REVIEW ARTICLE

The Reintroduction of the Horse to the Northern Great Plains and its Influence on Blackfoot Lifeways

Jessica Stocks
Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, University of Alberta

ABSTRACT

The presence of horses in archaeological sites across North America is often noted in research as an indicator of European contact. Fewer studies, however, have considered how Indigenous peoples incorporated horses as an intrinsic aspect of their lives. Research that considers Indigenous peoples' relationships with horses typically focuses on Southern Plains groups and does not feature Northern Plains communities as a central aspect. Looking specifically at one Northern Great Plains Indigenous people, this paper analyzes how Blackfoot lifeways were altered as a result of the protohistoric (seventeenth to eighteenth century) reintroduction of the horse. Blackfoot lives were transformed as their relationship with the land evolved, economic systems reformed, and trade, religion, and war became centered around the horse. Almost all Blackfoot people would have felt the effects of the horse's introduction, however not necessarily equally as these changes caused a shift in hierarchy. These impacts and changes on lifeways are evidenced by European historical accounts, Indigenous oral histories, and the archaeological record. Examining the relationship that the Blackfoot formed with horses demonstrates the significant influence that animals can have over people's lives. Horses' introduction to Blackfoot peoples proved to cause significant changes in the ways many conducted their lives, such as through the establishment of nomadic pastoralism and trade routes centered around the horse. This paper additionally calls for further research into the continued relationship between the Blackfoot peoples and the horse.

Keywords: Plain's horses, protohistoric period, Blackfoot, archaeology, zooarchaeology

INTRODUCTION

The most widely accepted theory regarding the horse population in North America is that horses were prevalent during the Ice Age and went extinct sometime at the end of the Pleistocene (Barrón-Ortiz et al. 2017). It is theorized that roughly 11,000 years later, North America was reintroduced to the horse (Equus ferus) by Spaniards who settled in what is now New Mexico (Hall 2020). This same hypothesis goes on to stipulate that towards the end of the seventeenth-century, Spanish horse herds were captured and utilized by Pueblo and Apache warriors (Hall 2020). Subsequent trade and capture then allowed horses to spread and multiply throughout Indigenous communities in the Southwest and beyond (Hall 2020). However, there are contradicting claims regarding the history of the horse in North America. Indigenous scholars such as Collin (2017) have posited genetic and traditional knowledge that supports an unbroken relationship between North America's most ancient horse breeds and Indigenous peoples. While the reintroduction of horses by Spanish settlers is currently the most accepted

theory in academic literature, the premise that horses were 'gifted' to Indigenous peoples by Europeans plays into a colonial narrative. This narrative consequently tends to minimize the unique horse cultures that many Indigenous groups have maintained for time immemorial (Collin 2017).

Bearing these connotations, this paper will consider the current and widely accepted theory of mid-eighteenth-century adoption of horses in the northernmost portions of the Great Plains, while recognizing that this version of history may change in the coming years (Hall 2020; Bastien and Kremer 2004). Focusing specifically on the Blackfoot, I argue that the adoption of horses altered lifeways of the Northern Great Plains by modifying individuals' relationships with the land, by improving socioeconomic conditions, and by facilitating a hierarchical society. While there are many more changes that horses brought to Blackfoot life (see Hämäläinen 2003; Landals 2004; Zedeño, Ballenger, and Murray 2014), the effects that I discuss represent the most fundamental and drastic ways that Blackfoot lifeways were altered with the introduction of horses. Despite the history of the horse's relationship with Indigenous peoples being well studied within the southern regions of the Great Plains, less is known about the horse's impact on the Northern Great Plains (Bethke 2017; 2020b; Ewers 1955). Examining the relationship that the Blackfoot formed with horses demonstrates the significant influence that animals can have over people's daily activities and lives more broadly. Through the study of the Blackfoot's experiences with horses, it is apparent that these animals were seen as extremely valuable and had a substantial impact on many lifeways.[1]

MODES OF UNDERSTANDING THE HORSE'S INFLUENCE

The Northern Great Plains includes a vast ecoregion that ranges east to west from the 100th meridian to the plains east of the Rockies, and north to south from southern Alberta and Saskatchewan to northern Wyoming and Nebraska (Barker and Whitman 1988). The horse is suggested to have reached the Northern Plains via Indigenous groups such as the Comanche, Shoshone, and Flatheads (Hall 2020). Through trade and seizure, archaeologists argue that sometime in the 1720s, horses were introduced to the traditional territory of the Blackfoot (Hall 2020). Taking place well before the Europeans were established on the Northern Plains, these horses would have roamed in what is present-day southern Alberta, western Saskatchewan, and northern Montana (Hall 2020; Bethke 2020b). By approximately 1725, the Blackfoot had developed a word for the horse: ponokaomitaa—which translates into 'elk dog' (Baldwin 1994; Bastien and Kremer 2004).

Prior to the introduction of horses, the Blackfoot utilized dogs to aid them in various activities. Since time immemorial, dogs were used to pull travoises (a frame made up of two wooden poles used to tow heavy loads) with as much as 35-kilogram loads (Bastien and Kremer 2004). However, the newly introduced horse proved to be a significant improvement over the dogs that the Blackfoot had relied upon for transportation and other services before the 1700s, because horses could travel four times further than dogs and pull larger travoises for twice as long (Baldwin 1994; Landals 2004). Despite this replacement, it is important to note that dogs were not completely disregarded with the introduction of the horse. Dogs continued to be used alongside horses, as dogs were viewed as companions and useful for lighter work (Bethke

[1] It is important to recognize my positionality in this context as a non-Indigenous settler. While I have endeavored to shift away from a Eurocentric interpretation and portrayal in this work, Blackfoot peoples themselves will always be those best suited to speak to their relationship with horses.

2020a). While the Blackfoot had survived on the Northern Great Plains for generations with only domesticated dogs, they perfected the mastery of the horse in a matter of decades. In 1754, British explorer Anthony Henday (fl. 1750–62) noted the expert horsemanship that Blackfoot adolescents displayed while he found his horse difficult to control (Hall 2020; Graham 2008). Although there are conflicting perspectives regarding the rapid adoption of the horse by the Blackfoot versus a continuous primordial relationship, there is no denying that the horse had a substantial impact on Blackfoot lifeways (Collin 2017; Bethke 2020b).

The influence of horses on Blackfoot peoples' lives is inferred from several modes of evidence, including historical accounts, oral histories, and archaeological findings (Bethke 2017; Hovens 2009; Landals 2004). It is imperative to note, however, that there are limitations to each of these forms of knowledge. Knowledge of Blackfoot interactions with horses frequently stems from the accounts of European fur traders and surveyors, many of whom lived with and relied upon the Blackfoot for survival (Bethke 2017; Hovens 2009). Indeed, the Blackfoot may be one of the most studied and well-known North American groups to Europeans due to their documented relationship with European fur traders (Hovens 2009). However, most Europeans arrived on the Northern Great Plains decades after horses were already incorporated into the Blackfoot culture, leaving many questions about precontact horse life in Blackfoot communities (Bethke 2017). While still valuable, these accounts are influenced by Eurocentric interpretations and must be viewed with scrutiny. Alternatively, the Blackfoot's oral histories are rich and can enhance academic knowledge of the horse's history on the Plains and fill in the gaps of colonial sources (Bethke 2020a). For instance, nineteenth-century lessons surrounding horses are still known today, such as Blackfoot Chief Buffalo Back Fat's advice to not have one's entire financial assets invested in horses (Hämäläinen 2003). While oral histories are well known by many Indigenous peoples, they are not widely available within academia and future scholars will be required to make a concerted effort to seek out these verbal accounts if communities are willing.

The impact of horses on Indigenous lifeways is further supported by archaeological evidence. However, due to the loss of many sites in the last two centuries and some standard post-mortem practices of leaving horses' bodies exposed to the elements after death, there are few archaeological remains of horses across the Northern Plains (Bethke 2017; Ewers 1955). European-contact archaeological sites are often identified from the presence of horse bones but are severely under-represented on the Northern Plains. Indeed, one estimate posits late pre-contact sites on the Northern Plains at a 20:1 ratio to contact sites (Landals 2004). While the lack of archaeological sites from the contact period may be due to the aforementioned preservation and taphonomic issues, there are other factors at play. It can also be argued that the limited number of contact period archaeological sites is implicated by an altered relationship between the Blackfoot and the land that resulted from the introduction of the horse (Landals 2004). The next section will investigate these effects.

PASTORALISM, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, AND MOBILITY: AN ALTERED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LANDSCAPE

The introduction of horses changed how the Blackfoot used the land. Bethke (2020b), for instance, argues that the introduction of horses to Blackfoot people caused a shift from little to no management over domesticated seasonal pack animals (excluding dogs who can survive on much of the same diet as humans), towards nomadic pastoralism. With the horse, the Blackfoot people no longer had to rely as heavily on specific locations for

hunting. This reliance can be considered by examining the methods of bison jumps and drivelines. Although the Blackfoot people had successfully used these methods to manipulate the bison's actions and ecology for generations without the horse, communities were required to live near localities that allowed for the creation of bison jumps and drivelines (Oetelaar 2014; Bethke 2017). Additionally, as dogs cannot travel as great of distances, or carry as large of loads as horses, there was insufficient means to transport bison meat over expansive stretches of land, thus requiring the Blackfoot to live near hunting sites seasonally (Hall 2020; Bethke 2017).

Rather than bring the bison to the people, the introduction of horses allowed hunters to move to the bison and to transport bison meat more freely (Bethke 2017). Using horses, hunters could pursue bison independently, or communally employ a surround method of hunting, which allowed for a high return in mass kills that could then be moved back to camp to process (Oetelaar 2014; Zedeño, Ballenger, and Murray 2014). The Castle Forks (excavated 1993) and Flicka (excavated 2006) kill-sites of southern Alberta potentially provide evidence for the use of horses in hunting and the movement of both unborn bison calves and "meat bundles" — multiple disarticulated skeletal elements of bison— by horses back to camps (Peck 2010, 429). The utilization of horses to transport fetal bison and meat bundles from these sites is hypothesized for several reasons. The Castle Forks site contains the humerus of a fetal bison, and both sites suggest a style of meat processing where large pieces of bison were butchered at one time, thus implying that transportation was of little concern, likely because of the horse (Peck 2010). This hypothesis is additionally supported as both the Castle Forks and Flicka sites can be placed within the contact period since they contain protohistoric material, such as metals (Peck 2010; Landals 1993). Furthermore, within the Flicka site, the remains of a horse that appears to have died accidentally were uncovered, thus confirming the presence of horses and indicating their likely utilization (Peck 2010; Vivian, Dow, and Blakey 2019).

With limited archaeological data, the frequency of movement cannot be accurately tested; however, hunting methods altered by the introduction of the horse likely allowed for increased mobility (Bethke 2017; Bethke 2020a). An increased mobility hypothesis augments the likelihood that groups no longer stayed in one location for as long as they had in the pre-contact era (Bethke 2017; Landals 2004). Evidence of this (or lack-there-of) likely fits into the archaeological record with few documented protohistoric sites on the Northern Plains. Instances of such sites include Alberta sites DgOv–2, DgOv, and DgP1–1 (see Pyszczyk 1997, 60 for further examples). Because pre-contact sites were generally occupied for multiple generations and thus left behind copious material culture, they are more archaeologically visible than shorter-lived contact period sites. As an example of this, the pre-contact archaeological site of Ross in Alberta has nine clear cultural occupation layers. In contrast, contact sites in general have brief occupation periods, and their artifact density is lower than pre-contact sites, thus rendering them less archaeologically visible (Landals 2004).

Within the traditional Blackfoot territory, archaeological databases indicate that there are 240 contact sites compared to 1,077 pre-contact sites (Bethke 2017). While these site ratios suggest that the Blackfoot may have had greater mobility due to the horse, there are several factors to consider. The pre-contact period lasted upwards of ten thousand years while the contact period of archaeological interest lasted for only a few hundred years (Landals 2004). These differential durations are likely due to declines in Blackfoot populations resulting during the contact era from colonial impacts, such as disease and famine, and there remains a bias in archaeologists'

desire to discover pre-contact sites (Bethke 2017; Landals 2004).

Despite these potentially confounding factors, there is little doubt that the Blackfoot would have been forced to increase the movement of camps due to the grazing habits of horses. As grazers, horses could not stay in one area for too long without depleting their resources (Hämäläinen 2003). Furthermore, horses require more water than dogs (Bethke 2017). While the proximity to potable water had always been of concern, with the addition of horses, camps now continuously had to be near adequate sources of water (Bethke 2017; Hämäläinen 2003). Additionally, it appears that the horse influenced the tendency to live near wooded areas, as bark would have provided additional food for horses (Bethke 2017; Ewers 1955). Cottonwood, specifically, is known to have been used as additional feed when deep snow in the winter prevented horses from reaching grass (Ewers 1955). On average, contact archaeological sites are in closer proximity to both water and wooded areas, thus supporting the idea that horses influenced camp locations (Bethke 2017) (see Tables 1 and 2).

Distance (km)	Precontact Sites (%)	Contact Sites (%)
0.5	42	81
1	18	12
2	14	7
5	9	0
10	6	0
20	11	0
Minimum Distance	0.0016	0.0007
Maximum Distance	19.4	1.9
Mean Distance	1.6	0.3

Table 1–*The distance of camps to water bodies decreased following European contact. (Source: data reproduced from Bethke 2017, table 2, 808.)*

Distance (km)	Precontact Sites (%)	Contact Sites (%)
0.5	17	44
1	6	5
2	6	7
5	16	11
10	14	5
20	41	28
Minimum Distance	0.00	0.00
Maximum Distance	89.9	61.8
Mean Distance	14.5	9.2

Table 2–*The distance of camps to wooded areas decreased following European contact.* (*Source: data reproduced from Bethke 2017, table 3, 808.)*

The horse also appears to have resulted in many campsites becoming situated in protected river valleys (Peck 2010). Unlike domesticated dogs, horses do not require humans to survive on the Plains. As a result of this, it was necessary to utilize protected areas to ensure that horses did not run away from their owners. The topographic intricacy of river valleys, coulees, and foothills may have

provided natural enclosures while further protecting horses from theft (Bethke 2017; Peck 2010).

Furthermore, Peter Fidler (1769–1822), a European explorer who spent a winter season in the late eighteenth-century living with the Piegan of the Blackfoot, produced accounts that suggest members of the Blackfoot participated in controlled burning due to the grazing needs of the horse (Oetelaar 2014; Haig 1991). Although Fidler partially attributed the prairie fires he saw to lightning strikes, the fact that he was travelling through Southern Alberta in winter and early spring—a time when there are few lightning storms—makes this unlikely (Oetelaar 2014; Haig 1991). Fidler observed that many of these fires often took place near camps where thousands of horses could later be found grazing (Oetelaar 2014; Haig 1991). It appears likely, therefore, that these were controlled fires set for the purpose of creating grazing land for horses (Oetelaar 2014). This ecological control would not have been unusual for the Blackfoot, as controlled fires were often used to sustain winter foraging pastures for bison (Oetelaar 2014; Barett and Arno 1982). It is important to note, however, that fire chronologies of Northern Plains' primary forests, constructed through tree-scarring, indicate that controlled fires did not increase significantly following the introduction of the horse (Barett and Arno 1982). This data calls into question whether controlled burning set for grazing pastures was common practice (Barett and Arno 1982), or if perhaps the focus on bison foraging shifted to a focus on horse foraging, thus keeping the level of intentional burning consistent. Irrespective, there is little doubt that the introduction of horses altered the Blackfoot's relationship with the land by influencing where the Blackfoot lived and for how long, and their chosen methods of ecological control for subsistence practices. Just as horses transformed how the Blackfoot used the land, horses further modified the dynamics of Blackfoot socioeconomic and cultural practices.

REMODELLED HIERARCHY IN BLACKFOOT SOCIETY

Trade, religion, and war were all affected by the adoption of horses. As the Blackfoot could now travel with greater speed and ease, their lives were granted more flexibility (Bastien and Kremer 2004; Bethke 2017). The horse allowed Blackfoot economic networks to expand. Horses were used to traverse trade routes between communities and many of these trade routes were further utilized to exchange horses for material goods (Bethke 2020b; Hämäläinen 2003). The Kiowa of the Central and Southern Plains, for instance, traded horses to Northern Plains groups such as the Blackfoot via the trade network of the Comanche peoples (Hämäläinen 2003).

The increased movement abetted by the horse allowed for more trade between the Blackfoot and other Northern Plains groups, while still permitting the Blackfoot to be mostly independent of the fur trade (early seventeenth-century to mid-nineteenth century) (Bethke 2020a; 2020b; Foster and Eccles 2019). Bethke (2020b) argues that the Blackfoot could instead selectively choose when their interactions with fur traders took place on a beneficial basis. However, supposing that any Indigenous peoples could always dictate their interactions with Europeans is an oversimplification referring purely to trade and some of the benefits offered to those who possessed horses. The fur trade was frequently one-sided in favour of European settlers; in instances of epidemics or territory conflicts, the Blackfoot often had no choice in the form in which their interactions with Europeans took place. Hämäläinen (2003) contends that the introduction of the horse on the Northern Great Plains allowed for the expansion of the fur trade, as newly mounted hunters were able to efficiently contribute bison robes to the market. Horses were further used as an

exchange for European-introduced products, such as ammunition and guns (Bethke 2020b).

In addition to altered trade networks, horses changed Blackfoot religion and spirituality. For example, new spiritual organizations centered around the horse were created within the Blackfoot culture (Bethke 2020a). Early Europeans noted that one Blackfoot religious society was for the mending of both humans and horses (Bastien and Kremer 2004). Blackfoot religious foundations that had once centered themselves around the bison now further incorporated the horse (Bethke 2020a). The horse was incorporated into these spiritual aspects of life as it had mystical abilities. Horses were believed to be a gift from Morning Star, the Water Spirits, or Thunder (Bastien and Kremer 2004). In Blackfoot culture, the horse became a part of almost all religious elements, including the sacred pipe and medicine bundles (Bethke 2020a; 2020b). In these respective religious features, pipe bundles are used in pipe ceremonies, which may be conducted for many reasons, such as to give strength to horses or for success in war and hunting (Bethke 2020a; Crowshoe and Manneschmidt 2002). Medicine bundles are meant to help individuals by providing them with power from animals, such as the horse (Bethke 2020a; Crowshoe and Manneschmidt 2002).

Furthermore, as travel could be undertaken farther and faster with the horse, distant groups previously not connected physically were brought together in religious ceremonies, such as the Sun Dance or Okan, which typically includes hundreds of people (Zedeño, Ballenger, and Murray 2014). Although an in-depth explanation of the Sun Dance is beyond the scope of this paper, this complex spiritual ceremony, often related to celestial events such as the summer solstice, is held for a variety of reasons, such as to gain luck and give sacrifice and prayers (Ewers 1948; Hollabaugh 2017; Kehoe and Kehoe 1977). Alongside bringing distant groups together at traditional locations for religious ceremonies, horses further created new locations of religious importance. Some of these spaces, such as Kobell Coulee— now within Montana's contemporary boundaries and the Blackfoot Indian Reservation— are believed to make horses stronger and continue to be visited by horses and their owners in the winter months (Bethke 2017; 2020b).

Gradually altering several aspects of daily life, the horse further changed warfare among the Northern Great Plains. Although the effectiveness of mounted combat allowed certain groups, such as the Lakota, to evade the harshness of colonialism for longer than others, there were now new reasons for wars between Indigenous groups due to the horse (Hämäläinen 2003). For instance, the Blackfoot and Atsina faced increasing pressure from the Flatheads and Shoshones, who, after acquiring horses, pushed into Blackfoot and Atsina hunting territory (Hämäläinen 2003). This infringement resulted in a series of wars to drive the Flatheads and Shoshones back south (Hämäläinen 2003). Within the Blackfoot culture, battles such as these were often depicted in paintings on features such as wooden bowls, where horses would be a central aspect of the artwork (Hovens 2009). Hämäläinen (2003, 838) argues that many of the instances of war were because, although horses were central to the Plains' economy, the Northern Plains were relatively "horse-poor." As a result, Northern Great Plains groups were in a constant battle to obtain horses. For example, the Atsina were expulsed from their established homeland following several bouts of fighting over horses, after which many died during a severe winter (Landals 2004). Overall, dynamics of conflict changed due to the introduction of horses (Bastien and Kremer 2004). The extent of this change is also demonstrated through language, with the development of a word within the Blackfoot lexicon that communicates the act of stealing horses. The word, Naamaahkhaan, which translates to "coup," refers to taking a

horse from someone's home or getting close enough to strike someone (Bastien and Kremer 2004, 16). Taken as a whole, the horse was an active agent in altering the Blackfoot's socio-economic and broader cultural systems, which subsequently influenced the formation and structure of hierarchies within Blackfoot communities.

REMODELLED HIERARCHY IN BLACKFOOT SOCIETY

Much of the warring described contributed to the development of hierarchy within Blackfoot society. Although horses allowed for more equality in such regards as being able to transport the elderly and disabled, more than anything, the horse was a symbol of prestige and power (Hall 2020). Those that were considered 'wealthy' had dozens of horses, with some rumoured to have them in the hundreds (Hall 2020). As horses had become essential to life on the Great Plains, those without horses found themselves reliant on horse-wealthy community members for access to bison (Hall 2020; Bethke 2020b). As horse-rich individuals held a status and position of power over horse-poor individuals, wealthy people would often maintain more horses than they or their families needed (Hall 2020). Well-off individuals did this with the knowledge that they could then call in favours following the loan of their horses to people without horses (Bethke 2020b). Therefore, the presence of horses challenged the comparatively equitable social structures that had been common in the days of reliance on dogs (Hall 2020).

As discussed, horses increased the effectiveness of warfare and were often acquired through such conflicts. Subsequently, for individuals who were horse-poor, it was difficult to accumulate horses because those with horses were more likely to be invited to contribute to raids (Bethke 2020b). It is important to note, however, that the wealthy could easily lose their riches. Severe winters common to the Northern Plains, theft, and disease were all known to strip individuals of horses (Bethke 2020b).

Although the hierarchical ways of the horse days likely affected most people, the aspects discussed thus far have primarily focused on men. Experiences with horses were also gendered. Although Blackfoot men held specific responsibilities for horses, such as clearing holes in ice-covered water, Blackfoot women maintained their primary care (Bastein and Kremer 2004). Although the workload between men and women had once been predominately equal, the introduction of the horse required greater labour from women (Crowshoe and Manneschmidt 2002). Though the horse's introduction relieved some of the women's workloads, such as carrying belongings in camp relocations, women now had entirely new tasks (Hämäläinen 2003). Blackfoot women produced saddlebags, harnesses, travoises, and many other products that allowed for the more resourceful use of horses (Bethke 2020b). Unfortunately, due to the often-organic nature of these creations, their existence in the archaeological record is scarce. Furthermore, women were responsible for collecting bark for horses and clearing snow for grazing patches in the winter (Bastien and Kremer 2004). While an increased workload does not necessarily equate to women having less equality because of the horse, women appeared to have been responsible for these tasks as they were "below the dignity of a warrior" (Bastien and Kremer 2004, 249). Those who married into polygamous relationships were further viewed as subordinates responsible for the care of horses, while initial polygamous wives and the wives of wealthy families appeared to enjoy the horse's benefits (Hämäläinen 2003).

The differential treatment of some women was primarily the result of authority and affluence being within the control of a select few men within groups (Hämäläinen 2003). Women's role and their image changed

following the introduction of horses (Crowshoe and Manneschmidt 2002). With the mounted warrior idealized, horse-rich men dominated life on the Northern Great Plains (Crowshoe and Manneschmidt 2002). While it is vital to recognize that there continue to be numerous Blackfoot horsewomen who value horses as an intrinsic part of their culture (Bethke 2020b) and not as a burden as is postulated here, so too is it vital to recognize that the introduction of the horse was not a standardized experience.

CONCLUSION

As experiences with the horse varied across the Northern Great Plains, I have attempted to highlight one Northern Plains group, the Blackfoot, and demonstrate how their lives were altered due to the horse. Drawing on European historical accounts, the oral traditions of the Blackfoot, and the archaeological record, the introduction of the horse to the Northern Plains had a significant impact on people's lives. Specifically, horses provided a new degree of mobility and an altered relationship with the land due to innovations in hunting methods and the care that horse husbandry required. Although the horse provided Blackfoot people with greater freedom of movement, the horse's needs largely dictated where groups travelled, as their grazing habits had to be considered.

The Blackfoot further found life altered through their economic and social systems. Economically, the Blackfoot's trading relationships with other Indigenous groups and fur traders transformed due to the horse. Socially, the horse became the center of many spiritual practices and caused various instances of war and territory disputes. Lastly, horses became the highest form of monetary value on the Northern Plains and subsequently resulted in differential status and hierarchies. Although many benefitted from the horse's introduction, this was not a universal experience, and many women found themselves subject to an increasingly male-dominated society.

Exploring the horse's influence on the Blackfoot is important because it gives us a glimpse into the power that animals hold over people's lives. Additionally significant, the history of the horse on the Northern Plains is a lesser-known topic amongst archaeologists and generalists alike. Here, I have endeavoured to compile much of what is currently known on this topic concerning the Blackfoot. As the horse had wide-reaching impacts across the Northern Great Plains, future research will undoubtedly consider the unique relationships that other Indigenous Northern Plains groups formed with the horse. Moreover, I have not addressed the contemporary impacts of horses on Blackfoot lifeways, thus highlighting the need for upcoming papers to display the Blackfoot's relationship with the horse not as a relic of the past, but rather, as one which has evolved and persevered throughout the austerity of colonialism. This paper has sought to demonstrate that, despite thriving for generations without horses, the Blackfoot rapidly adapted to suit an animal that became the center of many of their lifeways.

REFERENCES

Baldwin, Stuart J. 1994. "Blackfoot Neologisms." *International Journal of American Linguistics* 60, no. 1: 69–72. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1265481.

Barett, Stephen W., and Stephen F. Arno. 1982. "Indian Fires as an Ecological Influence in the Northern Rockies." *Journal of Forestry* 80, no. 10: 647–651. https://doi.org/10.1093/jof/80.10.647.

Barker, William T., and Warren C. Whitman. 1988. "Vegetation of the Northern Great Plains." *Rangelands* 10, no. 6: 266–272. https://repository.arizona.edu/handle/10150/640344.

Barrón-Ortiz, Christina I., Antonia T. Rodrigues, Jessica M. Theodor, Brian P. Kooyman, Dongya Y. Yang, and Camilla F. Speller. 2017. "Cheek Tooth Morphology and Ancient Mitochondrial DNA of late Pleistocene Horses from the Western Interior of North America: Implications for the Taxonomy of North American Late Pleistocene Equus." *PLoS ONE* 12, no. 8: e0183045. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0183045.

Bastien, Betty, and Jürgen W. Kremer, eds. 2004. "Innahkootaitsinnika'to'pi Siksikaitsipoyi – History of the Blackfoot-speaking Tribes." In *Blackfoot Ways of Knowing: The Worldview of the Siksikaitsitapi*, 7–26. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Bethke, Brandi. 2017. "The Archaeology of Pastoralist Landscapes in the Northwestern Plains." *American Antiquity* 84, no. 4: 798–815. https:// doi:10.1017/aaq.2017.44.

Bethke, Brandi. 2020a. "Dog Days to Horse Days: The Introduction of the Horse and its Impact on Human-dog Relationships Among the Blackfoot." In *Dogs: Archaeology Beyond Domestication*, edited by Brandi Bethke and Amanda Burtt, 163–185. Tallahassee: University Press of Florida. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvxrpxtv.11.

Bethke, Brandi. 2020b. "Revisiting the Horse in Blackfoot Culture: Understanding the Development of Nomadic Pastoralism on the North American Plains." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 24: 44–61. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10761-019-00502-1.

Collin, Yvette Running Horse. 2017. "The Relationship Between the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and the Horse: Deconstructing a Eurocentric Myth." PhD diss., University of Alaska. ScholarWorks@UA.

Crowshoe, Reg and Sybille Manneschmidt. 2002. "Horse days." In *Akak'stiman: A Blackfoot Framework for Decision-making and Mediation Processes*, 7–8. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Ewers, John C. 1948. "Self-torture in the Blood Indian Sun Dance." *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences* 38, no. 5: 166–173. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24530856.

Ewers, John C. 1955. The Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture: With Comparative Material from Other Western Tribes. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology.

Foster, John E., and William John Eccles. "Fur Trade in Canada." 2019. In The Canadian Encyclopedia, edited by Richard Foot and Michelle Filice. Historica Canada. https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/fur-trade.

Graham, Jane E. 2013. "Anthony Henday." In *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada. https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/anthony-henday.

Haig, Brian, ed. 1992. Journal of a Journey over Land from Buckingham House to the Rocky Mountains in 1792 & 3. 2nd ed., Lethbridge: Historical Research Centre.

Hall, Ryan, ed. 2020. "Náápi's place." In *Beneath the Backbone of the World: Blackfoot People and the North American Borderlands, 1720–1877*, 13–36. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Hämäläinen, Pekka. 2003. "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures." *The Journal of American History* 90, no. 3:

833–862. https://doi.org/10.2307/3660878.

Hollabaugh, Mark. 2017. *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos*. Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.

Hovens, Pieter. 2009. "C.C. Uhlenbeck: Collecting and Sharing Blackfoot Culture and History." *Canadian Journal of Netherlandic Studies* XXIX.ii/XXX.i (Fall 2008/Spring 2009): 129–149. https://caans-acaen.ca/Journal/issues_online/Issue_XXIX_ii_2008/Hovens.pdf

Kehoe, Thomas F., and Alice B. Kehoe. 1977. "Stones, Solstices and Sun Dance Structures." *Plains Anthropologist* 22, no. 76: 85–95. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25667371.

Landals, Alison. "The Broadview Site, EbMp 6: A Heritage Resource Conservation Study." Submitted to TransCanada Pipelines Limited, Calgary, 1993.

Landals, Alison. 2004. "Horse Heaven: Change in Late Precontact to Contact Period Landscape Use in Southern Alberta." In *Archaeology on the Edge: New Perspectives from the Northern Plains*, edited by J.H. Kelley and B.P. Kooyman, 231–267. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

Oetelaar, Gerald A. 2014. "Better Homes and Pastures: Human Agency and the Construction of Place in Communal Bison Hunting on the Northern Plains." *Plains Anthropologist* 59, no. 229: 9–37. https://doi.org/10.1179/2052546X13Y.0000000004.

Peck, Trevor R., ed. 2010. "Late Prehistoric to Historic Period Transition Protohistoric Period: ca. 250 to 200 BP." In *Light from Ancient Campfires: Archaeological Evidence for Native Lifeways on the Northern Plains*, 417–440. Edmonton: Athabasca University Press.

Pyszczyk, Heinz W. 1997. "The Use of Fur Trade Goods by the Plains Indians, Central and Southern Alberta, Canada." *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 21, no. 1: 45–84. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41103322.

Vivian, Brian, Janey Blakey, and Amanda Dow. 2019. A *Tale of Two Sites: Examining Two Proto-Historic Bison Kills in the Calgary Area. Lifeways of Canada Ltd*. https://lifewaysofcanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Vivian-Blakey-Dow-2005.pdf.

Zedeño, Maria N., Jesse A.M. Ballenger, and John R. Murray. 2014. "Landscape Engineering and Organizational Complexity Among Late Prehistoric Bison Hunters of the Northwestern Plains." *Current Anthropology* 55, no. 1: 23–58. https://doi:10.1086/674535.