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Creatures of Empire

by Joe Escobar – Friday, October 9, 2015, 11:13 PM

This forum thread is for Creatures of Empire posts and replies.

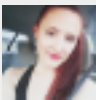
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Livestock causes tension

by Lauren Collett – Saturday, October 10, 2015, 10:25 PM

Professor Virginia DeJohn Anderson suggests one of the main differences of Native Americans and Europeans idea of the animals was simply the idea of animals as property. An idea that DeJohn Anderson suggests was not implemented in Native American society. Since animals were considered the property of the Europeans Anderson imagines Native American’s may have set there traps expecting deer but instead finding a cow. The idea of this cow being someone’s property would have never crossed there mind thus causing a conflict between the two cultures. On page 81 of the text book I found this quotation that seems to directly support many things DeJohn Anderson brings up “The colonists’ growing settlements shrank the Indians land base, and their free running hogs and cows wrecked the Indian cornfields.” This is not something I’ve heard in any history class previously but the idea of the Europeans animals destroying Indian crops makes a lot of sense and obviously caused tension.

Although the main difference was the idea of property I believe religion comes into play here. DeJohn Anderson mentions the fact that Indians often saw animals as living beings sharing the earth, not inferior but different and the idea of animals having spiritual power. An idea never taught in Christian religion which I believe could be considered against Christianity.

The Indians do come to use domesticated animals though in the book when the Spaniards leave horses behind in New Mexico the book mentions this on page 81. “During their 12–year absence (The Spaniards), the region had changed profoundly. Pueblo rebels had confiscated the horse herds of the fleeing Spaniards, and most of the animals had spread among the neighboring native societies through trading and raiding. In The Great Plains, the Apaches developed a dynamic culture of horseback hunting and warfare and expanded their settlements at the expense of other native groups.”

This is interesting because I feel many of us have the idea of Native American’s always riding horses when that really wasn’t the case at all until Europeans had been there for quite a while even then it seems mostly to be in New Mexico.



How animal domestication could have helped the Indians

by Oliver Valdivia – Friday, October 16, 2015, 8:01 PM

Interesting point Lauren. I think it's safe to say that the development of of horses was extremely beneficial to the continued success of the Apache Indians. In the podcast the interviewer brings up a good point that I did not notice the first time I listened to it. He says "Virginia you've described domestic animals as creatures of empire, suggesting that cattle and pigs are more significant for the process of settlement than we have recognized. Is this just a New England problem?" If Virginia DeJohn Anderson believes that domestication of animals is important to the process of settlement would the same belief apply to the Indians? If Native Americans had access to these European animals and would've let go of their belief that animals were not inferior to humans, prior to Christopher Columbus, would they have been a more stable people. Maybe if the Native Americans would've had access to horses prior to Spanish exposure they could've explored the nation quicker and more efficiently possibly forging a stronger, more unified populace.



Horses and mythical creatures

by Lauren Collett – Friday, October 16, 2015, 9:02 PM

I absolutely agree that horses had a great impact on the Native Americans as is just evident in what you said with the Apaches and the earlier quote from the book. It definitely increased there ability to trade with other tribes and also hunt more easily and quickly. Here's an interesting outtake from an article I found about an effect horses had that I hadn't even thought of.

"It spanned what had always been an unbridgeable gap in people’s ability to tap into the energy around them. In effect it transformed a mounted Sioux or Comanche or Nez Perce man into a new creature, one with the brain and imagination of a human and the grass-fed power, speed, and grace of a horse. As Momaday wrote, such a person had become one of those mythical creatures, a centaur, half-man and half-stallion"

(<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/early-settlements/essays/impact-horse-culture>)

The idea of this transforming them into mythical creatures make sense especially since they were just seeing horses and if you think about it how powerful a man feels on a horse. Also the horse must have greatly affected other parts of there culture especially considering all the tribal paintings of horses we've all seen growing up. If you think about Native American names one of the most famous that comes to mind would be "Crazy Horse" obviously named after the introduction of the horse to Native cultures.



Horses are native to North America

by Justin Cox – Saturday, October 17, 2015, 3:35 PM

I’m glad to see the two of you brought up the introduction of wild horses. I’ve been sitting on this interesting factoid for a little while:

It seems that horses are likely native to North America. As Jay F. Kirkpatrick Ph.D and Patricia M. Fazio, Ph.D, wrote in an article I found on <http://www.livescience.com/9589-surprising-history-america-wild-horses.html>:

Modern horses, zebras, and asses belong to the genus Equus, the only surviving genus in a once diverse family, the Equidae. Based on fossil records, the genus appears to have originated in North America about 4 million years ago and spread to Eurasia (presumably by crossing the Bering land bridge) 2 to 3 million years ago. Following that original emigration, there were additional westward migrations to Asia and return migrations back to North America, as well as

several extinctions of Equus species in North America.

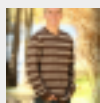
The last prehistoric North American horses died out between 13,000 and 11,000 years ago, at the end of the Pleistocene, but by then Equus had spread to Asia, Europe, and Africa.

So while it’s not incorrect that the Native Americans living during the Columbian exchange had never seen horses before, it is not quite accurate to say Europeans introduced the horse to North America as many people, including myself before this class, believe. In fact, it seems that they reintroduced the horse to its native lands.

Also of note is that horses migrated to Asia across Beringia in the opposite direction that humans took to reach North America. However, humans and horses weren’t crossing pathes with each other while migrating across Beringia. This article suggests horses migrated across the land bridge 2 to 3 million years ago while our book states humans first made the opposite journey merely 15,000 years ago.

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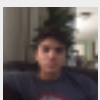
View on animals

by [Justin Smith](#) – Monday, October 12, 2015, 7:05 PM

I find it very interesting the stance that Professor Anderson makes about the animals that were native to the land and the domestic animals that the Europeans brought with them to the new world, especially the fact that Native Americans may have found the domesticated animals more alien to the land than the European settlers themselves. In the part of the country that I grew up in, it was a very popular belief that animals are property (farming was a big commodity in my area) so i agree with the stance that certain animals are a form of property. I think one reason that European settlers may have been more accustomed to the domestication of animals is due to early Christian beliefs. Christianity taught that animals were inferior to humans, therefore humans should use them to their own benefit (www.bbc.co.uk).

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Religion and Animals

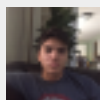
by [Oliver Valdivia](#) – Thursday, October 15, 2015, 7:33 PM

Initially I failed to connect religion and the Europeans view on animals. Thanks for bringing this point up. As our instructor has pointed out, religion was extremely important then and continues to be so now. I looked at your source and found the reason for why early Christians (be it Protestant or Catholics) believed that the animals were inferior to humans. They believed "humans have souls and animals don't" and "humans have reason and animals don't" (www.bbc.co.uk/religions/christianity/christianethics/animals_1.shtml).

As for the other side, Native Americans struggled to see this point of view because they believed animals were equal to humans. "Of course they were hunted,but only for food, and the hunter first asked permission to the animal's spirit" (www. pantheism.net/paul/history/native-americans.htm). This is a very important distinction because while the Christians believed the animals had no inner being, the Native Americans did.

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The creatures and ideas that the Europeans brought

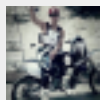
by [Oliver Valdivia](#) – Monday, October 12, 2015, 10:21 PM

I thought it was very interesting how something that to me seems like a very small part of the dynamic between Native Americans and the European settlers could be a microcosm for the drastic differences between the ideas of the two groups. DeJohn Anderson states that the main problem between the European animals and their relation to the Indians was that the Europeans had a different set of ideas about these domestic animals. The Europeans saw these animals as property, while Indians saw the animals as a part of nature that could not be owned. This issue comes to play an important role in King Phillip's (Metacom's) War where a concern that King

Phillip had about the Europeans was that their animals were destroying the Indian food supply. Our textbook summarizes this issue by saying, "The colonists' growing settlements shrank the Indians' land base, and their free-running hogs and cows wrecked the Indians' cornfields". Anderson argues that the issue of these animals was frustrating for the Indians because they didn't understand the why they couldn't just kill these animals and the answer was that the Europeans saw them as property. My ideas coincide with the ideas of the Europeans and I feel this is why the issue of the animals often goes unnoticed. Myself and probably many others don't see how someone can have a conflict with the ownership of an animal like the Native Americans did.

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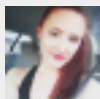
Re: Creatures of Empire, The main problem behind the conflict and the issues we still face today

by [Austin Howerton](#) - Monday, October 12, 2015, 11:24 PM

DeJohn Anderson suggests the main problem was the English and Indians viewing animals in completely different ways. These animals were all new to the Indians and were looked at as strange creatures but that was not the main problem. Through the eyes of the English these creatures were viewed as property with no spiritual connection and the Indians had their own opinion viewing them as living creatures that they shared the world with and in some way having some sort of spiritual protector within. Another main cause of the problem was the fact that the English had little control over the animals behavior such as getting loose and destroying Indian crops, pigs digging up the Indians selfish along the ocean shores, and animals getting caught in live traps. Another main problem was that Indians viewed the English domestic animals like they would a deer but when slaughtered was viewed to the English as steeling their property. Even when the Indians received land 30 miles away in a bad deal that the Indians weren't aware of the English domestic animals still ventured out to destroy their crops blowing it up into a even larger conflict. I view animals through the eyes of both Indian and the English because some animals are viewed as food and a way to provide but some animals are viewed as domestic animals such as dogs that would be viewed as animal cruelty if slaughtered for food. Today I believe the same discussion is taking place, where does the line get drawn between domestic and wild animals for food purposes. Many look at hunting as a way to provide but there are also many people that view it as slaughtering a helpless living creature and it seems to be an ongoing conflict in our nation today.

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Animals as property today

by [Lauren Collett](#) - Thursday, October 15, 2015, 10:10 PM

It is interesting that you bring up the discussion of this in society today on how we view animals. I believe it is important to look at history often to provide discussion on the conflicts of today. People of European descent have long viewed animals as property although the laws of animals as property go as far back as Roman times. It has only been since the early 1900's that our laws have changed to reflect domestic animals such as dogs and cats as property.

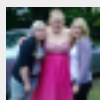
"The common law regards and gives the greatest protection to those animals designated as “useful,” and the least protection to those ferae naturae. Useful animals [e.g., cattle and sheep] are regarded as having intrinsic value, and are given the same protection as is given to goods; but, at common law, animals of a base nature are not regarded as property to the extent of being subjects of larceny, nor could a criminal action be brought for maliciously killing an animal of a base nature [e.g., dogs and cats]."

(<https://www.animallaw.info/article/living-property-new-status-animals-within-legal-system>)

Although the current worries people have about hunting since its not essential for survival anymore would be another discussion altogether. Thank you for bringing up this point.

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Concerned

by [Emalie Pilon](#) - Wednesday, October 14, 2015, 7:25 PM

I feel like the new animals may have caused concern and confusion but not as much as the new people did. With the animals they had to worry about if it was dangerous, if it carried diseases and other things like that. But I feel that the human would be the most concerning. They had weapons and minds that could form plans and bodies

that could carry out those plans. I'm sure that the animals came as a shock, but I think the strangers who brought the animals would be a much greater shock. In the audio clip DeJohn Anderson said that a lot of the times animals were viewed as having spiritual power, so maybe they viewed the new animals the same way and maybe instead of being weary of them, they felt interested. I don't really know how they would have felt about the animals, but I do feel like the humans would have been the most concerning.

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"Non-human persons?"

by [Justin Cox](#) - Wednesday, October 14, 2015, 8:04 PM

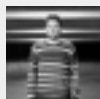
Professor DeJohn Anderson argues convincingly that the main difficulty Native Americans ran into with the new species of animals that European settlers brought to the American continent was that Europeans thought of their domesticated animals as property. DeJohn Anderson argues that this concept of humans owning another creature was foreign to Native Americans and that when they did not honor it they often found themselves in trouble.

DeJohn Anderson highlights the religious differences between Native Americans and European settlers and suggests that those differences were fundamental to the disparate ways the two groups regarded animals. Native Americans, she argues, viewed animals as something akin to 'non-human persons, with spiritual powers' thought I doubt that's a phrase native people ever used to refer to their own philosophy. This view of animals differed from the "Judeo-Christian dominion" view held by European settlers, which in part held that animals are inferior to humans, allowing for their status as property.

I find the suggestion that Native Americans viewed animals as "non-human persons" to be an insufficient description when, as DeJohn Anderson herself points out, the natural inclination of a Native American confronted with an animal causing him or her trouble would be to "kill it." I suspect Native Americans would not be so quick to "release an arrow," so to speak, if another human were causing trouble in part because there can be real repercussions associated with killing or wounding another human, i.e. revenge, that don't need to be considered when attacking an animal.

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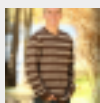
I disagree with her thesis

by [Justin Cox](#) - Wednesday, October 14, 2015, 8:40 PM

The original thesis of DeJohn Anderson's statements came in response to questioner's original inquiry. DeJohn Anderson proposes that Native Americans would have likely found the animals European settlers brought with them even stranger than the white-skinned European settlers themselves. I respect her expertise on this subject but I also disagree with her thesis. I would suggest she doesn't really hold fast to this thesis because she merely said that in "some ways" the animals would have been considered stranger to Native Americans, and she even said it through a dismissive chuckle.

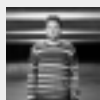
In my own life experience, I have been introduced many times to new species of animals I did not know existed. While I have found many of those new species to be intriguing and the experience of learning about them exciting, I strongly believe those feelings would pale in comparison to meeting a radically different form of human being I did not know existed. I'd liken it to meeting a biped from Mars walking his Martian "dog" along Pre's trail. There is no doubt which of these two new creatures would draw the vast majority of my attention. I like dogs but the similarities between the Martian biped and me would undoubtedly captivate my attention.

Futhermore, I disagree with DeJohn Anderson's thesis because she uses the fact that 'Native Americans had had some interactions with Europeans via the sea' as reasoning for why they would have found the animals they had never seen before as stranger than the Europeans. Firstly, she doesn't offer any examples of times or places where these nautical interactions occurred. I know only of Viking-Native American interactions involving Leif Erikson, as we discussed in class, hundreds of years before Columbus reached the Caribbean. Even if these interactions did occur, the number of Native Americans who had set eyes on Europeans must have been miniscule and certainly not enough to make the arrival of thousands of Europeans in the 15th and 16th centuries anything but profoundly strange.



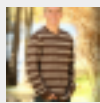
Re: I disagree with her thesis
by Justin Smith - Friday, October 16, 2015, 12:39 PM

I can definitely see where you are coming from with the disagreement with her thesis, however, I think the white settlers and the domesticated animals that they brought along with them may have been equally surprising in a sense. Of course if anybody was to ever meet an entire new race of humans it would be incredibly fascinating and I'm almost positive that it would be more exciting than seeing different types of animals. I feel the point that she is trying to make isn't so much about the different kinds of animals that the settlers were bringing with them though, but just the mere fact that they were domesticated. Imagine if you were a Native American and the only kinds of animals that you were used to were the wild animals that you had to try to hunt in order to have food on the table, then the white settlers come along with new animals. They have a cow, a chicken, and a lamb that they are not only able to butcher for the meat, but they are also able to use the wool for clothing, the eggs for food, etc. In my opinion the fact that the white settlers had food (and other materials) so readily available would almost be as surprising as the settlers coming in the first place.



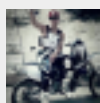
Similar situation in modern times
by Justin Cox - Thursday, October 15, 2015, 4:56 PM

This conflict between humans and animals strikes me as similar to what we see in areas where wolves have been reintroduced in North America, including eastern Oregon. Cattle ranchers, like Native Americans before them, view these free-roaming animals as destroying their way of life. In the modern case, wolves can cost ranchers thousands of dollars each time they attack and kill a head of cattle. Environmentalists and in fact the courts of the United States of America argue to these cattle ranchers that in spite of the threat to their livelihood, these animals are protected and any killing of them could find the perpetrator dragged into court. It is interesting, though, that while the cattle ranchers reflect the Native Americans in their desire to protect their own resources from encroaching animals, they are also a reflect the European settlers' view that animals are inferior to humans and worthy property.



Changed the course of history forever
by Justin Smith - Friday, October 16, 2015, 1:12 PM

It is pretty incredible to think that something as simple as Europeans bringing domesticated animals to the new world could've changed the course of history forever. Who knows how long it would've taken the Native Americans to domesticate livestock if they hadn't been exposed to the idea by the Europeans. Especially in a world that we live in today, a HUGE percentage of our food (and other materials) is given to us by domesticated animals. Could anybody imagine living in a world where you couldn't go down to your local grocery store to buy steaks for dinner that night, but instead would have to plan a hunting party to hopefully get food for the night? I guess this is one thing that European settlers should be given some credit for in the new world!



Situation in modern times add on
by Austin Howerton - Saturday, October 17, 2015, 5:15 PM

I find "Similar situation in modern times" to be a great correlation between modern times and the current period in which the discussion of wolves and farmers has been taking place for quite some time now. Another point that this brought to mind was the impact on Indian culture in today's time and their hunting privileges. In today's current time each tribe may have a varying bag and each tribes hunting regulations may vary. For most cases these Indian tribes are allowed a certain amount for their tribal customs and a certain bag limit on top of this. Indian tribes are even in most cases given hunting privileges on animal reservations where for anyone else would be considered poaching. If a tribal member is to break any sort of hunting regulation they are also sent to tribal court rather than a government court. These regulations are all signed treaties between native american's and

the federal government and in time have sparked many different disputes. The battle for land and hunting rights is an ongoing battle which can differ depending on the state and tribe at which is fighting for more land or more hunting rights.

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