

HST 201: US History F19 (Escobar)

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Creatures of Empire

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, October 12, 2019, 12:50 PM

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

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

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The difference on how Europeans and Indians looked at animals.

by [Riley McQueen](#) - Monday, October 14, 2019, 4:36 PM

The problem was that the Indians and the European settlers viewed the animals differently. Professor Anderson said (1:50 in the audio file) that the Europeans thought the animals as part of one's property while the Indians thought they were just living creatures and not something to be owned. The Indians also believed that certain animals like deer had some spiritual qualities to them and after they hunted them they recognized that spiritual power because they believed they had a reciprocal relationship with the animals. (Ward p.2) When comparing how the Europeans looked at animals compared to how the Indians thought of them it really shows a drastic difference in how their cultures work. One thinks of them like property while the other thinks that they themselves are a part of the natural world like the animals (Ward p.1). For the question on which way I look at animals, I believe that there can be creatures that we live next to and

ones we look at as property. We coexist with animals now without thinking of them as property (birds, coyotes, deer) but we also own animals (pets, farms, zoos). So I think that it all comes down to how you personally look at animals and how you were brought up to think about animals.

The Indians believed that they along with animals are a part of the natural world while the English believed that it was their biblical right to own them. Indians also believed that the animals had spiritual power to them (Ward 1), and would recognize that spirit after they had hunted them. Europeans didn't have any other thoughts about the animals besides that they provided what they wanted. I am not a religious person so I don't believe that an animal has spiritual powers but I also don't believe that it is our right given to us. Again it all depends on what religious or cultural background you have that influences the attitude you have towards animals.

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Animals: owned vs. free spirits

by [Emily Fosnight](#) - Friday, October 18, 2019, 11:38 PM

I really liked how you added that Native Americans had a reciprocal relationship with the animals they interacted with, and how they would acknowledge and respect the spirit of the animal after hunting them. It shows a respect that was extremely foreign to the Europeans. Something I find interesting is, I don't think Europeans would have necessarily considered the native animals, such as bears, deer, elk, etc., in the same way they regarded their livestock animals.

I also thought it was interesting how you included zoo's in "owned" animals. You're right, they are. However, they aren't the typically owned animals. These are normally animals we consider wild, and most aren't native to America. Do you think the colonial settlers would have viewed the native animals of America the same way they viewed their livestock?

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Differences in Native and European Common Interaction with Animals

by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, October 19, 2019, 6:42 PM

I think that another aspect of how settlers and natives views on animals differed was the ways that they used them. The typical European's life in many ways economically revolved around livestock, with daily activities and the "rhythm" of life being formed around their care. This meant that direct ownership of said animals was vitally important to the day to day life of Europeans and the settlers in turn. For the native people on the other hand animals, while central as a source of food, were not as directly interacted with and catered towards in their daily life. With only some villagers even following them on a seasonal basis (Review 2). These different styles being informed by domestication being nearly non-existent in North America before the Europeans arrived, largely due to the local animals not being suited to the practice (Review 1). This likely influenced the religious and philosophical views on animals held by Natives that you touched on very well. As without the means to domesticate an animal it would be quite difficult to think of them as property that you controlled and owned as the Europeans did.

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The main problem concerning new animals and their relation to the Indians according to the text book and audio of DeJohn Anderson

by [Emily Fosnight](#) - Monday, October 14, 2019, 10:56 PM

DeJohn Anderson suggests the main problem, concerning these new animals and their relation to the Indians, was "the package of ideas the English brought with them," (audio 1:34). The most problematic being the English seeing livestock as property. The English livestock were a major reason for more than one war. It was primarily the cause of Metacom's War. "The colonists' growing settlements shrank the Indians' land base, and their free-running hogs and cows wrecked the Indians' cornfields," (text p. 73). Another major problem was that the English didn't have full control over their livestock because there were no fields and fences like in England, so the creatures had to roam freely. These animals were damaging the Indians' fields and food resources and the English didn't even seem to acknowledge that. "Even when they move 30 miles away, they still can't keep planting fields free from livestock," (audio 6:22). The livestock were driving the Indians to move away and yet the livestock still found the Indians' planting fields. Another example involving livestock leading to war more indirectly is, "In 1675, the Doegs demanded payment of an old debt from a Virginia planter. When he refused, they ran off some of his livestock. After his overseer killed one of the Doegs, the others fled but later returned to ambush and kill the man," (text p. 74). This was the beginning of Virginia's Indian War. When the Indians kill or drive away livestock, the English see it as property damage and want the criminals punished. I do also look at most livestock as property, as well as pets as a person's property here in America; however, I can acknowledge that there are wild animals here, but also all over the world. In the matter of livestock animals, I have the European view of them being property.

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Further Reasons for Conflict Based on Livestock and Lack of Control

by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Friday, October 18, 2019, 8:59 PM

Another aspect of the settlers lack of control of their livestock was that they lacked the manpower as well as resources to attempt to contain their livestock. Eventually said livestock was completely out of hand and they were hunted by the settlers much as the natives hunted animals (Review 1). This likely exacerbated the confusion by natives as to the animals being property as they weren't contained by the settlers and were hunted in the exact same way that the natives hunted for food. This meant that even when natives killed feral hogs that destroyed their fields these uncontrolled animals were claimed by settlers as their property and they attempt to punish the natives protecting their crops (Audio 3:30). The free roaming animals also cleared out local animal populations, eating their natural foods. This obstructed native hunting along with the new animals often getting caught in traps set by natives for local animals which led to even more backlash from settlers (Audio 4:20). These conflicts were not at all helped by the concept of animals as property being completely foreign to the native populations. As you said this led to King Philip (Metacom) coming directly into conflict with the Europeans who's animals continued to encroach on native territory and crops without being held back. As even when the Natives attempted to clear out of areas with settlers the animals continued to multiply outward and still ended up causing them problems. This, along with settlers religious pressures on the natives, eventually directly leading to King Philip's War on the settlers (Review 2).

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How did religious/cultural differences in regards to animals lead to conflict between the Native peoples and Settlers

by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Monday, October 14, 2019, 11:32 PM

DeJohn Anderson suggests that the root of a large amount of the conflict between the Europeans and Natives in regard to animals is derived from their differing cultural and religious views on the nature of said animals. The natives did not see animals as personal property as they did not have the history of domestication that Europe did (Review pg 2). Instead they saw animals as "other than human persons" or other beings that were not necessarily inferior to humans themselves (Audio Clip 2:26). While the natives did hunt this was seen as more of a reciprocal and spiritual endeavor rather than a purely exploitative one (Review pg 2). This specific point greatly comes into conflict with Europeans values on animals. They saw owning livestock as an important part of life, one that was central to civilization (Review pg 1). Especially the potential civilization of the natives themselves, who they thought could easily be converted to herdsman (Review pg 1). In fact the act of hunting was something that only the aristocracy in England could pursue as a sport alone, with laws that required a certain level of income to hunt at all (Review pg 2). This meant that when natives killed animals that encroached on their crops the Settlers saw this as property damage and prosecuted the natives seeking compensation for damaged goods (Audio Clip 3:21). Personally I fall more on the side of animals as property in general, though I can certainly see the natives side of the issue as well. For example with animals that you often interact with more personally like dogs and cats I don't see them as purely monetary property, but rather as companions. I also think that in some ways modern game hunting is similar to native hunting, though in other ways it does lean towards the aristocratic sport hunting of the Europeans when done only for enjoyment rather than food.

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How religious and spiritual differences between Europeans and Indians play a role in how they view animals

by [Emily Fosnight](#) - Wednesday, October 16, 2019, 8:54 PM

Religious differences between these two peoples played a major role in the problems between them regarding the English livestock. The natives saw animals as "creatures being other than human persons. They were living beings sharing the Earth who were different from human beings, but not necessarily inferior to them," (audio 2:24), whereas the European settlers definitely considered themselves superior to the animals, and saw them as property and "resources to be manipulated and exploited" (Reviews in History Article; paragraph 3). The natives also had the perspective of "...a lot of major prey, like deer, were thought to have spiritual power or spiritual protectors," (audio 2:40). Which was an insane idea to the Europeans. The natives had more respect for animals and could look at them as somewhat equal beings; whereas, the Europeans owned animals and used them. I more closely identify with the European culture idea of animals, when it comes to livestock.

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Further Reasons Religious Differences on Animals Led to Conflict

by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, October 19, 2019, 3:09 PM

I think that another part of the religious conflict that ultimately led to King Philip's War was that the settlers were heavily pressuring the native people to convert to Christianity. Including attempting to get natives to come to "praying towns" (Textbook 81). Which obviously wasn't helped by their conflicting

religious views on animals and the role they played in society that you mentioned. Which pretty directly led to economic conflict when natives treated animals brought by settlers as they would any other local animals (Review 1). I think another important part of native relations with animals that you didn't directly mention was that while they did hunt animals for vital food the act of hunting was more of a religious experience due to their thoughts on animal spirits. So while they still used animals as resources they were more respected. Which was very different from Europeans who saw hunting as an aristocratic sport. I also think that the religious respect was a part of why domestication was not understood beyond the fact that native peoples did not have experience with it due to local animals not being suitable for domestication in the first place (Review 2).

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Opposing Views of Animals & the Impact of Early Colonial Animals

by [Connor Eden](#) - Friday, October 18, 2019, 12:11 PM

Professor Anderson suggests that the main problem wasn't with dealing with the animals themselves but the different cultural views on these animals. The Europeans saw there domesticated animals as property while native populations had never perceived living animals as someone's property. The view of domesticated animals having an owner and being that owners property has not changed, at least with the majority of the population, so I still hold similar views.

The Native perspective of animals could be characterized by a phrase Professor Anderson says "other than human persons" and goes on to say that they saw them as beings living alongside them on earth that are not the same as them but also not inferior. (audio file) They even believed these animals had "spirit protectors", to an Englishman saying an animal had any sort of spirit was seen as heresy (audiofile). For the English Christians, who I assume had all read Genesis, their beliefs told them that there lord made all the creations of the world, including animals, in the first 5 days and on the 6th day there Lord created man in his image putting mankind above all else. So we can easily see how these religious and cultural influences shaped both sides views. One side believed that the animals they raised and got food from where put there for them to use by god whereas the other sees them as equal living beings that can't be owned.

This concept of "Creatures of Empire" is very interesting as I had never really took into account the effect that the new livestock brought by settlers had. After hearing the new information from Professor Anderson in regards to the roaming livestock destroying Indian planting ground and traditional forms of subsistence I would say I agree they had a great impact. Although im skeptical in saying they had a greater impact then the settlers themselves, both livestock and settlers brought disease but the comparisons seem to end there. Settlers bring in things such as iron tools, english style homes, gunpowder, parliamentary forms of government, common law and african slavery the list im sure could continue but those things have a much larger impact that reverberates through the centurys. Whereas the livestock seemed to be only significant in very early relations with natives and there adaptations to these new animals such as adopting horseriding.

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**Do I own my animals?**by [Brandon Gericke](#) - Friday, October 18, 2019, 4:01 PM

DeJohn Anderson suggested that the main problem Natives had with the Europeans regarding the Europeans animals, was the sense of ownership that Europeans had over their animals. Natives didnt have this idea that they owned the animals or were superior to them. So when a settlers livestock intruded on native land, the natives did not consider that animal property of the settlers. So the natives would deal with the animals as they would any other wild animal, not understanding the repercussions that would follow.

Spiritually the natives considered the creatures around them as equals, and some animals even had spirit protectors. The settlers religion told them that they as men, would have dominion over all living creatures, and that the animals were there to serve them. Since I am Native American, i tend to see animals as my equal, and i do no believe that they were created to serve me or fulfill my needs.

I can make a connection between seeing animals as property and societal issues that we have today. A few such connections are the over-fishing of our oceans, the horrible treatment of cattle, sheep, and chickens at feed-lots, and the way people just give up on their pets after a little hardship. All of these issues are a result of superiority complex that we humans have over other animals.

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I'm curious how your Native American view of animals was taught to you? I'm full European, so naturally I've inherited the European view of animals. I feel like story telling is a major aspect of a lot of cultures, one of which America is and has been lacking.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: You 're Native American view**by [Brandon Gericke](#) - Saturday, October 19, 2019, 3:51 AM

I was taught my respect for animals during various hunting sessions. Each session was a lesson on how to humanely harvest an animal, and how to respect the animal fully, by using all its parts. Most hunts were done with a bow I had made.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**A connection between societal issues and animals**by [Riley McQueen](#) - Friday, October 18, 2019, 8:54 PM

There is a connection with the treatment of animals as property and societal issues we face in our nation today. One of the major issues we do is contribute to the amount of plastic waste in our oceans. An article from Pewtrusts.org states that "up to 13 million metric tons of plastic ends up in the oceans every year". Fish, birds, and marine mammals ingest the plastic causing them to suffocate and starve. And plastic isn't the only pollutant hurting the animals. Oil spills, chemical dumping, land runoff, and ocean mining are also major contributors. And it's not just the sea life that is being affected. It affects communities that rely on the fish in the oceans or lakes as their main source of income. This is just one of the many issues of animal mistreatment humans are adding to.

<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2018/09/24/plastic-pollution-affects-sea-life-throughout-the-ocean?amp=1>.

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Who deserves the credit?

by [Riley McQueen](#) - Saturday, October 19, 2019, 1:49 PM

I agree with Professor Anderson's argument that animals were more important as the "main actors" in early American history. Livestock was a major influence to people who settled in places, as Anderson says if you go forward to the 19th century one of the reasons people were moving out west was because "the leading edge of that settlement are livestock" (audio file 7:00). John Smith and Jonathan Winthrop were big characters in early american history but I don't think that they deserve to get all the credit. Our history books make it seem like those men did all the heavy lifting but they forget just how important the animals were in this time period.

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Re: What problems did domesticated animals cause?

by [Hunter Schultz](#) - Saturday, October 19, 2019, 11:46 PM

The main problem with the new coming domestic animals as stated in the podcast is that they are free roaming and don't have boundaries. These animals wandered around at times and would get onto Indian land and destroy crops and hunting grounds. These animals were new creatures to the Indians. Indians saw native animals as spiritual and as a necessary need to them and their tribe. But when introduced to these new animals from Europe it started conflict. The domestic animals would destroy the indians farmland and even messed with their hunting land as well as the native animals land. Stated in the podcast if these domestic animals were to get caught in the Native Americans traps the first thing to do would be killing these animals. But this caused conflict sense the animals were technically property and not wild. So if the Native Americans were to kill these domestic animals that were trapped they could be punished/charged for death/destruction of the settlers property. Which caused conflict between the settlers and the Natives. Now I think that we have some of the same problems in today's world just less complicated. Now I'm an avid hunter and the way I can relate is most cows are owned and tagged nowadays. Now the ones that are fenced in aren't the problem it's the cows that are "wild" and free roaming. These animals still destroy hunting land

and mess with stalking the animals us hunters kill. They also can become objects that get in the way of hunting. I've experienced cows in most areas I hunt because they are free roaming and the problems we have are that sometimes at long distance we can't tell if they are deer or elk. So if we shoot and miss judge them as elk/deer then we are faced with penalties because they are classified as "property" same as they were back then to the Native Americans.

All info based from:

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