

HST 201: History of United States F17 (Escobar Meta 20887 23004)

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Creatures of Empire

by Joe Escobar - Friday, October 6, 2017, 11:09 AM

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 question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Creatures of Empire

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The Problem With the new Animals

by Nathaniel McKinney - Saturday, October 7, 2017, 5:33 PM

Creatures of Empire

The main problem DeJohn Anderson is the way Natives Americans and the settlers viewed animals. In the article and the voice interview she was talking about how the Native Americans viewed animals as equals with themselves and was no word to distinguish between people and animals (Paragraph 3). Versus the English colonist they gave names, had ownership over animals, and domesticated/ had dominion over animals (Paragraph 3). To the second part of the question I have never viewed animals in the way Native Americans do because in our

culture now we have farms where these animals are in a terrible situation and the purpose of them is to eat or produce something for people. I think that the religious difference between the two cultures played a huge factor in the relationship of the two cultures. As I said at the start they viewed animals a lot differently and in the article, they said when English settlers messed with Native Americans' stuff, if they did something to the animals the natives would get in trouble. From the animals' troubles, problems arose with the two cultures leading to many fights like Bacon's Rebellion.

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1

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An Invasive Species Role in Colonizing America

by Casandra Fountain - Saturday, October 7, 2017, 8:46 PM

Professor Virginia DeJohn Anderson presents in her book, *Creatures of Empire*, that livestock is a major factor in the colonization of the New World. Unlike other historians, she shows the connections between Indian, colonist, and livestock and how livestock aided the colonists to press forward in taking over Indian land. I believe animals do have a major role in our society; back in early American history and today's world. The mass raising of livestock for human consumption in the modern-day slaughterhouse, is a very hot topic in today's society. These slaughterhouses are buying out our local rancher who played a significant role in how we started as a country. As the livestock did in the colonial times by forcing Native Americans off their land; the slaughterhouses are doing the same to the small-town rancher.

Englishmen saw animals as property. Dr. Matthew Ward wrote an article reviewing Anderson's book and states, "English colonist, in contrast, animals were property over which they had a biblically ordained right to assert dominion; they were an economic resource to be manipulated and exploited," (paragraph 3). Whereas Indians viewed animals in a spiritual sense. In the interview Professor Anderson gives in the podcast *Backstory*, she states Indians think of animals as "other than human persons". Animals are living beings, sharing the earth with the Indians who were different, but were not viewed as inferior to the human beings (2:15). The natives believed that certain animals, such as deer, were to possess spiritual powers and spiritual protectors (2:45). These two vastly different views of animals made it difficult to find common ground between the Indians and colonist. I was raised with the understanding that most animals were made to provide food for the table. With that being said, I strongly believe animals should not be killed just for the fun of it. I believe game animals do have spiritual ties between them and the humans who harvest them due to the fact they are taking that animal's life to continue their own. When one hunts for a wild animal you create a bond between the animal. You are thankful for the animal. This animal has provided food for your family and in a way, becomes one with you.

I strongly agree with the concept of *Creatures of Empire*. The livestock played a major role in the expansion of the English colonization of America. Ward writes the English settlers had imagined that they would replicate patterns of agriculture from England, but they were in for a rude awakening. Colonists found out that the high cost of labor and the constant shortage of manual labor meant they were forced to allow their animals to roam free in the woods, rather than keeping them in enclosed fields. This created high tensions between Indians and colonists. Animals were found destroying Indian crops, depleting them of their needed resources to feed their tribe. When your food was ruined in this time period you couldn't just run down to the store and get more food. Crops were everyone's livelihood. Even today's society, if your crop doesn't produce you run the risk of significant financial hardship. If the

Englishmen hadn't brought over an invasive species or potentially brought a different species that wouldn't have caused so much damage, would we have had better relations with the Native Americans?

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Re: An Invasive Species Role in Colonizing America

by Nathaniel McKinney - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 7:14 PM

I like how you brought up the idea of slaughterhouses nowadays, in my post I brought up a quick little point about slaughterhouses today. In the way that we just mass produce animals just for food. Seeing a different idea with the animals is interesting to see and how you went a little more in depth than I did. To add on to your point, a lot of tension between the settlers and Native Americans was created by allowing the settlers "property" roam free. In paragraph 14, Anderson talks about how colonists would give discipline to the Indians by having them go to court. And the Indians retaliated by killing more of the livestock and eventually lead to war like Bacon's Rebellion and King Phillips war.

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Re: An Invasive Species Role in Colonizing America

by Casandra Fountain - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 9:51 PM

Nathaniel,

I just responded to Sam's post with the same premise in mind. The concept of charging the Indian and not knowing the rightful owner of the killed animal, especially when the animal has wandered onto Indian territory, I think the English settler would have to take the lost. I think it's their responsibility as the owner to keep track of their herd (or property). In today's society, ranchers brand their cattle for this reason and the fact they have their cattle fenced off so they ideally can't run off.

Dr. Ward writes in his review, "If Indians sought compensation in the colonial courts, as they could in theory, any compensation was assessed by the neighbours and friends of the farmers whose livestock had created the problem." How interesting, the colonists being unfair to the Indians in yet another way. In the courts today, jurors are randomly selected and from there each lawyer tends to pick the ones who will "hopefully" rule in their favor at the end. At least this is somewhat random and fair compared to the bias rulings back then.

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Re: An Invasive Species Role in Colonizing America

by Hee Jin Seo - Saturday, October 14, 2017, 9:09 AM

I was also fascinated by the connection between humans and animals. The opinion of the Native Americans towards livestock was completely different from English colonists like you pointed out. I agree with you that animals do have a major role in the society. Humans, animals and environment are endlessly influence on one another. I wonder what would

happened if English colonists respected the way of treating livestock from Native Americans. I think considering animals just as property is human's arrogant idea. No matter when and where we live, human should remember that we share earth with animals.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: An Invasive Species Role in Colonizing America

by Sam Reposa - Saturday, October 14, 2017, 11:53 PM

I too was raised with the whole "provide for the dinner table" ideal. And I think, to some degree, the Indians did too--just in a more spiritual manner. The idea of hunting had very different meanings for the Indians and the English. According to paragraph 7 of Dr. Ward's article, both parties enjoyed and participated in hunting to some degree; however to Indians, hunting was done more so in a spiritual manner. The Indians relied on the hunting of animals for food and nourishment and in return for killing them, "animal spirits were honoured and rewarded" through ritual (Ward, paragraph 6).

I really believe that the whole conflict regarding animals between the English and the Natives really comes down to a difference in morals and views--just like any of today's big political issues such as abortion, partisanism, LGBTQ+, or religion. It all comes down your morals and views. The concept of animal ownership or animals being commodities for trade was completely foreign to the Indians because they were not raised with those beliefs--they did not have the Christian values of the English. Because both parties had their own beliefs and weren't willing to find a middle-ground or compromise, that is why the animal-related conflicts escalated to where it did. I find this analogous to how people on opposite sides of the Democrat/Republican spectrum have a hard time finding middle ground, and not much bipartisan progress is being made.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Some of the Various Dimensions of Conflict between Natives and Settlers

by Hunter Coy - Monday, October 9, 2017, 10:40 AM

I found the interaction between settlers, natives and their animals fascinating. As DeJohn notes in her interview, one of the main sources of conflict was competition over food sources between animals that the natives used for subsistence, and the animals that the settlers used for subsistence, with the conflict carrying over to the food sources that the natives themselves used. DeJohn notes that pigs would travel to the seaside at low tide and dig up shellfish that the natives used, or that green, fertile grass was a prime target for grazing cows as opposed to the deer that had eaten the grass with little to no competition for so long. Or occasionally, a wandering cow would walk into a trap that had been intended for a deer. The native that had set the trap would be held responsible. And though I don't think DeJohn mentions this, I, personally, could easily see how a misunderstanding regarding a cow and a trap could easily escalate into an armed confrontation between natives and settlers. As for the contrasting views and opinions that settlers and natives had in regards to animals and the rights that they had, natives viewed animals as "non- living persons" and saw them as their own unique beings with spiritual guardians. Compare this to the Judeo- Christian viewpoint that man has dominion over the earth and all it's animals (as noted by the interview). I could see how these views, being as different as they are, spurring conflict between the two groups.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Some of the Various Dimensions of Conflict between Natives and Settlers**

by Kelsey Lane - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 5:52 PM

I can also completely see and understand how the different view point regarding animals would have sparked issues between colonists and Indians. Colonists viewed everything the bought or traded for as theirs and as property. This included animals. The Indians on the other hand, had a great deal of respect for the animals around them and believed they all had a spirit and a place. Religious boundaries have always been a thing and will continue to be, but I think that the misunderstanding and the issue was even greater given the situation of settlement in America. The Indians and colonists were already having difficulties getting along and when you bring strange animals that can hurt or disturb the way of life for an Indian (eating grass, digging up seafood, crossing borders), and double that with conflicting religions and views, it can be very difficult to adjust.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Religious views of Native Americans and English Colonists**

by Christopher Zuercher - Monday, October 9, 2017, 11:55 AM

Religious differences between colonists and Native Americans played a role in how they viewed and treated animals. In Matthew Ward's review of *Creatures of Empire*, he states, "Native Americans relationship with animals was largely reciprocal, reflecting the belief that many creatures possessed their own spiritual power. For English colonists, animals were property over which they had a biblically ordained right to assert their dominion; they were an economic resource to be manipulated and exploited." I would like to think that I that I view animals as the Native Americans did. Spiritually I agree with them. However, I consume meat regularly that I have no connection with and consequently I support companies that view animals as a commodity, as the English colonists did.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Creatures of Empire**

by Kelsey Lane - Monday, October 9, 2017, 1:14 PM

The first issue that Anderson addresses when concerning the animals that were brought by Europeans, was the fact that Europeans viewed these animals as property. The Indians viewed no living creatures as property and this caused an issue among them. Indians thought of animals as living beings that has spiritual value and protectors. Another issue that these animals caused was that Europeans did not have full control of them and therefor they would often wonder onto Indian land and destroy crops and digging up land. Also much of the hunting done by Indians was done with traps and often times domesticated animals would disturb or get caught in them. Religion played a very large role in how this conflict started as well as continued. I lean more towards agreeing with Europeans on the fact that if you bought something (even if that thing is a leaving animal) it does belong to you. I also relate to the thinking of the Indians when talking about how wild animals should not be owned and that they all have a spirit that should ultimately should be respected. A more recent example of this

"if I bought it I own it" mentality is was actually with the slaves. Living breathing HUMANS and yet people still found a way to own and claim them as theirs. When it comes to the Creatures of Empire idea I'm rather neutral.

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new world

by Macy Biggs - Monday, October 9, 2017, 7:52 PM

Not so different England in the 17th century was considered to be a pre industrial society. Their way of life were determined by the seasons, harsh winters and summers. When people settled in the New World there was only a difference mainly in the south from their homeland. Things that made it difficult to establish a society like the English were due to the demand for labor in the south (men), and the people bought to Virginia were mainly men, women came in smaller numbers later, over time there was a natural increase in the population because of this. By 1700 there were still 50 men to every 10 women, the demand for labor ended due to the importation of involuntary workers (slaves).

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The connection between humans and animals

by Hee Jin Seo - Monday, October 9, 2017, 8:13 PM

Creatures of Empire refers to the transformation of the connection shared by English colonists to their domestic animals. According to professor Virginia DeJohn Anderson, the new livestock that the colonists brought with them were very unfamiliar to Native Americans. Domesticated livestock was a foreign concept for the Native Americans because they had such a different point of view about animals. Native Americans were conscious that all animals and humans share the earth. Furthermore, they thought humans and animals share a symbiotic relationship. On the other hand, Europeans considered animals as property, and were not at the same level as humans. This was evidenced by the two cultures views on predators. Native Americans viewed predators with respect and knew they played a dangerous, but vital role in the ecosystem, while the colonists viewed them as a danger and a nuisance that needed to be eradicated.

When I visited Japan few years ago, I saw a lot of deer wandering throughout a park in Nara. I was curious why the people in Nara went to a lot of effort to protect the deer that lived there, so I searched for the reason why there is a strong connection to deer in Nara. I learned that deer in Nara are considered sacred as they are messengers from God. Nowadays, the artificially high population of deer is starting to cause problems. The deer have started to invade farms and destroy crops. The Japanese government had to make a change and finally allowed people to start hunting Deer in August. Stories like this show that even if humans are supposedly "protecting" animals, when humans start to influence nature too much a large unbalance can appear.

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Re: The connection between humans and animals

by Casandra Fountain - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 7:47 PM

You bring up an interesting point with your trip to Nara. It made me think of a video clip I watched about the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park in 1995. The wolves had been absent for nearly 70 years and with their reintroduction they brought new life and old life back to Yellowstone. With these changes though, the wolves ultimately changed the rivers. Granted, this is the opposite effect of the deer in Nara but it brings us back to how animals have a big impact on the land and lives around them. Humans cannot disturb what mother nature has intended. With that being said, can you imagine what the land looked like just a few decades after the arrival of the colonists? Deforestation and soil depletion were just a few of the environmental negative effects the colonist brought with them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q>

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2



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Re: The connection between humans and animals

by Dylan Ganahl-Johll - Friday, October 13, 2017, 1:05 PM

After a few decades after the arrival of the colonist, and with the animals they brought we can assume they started to multiply fairly quickly. Even though the Indians had tried hunting them. Eventually, they got out of control leading the Native Americans to move up to 30 miles away from where they had been like mentioned in the video. Much like Hee said before about Nara protecting the deer, they got out of

Much like Hee said before about Nara protecting the deer, they got out of control and the numbers kept rising, eventually leading to land, crops, and other property being destroyed so they had to do something about it. And the same thing happened in the video with the pigs, sheep, goat, etc ruining property of the Natives, eventually causing them to move or continue killing these animals ("property" or not).

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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Re: The connection between humans and animals

by Hee Jin Seo - Saturday, October 14, 2017, 9:11 AM

Thank you for sharing the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park in 1995. It was very interesting. It is the contrary situation deer at Nara Park in Japan like you said. I realized it is difficult to maintain the natural balance of ecology. I think these days, humans focusing on development more than preserving ecological environment. We easily decide to make tunnels in mountains and do a land reclamation works in the ocean. It will destroy environment thus, humans have to suffer the negative result from the indiscreet act. I sincerely believe that we try to do our best not to have a great effect on the nature.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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Difference in Beliefs, But Who Was Right?

by Sam Reposa - Monday, October 9, 2017, 11:44 PM

In her book *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America*, Virginia DeJohn Anderson provides us with three concepts. The first concept is that Native Americans viewed animals as “other than human” persons—meaning they did not see animals as inferior living beings to humans, but instead as creatures they shared the land with (Podcast). To go further, according to the review by Dr. Matthew Ward, in the Native American language “there was no word to distinguish ‘animals’ in general from humans, simply words to identify separate species”.

The second concept Anderson discusses is that the settlers believed that by bringing their animals, they could not only make the land more civilized, but the Native Americans as well. The English had a much different view on animals than the Natives, from the Bible, they believed they had dominion over the animals and considered them to be their property, which was a concept the Natives had a hard time conceiving.

The third concept Anderson discusses is the conflict brought upon from the convergence of the Native Americans and European animals. According to the *Biography of America* clip from week one, prior to settlement. “the [Native Americans] had never seen a horse, cow, pig, goat, a chicken, or even a honeybee”. An example of conflict between the Natives and the English is when the domestic animals trespass into Native land, the Natives would kill the animal. The animal was considered property of the English; therefore, the Natives would be tried in court.

I tried to stay as objective as possible in my writing, but I am having a hard time justifying the actions of the settlers—not because I disagree with their beliefs, but because they are punishing the Natives for rules that don’t belong to them. To me, it’s like American police trying to arrest someone in another country for something that is only illegal here—it doesn’t really work. What do you guys think? Were the English in the right to claim their animals as property even if they wander onto Native American territory?

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3

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Re: Difference in Beliefs, But Who Was Right?

by Casandra Fountain - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 8:46 PM

Sam

I would have to agree with you. It is hard to stay objective to what the colonists imposed on the Indians. Dr. Ward writes “Indians who killed livestock, even feral animals, in the woods were hauled before the courts and prosecuted, even though it was not always clear who owned the animals.” To me this concept of charging someone and not knowing the rightful owner of the killed animal, especially when the animal has wandered onto Indian territory, you would have to take the loss. I think it’s your responsibility as owner to keep track of your herd. (This is where branding your animals came into play) Ward goes on to write, “If Indians sought compensation in the colonial courts, as they could in theory, any

compensation was assessed by the neighbours and friends of the farmers whose livestock had created the problem.” Though they might have been "trying" to settle the compensation fairly, the rulings were still in the settlers favor having all friends and neighbors decide. They should have brought Indians in to make the ruling of compensation more equal. At this point I would be pretty fed up with the treatment and high and mighty complex the colonists have over the Indians, and they were too. This ultimately led to the mutilation of English livestock. They would cut off its leg or cut out its tongue, and let the animal die a slow and painful death, a death that their English owners would most likely witness. (Ward’s review) Indians also responded by resorting to war and descending upon the colonial frontier in King Philip’s War in New England, and Bacon’s Rebellion in Virginia. (Ward’s review) As we discussed in class this was largest upheaval in colonies before 1775. With that upheaval, it brought a whole new evil. As stated in our textbook, “The rebellion had brought a festering class conflict to the surface, awakening Virginians to the need of social reform... As the colony gradually developed its system of racial slavery, class tensions among its white settlers diminished,” (p.87).

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Creatures of Empire: Religious Views

by Dylan Ganahl-Johll - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 6:59 PM

After watching the video, DeJohn Anderson stated the religious views by both the Indians and the English settlers. To the Indians animals weren't property, they were just 'other than human persons.' Indians killed animals to survive and even believed that major prey animals had spiritual protectors. However, the English settlers viewed their animals (pigs, sheep, cattle, and goats) as property. This meant that even though their animals (property) would be wandering around unsupervised and without any control, Indians couldn't kill without having to deal with lawsuits.

And as to if I look at animals like that I see where the Indians are coming from. If the pigs, sheep, cattle, and goats were controlled, fenced, and taken care by the Europeans then yes, they may have been "property". But the animals were left to roam and do as they pleased unattended. This lead to animals destroying Indian property even when they moved 30 miles away.

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Re: Creatures of Empire: Religious Views

by Jacob Spriggs - Saturday, October 14, 2017, 7:46 PM

I like how you tried to look at the issue of Indians killing English livestock from both point of views in your post. It seems to me that the English thought they were justified in prosecuting Indians when their livestock was killed because it was their property and they could choose how to deal with it. In my opinion, I think the English didn't put much effort into figuring out why the animals were being killed because if they had they would have controlled the livestock rather than trying to control the Indians. If they would have realized that the problem was that the livestock were wandering ff into Indian territory, they would have fenced off the animals, but instead they ignored this and put all the blame on the Indians, causing more altercations and retaliation from the Indians.

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Indians and European livestock

by Jacob Spriggs - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 9:22 PM

Professor DeJohn Anderson explains in her book *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* that the Indians that lived when the first European settlers came to America were not very accepting of the fact that the English viewed their livestock as property. Instead, they treated them as part of nature, just like every other animal, so they hunted them and used them for other resources, without confronting the settlers first. This, along with slaughtering the animals just to retaliate against settlers and other factors, led to the Indian Wars.

In today's society, there aren't many people who view all animals, domestic or wild, as part of nature except maybe some native Americans. You certainly can't go around killing someone else's livestock or pets, as that is a major crime. However it is easy to see where the Indians and English didn't see eye to eye when it came to domesticated animals. The Indians stuck to their belief that all animals were only owned by the Earth, while the English believed they needed these animals to survive in the colonies, and the two different opinions led to conflict fast.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Indians and European livestock

by Nathaniel McKinney - Saturday, October 14, 2017, 5:14 PM

The way the two cultures viewed animals is on two different spectrums. To see the way the Native Americans were treated for protecting their crops from the settler's animals. Dr. Ward writes "Indians who killed livestock, even feral animals, in the woods were hauled before the courts and prosecuted, even though it was not always clear who owned the animals." I feel as though you shouldn't be able to charge someone on a crime when protecting their property if the settlers can't keep track of their own animals. To be prosecuted on an animal that they are unsure would get very annoying and agitating but if they knew whose animals it was or if they were fenced in. I feel as though the Indians would have been more tolerate of a stray or two on occasion. Nowadays pretty much if not all farm animals are kept in some sort of containment and if they get out the farmer is going to deal with it. They wouldn't just let the animal roam free on someone else's land for long periods of time.

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Re: Indians and European livestock

by Sam Reposa - Saturday, October 14, 2017, 11:33 PM

I also believe that the Indian's shouldn't have been charged in instances that were out of their control such as the example around the 3:58 minute mark in the podcast. In this example, DeJohn Anderson describes a situation where an Indian sets a trap *intended* for a deer; however, a cow is trapped instead. If the cow were to be killed or injured, the

Indian who set the trap would be held responsible; therefore, liable for damages. In this situation, I do not believe the Indian to be at fault because the cow was wandering from the English territory onto Native land, plus the Indian did not intentionally kill the animal.

In your post, you seem to sympathize and favor the Native's point of view more, and to some degree, I certainly agree with you; however, once the Indians became intentional with their killing of the English's animals, it becomes harder for me to take their side. According to Dr. Ward in paragraph 5 of his article, "As Indians became more accustomed to English ways and more accustomed to their animals, they became less tolerant of English abuses and less inclined to accept the rulings of colonial courts. Finally, along the entire frontier, from New England to the Chesapeake, Indians began to retaliate by killing and maiming animals." As you said in your post, it certainly would get annoying and agitating getting prosecuted on something you have no control over; however, the way the Native's chose to deal with their frustration was intentionally violent, when it could've perhaps been dealt with in a more peaceful manner.

In conclusion, I agree that Natives shouldn't have been charged for situations that were out of their control, but once they got intentionally violent--then the English had every right to be upset.

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