a lot of bad blood between the Indians and the colonists and may have even saved lots of lives lost from the horrible war.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**I agree, animals=disease**by [Sarah Mackenzie](#) - Sunday, October 14, 2018, 8:00 PM

I don't know how I missed the link with animals and disease. I guess reading other articles and further information I must have just skimmed over it. After reading your post though I did more research on the topic. The inconvenience of animals goes far deeper than religious aspects, or animals trespassing on land. The illnesses that came along with these animals were intense. With so many people dying from these illnesses. Smallpox killed the greatest number of Indians, followed by measles, influenza, and bubonic plague. Indian populations did not have many of the infectious diseases that were found in Europe. That all changed when the English arrived. Indians were disease-free for the most part up to that point because of the lack of domesticated animals. Lacking the large domesticated animals, there were few opportunities for the transfer of infections from animal reservoirs of disease to human beings. Imagine how different life would have been if the English just came over with just themselves.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

2

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