Everything Will Be Changed:

The Horse and the Comanche Empire

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“Remember this: if you have horses everything will be changed for you forever.”

- Attributed to Maheo, Creator God of the Cheyenne

Bones of over 1,000 horses lay bleaching under a hot Texas sun, months-old remnants from the last stand of one of the greatest equestrian powers in history: the Comanche. Spanish horses allowed for the Comanche and other tribes of the Great Plains, who had lacked horses for over 15,000 years, to transform their societies. Upon its arrival, the Comanche immediately capitalized on the horse and used it to break the barrier of human physiology—the limits of human endurance which significantly restricted hunting, raiding, and trading—and created a vast trade empire. Many have romanticized this history by arguing that the horse was beneficial to all Comanches. This paper, however, argues that the horse brought wealth and power to some Comanches, but also brought slave markets, marginalization of women, constant warfare, and social stratification to their society. The tragic irony was that the horse, the very technology that allowed them to conquer their environment, eventually destroyed the ecological balance of the Plains and made them vulnerable to American invasions.

**Pedestrianism: Life before the Horse**

Before European contact, Plains Indians relied on farming as much as hunting and often oscillated between the two. Although the bison served as their main source of food, Plains

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tribes frequently built their settlements near rivers to provide the best conditions for crops to grow; far from the prairies where bison foraged.\(^4\) Hunting bison was dangerous and required Indians to run next to the animal, and they were often trampled by the herds.\(^5\) Hunts also required a great deal of planning, needed many hunters, and regularly failed.\(^6\) When they succeeded, however, one hunt could supply a Plains community for months. Because of the communal nature of these hunts—hundreds of Indians would participate in a single hunt—the supplies were distributed more or less equally among the participants.\(^7\)

Plains Indians used dogs to transport bison products, which weighed thousands of pounds, back to their settlements.\(^8\) Dogs, however, were inefficient in transportation and limited a tribe’s hunting, raiding, and trading capabilities. They could only carry up to fifty pounds of tradeable material, and could not travel more than six miles a day. They were also carnivores, meaning that they required the same food as their owners during times of famine.\(^9\)

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\(^5\) George C. Frison, *Prehistoric Hunters of the High Plains*, ed. James Bennett Griffin (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1991), 211-234; West, *The Contested Plains*, 34-35, 39. West gives examples of early Plains hunting methods such as the Bison Stomp—a hunting method where Indians would chase bison a considerable distance until they reached a cliff, where the bison would fall to their deaths; for other hunting methods such as bowhunting, see: Gerald Betty, *Comanche Society: Before the Reservation* (College Stadium, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 82.


\(^8\) Betty, *Comanche Society*, 90-91; see also: West, *The Contested Plains*, 34-35. West explains that Spanish conquistadors described Plains Indians as bands of hunters who traveled using dogs.

Three Equestrian Worlds Collide: The Horse and the Jumano, Apache, and Comanche

The first horses arrived in the Great Plains in 1600, traveling with Spanish conquistadors to New Mexico. The colonists kept horses far from Indians because, in 1568, King Philip II signed into law that, “Indians may not ride horseback…without exception.” The Spaniards recognized that Indian equestrianism would challenge their colonial occupation of the Plains and tried to minimize Indian knowledge of the horse with this law.

Ironically, the Spanish taught Plains Indians how to use horses. Many Spanish settlers forced enslaved Indians to tend to Spanish horses, teaching the Indians how to use a horse. Recognizing that horses could bring them freedom, enslaved Indians escaped on horseback to nearby tribes, bringing with them their knowledge of horsemanship. Because of this


10 Wissler, “The Influence of the Horse,” 1; Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Culture," *The Journal of American History* 90, no. 3 (December 2003): 835; West, *The Contested Plains*, 34-35; West, *The Contested Plains*, 49; see: Elliott West, “The Impact of Horse Culture,” *History Now*, no. 28 (Summer 2011): accessed November 14, 2019, https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-now/journals/2011-06/american-indians. West explains that the horse’s early ancestor, the hyracotherium, lived in the Great Plains 30 million years ago. These proto-horses then migrated to Europe during the Ice Age, evolving into modern horses while their cousins in America died out. In this way, the horse’s arrival in America was a sort of homecoming for the horse. In another sense, they left America wild and free and returned subdued and with humans.


13 Betty, *Comanche Society*, 86.

knowledge, horses slowly spread from Santa Fé, the locus of Spanish horse-breeding, to Pueblo tribes through theft and illegal trade.\textsuperscript{15}

The majority of horses, however, would not arrive into Indian hands until the Pueblo revolt of 1680, an Indian reaction to Spanish colonialism that drove the Spaniards out of New Mexico.\textsuperscript{16} During the revolt, the Pueblo captured thousands of Spanish horses, but did not incorporate them into their society, and instead traded them to various Plains tribes, such as the Jumano and Apache.\textsuperscript{17} Most importantly, Pueblo Indians spread Spain’s equestrian techniques to Plains tribes with whom they traded.\textsuperscript{18}

Besides trading, Jumanos and Apaches also stole horses from Spanish settlements.\textsuperscript{19} With such a great increase in horses, Apaches waged war on the Jumanos to secure better access to New Mexican trade.\textsuperscript{20} In the late 16\textsuperscript{th} century, successive epidemics of smallpox shrunk Jumano populations. Consequently, the production of Plains commodities, which the Jumano trade network depended upon, decreased. Further, from 1703 to the 1720s, heavy drought struck the Plains. During this period, bison populations migrated away from much of Jumano territory.\textsuperscript{21} The final blow to the Jumanos occurred when the Apache drove them from the Colorado valley.

\textsuperscript{15} For a map of trade routes, see Appendix A.
\textsuperscript{18} Kavanagh, telephone interview by the author; Page, Uprising: The Pueblo, 166.
\textsuperscript{20} Hämäläinen, "The Rise," 836.
\textsuperscript{21} Anderson, The Indian Southwest, 55-60.
a valley rich with bison. With the bison population depleted and their trade empire destroyed, the Jumanos disappeared as a people.

Apache ascendency was short-lived because of the emergence of a new great power in the Southern Plains: the Comanche. Originating from a pedestrian Wyoming tribe called the Shoshone, the Comanche migrated down the Rocky Mountains, reaching New Mexico in 1706. They migrated to escape from disease and warfare, but most importantly to access the New Mexican horse reserves. Comanches obtained horses rapidly through raids on Indian and Spanish settlements, and adopted Spanish equestrian techniques. The Texas politician David Burnet described this in 1847, writing that “they are nomadic in their manner of life; their cattle consisting of horses and mules, which they rob…from…Mexicans.” These horses allowed the Comanche to finally overcome the barrier of physiology, opening up new trading, raiding, and transportation opportunities.

Unlike other Plains tribes that used the horse to supplement their long-established way of life, the Comanche built their society around the horse. After the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, the Pueblos traded with Comanches, which, in addition to raiding, gave the Comanche enough

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26. Winfrey, The Indian Papers, 3:86.
27. Letter by John Sibley, "Historic Sketches of the Several Indian Tribes in Louisiana, South of the Arkansas River, and between the Mississippi and River Grande," April 5, 1805, in American State Papers: Indian Affairs, ed. Walter Lowrie and Matthew Clarke (Washington, DC: Gales and Seaton, 1832), 1:723, accessed March 16, 2020, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.35112103282408&view=1up&seq=13. Sibley wrote that “Every two or three days [the Comanche] are obliged to move on account of all the grass near them being eaten up, they have such numbers of horses.”
horses to be able to exploit the grassland’s most valuable resource—the bison.\(^{28}\) Once the Comanches obtained the horse, they abandoned pedestrianism and farming for a mounted lifestyle, which focused on intensive hunting and trading.\(^{29}\) Their new method of hunting, the running hunt, involved groups of mounted Comanches charging bison herds.\(^{30}\) This method proved itself to be far better than the pre-horse communal hunts because they could chase herds farther and kill in much larger quantities.\(^{31}\) Horses could also travel farther and carry loads six times heavier than dogs could.\(^{32}\)

Because they formed their society around the horse, the Comanche established themselves as the first true Plains horse culture and as hegemons of the Southern Plains.\(^{33}\) Immediately after their arrival to the Southern Plains in 1706, the Comanche began raiding Apache settlements.\(^{34}\) The two tribes could not co-exist on the Southern Plains because both needed the river valleys of the New Mexican Plains, which provided water, grass, and shelter during winter. Thus, a war between the Comanche and Apache was practically inevitable.\(^{35}\)


\(^{29}\) For an example of the Comanche centering their lives around the horse, see Appendix B. Dan Flores, interview by the author, Stoughton, WI, March 27, 2020; Preston Holder, *The Hoe and the Horse on the Plains: A Study of Cultural Development among North American Indians* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), 78.


\(^{32}\) Ewers, *The Horse*, 308.

\(^{33}\) Kavanagh, telephone interview by the author. Because they were immigrants, the Comanche were accustomed to adjusting to changing environments. Apaches and other Plains Indian tribes, on the other hand, had long-established traditions in regard to their way of life. Therefore, the Comanche adapted to the horse by using it to direct their way of life, but other Plains tribes used the horse to complement their ways of life. In this way, the Comanche were the first true Plains Indians horse culture.


\(^{35}\) Hämaäläinen, “The Western Comanche Trade Center,” 488; Elliott West, *The Way to the West: Essays on the Central Plains* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 50. West argues that during winter, the harshest season, river valleys provided horses the necessary protection from the elements. For an example of
When war did occur, the Comanche’s nomadism and mounted attacks—borrowed from the Spanish—gave them dominance against the semi-sedentary Apache.\textsuperscript{36} One French observer noted the Comanche usage of the horse in battle, recording that, “[The Comanche] are always mounted on caparisoned horses.”\textsuperscript{37} By trading with the French and British, the Comanche could also purchase guns, which the Apache could not obtain through their trade with the Spanish.\textsuperscript{38} Therefore, by the early 1760s, the Comanche were able to drive the Apaches out of New Mexico.\textsuperscript{39}

**The Horse and the Comanche Trade Empire**

After their victory against the Apache in the mid-1700s, the Comanche built a multifaceted trade network, centered in the Arkansas Basin. Horses drove the trade empire because they allowed Comanche hunters to kill large amounts of bison—amounts not this, see: Herbert E. Bolton, *Coronado: Knight of Pueblos and Plains* (Albuquerque, NM: The University of New Mexico Press, 1990), 267-268. See also: Pekka Hämäläinen, “The Western Comanche Trade Center: Rethinking the Plains Indian Trade System,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (1998): 492-494, accessed February 2, 2020. doi:10.2307/970405. Hämäläinen provides the analysis that Comanche-Apache hostilities were fueled by the need of New Mexico, which provided a central location for trading to groups such as the Pueblo Indians.

\textsuperscript{36} Munkres, e-mail interview by the author; Kavanagh, telephone interview by the author; Hämäläinen, “The Rise,” 837. See also Appendix C for evidence of the Comanche borrowing techniques of the Spanish and mixing it with their own battle tactics.


\textsuperscript{39} Hämäläinen, “The Rise,” 837.
conceivable under a pedestrian lifestyle. Comanche women processed bison hides into robes which, along with stolen horses, Spanish and French traders valued.

As their trade empire grew, the Comanche utilized middlemen to expand their trade. The first of such intermediaries were the Wichita, a confederation of tribes living along the Lower Arkansas River. Wichitas allowed the Comanche to trade horses to the French, who gave them guns in return. Because of the Comanche, the Arkansas Basin soon became the primary location for the distribution of horses to the central and northern Plains. Their trade network reached Spanish, French, and British colonists, even reaching the Sauk, a Wisconsin Indian tribe. Most importantly, Comanche trade brought them European goods, such as guns, which increased the Comanche’s military power.

The Comanche quickly exerted this power over the Spanish through raids. In 1767, the better-armed Comanches constantly raided New Mexican settlements and stole their horses.

40 Gerald Betty, e-mail interview by the author, Stoughton, WI, April 17, 2020.
41 Kavanagh, telephone interview by the author; McCollough, Three Nations, 45; Hämäläinen, “The Rise,” 839.
42 Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire, 72, McCollough, Three Nations, 3-4.
44 Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire, 72.
45 Hämäläinen, “The Western Comanche Trade Center,” 489-495. For Comanche trade reaching the Sauk, see: Peter Pond, "Journal of Peter Pond," in Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Madison, WI: The Wisconsin Historical Society, 1908), 18:355. Peter Pond was a fur trader. He reported that “Sometimes they [sic] Go Near St. Fee [Santa Fe] in New Mexico and Bring with the Spanish Horsseis [sic].”
46 Kavanagh, "Political Power," 60; McCollough, Three Nations, 2; West, "American Indians."
47 McCollough, Three Nations, 3.
Comanche raids caused Spanish settlers to rely on such things as old shoes for food. Because of raids, they possessed so many guns that they even began to trade firearms to Spaniards, replacing Spain as the major political, economic, and military power in the Southwest. This decline was marked by the transfer of horses from Spanish colonies to Comanche tribes. Comanche horse raids were so commonplace that in 1775 the Spanish colony of New Mexico petitioned Spain for more horses because they did not have enough to defend themselves from Comanche attacks.

By 1786, the Comanche owned around two times more horses than the Spanish.

**Stratification, Marginalization, Slavery, and Warfare in Post-Horse Comanche Society**

The horse transformed the Comanche economy, but such wealth and the power stratified Comanche society. Before the horse, proto-Comanches, and most other Plains tribes, lived in a fundamentally egalitarian society. These societies did not have private property, expected everyone to labor—regardless of their rank—and redistributed essential goods to its members.

The horse, however, allowed Comanche raiders and military leaders to accumulate property,
resulting in the private ownership of the means of production.\textsuperscript{54} Because they viewed horses as private property, Comanches experienced social stratification, which was based on horse ownership. Wealthier Comanches owned forty or more horses and could even be acquitted of murder by gifting horses.\textsuperscript{55} Police also protected wealthier Comanches’ access to trade.\textsuperscript{56} Poorer Comanches, on the other hand, owned zero to five horses and relied on the wealthy to lend them horses for hunting. Moreover, their poverty excluded them from the social activities of the tribe.\textsuperscript{57} In this way, the horse benefited the wealthy, but marginalized the impoverished.

Women experienced similar marginalization as a result of the horse. After the horse’s introduction, the gifting of a horse between the families of a couple became necessary for marriage.\textsuperscript{58} Polygamous relationships were commonplace for middle- or upper-class Comanches, who could spare more horses.\textsuperscript{59} Trade incentivized polygamy because wives could prepare buffalo robes in large volumes.\textsuperscript{60} Although men skinned bison in the field, a Comanche named Niyah explained, “After their arrival back in camp, it was all was turned over to the women.”\textsuperscript{61} John Sibley, an Indian agent for New Orleans furthered that, “The women…appear to be constantly and laboriously employ’d in dressing buffalo skins…attending & guarding their

\textsuperscript{55} Ewers, \textit{The Horse in Blackfoot}, 240-242.
\textsuperscript{56} Kavanagh, "Political Power," 29. Police made sure that, during running hunts, no one individual had a head start. Kavanagh argues that this policing seemed to make hunts fair, and give everyone an equal chance, the police made it so that the richest Comanches, who had the best horses, would profit the most from the hunt.
\textsuperscript{57} Ewers, \textit{The Horse in Blackfoot}, 243-244.
\textsuperscript{60} Wolf, \textit{Europe and the People}, 181; Hämäläinen, \textit{The Comanche Empire}, 261.
\textsuperscript{61} Hoebel, \textit{Comanche Ethnography}, 84.
horses…making their riding & pack saddles &c.” 62 While wives were responsible for domestic tasks before the horse, the horse introduced the tasks of tending horses and processing bison hides, making women work far harder than before the horse. 63

These new tasks demanded more labor than wives alone could provide. Thus, the Comanche turned to raiding villages to enslave Indians that they would sell or use for manual labor, such as fetching water, tending horses, preparing bison hides, or finding firewood. 64 George Bent, an Indian trader, quantified the scope of this slave trade, writing that “Among the…Comanches nearly every family had one or two Mexican captives.” 65 To preserve their slave economy, Comanches used horses to raid deep into Mexico and take captives. 66 Bringing back hundreds of Mexicans in the 1820s, the Comanche emerged as large-scale slave owners. 67

The power of the Comanche’s trade empire manifested itself in the form of constant warfare and raiding. 68 Indian wars over territory quickly took their toll. In most tribes, women outnumbered men, many of whom died during these wars. 69 Comanches even increased raiding

63 Callahan, telephone interview by the author; Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire, 244; see also: Hämäläinen, “The Rise,” 841-842. Hämäläinen argues that winters were particularly onerous for women, who were responsible for foraging for resources.
64 Hugh D. Corwin, Comanches and Kiowa Captives in Oklahoma and Texas (Guthrie, OK: Cooperative Publishing Company, 1959), 7; Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire, 75-76. See also: Lynn Robinson Bailey, Indian Slave Trade in the Southwest (Los Angeles, CA: Westernlore Press, 1966), 25. Bailey argues that the Spanish fabricated the Plains Indian slave trade to weaken Plains tribes and make money while doing it. Further, the Spanish reasoned that the slave trade would pit tribes against each other so that they would not pose a threat to the Spanish colonies. For the slave market, see: Morris W. Foster, Being Comanche: A Social History of an American Indian Community (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1991), 40-41.
66 Corwin, Comanches and Kiowa, 11; Matthew Liebmann, Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th Century New Mexico (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 42. Liebmann makes the argument that horses turned raiding into a much more profitable venture. Before the horse, warriors could only take as much as they could carry from a raid, but the horse allowed raids to be more destructive.
68 West, Contested Plains, 77.
69 West, telephone interview by the author; West, "American Indians.”
on Mexican settlements to “keep up the numbers of the [Comanche] tribe.”

For example, Niyah recalled that “Comanches captured Mexicans, keeping the women as wives.”

The Elimination of the Bison and the Decline of the Comanche

Ironically, equestrianism, which enabled their rise to power, caused the Comanche’s fall. To maintain their trade, Comanches overhunted bison, slowly depleting its numbers. In 1840, the Comanches and three other Southern Plains tribes—the Kiowas, Cheyenne, and Arapahos—negotiated peace and agreed upon a shared occupancy of the Arkansas Basin, previously a contested territory where hunters rarely went and bison flourished. After the peace, Indians flocked into the Basin to hunt. Bison numbers rapidly fell because of overhunting, driven by the Comanche trade economy, and because horses competed with bison for grass and river valleys. River valleys were necessary for bison populations because they

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71 Hoebel, Comanche Ethnography, 124.
73 Rupart Norval Richardson, The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement: A Century and a Half of Savage Resistance to the Advancing White Frontier (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1933), 172; Dan Flores, "Bison Ecology and Bison Diplomacy: The Southern Plains from 1800 to 1850," The Journal of American History 78, no. 2 (September 1991): 471-481, http://www.buffalofieldcampaign.org/legal/escitations/floresbisonology.pdf; Jacob Fowler, The Journal of Jacob Fowler Narrating an Adventure from Arkansas through the Indian Territory, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico, to the Sources of Rio Grande Del Norte, 1821-22, ed. Elliott Coues (New York, NY: Francis P. Harper, 1898), 59-62. For bison depletion, see: Letter written at Fort Gibson, August 1, 1833, letter to the editor, American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine, October 1833, 71, PDF. The author of the letter wrote in 1833 that, “[The bison] have receded, it would seem, one hundred miles westward in the last ten years; and it may be safely assumed, that thirty or forty years hence, they will not be found nearer to us than the spurs of the Rocky Mountains.” He attributed the decline to overhunting by Comanches and other tribes.
75 Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire, 295-296; see also: George Frederick Augustus Ruxton, Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains, (London, United Kingdom: John Murray, 1849), 266. Ruxton writes that, “It is a singular fact that within the last two years the prairies, extending from the mountains to a hundred miles or more down the Arkansa [sic], have been entirely abandoned by the buffalo.”
provided the animal food, water, and shelter from harsh conditions during winter. This strain made it difficult for bison to rebound after disease decreased their population. Diminishing bison numbers were detrimental for the Comanche because it led to mass-starvation and crippled their trade economy, which they tried to sustain by herding cattle.

Although the Comanche’s rise to power occurred over 150 years, their fall from power took only 10 years. In the mid-1800s, buffalo robes became increasingly popular due to the collapse of the otter fur trade. As a result, many American hunters flocked to the Southern Plains to hunt bison. Early traders decided to sell buffalo robes in high quantity and low prices, requiring hunters to kill more bison. Because of this requirement, American hunters killed bison only for their hides, leaving the corpses to decay. They flocked to Comanche hunting

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76 Betty, e-mail interview by the author; McCollough, Three Nations, 100; Flores, interview by the author; Richardson, The Comanche, 174; Hämäläinen, “The First Phase,” 104. For overhunting, see: C. C. Rister, “The Significance of the Destruction of the Buffalo in the Southwest,” The Southwestern Historical Quarterly 33, no. 1 (July 1929): 41, https://www.jstor.org/stable/30237207. For an example of the horse’s competition with the bison, see: Hyde, Life of George Bent, 37. For falling bison numbers, see: George Frederick Ruxton, Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains (London, England: J. Murray, 1861), 223-224. Ruxton wrote that, “The buffalo have within a few years deserted the neighbouring [sic] valleys, particularly in one called Bayou Salado, which abounds in every species of game.”


79 Flores, interview by the author.


grounds, which the U.S. Army was instructed to protect from intruders, but did not protect from American hunters, who, between the years 1872 and 1874 killed more than 4,373,730 bison.82 The Army had made the connection that by killing bison, they also killed Comanches because of their reliance on the animal—Comanche trade would collapse without bison.83 By the autumn of 1874, American hunters had eliminated all of the bison from Comanche territory.84 In a last-ditch attempt to protect themselves from the U.S., the Comanches engaged in the Red River War.85 On September 28, 1874, the Comanche suffered their final defeat at Palo Duro Canyon, where the Army captured and killed 1,000 Comanche horses.86 Without horses or bison, Comanches could not survive on the Plains and by the summer of 1875, the last Comanches moved to the Fort Sill Indian Reservation.87

Although horses enabled Comanches to overcome the barrier of human physiology and made them hegemons of the Southern Plains, the transition to equestrianism can be seen as a cautionary tale. Perhaps the sight of the bleached bones recalled Maheo’s warning: “Remember

83 David D. Smits, "The Frontier Army and the Destruction of the Buffalo: 1865-1883," The Western Historical Quarterly 25, no. 3 (Fall 1994): 318, accessed February 4, 2020, https://history.msu.edu/hst321/files/2010/07/smits-on-bison.pdf; Callahan, telephone interview by the author. For the U.S. Army’s positive reception of American hide hunters, see: John R. Cook, The Border and the Buffalo: An Untold Story of the Southwest Plains (Topeka, KA: Crane & Company, 1907), 113, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/51448/51448-h/51448-h.htm. General Sheridan, who was in command of the military department in the Southwest, told Texas lawmakers not to pass a proposed bison conservation bill because "These men [American hide hunters] have done in the last two years and will do more in the next year, to settle the vexed Indian question, than the entire regular army has done in the last thirty years…let them kill, skin, and sell until the buffaloes are exterminated."
84 Nelson Appleton Miles, Personal Recollections and Observations of General Nelson A. Miles Embracing a Brief View of the Civil War, illus. Frederic Remington (Chicago, IL: Werner Company, 1897), 159.
85 Hämäläinen, "The Rise," 845; Callahan, telephone interview by the author.
this: If you have horses everything will be changed for you forever. You will have to move around a lot to find pasture for your horses. You will have to give up gardening and live by hunting and gathering…and live in tents. I will tell your women how to make them…You will have to have fights with other tribes, who will want your pasture land or the places where you hunt…Think, before you decide.”

The horse liberated the Comanche from pedestrianism and forever changed the Southern Great Plains.

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88 Marriott, Plains Indian Mythology, 96-97.
Appendix A

Map of Indian Trade Routes

This map shows the trade routes of the Plains Indians. It reveals that all trade routes in the Southern Plains connect to Santa Fé, where the Spanish had kept their horses and where the Comanche later established their trade empire. Thus, Santa Fé was a key town in regards to the history of the horse in the Southern Plains.
Appendix B

*Drawing Made by a Comanche Indian*, illustration. Box 1, Folder 44. W.H. Jackson Photographs…of North American Indians, 1870-1877. Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI.

**Drawing made by a Comanche Indian**

This drawing depicts a Comanche warrior. On his head are bison horns and a feathered headdress, both of which are indicative of war honors. Therefore, this warrior must have been distinguished in war honors. Most importantly, however, this picture illustrates the importance of the horse in Comanche society. The drawing focuses as much on the Comanche as it does his horse, demonstrating that Comanches were inseparable from their horses.
Appendix C

Páez, José de. *The Destruction of the Mission of San Sabá in the Province of Texas*. 1765.
Illustration.

The Destruction of the Mission of San Sabá

This painting depicts a Comanche and Wichita raid on a Spanish mission, located on the San Sabá river in Texas. In 1758, the Comanche and Wichita attacked San Sabá because they believed it was proof of an alliance between the Spanish and the Apache, the Comanche’s rivals. This painting depicts Comanches riding armored horses, a method used by the Spaniards in the region. The Comanche’s use of leather armor demonstrates that they initially developed their horse culture from Spanish horse culture, which the Pueblo Indians passed on to them.
Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources


This work is a collection of primary sources from the surgeon Dr. John Sibley. In 1804, Sibley was instructed to be a surgeon’s mate for American troops located in Natchitoches, a military post established on the Red River. Later on, he became an Indian agent for territory south of the Arkansas River. His notes on the different tribes, including the Comanches, were incredibly useful for me. I used this source to demonstrate that the horse introduced many new burdens on Comanche women, who were expected to take care of the horses, tan bison hides, and also perform domestic tasks.


Box 1 folio 11 contains a description of the Shawnee, the Apache, and a photo of a certain Charles Tucker. I used the description of the Apache to demonstrate their tactic of raiding to obtain resources.


George Bent was one of the founders of Bent’s For, a trading post in Colorado. This work is a collection of the letters he exchanged with George Hyde detailing his encounters with
the Cheyenne people and other Plains Indians with whom he traded. I used these letters to show how Plains Indians treated their captives.


*New Spain and the Anglo-American West* is a collection of primary sources, specifically letters detailing the current situation of New Spain. I used it for a Spanish perspective on the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.


This letter speaks of intelligence, provided by the Frenchman, Luis Fuesi. I used it to prove that the Comanche and the Pawnees became allies with each other.


Cachupin left this letter to del Valle, who was his successor as governor of New Mexico. In this letter, he instructed del Valle how to manage New Mexico in a manner that
avoided conflict with Plains tribes. I used it to prove that the Spanish tried to prohibit
Indians from obtaining horses.


Robert Carter fought for the United States during the Indian Wars, including the Red
River War. *On the Border with Mackenzie* is regarded as one of the most complete
accounts of the Red River Wars by someone who fought in them. I used it in my paper to
show that the Comanche turned to other animals for food once bison populations fell. I
also used his account of the battle of Palo Duro Canyon and the subsequent slaughter of
Comanche horses.


*The Coronado Expedition* is a compilation of documents from participants of Francisco
Vázquez de Coronado’s exploration of the Southern Plains. I used this source to
demonstrate that early Plains Indians used dogs as beasts of burden.

"Comanches." Box 2, Folio 26. W.H. Jackson Photographs from the United States Geological
Survey of the Territories as Described in the Descriptive Catalogue of Photographs of
North American Indians. University of Wisconsin, Madison, Madison, WI.

Box 2 folio 26 of the W.H. Jackson Photographs contains a picture of a Cheyenne, a
biography of an Indian—a certain Asa Havie—and a description of the Comanches. I
used it to understand how the Comanche were viewed by other non-Comanches in the
1800s.

Cook, John R. *The Border and the Buffalo: An Untold Story of the Southwest Plains*. Topeka,
KA: Crane & Company, 1907. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/51448/51448-h/51448-
In *The Border and the Buffalo*, Cook recounts the destruction of the bison. He provided an American perspective, showing that some Americans fought hard to protect the bison, and some fought hard to eliminate it—they argued that eliminating the bison would “pacify” Plains Indians—but most simply did not care. I used it to demonstrate that many in Washington wanted to do nothing about American hide hunters because they were weakening Plains Indians by killing bison.


This work is a compilation of Comanche and Kiowa captivity narratives. While captivity narratives often have a great bias against Indians, this particular source provided thoughtful insights into the life inside a Comanche or Kiowa camp. I used it to demonstrate what life was like for Comanche captives and that it varied greatly, being incredibly harsh for some and very comfortable for others. I also used it to explain that Comanche captives were very important in tanning hides and doing other domestic activities.


Richard Dodge was a colonel in the U.S. Army, in which he served for almost 50 years. He established multiple forts in the Southwest and, as such, observed the Southern Plains Indians. This source was particularly useful to me because he calculated the number of bison killed by American hunters from 1872-1874, which helped me to demonstrate that,
although the Comanche slowly depleted bison populations, American hide hunters were what destroyed the bison in the Southern Plains.


In this document, Padgitt recounts his life during the pioneer years. For example, he recounted an experience in which he and his family were approached by a band of Comanche, who asked his children to show them where beef was kept. After they did so, the boys were safely returned, although Padgitt thought that they were going to be killed. I used this story to demonstrate that the Comanches turned to other sources of food, such as cattle, when bison populations started to rapidly fall.


This Journal details Fowler’s journey along the Arkansas River, following the Santa Fe Trail. Along his journey, he encountered and stayed with Comanche bands. As such, his work was very helpful for me to learn about the customs of the bands he stayed with. I used his estimates that each Comanche person used 6.5 bison per year. This evidence was very important in understanding the strain placed on bison populations later on.


Anthony Glass was a white American who traded with the Plains Indians. As such, he periodically lived with Plains tribes. I used him to primarily show that Plains Indians
lived in constant fear of other Indian raiders and took precautions to prevent their horses from being stolen.


*Early Western Travels* brings to light many sources during the mid-1700s to the mid-1800s. This particular document was very helpful for my understanding of Comanche trade. I used it in my paper to show that many settlers on the Southern Plains recognized that if nothing was done about the American hide hunters, then the bison would become extinct.


This work was one of the most important works that I used because it consists of interviews with Comanches. Further, these interviews were conducted shortly after reservation life, with many interviewees having a firm memory of pre-reservation life. Lastly, these interviews were conducted by anthropologists, meaning that there it contains no colonial biases, unlike primary sources written by colonists. This source was so important because it allowed me to view Comanche history through the Comanche lens. I used it to evaluate marriage customs and how the horse affected female Comanches.

This document communicated the current state of the mid 1800s Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche Indians to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It was very interesting to see how these tribes reacted to the ongoing bison crisis at the time. I used it to show that Comanches would raid Mexican settlements and then integrate the captives into their society.


In this work, James detailed his experiences living among the Plains Indians as an explorer. I used it to illustrate what trading with the Comanche looked like. It was also very helpful to see the importance of gift-giving for the Comanche.


This letter is a report from the Frenchmen Jacques-Pierre Jonquière about the condition of posts on the Southern Plains and important events surrounding those posts. This source details many attacks made by the Comanches against different rivals, but I used Jonquière’s description of the Comanche war parties, specifically how they were armed similar to the Spanish and used their war horses similar to the Spanish too, suggesting that they adopted some Spanish equestrian techniques.

Kelly was a frontierswoman who was traveling down the Oregon trail when she was captured by a group of Sioux. This work documents her life among them. Although it is at times hyperbolic, it is a still very good primary source. I used it to demonstrate that traders bought bison hides at incredibly cheap prices and then sold them for much more.

Letter written at Fort Gibson, August 1, 1833. Letter to the editor. American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine, October 1833, 70-75. PDF.

*The American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine* was a monthly sporting magazine that largely dealt with horses and horse racing. This specific letter details the author’s journey from Fort Gibson to the Pawnee and other Indians. The goal behind the journey was to maintain a friendly relationship between the U.S. and the Indians that the party met. I used this source for the author’s descriptions of animals. This source was incredibly important because it provided evidence that bison were scarce on the Southern Plains as early as 1833.


*Adventure in Red River* documents the travels of George McClellan and Randolf Marcy. It was incredibly helpful for background research and I used it in my paper to explain the role of women in tribes.


*Plains Indian Mythology* lists many myths of various Plains tribes. I used a Cheyenne myth that illustrated that the Comanches obtained horses through theft.

This letter details the Spanish and Comanche skirmishes in 1775. It was very helpful for me in understanding the often-hostile relationship between the Comanche and the Spanish, as well as Comanche relations with other nations. I used it to illustrate that the Comanche purchased guns from the British.


Pedro Fermin de Mendinueta was the governor of Spanish New Mexico from 1767 to 1777. This particular letter details the state of the province of New Mexico and is, in essence, a plea for help. He pleaded that New Mexico was in dire condition and needed support, or else it would collapse. I used this letter to demonstrate the magnitude of Comanche raids, which removed almost all of its horses from the Spanish control.


Nelson Miles was a field commander during the Red River Wars. This source recollects his experiences during the Civil War and during the Indian Wars in which he fought. I used this source to show that American hide hunters killed so many bison that they nearly drove them to extinction.

Neighbors, Robert S. Letter to H. R. Schoolcraft, "The Na-u-ni, or Comanches of Texas; Their

*The Indian Papers* is a compilation of many archival documents about Texas and the Southwest. This letter describes the Comanches, including political and cultural aspects. I found this work to be very helpful in understanding how the Comanche adapted to the bison population shrinking. I used it to show that they adapted by eating their horses.


Ortiz wrote this letter to ask for supplies for the colony of New Mexico. I used it for horse numbers among the Comanche.


Peter Pond was a fur trader, an explorer, and a cartographer. I used his journal to prove the vastness of the Comanche trade empire, with its trade reaching even Wisconsin.

Rivera, Pedro de. *Diario y derrotero de lo caminado, visto y observado en la visita que hizo a los presidios de la Nueva España Septentrional el Brigadier Pedro de Rivera*. N.p., 1945.

Pedro de Rivera was a Spanish general who inspected the state of New Spain from 1724 through 1728. He traveled over 8,000 miles during the trip and recorded entries about the settlements, their inhabitants, and the Indians he encountered along the way. This primary source was very interesting to read because it revealed a lot about the different tribes at
the time. Most interestingly, it revealed that the Comanches used dogs to transport their camps before the horse.


This source is an account of British explorer George Ruxton’s journeys in New Mexico. Along the way, he described the lack of game in the territory, specifically bison. I used it to show to what extent the bison population had been eliminated in the Plains.


As its name suggests, this letter describes multiple Indian tribes south of the Arkansas River. It ranges from the Caddo, to the Choctaws, to, of course, the Comanches. His report on the Comanche was very accurate and provides excellent insight into the life of Comanches, albeit he does exaggerate on a couple of occasions. I used his description to show that the Comanches were nomadic, moving camp frequently to follow bison herds or to find fresh pasture for their horses.


*The Indian Cause in the Spanish Laws of the Indies* investigates the Spanish Laws of the Indies—the laws which Spain applied to their colonies in the New World—in the perspective of how they affected the Native populations. It includes an English
translation of all of these laws, which is what I found particularly helpful about this source. I used it to show that Spanish law prohibited Indians from riding horses.


*After Coronado* is a collection of Spanish documents from the late 1600s to the early 1700s. This particular diary details the state of different pueblos and what their inhabitants were like. I used it to indicate Apache hostilities towards the Comanche, specifically their attacks on the pueblos at which the Apache stayed.


*The Indian Papers* is a collection of primary sources from the Spanish. I used it to demonstrate the Apache’s use of raids to accumulate horses.

**Secondary Sources**


*The Indian Southwest* demonstrates the adaptability of the Plains Indians; even in the face of Spanish attacks, drought, and famine, they managed to modify their lifestyle to fit the environment. I used it in my paper to discuss the Apache and Jumano wars, as well as trade between the Plains and Pueblo Indians.

In this work, Bailey examines the causes and implications of the Indian slave trade. I used it for her analysis that the Spanish fabricated the slave trade so that they might strengthen their grip on the Plains.


*Las Carneradas* traces the history of the New Mexican sheep trade. I did not use it for his analysis on the sheep trade, but rather for a 1757 census that reported the horses of the Plains Indians to be two times more than those of the Spanish.


In this book, Betty looks at Comanche culture before its forced relocation. He analyzes the Comanche’s political, cultural, and economic life through the lens of kinship, which was incredibly interesting. I used it to examine Comanche life before and after the introduction of the horse.


In *Violence over the Land*, Blackhawk explores the effect of colonialism on native tribes, namely that it forced Indians to use violence as a mechanism to survive. I used it for background information on where the Comanche originated from.

In this journal article, Bolton sought to answer the question: what happened to the Jumanos after the mid-1650s? I used it in my paper to show the Apache’s engulfment of the Jumanos.


*Coronado: Knight of Pueblos and Plains* accounts the journey of Francisco Vásquez de Coronado into Spanish North America. I used it to show that Plains Indians kept their horses near river valleys during winter.


In this article, Ellis looks at the boarding schools at Fort Sill, the Comanche and Kiowa reservation. He examines what the purpose of them was, how they functioned, and how the children responded to them. I used it to show that, once on the reservation, the US-run boarding schools would try to “purge the savage” from Comanche children. This included, among other things, forcing them to forget their Comanche culture, such as their horse culture.


In this book, Ewers mainly examines the horse’s impact on the Blackfoot Indians, but also examines its effects on other tribes. I used it for background information on the Comanche, such as their horse wealth.

This article presents the thesis that bison numbers had already begun declining at a dangerous rate before the American hide hunters annihilated them in the 1870s. It was incredibly helpful for me to understand the balancing game between hunting and preserving the bison. Further, it helped me to understand the two different facets of the bison’s demise: the slow, gradual decline that it faced from Plains Indians and the immediate destruction of it by American hide hunters. I used it in my paper to demonstrate how the horse greatly attributed to the depletion of bison populations. I also used it to find primary sources and other secondary sources.


*The Evolution of Political Society* set forth a schematic for the emergence of a state. He lists three societies that exist before the society become a state: egalitarian, rank, and stratified. I found this work to be incredibly useful in understanding how the notion of private property changes society. I used his analysis on egalitarian and rank societies, specifically that they redistributed essential goods among its population.


In *Prehistoric Hunters of the High Plains*, Frison examines archaeological data of the Prehistoric Plains. I used it to show what hunting methods the Plains Indians used before the horse.

Haines explains how horses spread from Southern Plains tribes to Northern tribes. As such, this work was crucial for my understanding of how the southern tribes initially obtained horses and then later traded them with other northern tribes.


*The Buffalo War* was the first synthesis of the battles of the Red River war. He provides excellent analysis of the battles and their leadup. The notable only flaw about this work is that the method the publisher employed for footnoting—the sources are referenced only by the page number and a snippet of the reference—makes it difficult to find the sources that Haley used. Nevertheless, it was incredibly useful for my understanding of the causes of the Red River War and for understanding how American hunters drove the Comanche to war as a last-ditch effort at resisting American imperialism.


In *The Comanche Empire*, Hämäläinen deals with the rise of the greatest Indian empire in the Southern Plains: the Comanches. I use it to demonstrate how the horse played a key role in forming this great empire, but also led to its eventual demise.

In this article, Hämäläinen investigates the eradication of the bison. He argued that the Comanche played a large role in its destruction and allowed American hunters to destroy an already weening population. He also emphasized the US’ complacency in regards to hide hunters. I used it to show that the U.S. and American hunters had a large role in the depletion of the bison population.


Pekka Hämäläinen, a Finnish professor at the University of Oxford, deals with horses and their impact on the culture of the Plains Indians in this article. He focuses on the effect of horses on the culture of the Plains tribes that had them. His thesis is that the effect of the horses depended on how northern or southern a tribe was. He also later argues that complete equestrian nomadism was the best way for tribes to use horses.


In this article, Hämäläinen argues that the Western Comanches operated a major trade center on the Arkansas Basin from the 1740s to around 1830. I used it in my paper numerous times and it provided crucial background to the economic history of the region.


In this book, Hickerson chronicles the rise and fall of the Jumano Indians. I used it in my paper to show the incorporation of Jumano tribes Apache tribes.

*The Hoe and the Horse* examines the effects of the shift from farming to hunting on Plains Indian culture. I used it to demonstrate that the Comanche abandoned farming in favor of hunting.


*The Extermination of the American Bison* was the first secondary source detailing the bison’s near-extinction. Hornaday wrote the work so that he might prevent the overhunting of other animals in the future. His work is incredibly important because he used firsthand accounts of hunters, ranchers, and soldiers to investigate bison population numbers and why those numbers began to fall. I used his work to demonstrate that the Comanches contributed to the bison’s decline by their unsustainable hunting practices, which was fueled by American demand for bison robes and other bison byproducts.


As its name suggests, *The Destruction of the Bison* focuses on the near-extinction of the bison in the late 1800s. This book provides an excellent analysis of the bison’s carrying capacity and how the Comanche’s trade market weakened the bison’s numbers. Furthermore, he includes brilliant analysis of how American hunters nearly doomed the bison to oblivion and how the bison rebounded from certain extinction. I used it
throughout my paper and also used it to find primary sources about the bison’s destruction.


*Storms Brewed in Other Men’s Worlds* investigates the interactions between the Southern Plains Indians, Spanish, and French. I found her analysis of Comanche trade to be very interesting because of how far it spread and how the Comanche used middlemen to trade with individuals far away. I used it to show how the Wichita were the first middlemen for the Comanche and allowed the Comanche to trade for guns with the French.


In this dissertation, Kavanagh focuses on what he calls the “Comanche anomaly,” and how political resources affect the political organization of Indian tribes. This work was incredibly helpful for me to understand early Comanche hunting methods and how the horse led to social hierarchies.


*The Comanches* is an anthropological work that details the history of the Comanches beginning in 1706, the date of the first recorded mention of them, and ending in 1875, the date that the last band of Comanches surrendered and moved into the Fort Sill reservation. It examines a plethora of sources and uses them to construct a chronological
history of the Comanches. This work differentiates itself from other secondary sources because Kavanagh investigates the claims of primary sources, considered to be canon by many other sources, and determines their validity. I used this work throughout my paper and also to find other sources.


This work illustrates the relationship between Plains Indians and New Mexicans, specifically focusing on Comancheros, New Mexicans who traded with the Comanches. This work was very important for my understanding of the Comanche trade empire. I used it to demonstrate how the Comanches began to raid for cattle once bison numbers fell.


In this book, Knaut examines the causes leading up to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 as well as its effects on the Southern Plains. I used it to examine the causes of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.


This book was very important for my understanding of the ecological circumstances surrounding the bison at the time of its demise. I used it to show the many factors that led to the bison’s disappearance from the Southern Plains and also used it to find more sources, which proved to be very helpful.

*Revolt* looks at the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and its aftermath in regards to Pueblo culture. This work differentiates itself from other histories of the Pueblo Revolt because he uses archaeological sources instead of only relying on the accounts of the Spanish, which contain a fair amount of bias in them. I used this source to show that the horse allowed Indian raids to be far more lucrative because they allowed raiders to carry away far more plunder than before the horse.


*The Apache Indians* was the first secondary source on the Apache to depict an accurate account of their history that utilized deep research and primary source analysis. It was very important for my understanding of early Apache history. I used it in my paper to demonstrate that early Plains Indians used dogs to travel. I also used it to understand the causes behind the Comanche’s attack on the mission of San Sabá.


McCollough compares the Comanche and the Hasinais in relation to the Spanish colonists. This work was very important for understanding the Comanche culturally, economically, and socially. I used her analysis on the horse’s impact on the Comanches and how it helped them to respond to Spanish colonialism.

Momaday, Navarre Scott. "A Word on the Plains Shield." In *In the Presence of the Sun: Stories*
In the Presence of the Sun is a collection of works by the Kiowa writer, N. Scott Momaday. This specific poem, “A Word on the Plains Shield,” helped my understanding of how deep the horse was integrated into Plains Indian society.


*Being Comanche* lays out the social aspects of Comanche society and challenged many common notions of the time about the Comanche’s social organization. I used it to find many primary sources on the social aspect of the Comanches and also used it for analysis on the Comanche slave market.


This article evaluates the journal of Pedro de Rivera, an early Spaniard. It was very important in understanding Comanche-Spanish relations in the early 1700s. I used it to show that the Comanches used dogs to transport their camps before the introduction of the horse.


*Uprising* documents the Revolt of 1680. It was very helpful in my understanding of the revolt’s underlying causes. Further, it provided key evidence in regard to the effects of
the revolt, such as the dispersion of the horse to Southern Plains tribes. I used it to show
that the Spanish diligently protected their horses from any raiders and that the Revolt of
1680 allowed Southern Plains Indians to develop their horse cultures.


*The Osage* focuses on the developments which allowed the Osage to gain a great amount
of power. One such necessary development was the horse, which allowed them to amass
a great amount of power through bison hunting. I found her analysis on the Wichita and
the Spanish-Comanche trade network to be very fascinating. I used it to show that the
Comanches traded slaves, horses, and buffalo robes for French firearms and other
manufactured goods.

Richardson, Rupart Norval. *The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement: A Century and a
Half of Savage Resistance to the Advancing White Frontier.* Glendale, CA: Arthur H.
Clark Company, 1933.

In this book, Richardson investigates how the Comanche acted as a barrier to American
imperialism. It was very interesting to read his analysis on how the collapse of the beaver
fur trade led to increasing demand for bison furs. I used this book to show how the bison
collapse affected the Comanche and how they responded to its collapse by increasing
their raids on Mexican settlements.

Rister, C. C. "The Significance of the Destruction of the Buffalo in the Southwest." *The
Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (July 1929): 34-49.
This article examines the impact that the bison’s near-extinction had on the Southern Plains, specifically on the Plains Indians, who relied on it for food. Rister provides excellent analysis of this event and lists the causes and roles that the UsS. and the Southern Plains Indians played in its demise. I used it to show that Plains Indians killed 5,000,000 bison between the years 1835 and 1845.


*The Wichita Indians* investigates the Wichita and their role as traders on the Southern Plains. I found it to be very necessary to my understanding of the Comanche-French trade networks. I used it to show that the Comanche traded hides and other goods to the Wichita for French firearms.


In this article, David Smits, a professor at the College of New Jersey, examines the role of the U.S. army in the removal of the bison from the Plains. I used it to show that the U.S. played a crucial role in the relocation of the Comanche because they did not take action against the invading American hide hunters.


*Farmers, Hunters, and Colonists* is a collection of essays that examines the relationship between Plains hunter-gatherers and Pueblo farmers. It also investigates the role that
colonists played in altering this relationship. In this chapter, Speth investigates food trade between Plains and Pueblo Indians. I used it to show that Plains Indians needed plant-based carbohydrates in their diets to avoid malnourishment.


In this book, Spielmann examines interdependence between the egalitarian societies of the Prehistoric Southern Plains. I used it to look into food trade and cited it in my paper to explain that prehistoric Plains Indians utilized both farming and hunting to produce food.


This book examines the early bison hunting methods of the Plains Indians before the horse. It analyzes different methods such as the stomp, surround, and drive. It utilizes archaeological evidence when explaining these hunts. I used it to explain that the spoils of the hunts would be evenly divided among those participating in the hunt.


In *The Contested Plains*, West explores how the gold rush to Colorado affected those areas outside of Colorado, specifically Indian territories. I use it to show how the horse proved to be a groundbreaking force in Plains Indian life.

In this work, Elliott West explores how horses shaped the Plains. I found its sources to be very helpful, especially its primary sources. It also greatly aided in my understanding of Plains Indian culture before and after the horse came to the Great Plains.


In this book, West explores the migrations of the Cheyenne. He argues that the horse drove the Cheyenne, and other tribes, to migrate onto the Central Plains because of the possibilities it brought to Indians. I used it to show that, during winter, river valleys provided horses the necessary protection from the elements.


This archaeological report details a bison drive from around 6500 BCE. It shows how the hunters were able to kill nearly 200 bison in one single drive. It also provides insight into how the animals were butchered after the successful drive and how the hunters kept almost every part of the animal. I used it as an example of hunting methods before the horse and how these methods could be highly successful.

Wissler was one of the first authors to push that horses influenced Plains Indian culture. I used his works to show what the initial introduction of horses into the Plains Indian society looked like.


In this anthropological work, Wolf criticizes the commonly-held belief that, before European colonialism, non-European nations were isolated entities. He argues that the opposite was actually true and that their cultures were constantly changing. He uses a Marxist approach to the emergence of capitalism and its spread to non-European territories. I used this work for its Marxist analysis on the horse, specifically that it changed the ownership of the means of production from communal to private and individualistic.


This article details the trade routes on the New Mexican frontier. I used it to show that the Comanche traded with the French, allowing them to purchase guns.

**Personal Communications**

Betty, Gerald. E-mail interview by the author. Stoughton, WI. April 17, 2020.

Gerald Betty is a professor at Del Mar College. He is the author of *Comanche Society: Before the Reservation*. In addition to giving me answers to my questions, he also gave me high-quality background information about anthropology, specifically kinship,
culture, and the scientific method in regards to history. His answers challenged the assumptions that my questions made, which opened up new perspectives on the history of the horse and the Comanche. He also challenged a few beliefs prevalent in Comanche history and the history of Plains Indians horse cultures. His answers built my understanding of this topic and also led me to further research aspects of this history.

Barcena, Bernard. E-mail interview by the author. Stoughton, WI. March 21, 2020.

Bernard Barcena is the current Chairman of the Lipan Apache. He was a great help to me in understanding how the horse changed Apache society, as well as why the Comanche and Apache went to war. He helped me to understand how the horse impacted the Apache differently from how it impacted the Comanche, which was incredibly important in my knowledge of this topic.


Ms. Callahan is the current Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Comanche Tribe. Her insights were incredibly helpful because of her deep knowledge of Comanche culture. She explained the impact of horses on the Comanches and opened up different perspectives on the topic, which helped me immensely in my research. I used her insights throughout my paper and to guide my research.


Dan Flores is a Professor Emeritus at the University of Montana. He has written many environmental histories of the West. I talked to him about the destruction of the Bison in the Great Plains—its causes and the history surrounding it. He was of incredible help
because he explained all of the conditions that led to the bison’s destruction, the response of the Comanche to falling bison numbers. One of the most interesting points that he made was that the bison’s decline has two levels: the slow and gradual decline from Plains Indians, which it faced before the Civil War, and the incredibly rapid destruction after the Civil War, which was imposed by the American hide hunters. Talking to him greatly increased my understanding of the bison’s fall.


Dr. Thomas Kavanagh has written multiple highly important works on the history of the Comanche and compiled very important interviews with early Comanches. I talked to him for a little over 3 hours and was able to discuss a wide range of topics. He was able to clarify many misconceptions and guide me away from certain secondary sources. Most importantly, he informed me of lots of new areas in which I should research. His anthropological insights were incredibly helpful in understanding the Comanche’s political organization as well as in understanding the differences between egalitarian, rank, and stratified societies. This interview greatly influenced the direction that I went with my paper.

Munkres, James. E-mail interview by the author. Stoughton, WI. March 2020.

James Munkres is an archaeologist for the Osage Nation. He was very helpful for understanding how the horse affected the Osage, but he also gave very insightful information on how the horse changed Plains Indian culture in general. He also provided other sources for me to look at, which helped me to understand the Comanche’s trade relationship with other tribes.
Elliott West is a highly esteemed historian of the West. I was able to interview him, which gave me a deeper understanding of my topic. He also helped inform me of articles and books, which proved to be especially useful. Lastly, he provided me a map of Comanche trade routes, which I used for my Appendix A.