Horses and Grazing on the Navajo Indian Reservation

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Authorization to Submit Dissertation

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Abstract

In northern New Mexico, northeast Arizona, southeast Utah, and southwest Colorado, the Navajo people, Athabascans, became equestrians after the introduction of horses by the Spanish in the year 1540. Once following bison by foot on the Great Plains with large pack dogs, the historical Navajo overcame perhaps one of their greatest enemies, distance. Not giving the Spaniards credit, the Navajo at once developed a ceremonial history that the horse was procured, not easily, from their father the Sun. On horseback, the Navajo increased their wealth with great herds of sheep, a steady supply of meat, clothing, bedding, and security.

Loss of lands and subjection by force reduced Navajo advancement for a short time. Imprisoned for four years as a people and attacked incessantly by all nations not Navajo, the people survived and, although now wards of the United States government, a renewed growth appeared within their heart. Guidance and protection from their traditional leaders and medicine people safely ushered the Navajo into modern times.

The horse today, as it was yesterday, must be nearby a Navajo for companionship, a sense of safeness, and is the consciousness of wealth and the state of well-being. Grazing lands represent the kindness bestowed by a nurturing mother. Grazing provides the nutrient to the Navajo through the horse, other livestock, and wild game. Grazing lands must be safeguarded. The fragility of Navajo rangelands to overgrazing, erosion, and extreme weathering is genuine and ever-present.

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I am indebted to the traditional leaders and teachers of the Navajo people. The historical sufferings and triumphs of my ancestors inspire the direction of my life. I only hope I will pass on their legacy to my children as they did with me. The Medicine Men and Medicine Ladies of the Navajo who through the Blessingway, Night Way, Mountain Top Way, Protection Way, summer ceremonials provided the guidance to attain knowledge while always retaining my heritage.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mother, Vennie Frances Tracy, who made me want to be a hero; my father Arthur E. Tracy, Sr. for stimulating my young mind to learn new and great possibilities; and, my late grandfather, Fred Dedman, who, when I told him I was going back to school said to me, “You will not fail.” His words were always there at the front of my mind. Also, to all horses, for true friendship.

I also dedicate this dissertation to all who want to be equestrians, past, present, and future. To all horses of earth, your sacredness is true.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE ORIGIN OF THE NAVAJO HORSE

The Real Horse

In the Navajo beginning there was nothing but darkness with one exception, The One Who Walks Alone. He created fire, air, water, and pollen. From these came the Sun, the earth, our atmosphere, and precipitation (Benally, 2006). He created the Holy People who were to become the deities of the future Navajo. He also created First man and First Woman. The two lived with other divine beings during the time the earth was inhabited by creatures that regularly devoured people. Talking God, the grandfather holy being of the Navajo was one of the holy people.

The Spanish and Portuguese of southern Iberia in the mid 1400's began to explore by ship, new trade routes to their east. Their sailors circled the African Cape of Good Hope and reached India by the end of that century (Edwards, 1995). On September 8, 1492, Christopher Columbus and his crew, in three ships departed the Spanish Port of Palos, headed due west, seeking a shorter sea route to the East Indies but landed on San Salvador, an island in the Bahamas on October 12, 1492. From there he sailed amongst three more islands, Cuba, Baracoa, and Hispaniola (de Steiguer, 2011).

To save the people and those who would come in the future, the Holy People brought forth a newborn infant girl to the peak of Ch'ol iii'. She was the child of the dawn. The girl was found and raised by First Man and First Woman; her spirituality was guided by Talking God. Growing to maidenhood, she received in ceremony, a dress and moccasins adorned

with shells from the sea and were named White Shell Woman. She wed the Sun and brought forth two twin boys, Slayer of Enemy Gods, and Born for Water.

Returning to Spain a hero, Columbus again departs for the new world a year later on September 25, 1493, and arrives at what was to be named the Americas in seventeen ships with fifteen hundred men, 24 stallions, 10 mares, pigs, mules, burros, sheep, goats, cattle, cats, chickens, and dogs. Prior to Columbus' introduction of European domestic animals, the Native American peoples had only the dog, turkey, guinea pig, alpaca, and llamas for domesticated animals. The horse had finally returned to the Americas after an 8 – 10,000-year exodus, and, within 400 years there came to be approximately 25 million horses in North and South America.

The twin boys of White Shell Woman, not knowing their father began inquiring of his identity and his whereabouts. With difficulty they found that their father was the Sun, who was not a kind man. They found him and survived his tests of paternity meant to kill them, where upon he acknowledged his sons and asked them how he could help them. They asked for weapons to destroy the monsters but he offered horses instead, the first horses. They received his weapons and cleared the land of danger, and, they brought home our horses.

My grandmother, my biological mother's biological mother (I have many mothers and grandmothers through clan), told me when I was a small child, *"there are no longer real horses on our lands. The real horses were small, lightly built, always ready to run, possessing great endurance under the saddle, and could be rode long distances regularly. Many horses had a smooth running walk."* She went on to say *"many young men including your grandfather (biological) left the reservation and worked for wages on the railroad* (my

grandfather was born around 1900) *and brought home big horses, white man horses; wagons, plows, and bred out the real horse. Maybe there are real horses left on Black Mesa but they are gone from here. The horses you see on the range now are white man horses."* The real horse, referred to by my grandmother, was the Spanish horse. It is ironic, tribal employees and contractors of the Navajo government, rounding up and shipping to sale what may be vestige *"real horse"* from the Navajo range, 2012 – 2013, while riding *"big horses"*.

The Spanish horse that became the historical Navajo horse was made up of several horse types leading to its renown as a superior saddle horse. The Andalusian horse of Spain is thought to be the predominate type and breed first introduced to the Americas by the conquistadores in the late 1400's and early 1500's. The Andalusian was the byproduct of early invasions from North Africa by Islamists and Moors and the defending Iberians (Spanish). From North Africa, the invaders brought as war horses, the mixtures of Barb, Arabian, and Turkoman bloodstock.

The Spanish responded to the invading faster light horses with a horse crossed with the heavy Forest horse of Europe and the oriental hot bloods supplied by the invading Arabs. The African Islamists and Moors had successfully invaded and occupied Spain for 700 years prior to their initial defeat in 732 AD (Jankovich, 1971). The stockier Spanish war horse, carrying knights with heavy shields fought as a compact unit, repelling the attacking light cavalry. In 1492, just before sailing to the Americas, Spain finally drove off the North Africans for good. The Andalusian horse, the result of war; the merging of desert bred and native European horses; the first equine to step on to the Americas again; became known as the finest horse of the old world during that time.

In the year 1540, Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, leading 336 men and accompanied by 1,000 Indian helpers and a large herd of domestic European livestock entered what was to eventually become the states of New Mexico and Arizona. He reached the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River, and the Hopi villages of northeastern Arizona as well as exploring the plains of Kansas looking for a purported seven cities of gold. Traveling north from Mexico into Arizona, Coronado inventoried his equids at fifteen hundred head. Scholars do not believe Coronado lost any horses or mules to the wild on this expedition and only had two mares in their herd (de Steiguer, 2011).

In 1598, the village of San Gabriel was established by the Spanish, later becoming the town of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Juan de Onate, a Spanish Conquistador, made several expeditions north using domestic European livestock to carry supplies. But it was not until around 1605 that Onate's colonists, who established the town of Santa Fe and other Spanish villages in New Mexico, began to lose horses to the wild and to the Native Americans.

Sis Nah T'eel Mesa is located approximately fifteen miles south, southwest, of Counselor, New Mexico, and about the same distance north of Pueblo Pintado, New Mexico, on the eastern portion of the Navajo Indian reservation. Two Navajo elder medicine men, tell of another story of horses being created on top of this mesa by the holy people, those, who the traditional Navajo, address in their ceremonies and prayers. On top of this mesa, the holy people set down smooth round pebbles and through song and prayer caused the stones to move, becoming horses. Coyote, ever wanting to be included, considered an annoyance and ignored by the deities, also laid down small stones nearby, creating other domestic livestock such as chickens, pigs, and geese.

At one time, during the historical Navajo era, the people had come to a point where they owned very few horses. It was decided by medicine men to trek to the top of Sis Nah T'eel and conduct ceremonies and make offerings to acquire more horses. The tribal herds were becoming depleted. At the conclusion of the ceremonial, while descending the mesa, a band of horses was observed grazing below. The people had horses again. Sis Nah T'eel Mesa is also named in prehistoric Navajo stories where several new Navajo clans were added to the growing Navajo people.

The origin stories of Navajo horses usually incorporate Sis Nah T'eel. The widest part on top of Sis Nah T'eel is about a fifty yards wide and narrows to a 15-yard-wide roof for its remaining half. The mesa is rimmed with 20 Ft. high vertical rock cliffs. Deer tracks are abundant throughout the top of the mesa. There are several locations on the steep slopes where one can climb to the top without encountering vertical rock. The top of Sis Nah T'eel Mesa is level and densely covered with pinon – juniper woodland.

The Spanish made great changes to Navajo life, both good and bad. The greatest good was the livestock that became a Navajo lifeway. Constant Spanish raids seeking Navajo slaves lasted for centuries after their arrival to New Mexico and northern Arizona. The Spanish brought war to the southern Colorado Plateau because of their policy of enslaving local peoples (Mitchell and Frisbie, 2001). The Spanish silver mines of Zacetas and Parrel, Mexico, opened in 1548 and 1631, demanding labor (Evers, 1982). The Estancia Salt Flats, southeast of present-day Albuquerque, New Mexico, became a source of salt needed to refine silver in Old Mexico. The "plunder economy" of the Spanish exacted tribute and labor in the form of slavery from Pueblo and Navajo (Super, 1988). The Navajo lived in a continual fear of attack, training themselves always for war of defense.

It was unique to Navajos those horses, sheep, and goats revolutionized Navajo *"good life."* Of all indigenous peoples of North America, it was only the Navajo who took to sheepherding as a basic economic cornerstone in addition to hunting, gathering, and planting. The Plains Indian continued to hunt buffalo. Pueblo Indians kept raising corn and squash. But, to the Navajo, to raise sheep, and possess plenty of horses in their own chosen lands, became a new way of living, a new *"good life,"* to which they adhered to for the next three centuries after introduction of European livestock (Boyce, 1974).

To Graze Horses

The Navajo grazing lands is a part of the earth mother. Every part of earth is mother. The name mother is the greatest tribute of veneration and feeling. The rangeland provides nourishment through the animals that sustain as well as providing required carbohydrates as did each of our biological mothers. The domestic animals the Navajo now husband are of European origin although for some animals such as the horse, someone in history, who was of the Navajo people, brought forth the oral history that the horse came from the deities. In the old days the people hunted daily and still do on occasion, but found that a steady supply of protein through herding was a sure source. Hunting was hard.

Navajo lands now consist of 27,000 square miles of arid and semi-arid high elevation cool desert. Precipitation averages about 10 inches a year and comes in early spring and again during late fall. Winters are extremely cold and dry and the summers are very hot and also dry. The sporadic moisture hails from the Pacific. The grazing pastures for Navajo

livestock are extremely challenged. The earth mother provides sustenance. The mountains and water are our mothers.

In 1868, the Navajo signed a Treaty with the United States after an 18 year off and on war and 4 years of imprisonment for approximately half of the Navajo Tribe at Fort Sumner, New Mexico. The Treaty included lands set aside for the exclusive use by the Navajo people although there was a loss of approximately 66% of original Navajo country. The modern Navajo lands are fenced in to grazing districts and livestock owners residing in those districts may only graze their stock within those districts.

The modern Navajo tribal government is set up mimicking the federal government and is overseen by the federal government's Bureau of Indian Affairs. Implemented tribal grazing regulations follow policies as set up by the federal Bureau of Land Management. Livestock overgrazing along with continued drought has plagued Navajo pastures. The old folks grazed their livestock *"following the green"*, starting at lower elevations in early spring and ending up in the high country as the grass gets greener and descending back down to the lowlands during the fall season with their grazing stock. Fenced in districts make that grazing no longer possible. Livestock owners are compelled to graze only within their grazing districts concentrating overgrazing.

Approximately 12,400 grazing permits were issued to tribal ranchers throughout Navajo country immediately after the 1930's mandatory livestock reduction (Acrey, 2005). The Navajo Indian reservation is owned by the federal government and is held in trust for the Navajo Indian tribe. The Navajo tribal government oversees policies administered on the reservation for tribal members but answers to the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (Austin,

2009). No new grazing permits have been issued since that time. The present Navajo Indian reservation is a portion of the original lands owned by the Navajo people.

The Navajo population hovers around 300,048, the largest of any tribe in the United States (Wilkins, 2013). Over 130,000 Navajos reside on the reservation. The population has increased from 50,000 in 1940 (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). The Navajo reservation is divided into 5 Bureau of Indian Affairs Agencies (federal government) which are somewhat like State counties. These Agencies are divided into 110 local government chapters (Navajo tribal government), derived from the original natural communities where the people had available resources for economic survival. Within these chapters are 315 communities. Land use is administered by the Navajo Nation government (tribal) which includes home site leases, business leases, farm leases, and grazing leases. There are 23 Grazing Districts with a total of 12,400 livestock permits appropriated to Navajo ranchers. These permits were issued during the 1930's after a major government administrated mandatory livestock reduction (Acrey, 2005).

Current existing permits are handed down through families or purchased from grazing permit holders where possible. Today, grazing permit owners control who can build new homes. Their signature must be obtained for development of new construction. Additionally, the Navajo Nation government requires home site lease applicants provide an archaeological clearance and a land survey of their intended home site. As the Navajo population increases, young families struggle to obtain a Home Site Lease from the Navajo government. Construction of a new home is possible only with an approved lease. Wherever one wants to build, whether near established family home centers, or in new isolated locations, a primary

requirement is they must obtain a signature of tribal members living nearby who own grazing permits.

A Natural Community

The small population of Nazlini, Arizona, is located approximately 23 miles south of Chinle, Arizona, and 12 miles north of Ganado, Arizona. Nazlini is a community of Navajo land where water is abundant, wood for heating and building is local, and hunting is nearby. Most of Nazlini is range land where domestic horses and cattle range free and herds of domestic sheep are shepherded daily for forage. The 2010 US Census lists Nazlini to have approximately 1,260 people. The Navajo Housing Authority, through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the Indian Housing Plan, built 50 units of modern style housing, set out in city block fashion, four miles north of Nazlini School and Chapter House, beginning in the 1980's. The rest of the Chapter members reside throughout the country side where they have lived since the implementation of the Navajo reservation in 1868. Nazlini Charter School serves students, K through the 6th grade. Over a small rise from the Nazlini school is the Nazlini Chapter House and Senior Citizens Center.

The Chapter House of Nazlini is the community location of the local branch of the Navajo Nation government and contains a meeting hall where members of the community meet to discuss local needs and its involvement with tribal, county, state, and federal government jurisdictions. Elders of the Nazlini meet for lunch during week days at the Senior Center. The Nazlini Trading Post, once located adjacent to the Nazlini School, closed its doors in the 1980's due to local residents traveling further to access more varieties of

consumer needs. Approximately half of the residents of Nazlini now have electricity and plumbed water. The modernization of Nazlini homes began during the 1980's. Where the outlying home sites once contained one or two living structures, as families have expanded, there may be now 4 to 6, or more, houses clustered together throughout the rural areas. The rangeland of Nazlini is a precious resource of the community.

The members of Nazlini Chapter now have the modern conveniences of electricity and water. Robert McPherson in his book, Navajo Land, Navajo Culture, wrote that the 1990 Census showed that Navajo Reservation wide, 63% of Navajo people 16 years and older drove by themselves to work while 21% rode in car pools. The remaining 12% walked or stayed home. The turn towards a wage economy disturbed the older Navajos who lived by horses and livestock. McPherson interviewed Nakai Begay, northern Navajo…

> *"Now people live only to have a vehicle. They are addicted to them.*
> *This is the only thing we see now. It seems every single person has one.*
> *Because of this, what was once called life – sheep, cattle, [horses], and the things*
> *That can preserve life – have been forgotten…"* (McPherson, 1988).

It was also during the 1980's that the Navajo elders who lived exclusively by livestock, and raised their children with livestock, began to succumb to old age. With their passing, the continuing generation began relying on wage earning as a means of acquiring income. I lost my grandmother in 1983. She had sheep, goats, cattle, and horses. Her herds were shepherded daily and penned at night. She moved from the low lands of Nazlini to the higher mountains seasonally, following better grazing. She owned 5 homes throughout her grazing area. With her passing, a way of life ended in our family. The older folks were

economically self-sufficient. The rest of us are wage earners. My family is just one example of many, many, families throughout the Navajo reservation who changed their way of life with the passing of their elders.

Yet, while earning wages is predominating, the love for livestock has never left the hearts of Navajo people. Many people keep horses and sheep penned and love riding. The meat from sheep is the Navajo's favorite source of protein. If one checks the fresh meat counter of all grocery stores on the reservation, half of the counter will be mutton and the other half is divided between beef, pork, and chicken. There are many herds of sheep throughout Navajo country but, with the demand, much of the meat is procured from the meat counter via off reservation non – Navajo sheep ranches. Horses are a requirement to certain traditional religious ceremonies. Those ceremonies are as important today as they were historically. Horses have always been a part of the Navajo range.

Overstocked

The Budget and Finance subcommittee of the Navajo Nation Council, the governmental representation of the Navajo people, issued a press release during the early summer of 2015, addressing the feral horse roundup program that was implemented in 2013. The Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture provided the report. During Fiscal year 2013, the Navajo Nation Council appropriated 3.1 million dollars to conduct feral horse roundups and develop plans to address overgrazing and erosion control. The Navajo Nation estimated that 70,000 feral horses ranged throughout tribal lands. After intense roundups, those horses

captured from the 38,000 (latest estimate), were sent to slaughter. It is thought that 1,100 – 2,000 horses were captured.

Employees or contractors of the Navajo government who carried out the roundups did so in a distasteful manner according to many elders who thought roundups were necessary but did not want horses to encounter callous handling. In some cases, branded horses were taken captive and shipped in contradiction of lawful adherence by horse owners. One young lady from the eastern Navajo reservation managed to recover most of her branded, captured horses, by confronting high government officials who intervened on her behalf. A few of her horses were traced to Texas and lost. The Navajo electorate, who once supported the roundups by resolution, rescinded their resolutions and began opposing the tribal government's efforts.

An article in the weekly March 1, 2018, edition of the Navajo Times tribal newspaper, wrote of a proposed horse hunt using weapons for big game (large caliber rifles and hunting bows). The Navajo Tribal Division of Natural Resources had issued a proclamation declaring a 2018 feral horse management hunt which was designed to remove 60 overgrazing horses from the Carrizo Mountains of northeast Arizona. For $10 a tag, non-branded horses over two years old and mares without foals would be fair game. Following the release of the horse hunt public announcement, horse advocates organized a rally at the Navajo tribal headquarters in Window Rock, Arizona, protesting the hunt. The Office of the President, Navajo Nation, informed of the public outcry, issued a cancellation of the proposed hunt.

The ceremonies and prayers for horses representing well-being, health, and prosperity are still very much flourishing but the time it takes for students to attend school, and the time it takes for people earning wages on the job, leaves little time for the management of horses, resulting in unattended free ranging horses breeding at will. Almost all of the hay fed to kept horses is imported from off of the reservation. There are a few Navajo farms that grow hay along the San Juan River on the northern part of the reservation and the tribal enterprise, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, supplies hay for sale to tribal stockmen but the expense is prohibiting. It is easy to turn out unutilized horses to range pasture. Many horses have never been touched by man and are as wild as the horses of the Nevada desert.

In general, the Navajo people have become less responsible for managing their own horses. A horse let out to pasture will fend for itself and thrive providing there is nutrition and water. Predation is rare and automobile collisions may be the horse's greatest danger besides natural mortality. Injuries and fatalities to people and severe damages to automobiles from colliding with loose horses on Navajo reservation highways is a real and frequent peril. The negligent horse owner leads to government involvement making resource managers the bad guys. The implementation of sanctions at the local government level would force local authorities to regulate their own denizens. The leaders at the Tribal government level are unjustly ascribed anti-horse while the local horse owner lazes behind traditional pomposity, endangering motorists, horses, and the environment while not tending to his herd.

The Navajo people were once exclusively reliant on a livestock economy from as early as the year 1608 (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). It was not until after World War II that the Navajo turned to a wage economy. The Navajo Indian population, once centered on a total

livestock economy, has increased to such an extent and combined with a confined land base, i.e., the reservation, the raising of livestock for income and subsistence has become almost impossible. The Navajo people still cherish livestock today.

Traditional Navajo indigenous knowledge of livestock husbandry and modern scientific rangeland management practices by land managers and Navajo citizens is essential. Currently, Navajo range managers do not have presentations available to convince land users and tribal law makers of sound range management principles. The reduction of feral horses seems to be a management challenge where nobody wants to take a lead role. A proper education of Navajo values and ecological management should be of great value. Non-Navajo speaking younger people, who have livestock, would benefit from Navajo indigenous knowledge regarding livestock husbandry.

The overstocking of horses is a reservation wide problem. The Navajo Times, the leading newspaper of the Navajo, noted that…*"Several [Navajo Council] delegates noted the combination of drought and overgrazing, especially by feral horses, was turning portions of the Navajo reservation into sand dunes"* (Shebala, 2012). *"Many horses are dying on the Navajo reservation due to lack of water and forage. Navajo stock owners of large herbivores tend to leave their herds loose on open ranges as there are no large predators and so do not need daily constant attention".*

Nevertheless, Livestock is Life

The Navajo people, in general, do not trust the federal government and view the Navajo tribal government with disdain (Wilkins, 2013). The Navajos remember the imprisonment of the tribe from 1864 – 1868 by the United States Army, and the forced livestock reduction of the 1930's. John Holiday, a traditional leader and medicine man stated *"…John Collier (Commissioner of Indian Affair during the 1930's) really wanted to round up our people but could not do it, so instead he took our livestock. He went through our land and forced the people to get rid of their goats and sheep, horses and cattle. Next, he littered the reservation with dead animals, leaving a stench of death everywhere. When the government officials took our livestock away and slaughtered them, it was heart breaking. By doing this, Collier tried to destroy our freedom and dependence on our land"* (McPherson, 2005).

In 1906, Louisa Wade Wetherill, and her family, established a trading post at Oljato, Utah, on the Navajo reservation. In Oljato, she befriended an older Navajo man by the name of Wolf Killer, who was born around 1855 (Wetherill, 2007). They were to remain friends for the next 20 years, until his death of old age in 1926. During this time, Wolf Killer shared his upbringing. Telling of a time when he was about 6 years old, Wolf Killer and his brother were asked to take the sheep out to feed during a cold, early spring day. They turned their flock into a patch of grease wood to graze while they went down into an arroyo to keep from the cold wind. While down in the wash, the two boys complained about the coming of the Spaniard and the white man. If it was not for those foreigners, the boys would not have to be suffering in the cold herding these miserable beasts. They lamented and wished they were

home with their folks, sitting around the warm Hogan (Navajo earth dwelling), listening to the stories of the men as they told of deer hunts and fighting Apaches and Utes.

Their grandfather had noticed the sheep grazing by themselves and found the boys huddled down in the wash, and having overheard them, climbed down and told them of the days when the people suffered from extreme hunger. He told of days when game was scarce and gathering seeds and berries and digging edible roots was an only means to stay alive. Days of gathering pinon nuts and sleeping in tree branches at night to stay safe from wolves. During that time enemy tribes were always looking to take their young ones for slaves so danger was everywhere. It was the coming of sheep that allowed them to live in health and prosper. It was sheep that gave them a guaranteed meal as well as bedding and clothing.

Present day Navajo people regard domestic livestock just as much as did their ancestors. The importance of livestock to the Navajo, historically, and present day, is of significance. Economy, religion, culture and livestock are all equally intertwined with Navajo life. Many Navajo are now wage earners. Although herding has been significantly reduced as a way of life, the Navajo still keep livestock and prefer to live on rural home sites not near too many neighbors. Unlike many other American Indian tribes, the Navajo prefers to live in nuclear family locations but within a practical distance from near relatives.

This life way in Navajo country demands the need for large pastures that Navajo livestock men require for their herds. Grazing pastures were, and are today, a very much needed resource. The historic Navajo people became a livestock people after the introduction of domestic herbivores by the Spanish. The need for grazing lands created conflicts between the Navajo and surrounding tribes and Spanish.

The United States entered the lives of the Navajo resulting in the imprisonment of most of the tribe for four years. This internment resulted in the Navajo losing two thirds of their traditional territory. Confined to a reservation with diminished lands, the people, although maintaining their economy with livestock, began to seriously overgraze their pastures. The overgrazed pastures resulted in the federal government introducing a controversial livestock reduction program. The livestock reduction program implemented in the 1930's resulted in the traditional Navajos becoming distrustful of the federal and tribal governments. That feeling persists today.

The traditional Navajo point of view is livestock; religion and Navajo culture are all one and the same; each is a necessary ingredient for a good Navajo life. The biology and ecology of sheep, cattle, and horses each have their own distinct impact on the Navajo pastures. Within the last two years the Navajo tribal government has implemented a horse round up program with mixed results. The Navajo government estimates that there over 38,000 loose horses on the reservation. The recent round ups resulted in less than 2000 horses corralled and shipped to buyers. The Navajo citizens protested the round ups and the gathering of horses has not resumed as of yet.

There is definitely an overgrazing problem on the Navajo reservation. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Navajo Tribal government have followed an agenda to manage grazing with failed results. The division of Navajo lands into grazing districts has forced livestock owners to graze their herds in undersized pastures, creating added erosion and destruction of forage. The responsibility of managing overgrazing may be best handled at the

local governmental level where each chapter of the Navajo Nation government may be responsible for its own grazing areas.

There is a new proposed grazing policy on the table of Navajo lawmakers but it has yet to be addressed. Grazing and livestock is a very sensitive subject among the Navajo people. Although modern Navajo leaders are elected by democratic vote, the tribal government acts on behalf of the people, rather than according to the will of the people. In that sense, the Navajo government is not a true democracy (Wilkins, 2013). Once the people themselves are involved with policies regarding grazing, it may be that true range management and the prevention of overgrazing will come into being. Feral horses are a problem. It is not uncommon to see horses grazing along well traveled highways on the Navajo reservation. There have been many accidents where automobiles have collided with horses on the roads at night.

It may be that a combination of range management programs could lead to a solution. It is only in that way the Navajo people will willingly cooperate with range management programs. The indigenous knowledge of over 300 years of Navajo livestock husbandry and combine it with the latest of scientific range management tools, range rehabilitation on Navajo lands will begin. The Navajo lands are set at 27,000 square miles; all old Navajo lands not part of the current Navajo are settled by Europeans. Land is being bought back by the tribe in bits and pieces. The Navajo populace is continuing to grow. It will probably be, that the range will have to be utilized for human habitation, more so than for livestock foraging.

Training a First Horse

The horse had been acquired by a group of deities, holy to the future Ni'hókáá' Diné, known today as the Navajo. Ni'hókáá' Diné translates into the English language to *"Earth Surface People."* Ni' is the ground, hence the earth. The earth itself has its own name, Ni'hósdzáán where hósdzáán refers to a woman (land) that spans into the distance forever. Proceeding with the translation, hókáá' is *"being above or existing above."* Diné means people. This name is sacred and is used in prayer when the people identify themselves to the Holy People (Iverson, 2002). This paper refers to the people as Navajo as it is by this name that the people are more known. The Holy People involved with the horse that begins this particular historical event were Hááshch'éyéélt'i'íih (Talking God), Hááshch'éhóghaan (Growling God), Altséh' háást'iih' (First Man), and Máá'ii, the coyote.

The horse was wild, very wild. Caught by the neck, it snorted and plunged about, rearing and striking with its front hooves. The Holy People were flung about as they tried to bring the horse into control. At last, one of them managed to straddle the snorting horse as others held it fast. Many were in attendance and witnessed the horse buck rider after rider off. Hááshch'élt'i'íih himself landed in a heap with his tail feather head dress askew. Finally, it was decided that the horse could not be ridden when out of the crowd of onlookers stepped a small, slim man who had a very dark complexion.

He stepped up to the horse against the advice of all there. The horse was not meant to be rode and could not be rode therefore horses were not to be ridden. Quickly and nimbly mounting, with a firm hold of the wild horse' mane, the horse was turned loose. The rider, clinging to the bucking horse, disappeared over a distant hill in a cloud of dust. *"He is no*

more," the onlookers said to each other. *"Who was that person"* they said to each other *"He will be killed."* Nobody knew who the rider was that was now thought to have been killed by the wild horse. As everyone turned to leave to their respective homes, a deity looked back one last time while walking away and loudly exclaimed, *"He is coming, and riding the horse!"* Up rode the rider on the now docile horse. That rider who rode the first horse was the cowbird. Those who know that story will not harm the cowbird to this day and some seek its natural affinity with horses to better themselves as horsemen. This Navajo narrative is one of many told to me by my parents and grandparents.

These stories pertaining to horses were not told as myths or legends, but occurrences that actually transpired within the course of Navajo history, according to the traditional Navajo. Horses were, and, are sacred to many Navajo people today just as they were historically. Many Navajo families continue the stories of traditional horsemanship. Beginning in 1868, the federal policy of assimilating the Navajo into mainstream Americans began in earnest yet many present day Navajo believe in adhering too, and, enhancing distinctive Navajo values and culture (Wilkins, 2013). Today, most Navajo people do not raise livestock for sustenance as in the past although horses are essential to certain Navajo religious ceremonies.

Wolf killer's Navajo childhood, and adult livelihood, as with most Navajo people, concentrated on livestock for sustenance and prosperity (Wetherill and Leake, 2007; Dyk, 1938). For many generations, raiding for livestock had provided the means for establishing Navajo herds. Consequently, during his young life, from 1864-1868, Wolf killer, along with his family and fellow tribesmen, spent four years incarcerated at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, now known as the Long Walk, resulting in the loss of two thirds of traditional Navajo

territory and grazing lands (Big horse, 1990; Holiday and McPherson, 2005). After 1868, the Navajo people, no longer able to alternate grazing lands to accommodate the environment for their livestock, were forced into a life governed by non-tribal policy and a population increase that would not allow the livelihood once balanced by climate disparity. Diminished grazing lands, vulnerable to erosion, were to become became severely overgrazed (Bailey and Bailey, 1986).

As long as there was water and forage for their livestock, life was hard, but, good, for the Navajo in 1880. That year, having wintered in close proximity to a year round spring at Aspens Coming Down, on northeastern Arizona's Black Mesa, a dry summer and the lack of grass in the area forced Old Man Hat and his family to move their livestock roughly fifty miles north to healthy pastures in the canyons off of Navajo Mountain. The following winter, a storm left two and a half to three feet of snow covering all forage as well as the tall sagebrush killing most of their sheep; a coyote attack slaughtered nearly all their lamb crop that same winter. The weather of Navajo land always has, and always will, the dictate all life that depends on it; Old Man Hat told his family not to cry, livestock was gifted from the holy deities, and, so must have wanted them returned. They would simply begin again and rebuild their herd (Dyk, 1938).

Black Mesa and Navajo Mountain have long been sanctuaries for the people such as Old Man Hat. His story begins around the year 1880 and, that him and his tribesmen, in common, share a livelihood that involves livestock. Their ecosystem and their environment shaped their way of life, and ultimately, distressed their natural world. The environmental history of the Navajo livestock culture and the present condition of the range characterizes the struggles of maintaining a livestock economy.

Before the Horse

During prehistoric times, the Navajo experienced diverse natural environments of North America. The origin stories suggest knowledge of, if not familiarity with, the harsh, long winters of boreal climate, and the waterless deserts of the Mojave and Great Basin. Endless flooding indicates regions of non-stop precipitation. The coastal regions near oceans were also once inhabited for a time. Certain religious ceremonies tell of the Navajo traveling up and down the Great Plains following the bison herds. Some of the people ended up in northern Canada near the habitat of the woods bison (Irvin Tso, personal interview, 2015). Other Navajo historical stories tell of relocating to different environments in search of better climates. Ultimately, the Colorado Plateau was selected to be the homeland as revealed by the origin story.

They emerged from three lower worlds. The fourth world is today, the world where we now live. In the first black world, they were but insects, living on an island, surrounded by water; immoral, they were driven out. The Swallows, a bird people, accepted them into their world which was blue and barren, for 24 four days; lessons not learned from their previous experience forced them to move again. Turkey and deer tracks were discovered on the third, yellow world, which was surrounded by four snow covered mountain peaks; one mountain located in each of the four directions. On this third yellow world, the ancestral Navajo met a race of man, the Kisaani, or Pueblo, who welcomed them and fed them a new food, corn and squash, which they cultivated.

In the yellow world, holy beings appeared and reformed the insect like people into their own likeness and created additional people using white and yellow ears of corn and eagle down enveloped in unwounded buckskin. The holy deities now appear regularly to the people and guide their growth and development through spirituality and show the people the use of deer masks for luring deer. Corn and squash becomes a principle food source and its use becomes a venue to the holy beings. Men and women realize they need each other to subsist and all wildlife that exists today, are present in this world. One last move befell the third world inhabitants. Theft, consequences in a great flood and, forces all life to move into the present-day white world where they emerged at Island Lake, near Silverton, Colorado (Mitchell F., 1978; Iverson, 2002).

The earliest days brought forth the birth of White Shell Woman, who bore twin warrior sons that made the lands safe for the Navajo. The people secure, she moved to the west coast where she told humans, of her own creation, of like relatives, living in the upper San Juan River country of southwest Colorado and northwest New Mexico. This news results with an eastward migration. The uniting of the different bands during this time established the clan system which exists today. The different bands of that time introduced to each other pottery manufacturing, better tanning methods, and sinew backed bows; the most up-to-date knowledge of the day, creating an easier existence. It is at this time the people begin raiding neighboring tribes to increase their numbers (Wetherill, 2007).

The people have another, perhaps, older, story to their origin. It is prehistoric Navajo knowledge that other like people exist far to the north in present-day Alaska and Northwest Territories of Canada, and, along the Pacific coast of North America. All Navajo agree that at one time, all of the people of these regions were one people and spoke the same language.

Some say a disagreement took place resulting in the separation of the northern people and the Navajo. Some Navajo believe that during the formation of the clans, a group became lost and migrated north. Other Navajo say the people, after division, moved south, and settled the Colorado Plateau. In 1893, Navajo Agent, Edward H. Plummer, took a group of Navajo to exhibit their culture at the Chicago Columbian Exhibition. Other tribes were also in attendance as were a particular group of Canadian natives. The Navajo and Canadians recognized each other's same language and reaffirmed their division, staying away from each other during the duration of their visit (Acrey, 2005; Holiday and McPherson, 2005).

A ceremony reveals a story. This narrative reveals how the Navajo lived in their environment during the era prior to the appearance of Europeans and livestock. A young lady, of the Bitter Water clan, fleeing an unwanted admirer robed in a white bison hide, starts her cooking fires with fire drill and roasts pinyon pine nuts in hot ashes; she picks choke cherry, orange gooseberry, serviceberry, wild rose, sumac and wild currants to supplement her meals. Returning home, she boils deer meat mixed with tallow and ground drop-seed grass seeds into a gruel for her brothers, who spend all of their time hunting for meat. Her brothers give her buckskin from which she sews herself fringed clothes. She travels again, encountering native wildlife, who shares with her, knowledge to restore health. In 1935, Yucca Patch Man, a practicing medicine man, of Fort Defiance, Arizona, of the Mountain Way rite, relates through an interpreter, this story that requires precision in its re-telling; this story is the origin of the curing ceremony (Wyman, 1975). The early Navajo were conscientious to the southern Rocky Mountain ecosystem, to live in equilibrium with nature was to survive. The introduction to pueblo agrarianism, and, later, domestic livestock made life a little easier.

Tree ring dating determined early Navajo types of pottery found in Gubernador Canyon, New Mexico, dating between 750 and 875 A.D. and Navajo type dwellings were aged at 1000 A.D. in western Colorado. Dendrochronology (tree ring dating) of forked stick type hogans (homes) validates Navajo people living south of present day Gallup, New Mexico, in 1380 A.D. and at the head waters of the San Juan and Chama Rivers in 1540; both of these sites are near established Pueblo villages of the time (Locke, 1976). The Aztec, New Mexico, Anasazi (Begay, 2003) ruins and the Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, ruins were constructed between 900 A.D.-1130 A.D. (Douglas and Fritts, 1976). Logs used in the construction of the Anasazi (the Navajo name of ancient Pueblo people), Pueblo ruins at Tsegi Canyon, Canyon De Chelly, and Mesa Verde date to the 13th century. Tree ring dating verifies Navajo occupation of the same lands as well as co-existing with the Anasazi during the same time period.

The Navajo and Pueblo peoples interacted before the introduction of European livestock. These ancestors of the modern Pueblo peoples once inhabited much of what was to become Navajo country and some of these early inhabitants are predecessors of many Navajo clans (Begay, 2003; Denetdale, 2007). Archaeology describes Anasazi occupation of the Colorado Plateau between 1500 B.C. and 1300 A.D (McPherson, 2000). Although tree ring dating verifies Navajos and Anasazi coexisting between 1000 A.D and 1300 A.D., it is plausible to presume that weathering and decomposition of earlier Navajo dwellings, always exposed to the elements, hindered the application of dendrochronology, which may have established an earlier time of residency. Yucca Patch Man tells of Pueblo neighbors assisting and participating in the first Mountain Way ceremony. Therefore, the Navajo were aware, and probably witnessed, the Spanish assault on the Pueblo villages in the year 1540.

The Four Sacred Mountains

The four sacred mountains of the Navajo people are the traditional boundaries of their domain. Blanca Peak, Sangre de Cristo Mountains, east of Alamosa, Colorado, is the sacred mountain of the east. Mount Taylor, near Grants, New Mexico, is the south mountain, and the San Francisco Peaks of Arizona's Mogollon rim country, is the sacred mountain of the west. Hesperus Peak, of the San Juan mountain range in southwestern Colorado, is the fourth and north sacred mountain of the Navajo. In the center of Navajo country are two recognized sacred mountains; Spruce Mountain or Gobernador Knob, of northwest New Mexico, and Huerfano Mountain east of Bloomfield, New Mexico (Mitchell, 1978).

The historic Navajo country comprises the southern two thirds of the Colorado Plateau, consisting of almost 140,000 square miles that include the southern portion of Utah, southwest Colorado, northwestern New Mexico, and northeastern Arizona. The semi-arid lands are made up of sparsely vegetated plateaus, some grass lands, badlands, countless red sandstone canyons, and mesas covered with Pinon-Juniper woodlands. There are abundant fields of cooled lava resulting from once flowing molten rock, said to be the coagulated blood of the giant slain by the two hero twins; slow weathering volcanic cores, relics of ancient volcanos, such as Church Rock and Ship Rock of northwest New Mexico and El Capitan Peak, south of Monument Valley, Utah (Baars, 1995).

The elevation ranges from 2,800 feet at the mouth of the Little Colorado River, to the 10,416 feet high Navajo Mountain. The mountainous areas are Black Mesa, Tsegi Mesa, Navajo Mountain, the Defiance Plateau, and the Carrizo, Lukachukai, Chuska range. These

higher ranges host Ponderosa pine, oak, Douglas fir, Quaking aspen, spruce, mule deer, and elk.

The only river with water is the San Juan, descending from the snowy peaks of southwest Colorado, flowing through the northern Navajo border, provides a little irrigation to Navajo farmers. The greatest river of the southwest, the Colorado, borders the northwest section of the Navajo reservation. The virtually year-round dry Little Colorado begins in the eastern Navajo reservation and crosses the lowland plains of the southern Navajo before draining in to the Colorado just before the start of the Grand Canyon. The Rio Puerco River, in name only, a dry wash, descends from northwest New Mexico, emptying its sand into the Little Colorado River (Evers, 1982).

Climate

The foremost environmental feature of Navajo land is precipitation only adequate to support scant forage but capable, during the summer rainy period, of dropping over two inches of moisture in a few hours (Richmond, Baron and Baron, 1989). Precipitation occurs during the spring and summer months in torrential rain showers and during December, February, and up to March in the form of snow. The country of the Navajo has long been disposed to extreme weather periods of drought and times of violent storms (Wetherill, 2007). Wolf killer's grandfather tells him of the time when the Navajo ancestors witnessing neighbor tribes inhabiting Canyon De Chelly, Arizona, and Mesa Verde, Colorado, abandoning their cliff dwellings. Extended droughts causing starvation forced these ancient

peoples, the Anasazi, to relocate to villages on the Hopi mesas and villages on the Rio Grande River in New Mexico (Aton and McPherson, 2000).

Tree ring dating also validates that a great drought persisted for at least fifty years through 1276 A.D., pushing Anasazi farmers out of the area (Aton and McPherson, 2000). It is noteworthy that the climate of what was to become exclusive Navajo country influenced the abandonment of well-established ancient communities. The descendants of the Anasazi now inhabit communities in Hopi and the Rio Grande valley of New Mexico.

Approximately 90% of Navajo country is drained by the San Juan and Little Colorado Rivers. The extreme eastern portion drains into the Rio Grande River (Forest Management Plan, Navajo Indian Reservation, 1983). The rain shadow effect of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the west allows only 10 inches of precipitation a year (Foos, 1999). The Mogollon Rim country of the Grand Canyon receives Sierra Nevada moisture while also effectively restricting rain and snow from Navajo lands which is further east.

Navajo Livestock

In 1932, Slim Curley, Crystal, New Mexico, contributes this portion of the Blessingway Ceremony to ethno-history (Wyman, 1970). The twin warrior's father, the Sun, and their mother, Changing Woman (formerly White Shell Woman), created horses and sheep so the future Navajo people will flourish. The Blessingway bestows the balance for the Navajo to live in harmony with the earth and all that exists in nature; the people will prosper and the gift of horses and sheep from the holy people completely accomplishes that conviction. Slim Curley, provides this song, one of many, sung during a Blessingway:

"That is it, that really is it.

Now as I really am the child of Changing Woman that is it, that is it.

Really the east, really below it, that is it, that is it.

When through real darkness a dark stallion stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Transformed into a young man his dark flute would appear with him, with this he would call as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

With his dark voice he would call for me as he stood waiting, that is it, that is it.

Various fabrics were attached to him as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Various jewels were attached to him as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Various horses were attached to him as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Various sheep were attached to him as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Now then, if on this day he makes me partner I should thereby be the winner as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Always increasing, never decreasing he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Now long life, now happiness I am as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

Before me it is blessed, behind me it is blessed as he stood waiting for me, that is it, that is it.

That is it, that is it, now as I am the Sun's real son that is it, that is it…"

As horses and sheep became a part of Navajo life, they still maintained a healthy reliance on hunting, gathering and agriculture (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1947). Horses and sheep as well as agriculture became a function of Navajo religion, culture, and economy (Mitchell, 1978). Ceremonial prayers for well-being consisted of appealing to the holy people for favorable moisture to ensure successful hunting, abundant crops, and large herds of healthy livestock (Weisiger, 2009). Many Navajo families who hunt big game today remain very diligent in the preparation and consumption of wild and domestic herbivores. Both food sources are utilized with veneration.

Historians are unclear as to when the Navajos acquired livestock (Bailey and Bailey, 1986) and speculate that the Navajo did not develop the herding aspect of their economy until the late 17th century, almost 160 years after livestock introduction, yet Spanish reports document the Navajo fighting on horseback with the Pawnee, Wichita, and French, in western Nebraska (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1947), and selling French children for slaves in 1698 and 1700 (Lapahie.com/Timeline, 2010). In 1605, Onate's colony, San Gabriel, New Mexico, documented losing horses to Indians. Horses first introduced in 1540 to Arizona and New Mexico, taking 65 years for Indians to become equestrians seems unlikely, let alone 160 years.

The Navajo, now livestock people, formerly flexible to climate, were now subject to patterns of weather change and a fierce competition for available pastures (Aton and McPherson, 2000). The land remained the same; a high desert environment, with its limited rainfall, scrub deserts, and scattered grasslands. The isolated mountain ranges, foot-hilled in pinyon pine and juniper, and crowned with ponderosa pine, quaking aspen and spruce, now felt for the first time, the tracks of horses, sheep, cattle, and a new race of man, the Spanish.

War

The Spanish, though they introduced livestock, were not well regarded by the early Navajo. When the villages of Chaco Canyon were still occupied by the Anasazi, a man named the Gambler, subjugated its citizens by first betting them for their property and then for their lives, enslaving them. The Navajo, aided by the holy people, beat him at his own games, and shot him into the sky by bow. He landed far to the south and became the god of the Spanish (Holiday and McPherson, 2005). The Gambler's descendent people, A

Franciscan priest, Fray Marcos de Niza, arrived at Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico, in 1539, guided by a Moorish slave named Estevan. The trip was to seek gold and spread the catholic faith but the Zunis killed Estevan; his demands for women and treasure as tribute, was not acceptable (Locke, 1976).

In the summer of 1540, the Spaniard Francisco Vasquez De Coronado and his men, seeking riches of gold, returned to the villages of Zuni, razed it, and overpowered the Pueblos of the Rio Grande River. The Spanish permanently settled northern New Mexico, indenturing the Pueblo peoples into servitude, bringing war to the land (Iverson, 2002). The Navajo soon learned raiding and plundering of their Pueblo and Spanish neighbors for agricultural products, livestock, and slaves, was a worthy livelihood.

Due to Navajo attacks, San Gabriel, the Spanish colonial capital, had to be abandoned in 1610 and moved to a more fortifiable location of Santa Fe now stands (Sides, 2006). The Navajo fought for generations to protect their way of life. It is safe to presuppose a grandchild, father, and grandparent, each being born during war, and dying of old age, while still at war; that is, if they reached old age. From the year 1540 through 1864, a period of 324 years (Acrey, 2005; Sides, 2006), the Navajo fought the Spanish, then the Mexicans and Pueblos, Utes, Comanche (Iverson, 2002), Pawnee, Wichita, French (Locke, 1976), Apache, Havasupai, Yavapai (Lapahie.com/Timeline, 2010), and finally the Americans (Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1947). Horses enabled the Navajo raiders to travel far distances and encounter enemy tribes in addition to the rich livestock and agricultural centers of the Spanish and Pueblo (Bailey and Bailey, 1986).

The Spanish brought war to the southern Colorado Plateau because of their policy of enslaving local peoples (Mitchell and Frisbie, 2001). There are not too many Navajo today

that do not know of Spanish and Mexican raiding stories as passed down from their elders. Many Navajo were taken to be servants of households, laborers in the fields, and to tending of livestock. The "plunder economy" of the Spanish exacted tribute and labor in the form of slavery from the Pueblo and Navajo (Super, 1988).

In Nazlini, near the base of the Defiance Plateau, is a 35 foot diameter sandstone spire that rises to approximately 25 feet in height. Its Navajo name translates to "Rock That's Wrote On." Nearby, in the wood, are six forked stick Hogan remains in close proximity to each other. They are yet upright. At the standing level of kids and normal sized adults, are many inscriptions etched in to the column of soft rock. Names and dates are the inscriptions, all etched in the 1900's and since. One etching, very old, is a Mexican name scratched in to the rock about 12 feet above the ground. This is the story…

The year is not known, it is a local Navajo history story. Up Nazlini Canyon, a young Navajo teenage boy was surprised and taken captive by a raiding party of Mexicans. The boy was mentally challenged to begin with. Through an interpreter, the young Navajo divulged the location of relatives living 2 miles north along the base of the mountain. In those days the people did not live in the open but in hidden alcoves easy to flee in case of danger. The Mexicans surprised and attacked the encampment killing all of the inhabitants and livestock but took a little girl prisoner and unknowingly, mounted her on her own horse. Her hands bound; on her horse; in the middle of the line of enemies following each other; she was led horseback towards the east. Many days passed as they traveled further. They fed her and gave her water enough to stay alive.

She always talked to her horse in her mind while bound and being led. She would ask her horse to save her and that they would return home safely. Ahead of her were Mexicans on horseback and behind her were Mexicans on horseback. She was in the middle. At one point while traveling through a forested mountain, all of the riders had to ride single file through an extra thick stand of young evergreen trees. The trail was narrow and wound back and forth through the tall young pine trees. An opportunity presented itself when the rider ahead was not visible and the rider coming behind was out of view. The enslaved horse, on its own, veered in to the thick stand of saplings, quietly wedged itself head first with the little girl on its back, in the thicket. When the last following rider passed by, the horse backed out and took off at a gallop towards home. It took several days but the girl and her horse returned home safely. It was then she told of the Mexican standing in his saddle inscribing his name into the rock. After purification ceremonies cleansing her of the enemy, the little girl returned to normal life. Her horse saved her life.

During the two and a half centuries of warfare with the Spanish, and then the Mexicans, there is not much reference to the state of the Navajo natural environment. Spanish and Mexican reports refer to non-stop Navajo raids and counter raids to recapture stolen livestock and kidnapped citizens (Lapahie.com/Timeline, 2010). In 1583, Antonio de Espejo noted that Querechos (Navajo) traded deerskins at Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico, for cotton mantles. In 1626, the Spaniard, Fray de Zarate Salmaron, noted that the "Apache Indians of Nabaju" occupied the Chama Valley and a portion of the San Juan Basin in northwest New Mexico, and Fray Alonso de Benavides mentions Navajos growing crops near Mount Taylor, New Mexico (Bailey and Bailey, 1986).

On October 13, 1705, the Spaniards attack a Navajo camp, burn their corn fields. and carry off Women, children, horses, sheep, skins, and baskets. In 1754, the Spanish report the Navajo having abandoned Dinetah, their original homeland (Bailey and Bailey, 1986) of the Chama River country of northern New Mexico, the southern foothills of the Colorado San Juan Mountains, and were *"fleeing from the war by which the Utes seek satisfaction for the injury done to them by the Navajos…they assaulted some Ute ranches and robbed them of what they had"* (Lapahie.com/Timeline, 2010).

The United States, in 1846, entered New Mexico and arriving in Santa Fe, took control of the province and noted that the Navajo were richer in livestock than the Mexicans and were the only Indians increasing in population who had contact with white men (Lapahie.com/Timeline, 2010). All Mexicans were now under U.S. protection (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). The newly appointed Governor, Charles Bent, in a letter to Secretary of State James Buchannon on October 15, 1846, wrote of the Navajo:

> *"They are a warlike and wealthy tribe, there being many individuals among them whose wealth is esteemed as far exceeding that of any other person in the territory. Their principal wealth consists of immense herds of horses, mules, sheep, and cattle…These Indians have permanent villages, and cultivate all the grains and fruits known to Spaniards in this climate. They manufacture blankets of rare beauty and excellence. They do not destroy the Mexicans, because they actually prefer that they should continue to raise stock for them to drive off... until these Indians are effectively subdued…they will continue to blight the prosperity of that portion of this territory which is exposed to their depredations"*(Iverson, 2002).

According to Governor Bent, the Navajo owned 30,000 cattle, 500,000 sheep, and 10,000 horses and mules and that one person could own 5000 to 10,000 sheep (Iverson, 2002). The Navajo met with Colonel Alexander Doniphan in late November of 1846, but continued their raiding of New Mexican ranches on a daily basis (Sides, 2006).

The Navajo fight the United States for the next 18 years and starved into submission, were imprisoned at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, in 1864 (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). Gus Big horse, born in 1846, at the age of 16 came home to find his parents murdered by Mexicans. Orphaned, he was taken in by warriors and helped protect the people that went in to hiding from the United States soldiers, their mercenaries, and were never marched to Fort Sumner, where other imprisoned people suffered four years of bondage (Big horse, 1990). Tall Woman, born in 1874, tells of her mother and family fleeing from Kit Carson (Sides, 2006) and his white soldiers with their auxiliary forces of Mexican, Ute, Comanche, Pueblo, and Apaches, who eagerly help in exchange for rewards of captured Navajo livestock and booty (Mitchell and Frisbie, 2001).

Navajo Oshley, born around 1880 or 1890, and his nephew, John Holiday, born in 1919, tell of their maternal grandmother, Woman With Four Horns, who was captured by Mexicans and taken to Texas but escaped to Fort Sumner where she rejoined her imprisoned relatives (Holiday and McPherson, 2005). Dark Water's Son of Rock Point, Arizona, tells of his grandfather, Dééshchii'nii Atsidii, who survived Fort Sumner, and afterwards, during his old age, carried a steel spear head as long as his forearm. He would wave it about saying, "This is a warrior's spear, and do you have a spear, my grandson? I have a spear." Dééshchii'nii Atsidii was an experienced warrior (Evers, 1982).

Towards the last days of confinement at Fort Sumner, the Navajo people spread out on a plain into a large circle, they then closed in, trapping a coyote (Iverson, 2002). The medicine men put a bead into the coyote's mouth whereupon the people withdrew. The coyote, stood for a few moments and started west, in the direction of the Navajo homelands

(Acrey, 2005). The people knew then, they were going home. The ceremony with the coyote was last utilized at that time.

On June 1, 1868, a treaty was signed between the United States and the Navajo returned to a reservation measuring 80 miles by 65 miles (Bailey and Bailey, 1986), a fraction of their traditional landholdings. Some Navajos left Fort Sumner as soon as possible when they were released, but the main group consisting of 7,136 Navajo had with them 564 horses, and 4,190 sheep and goats when they started for home (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). Approximately 2,500 Navajo died at the Fort Sumner prison camp (Denetdale, 2007). In accordance with the 1868 treaty, 14,000 sheep and 1,000 goats were issued to the people in November, 1869 (Acrey, 2005). The Navajo began to rebuild their lives.

Overgrazing

The war years were over for the Navajo. The 1880's brought forth a point in time where the Navajo could live in peace, on their own lands, with their families and livestock; the first time in 300 years, of not having to be constantly alert to enemy raids (Hoffman, 1974). Experiencing another drought in his area, Old Man Hat simply moved his herds farther west to new grazing lands where the forage was two to three feet high (Evers, 1982). Now near the Hopi villages, his family butchered four goats and traded the meat for beans, corn, dried peaches and other foods (Dyk, 1938). Old Man Hat was probably living and herding outside the newly established reservation boundaries; what mattered most at the time was that he was self-sufficient which he demonstrated by bartering meat to the Hopi.

After the Navajo Wars, the federal government encouraged the rebuilding of Navajo herds (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). The government issued 10,000 more ewes in 1872, and the

last distribution of 7,500 sheep in 1878. Ultimately, it was Navajo livestock that allowed, by Executive Order, the increase of reservation lands, to 27,425 square miles, making it by far the largest piece of Indian land in the United States today (Evers, 1982). Some Navajo renewed raiding for livestock immediately on their return from Fort Sumner in 1868. They raided the Mescalero Apaches, Jicarilla Apaches, Ute, Pueblos, Spanish-Americans, Anglo-Americans, and Mormons (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). They carried off whatever they could, including sheep, goats, horses, mules, and cattle. By 1882, Navajo raiding to regain livestock had ceased.

When Old Man Hat died in 1893, he and his wife and son had 1,400 sheep, 67 horses and many cattle. In 1868, when the people returned from Fort Sumner, he started out with 7 sheep for which he traded a Paiute slave (Dyk, 1938). He traded meat, wool and hides at newly established trading posts for coffee, sugar, calico, blankets, and other dry goods. When near the Hopi Pueblo, he traded meat for agricultural products. On his own farms, he raised corn, melons and squash. He hunted deer on the San Francisco Peaks and in the mountains of southern Utah. His life provides a general look at Navajo living during the immediate post-war years; this way of life was to come to an end in the 1930's with the implementation of livestock reduction (Parman, 1976). Chester Nez, in his book, Code Talker (Nez and Avila, 2011), writes

> *"A far-off rumble of heavy equipment, a sound not often heard in Navajo country, gave me warning. If I had known what was coming, my heart wouldn't have pounded with eager anticipation. But the second, and then the sight of the flatbed truck carrying a huge bulldozer, was uncommon---and intriguing. I wiped the sweat from my eyes. What could it be for?" The Navajo men working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) unloaded the truck and dozed a trench, 150 feet long and 5 feet deep nearby as Chester's grandparents looked on in silence. "A week or so later, the BIA men returned on horseback. My family gathered at the Hogan. The BIA workers blocked one end of the trench on Grandmas land, leaving the other end open. 'You*

> *need to round up your sheep and goats', one man said. 'Herd them into the trench.' Grandfather's face turned to stone 'but—'*
>
> *'Do not protest, Grandfather,' one of the BIA workers said, using the polite form of address for a younger man addressing an elder. 'Haven't you heard, you will be thrown in jail?' My stomach knotted as I helped herd all but three hundred of Grandmother's sheep and goats into the deep trench through the open end. Then the BIA workers sealed that end. A flammable liquid was sprayed on the animals, and they were set on fire."*

Chester was 13 or 14 years old at the time, during the mid-1930's, living at Chichiltah, New Mexico, south of Gallup, and north of Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico.

The autobiography of Son of Old Man Hat is valuable. This life story as an excellent portrayal of early Navajo life with livestock. They practiced transhumance, seasonally moving with their livestock between pastures, never overgrazing any one particular area. The climate dictated their movements. All of the people in the book are Navajo, and, speak only Navajo; they don't know the English language, they don't need to, they are autonomous. Almost every aspect of their life is pure, untainted Navajo, with the exception of no more wars. At approximately 25 years old, Son of Old Man Hat is wealthy by any standard.

A letter from Governor Charles Bent reports the numbers of Navajo livestock, that some individuals could own, up to 5 to 10,000 head of sheep. It would seem difficult to successfully conceal and defend such large herds from numerous enemies during unremitting war. It took kit Carson approximately one year, from the fall of 1863 through November, 1864, to starve into submission, or capture, 8,570 Navajo men, women, and children to Fort Sumner, suggesting food, usually in the form of livestock, was hard to come by. Tall Woman's mother tells of Navajos reduced to skin and bones surrendering to the United States Army (Mitchell and Frisbie, 2001).

By 1930, the government estimated the Navajo population at 40,858 up from the almost 9000 who returned from Fort Sumner and that they owned 1,300,000 sheep, 27,000 head of cattle and 80,000 horses (Acrey, 2005). The Navajo population was growing very fast. The language remained intact as did the ceremonies and culture. The Navajo livestock allowed the people to remain independent and not reliant and not dependent on the government, preserving and expanding on their own way of life. Overgrazing was taking place.

L. Schuyler Fonaroff's article, titled, "Conservation and Stock Reduction on the Navajo Tribal Range", writes about the fencing off a demonstration area…

> *"All that was needed was proper stocking, proper animal husbandry, and improved stock, and 'if the demonstration area results can be taken as criterion, the total income from rangelands, grazed on a sustained yield basis, will actually increase. The Indians, however, were not receptive to the idea of adopting techniques that the government used successfully on the demonstration areas. For one thing, it is difficult to make a Navajo think in the future, particularly beyond one year (Footnote). If a demonstration cannot be completed within a relatively short period, the results hold little meaning for the Navajo."*
>
> *This is Fonaroff's footnote…Left Handed. [Navajo Indian]: Son of Old Man Hat: A Navajo Autobiography (recorded by Walter Dyk; New York, 1938). "About the year, my folks would say 'This year,' or 'Next year,' but I couldn't discover what they meant. I used to wonder what it meant, when they said, 'A year,' or 'Two years,' and sometimes, 'My years,' I wondered what a year was, and where it was. I used to think, 'It must be around here.' But I couldn't see it. I always thought that a year must have arms and legs and a head. 'It must have a body like an animal.' I used to wish that I could see it when it comes around again. But I never saw the year…I used to see a month. I was wondering what it looked like…I thought it was something that moved or walked about."*

Son of Old Man Hat's story begins by telling of his childhood and how he thought as a very young boy. He was very young when he wondered about the concept of "time." Obviously

Fonaroff is incorrect. According to Fonaroff, the Navajo people have no concept of time after one year. Fonaroff references a little boy's wondering about the concept of time.

In 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt, implemented the New Deal in response to the Great Depression (Parman, 1976). For the Navajo, the New Deal focused on soil conservation as it was feared sedimentation from eroded Navajo lands would endanger the new Boulder Dam (Nez and Avila, 2011). The soil conservationists believed Navajo livestock overgrazing the land led to serious erosion. The result was the implementation of the Navajo Stock Reduction program of the 1930's. The Navajo said it was the weather patterns (Weisiger, 2009) that caused erosion. Once again Fonaroff, writes:

> *"The Navajo themselves, ironically, were only dimly aware that something was wrong. Life on the reservation continued to flow smoothly; enlarging arroyos, shorter grass, and the greater intensity of use to which the land was being subjected were merely incidental matters. Theses Indians do not hold to our own cause-and-effect relationship for range depletion. Many Indians believe that the rains come from God to make the grass grow, and the Navajo were inclined to trust that nature would in time adjust ecological balance."*

Like Chester Nez, John Holiday, of Monument Valley, Arizona, presented 600 sheep and 37 horses to Navajo stock reduction workers who allowed him to keep 13 horses and 354 sheep. The rest, they took away and slaughtered them in the washes (Holiday and McPherson, 2005). John also physically assaults Navajos assisting the government and chastises them for working against their own people. Charlie Yellow, Kayenta, Arizona, lost 100 goats to stock reduction. He tells of many men, women, boys, and girls who died of sadness for something that will never come back. Because of stock reduction, many people passed away (Evers, 1982).

Conclusion

Frequent droughts are common and extreme precipitation is a normal weather pattern for the Navajo country and has been for almost 6000 years (Aton and McPherson, 2000). Tree ring dating verifies Navajo and Anasazi living near each other during the time the now abandoned Pueblos were inhabited which supports the emergence stories of the Navajo telling of a point in time when they meet the Pueblo people and acquired corn and learned agriculture. Navajo oral history is again supported by tree ring dating that the Anasazi abandoned their villages due to extreme drought. The Navajo do not abandon the often drought stricken areas demonstrating their ability adapt to extreme weather conditions. Ceremonial stories collected from Navajo medicine men as early as 1881, detail life of early Navajos as hunters and gatherers in the Colorado mountains. These same stories reveal that hunting, agriculture, war and livestock are inseparable from religion, culture and livelihood.

For almost 300 years, the Navajo, while in a state of constant warfare with many different surrounding peoples, continued to develop and grow as a tribe, while living off of livestock, farming and hunting. They find a niche for themselves. The Navajo of the 1930's were prevented from using traditional knowledge in addressing the drought of the Dust Bowl era, which resulted in the slaughter of thousands of their livestock but were successful in negotiating for the largest reservation of any tribe in the United States.

The Navajo are once again, at a cross roads. The Navajo Tribe is once again experiencing a withering drought; that miraculous gift from the Sun to the Navajo people, the one that brought the Navajo to another level of life, the horse, is said to be in distress inside

Navajo lands. Some say there are too many horses, that they are nothing but feral. Unreliable counts from the air estimate 70,000 horses grazing whatever they can.

For about six months in 2013, the Navajo Tribal Council sanctioned an organized roundup (Shebala, 6-7- 2012). Individual chapters (counties) of the tribe were contacted and many put forth resolutions, approving by vote, the capture and removal of unwanted horses. Tribal employees mounted on all-terrain vehicles ran bands of horses into set up portable capture pens with minimal success. Captured horses were sold to buyers with instruction not to sell them back towards reservation residents. At first, nobody said anything, but soon Navajo grandmothers took notice and admonished rough handling (Shebala, 6-14-2012).

Tribal workers kept chasing horses and Chapters began rescinding their resolutions and banned horse roundups within their jurisdictions. Some Navajo reached out to non-tribal animal welfare groups for help. Under pressure by animal welfare groups and many tribal members, the council reversed its stance on horse roundups. On May, 1, 2014, President of the Navajo Nation issued a press release announcing a Memorandum of Agreement with former New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson's Foundation to Protect New Mexico Wildlife and actor, Robert Redford (Santos, 2013). The agreement will look for funding to reverse Navajo horse populations without sending them to slaughter.

Currently open for public review and comment is a new proposed Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act of 2014. Basically it reads that all existing livestock permits will be void and new ones will be issued by application. Existing permits were issued by the BIA in 1940 after the stock reduction. New permits will be issued to qualified applicants who present sound livestock management plans. Permits are to be renewable every 5 years where the BIA

permits were issued one time for life. All trust lands will be under the authority of the Director of the Department of Agriculture. All burials will be only at community set up cemeteries. Family burial grounds will be no more.

Livestock management is a very sensitive issue on the Navajo reservation. Many Navajo raise livestock and any administrative intrusion to their home community lands could be addressed with opposition. Yet, there needs to be system where unwanted or unclaimed livestock can be managed. Range management plans or procedures are not the difficulty. It is the people, the tribal citizen's needs that need administration.

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CHAPTER TWO: HIGHLIGHTS OF MAN'S RELATIOHSHIP WITH HORSES -- HISTORY AND MY OWN EXPERIENCE

Dawn Horse

Eohippus, the ancestor of Eques caballus evolved during the early Eocene epoch about 52 million years ago as a knee high multi-toed browser scurrying in and out of thick brush (Edwards, 1995). The size of a house cat, Eohippus, the Dawn Horse, lived in a tropical jungle like environment and fed on herbaceous browse and fruit including soft, woody stems. Its legs were longer in comparison to its body showing the beginnings of adaptations to running. The front legs had five toes of which four were equipped with hooves rather than claws. The fifth toe was off the ground. The hind limbs had hooves on three of the five toes. Its feet were padded somewhat like a dogs but it had hooves, not claws.

At about 50 million years ago Eohippus evolved in to Orohippus where the main change was in its teeth giving it greater grinding ability for tougher plants as well as a little more lengthening to the limbs (Jankovich, 1971). Epihippus came about 47 million years ago with yet more developed grinding teeth for woody plants. Mesohippus took a turn as the earth continued to dry, with the earliest grasses appearing and the forests yielding to flatland. At 40 million years ago Mesohippus was larger, faster, more agile; grinding teeth more evolved; looking more “horsey.”

Miohippus, at 36 million years ago, branched from, and, co-existed with Mesohippus for 4 million years; significantly larger, piloting in a new expansion in horses. It began branching in to 2 major groups, one a forest animal, and the other suited to life on the prairie. As Mesohippus died out, Miohippus becoming larger, developed into Kalobatippus which

was suited to traveling on soft forest ground and travelled from North America to Asia across the Bering Strait. Anchiitherium, in North America and Asia developed into Sinohippus in Europe and Asia and Megahippus in North America.

Parahippus, a prairie animal of North America, about the size of a small pony became increasingly horse like in its features; elongated skull with a horse's facial structure. Merychippus was next, coming into being in the middle of the Miocene epoch. It had wider molars than its ancestors for hard grasses of the steppes. Its hind legs had small hooves with short side toes which were increasingly unneeded. Several branches derived from Merychippus but Pliohippus is the animal which evolved in to Plesihippus which became Dinohippus, then, finally, the genus Equus (Edwards, 1995).

Eohippus and its descendent Equus caballus (modern domestic horse) is of the small mammalian order Perissodactyla of odd-toed ungulates. Horses as we know them are also of the suborder Hippomorpha, which are Equidae, Tapiridae (Tapir), and Rhinocerotidae, (Rhinoceros). Domestic horses of the family Equidae is divided in to seven species which are Equus caballus (modern domestic horse) which includes the Navajo "real" horse, Tarpan, and Pzrewalski's horse; African wild Ass which includes the donkey; Onager, or Asiatic wild ass; Kiang, or Tibetan wild ass; Plains zebra; Mountain zebra; and Grevy's zebra (Jankovich, 1971).

The domestic horse has 64 chromosomes and Przewalski's horse has 66 chromosomes and when mated to each other, produce fertile offspring. The donkey has 62 chromosomes but produces the infertile mule when bred with the horse. Each of these seven species of modern equids has its own distinct number of chromosomes. Although many of

them can be cross bred and may have live offspring, the resulting foals usually are sterile (Edwards, 1995).

As the Eocene epoch came in to the Oligocene epoch approximately 34 million years ago, the landscape began to be drier with more savannahs resulting in horses diversifying into many types of equids. As the landscape changed the descendants of this little mammal became the 64 chromosomed horse of today. Once occupying the Americas and Europe and Asia, modern horse found a firm footing in the old world, having become extinct on our continent (Jankovich, 1971).

Horses had originated naturally in North America and migrated via the Bering Strait to Asia, but the early American horse died out mysteriously with other mega fauna became extinct about 10-7,000 BC, just after the end of the last ice age. The re-introduction of the horse had a profound impact on Native American culture in North America. The Navajo name translates roughly into "Livestock [to be worked]", the dog is named the same but with an added noun indicating its smallness facetiously compared to a horse. Coronado, the Conquistador, in 1540, encountered a people on foot with big dogs that had packs strapped on their backs on the plains of eastern New Mexico, Oklahoma, or Texas. Coronado called these people Querechos and it is thought they were ancestral Navajo Apache (Fergusson, 1951).

Modern horses as we know them resulted from the breeding of five sub species of Equus caballus beginning about six thousand years ago and ending around the year 1900. The five sub species are of different strains from which all domestic breeds take their origin are the proto-warm blood*, E. caballus mosbachensis*; the proto-draft, *E. caballus caballus*;

the Tarpan, *E. caballus gmelini*; Asian Wild Horse or Przewalski Horse, *E. caballus przewalski*; the Lamut Wild Horse, *E. caballus alaskae*; and the American Glacial Horse, *E. caballus laurentius* (Jankovich, 1971).

Of the five ancestral types of horses, the modern horse, Asian Wild Horse (Przewalski's horse), the ass, hemionids, and zebras of Asia and Africa are the only survivors of Equus. The last wild Tarpan, a mare, died in captivity at Askania Nova (north of the Crimea, the Ukraine). "Reconstituted" Tarpans live in the forests of Poland. Most Asian Wild Horses (Przewalski horses) are held captive in zoos but it thought that there may be a few free in the Gobi Desert. Nevertheless, captive Przewalski horses have been released back in to their original habitat in Mongolia by scientists in recent years.

Before domestication, there is thought to be four horse types of wild horses. Two of these were pony types and the other two were believed to be horse types (Jankovich, 1971). The first of the pony types is pony Type I, evolving from the Tarpan and existed in northwest Europe and was resistant to cold and wet and its modern equivalent is the modern Exmoor Pony. Pony Type II resembled the Asian Wild Horse but had 64 chromosomes rather than the 66 of Przewalskis horse. It had a course head, heavy built, and a convex profile; its modern counter-part would by the Highland Pony. The third type, Horse Type III was long eared, long necked, gangly, slab sided; a desert horse stemming from the Tarpan, and much like the modern Akhal-Teke horse of Turkmenistan. The fourth, Horse Type IV, was small, fine-boned, short ears, concave face, thin skinned; a desert horse; a high set tail and flat croup; this horse, from the Tarpan, was similar to the modern Caspian and Arabian horse.

Modern horses are classified into three types: Light horses, which have light bones, thin legs, and weigh approximately 900 – 1200 pounds at maturity; heavy horses, which have large bones, thick and sturdy legs, and weigh 1600 pounds or more at maturity; and ponies, which weigh less than 800 pounds at maturity. Each of these and combinations of these types have contributed to more than 111 breeds of modern horses (Horse Class. Animal World, 1998-2012).

Once domesticated at about five thousand years ago, horses played a role in man's cultural, social, and economic development. Miklos Jankovich writes in, They Rode In To Europe, "The history of the world was shaped to a large extent by men on horseback who, because of the animals under them, were able to travel great distances, thus bringing about that exchange of ideas and inventions which is a fundamental requisite of human progress (Jankovich, 1971)."

After Christopher Columbus' initial importation of mares and stallions in 1493, horses had again made America home, having been absent for 10,000 years (Jankovich, 1971). In 1540, the Spanish officially introduced horses and other European domestic livestock to what was to become the state of New Mexico (Lapahie, 2010). All people of the United States and most of the human inhabitants of planet earth have benefited from the ownership of horses throughout history. The Navajo people, have the largest land base of all people indigenous to North America mostly due to their being stockmen. The horse is an integral part of Navajo life. The adoption and use of the horse has enabled the historical Navajo to hold large tracts of territory in the southwestern United States. Horses have had a profound impact on the peopling of North and South America.

Behavior

The horse is a prey animal, potential food for carnivores, and relies on flight, totally, for its means of survival. It will stand and fight with bared teeth, striking front hooves, and kicking hind feet, when cornered (Williams, 2008). The horse out runs predators to survive. Its entire physique and its instinct is evolved to be able to detect and escape by running from its hunter. The horse's eyes are on the side of its head to be able to see all around its body while grazing or at attention. It will detect the slightest movement. The horse's only blind spots are directly in front of its muzzle and directly behind its rear end. The eyesight of horses are their primary means of detecting danger.

Horses do not have good color vision other than being able to detect the differences between blue, red, and gray tints. They are not very good at distinguishing green and yellow from gray. Horses also have poor depth perception. A puddle of water, although only two inches deep, could be ten feet deep as far as it is concerned (Williams, 2008). The horse, unlike many ungulates can sweat, meaning it can run long distances while cooling itself through perspiration. Other ungulates such as ruminants cannot perspire (except for the Brahman), and can expire if overheated from exertion.

Horses are herd animals, they have to be among other horses, or animals approximating horses. A natural herd of horses will consist of a lead mare, a group of mares, their foals, and a stallion. A herd may consist of two mares and a stallion or a herd of up to thirteen mares and their stallion (Williams, 2008). Adolescent stallions and weaker or older stallions, make up bachelor bands. These herds do not have a set of mares and must become

strong enough to physically take a herd from a herd stallion or remain in single stallion bands. Horses have a pecking order within their herds. There is always a dominate horse with underlings dominating each other until the least dominate horse claims its place at the bottom of the pecking pole. A human can step in and become the dominate partner of a horse. Size does not matter. It is this characteristic of horses that allowed them to be domesticated for riding and pulling.

Horses are highly social. They are unlike many animals in that they can communicate through vocalizing; nickering, squealing, neighing, and snorting to warn of danger. The body language of horses is understood by other horses and can be understood by man. The set of a horse's tail that is drooping may indicate fatigue, pain, or submission. A tail carried high may mean excitement, playfulness or alertness. A swishing tail signifies an irritated horse.

Horses confined separate from others of their kind develop stress related vices such as pawing, chewing wood, sucking air by over biting a solid structure (cribbing), weaving its head back and forth like a pendulum, chewing wood, and eating dirt. These vices derive from the artificial inhibition of horses natural habits.

A horse with its ears pinned back is very mad and could possibly attack and is very aggressive. Ears erect and pointing forward tells that a horse is very interested in something in the direction of its pointing ears. Laid back ears that may be drooping indicates neutrality or laziness. A younger horse or a submissive horse will lower its head and open and shut their jaws indicating submissiveness. A stallion with its head low to the ground, ears pinned back, approaching a mare, is telling the mare to get back in line or do not go there. A responding mare will be attacked and drove back in to the herd.

A song I learned early in life says… *"My horse's hooves is striped agate; His fetlock is eagle down; His legs are lightening; My horse's body is the eagle plumed arrow; My horse's tail is the male rain; His mane is rain bows; My horse's ears are round corn; My horse's eye is the Big Star; My horse's head is made of mixed waters; My horse's teeth are of white shell; I guide him with the long rainbow as my bridle."*

I grew up with horses and my life has been shaped from horses. I must have been four or five years old, and it might have been around 1962, or 1963, when I first noticed the bands of different horses coming to water on Nazlini Creek. We lived on the south rim of a portion of Nazlini Canyon. Down in the canyon were our fields of corn, squash, alfalfa, apples, apricots, and plums. A horse trail from our home went down into the canyon and could be seen across the canyon, where it emerged and forked towards my grandparent's hogans and Gray Ridge respectively. At mid-morning the trail from Gray Ridge was usually occupied with single lines of thirsty horses headed up by the lead mare with the band stallion bringing up the rear. In between the two were assorted mares, foals, and pre-pubertal young horses of both sexes. Straggling at a safe distance from the stallion were the bachelor studs also thirsty and intent on clear, cool water. It was always a special time of day for me to watch the various bands coming and going from water. The scene would repeat in late afternoon.

Although individual bands kept safe distances from each other, the creek, the trail, and time of day, would bring various bands of horses within sight of each other. It was something to see a snaking stallion lower his neck and extend his head low to the ground, ears pinned back, and chase a straying mare back into the herd. She lost no time getting back into the herd as she nervously swished her tail. Best of all was the sight of two mature

stallions trotting toward each other with bowed necks and going through the ritual of smelling and nudging each other's flanks while stomping, kicking, and squealing.

I remember my uncle had two stallions, a solid bay and a liver chestnut with a blaze and four white socks. The liver chestnut stallion had the longest mane I had ever seen on a horse. Both of these stallions followed at least twelve to thirteen mares each and their offspring. As weanlings, the two studs shared the same corral, water barrel and feeder bunk. But as mature stallions with their own herds, they would fight for hours and only broke apart when their respective bands grazed off into the distance. I remember being close to their battles as a little boy always ready to jump in to a juniper tree for safety, yet being close to their fighting was exhilarating.

My Grandfathers and Grandmothers

During the 1960's, many of my relatives and many people from my community traveled daily by two horse wagon or by horse back. The trail from Flat rock went by our home and it was not uncommon to see older men and older women riding at a slow jog towards the trading post or the local tribal government meeting building. The older men always had, first of all, a broad flat brimmed felt hat, sometimes a vest, if not, a suit coat; a long rope tied around their horse's throatlatch coiled and tied to the saddle; hobbles tied off side of the cantle; a rawhide quirt, and many of them had side arms and they looked like they meant business.

Many of the elder men had permanent turquois stone earrings attached with a string to their pierced ears. The older ladies rode their saddled horses in full billowing dresses that

reached to their ankles, velveteen blouses adorned with small silver conchos, and always a long scarf over their heads, tied under their chin. At the trading post and at the meeting place, horses would be tied up or unhitched while the people were inside visiting and doing business. They didn't use saddle bags for their cargo but cloth sacks with each third of the end sack lashed to the saddle by the two longest set of rear saddle strings.

Big Kaya Onny, an elder Navajo always rode a black stallion with a long black mane and tail. He rode at a slow jog as did all older Navajo men. I remember him crossing the canyon regularly on his trips to the trading post. He didn't make it home once. His family back tracked him and found his saddled horse standing over him. Big Kaya Onny was surmised to have died of a heart attack. Chei Bord, was another elder who travelled consistently on a Dun gelding. His name, Chei, meant grandfather and Bord was really Boyd. His name was Boyd Tracy but nobody said Boyd. Everyone called him Bord. They found his body further up the canyon from where we lived at a crossing where there was cliffs. He had fallen from his horse into a crevice. He was very old as well.

Another old man from Nazlini was Yellow Man. He wore a black felt hat with a high round crown and a flat brim. His hat band was made of sterling silver, inlaid with turquoise. His long hair was tied in a bun at the base of his neck and he wore permanent turquoise nugget earrings that dangled from his ear lobes. His neck was always wrapped in a scarf and he was never without a chew of tobacco while in the saddle and he was always in the saddle. Yellow Man always looked good in the saddle, a classic old time Navajo horseman.

Once while riding my horse Poco, I saw Yellow Man in the distance riding a black gelding at a slow jog. I headed him off at a lope, slowed to a trot respectfully before riding up

to him and said *"ya'aht'ey shii cheii"* (greetings my grandfather). I was happy and smiling. He took one look at Poco and said "*Ni lii' la' t'oh beh dokl'izh!"*… "Your horse is blue with water!!" He scolded me without saying hello. My horse was sweaty and Yellow Man let me know he didn't like it. On the other hand, sometimes I would see him standing in his stirrups, leaning forward, front brim of his hat bent up from the breeze; smiling, still with a big chew, traveling at a medium to fast jog, horseback. That meant he was a little tipsy from wine he got off of a bootlegger. He would be real friendly during that time, chuckling and telling stories. If alive today these men would now be around 120 years old. They are all gone now.

An elder Navajo lady very old at the time of this story took her sheep out to graze on horseback daily. She lived on the prairie east of Nazlini on top of Red Grass Mesa. The prairie is about sixty miles long from north to south and bounded on the west by Black Mesa and is about eight miles wide. Red Grass Mesa parallels Black Mesa north to south, but its rim slopes downhill from the prairie on its east side where Black Mesa rises from the prairie on its west side. This elder lady, a clan grandmother of mine, had hobbled her saddled horse and it was grazing amongst her herd of sheep when I rode up on Rusty.

I had borrowed Rusty and ended up about ten miles from home and I was exhausted from trying to keep Rusty at a trot. I was looking for missing horses. I couldn't get anything out of him. All I had was my heels and my reins were roping type; one continuous loop with no tail. I didn't have a lasso or a quirt, or a belt; no stick to be broken off of a branch because I was on endless prairie. My uncle, Rusty's owner, had the bad habit of always absent-mindedly drumming his heels on a horse's ribs as he rode. Therefore, the result was Rusty being desensitized from being asked to go faster with a nudge or a kick by a rider's heels.

My grandmother must have gone home for lunch. I looked everywhere and there was no one to be seen. I wanted to borrow something to use as a stimulus for Rusty. I took a rein, it was new, from the hobbled horse. There was no other loose ropes available to use from the horse. The bridle had been removed so the horse could graze and the bridle was suspended from the saddle horn. I was in my early teens.

I mounted and doubled the rein now a whip and let Rusty know I was again in charge and he didn't hesitate, taking off in a nice easy lope straight across the prairie to my own biological grandmother's full sister's home. The home was about two miles from where I got the rein but it was visible. I rode up and introduced myself formally. *"Hello my grandmother", I come from Where the Creek Resurfaces, I am Mustache's second oldest daughter's oldest son. My father was the late Zuni. My mother works at the Nazlini boarding school and takes care of the children when they get finished with class."* She now knew I was her full sister's grandson and she now knew who my mother was, her niece, and knew which child of my mother I was. My introduction of myself was exactly as how my mother taught me to do it. I presented myself appropriately. Mustache was my biological grandmother's husband, my grandfather. I asked my grandmother if she had seen the horses that I described. She saw a lot of horses; bays, sorrels, blacks, and spotted horses but no grays.

I thanked her and left for the long ride home not aware I was watched while taking the rein and also observed from long distance as I rode straight up to my grandmother's home. I, in my mind, had just borrowed the rein without bad intentions. My horse would not go and I did ride straight to my grandmother's home rather than trying to hide like a thief. After I left my grandmothers or during my visit with her, my other grandmother, the one I took the rein from, got in a truck with her adult children, who drove her to my grandmother's

home, the one I had just visited, and asked her who I was because I had taken a rein from her hobbled horse.

My grandmother, the one I went to secondly inquiring about horses after I took the rein, possibly not wanting to claim me as a relative because I was just accused of stealing, responded, *"I don't know who he was, he come riding up to me calling me grandmother. He said he is Zonnie's grandson and his father was the late Zuni and that his mother works at the school. He was looking for horses. He said he is the oldest and he must be Vennie's son."* It was later that same evening, I was home and my mom came home from work and she was furious. *"I have been never so embarrassed in my life,"* she said, *"how could you do such a thing, taking a rein from an elder lady's horse. How could you? I felt so bad, I didn't know what to say. Tomorrow morning you go and return that rein! Your poor grandmother said that is the only reins she has for the only bridle she owns and she barely had enough money to afford those reins and wants more than anything to have her rein returned to her. You just get up there and you return your poor grandmother her rein!* "I was terrified, *"Mother",* I said, " *I didn't mean to take her rein. I looked for sticks, there were no trees around to break a branch off of, I didn't have a whip or a rope and I couldn't get Rusty to even trot. I was becoming exhausted drumming my heels to his ribs with no response from him at all. I had to have a whip, he wouldn't go."*

Rusty was bottle raised and a cryptorchid. My uncle had rustled Rusty as a nursing colt, thus, the bottle. Rusty was very gentle but had the odd habit of sucking drinking water as an adult. It took forever for him to drink his fill, maybe it was from being raised by a bottle and not learning how to drink from other horses, other than that he was normal besides being a cryptorchid. Being a cryptorchid didn't make Rusty lazy.

A cryptorchid is a male horse with a testicle that is not descended in to the scrotum but retained inside the body. The horse is hormonally a stallion, but sterile and cannot produce fertile semen. Rusty's descended fertile testicle had been removed. Men that gelded stallions refrained from going after a retained testicle due to possible infection. Rusty was a Navajo horse. He could run all day and had good stamina. He just needed to be understood.

Two elder men from the Nazlini area altered stallions into geldings when I was young, the Late Ned Charley and the late Paul Claw, Sr. During the annual summer community brandings where everyone attended, Ben Tail did the castration of stallions at the request of owners. My folks did not like our stallions gelded in public. They strongly believed that female humans should not watch a stallion castration. They said a cut horse would swell and heal very slowly, suffering, if its gelding was witnessed by girls or women.

Ben Tail didn't mind gelding stallions in public, he was a showman, and a good one. Ben Tail was a professional horseman. Ben was old but he had young men doing his lassoing and tying of the semi wild horses per his expert instruction. I wished I worked for him. Ben Tail was an entertainer while working a horse. With all kinds of people perched on top of the huge corral or peering through the gaps of the corral cross poles watching, he would crack jokes in the Navajo language always peppered with the little bit of English he knew. The crowd very much enjoyed him. His last job of the day would end with the running into the chute of a wild horse where a young man would volunteer to ride the exhibition bucking bronc. Sometimes the horse bucked off the rider but sometimes the rider stayed on and had to bail off where convenient. At other times the wild bronc would just take off in a dead run with the rider clinging to its back.

My folks had their horses worked at home and called on either Ned Charley or Paul Claw, Sr. to help us. We boys did the roping and tying down of the young studs according to instruction. The horse, hog tied with testicles exposed, the horsemen using a sharp pocket knife removed both testicles, knotted the bleeding vessels by hand and put a dry powdery medicine that looked to me like dried coffee grounds into to the wound to coagulate and stop the bleeding. The excess fresh blood was rubbed on to each hoof wall and the sole so the horse would always have hard hooves and the blood was also rubbed on to the forehead and muzzle of the cut horse so it would be gentle.

The newly removed testicles were never thrown towards the front of the hog tied horse lest he would be spooky as a saddle horse. Nor would the removed testicles be flung towards the horse's rear. To do so would make the horse slow due to his waiting for his testicles that were thrown behind him. The tip of the horse's forelock and the tip of its tail was docked using the pen knife to let others know the horse was fresh cut so to not needlessly handle it while healing. We took the testicles to the top of a high cliff and left them there in hopes that an eagle would consume it, empowering our cut horse to run far and long effortlessly.

Across the canyon from our home was the main dirt road from Nazlini to the Three Turkey Ruins area. Many Nazlini citizens lived out that way and when they were on their way to the trading post or for a community meeting by wagon, one could hear the steel rimmed wheels for a half a mile. My father used to say the steel wheels rolling over rocky sections of the dirt road sounded like distant rolling thunder. The road people traveled was across the canyon, a half mile from our house, so wagons passing by certainly broke the silence. All wagons were box type and hitched to two horses. The adults rode up front on the

bench seat while the children and cargo took up the vacant box end. Sometimes a foal would be trailing the team indicating one of the wagon horses was a nursing mother.

We got our first horse, a black weanling filly, from a family that had the foal's nursing mother hitched to their wagon. We could, as usual, hear a team coming in the distance, and the wagon would emerge and descend in to the canyon and emerge on the other side and disappear over the distant hill heading towards the trading post. A little later, a small dark foal would emerge and descend into the canyon and slowly disappear over the far hill following the long gone team. Later in the late afternoon the wagon would re-cross the canyon heading home, and much later, the little foal would follow, also heading home. My mother, sympathetic, approached the owners and asked to buy the little filly and we got our first horse. The foal wasn't mistreated. It was just slow and it knew where it was going but it was lucky for us kids that my mother felt sorry for it.

In 1866, after spending two years as prisoners of war at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, my grandmother's grandmother escaped with her older sister and her brother in law. The main group of Navajos were released, after signing a Treaty with the United States government, in 1868. My ancestors, during those days of fearing, hid within the fortress of Ts'eghii', or Canyon De Chelly. Nazlini Creek is twenty-three miles south of Canyon De Chelly. Having come home first, my great-great grandparents settled choice lands near the creek. *"After the return from Fort Sumner, families of the people were given two sheep, hoes and seed for planting. The shortsighted ones butchered their sheep and ate them. Others counseled and took close care of their livestock and survived on rabbits and what they could find while rebuilding their herds",* was a story told by my grandmother. The basic teaching

was to preserve our herds so we may never again suffer from starvation. My grandparents raised thirteen children. My mother was one of those children.

My grandmother died at the age of seventy-eight in early spring of 1983. Immediately after her burial, my uncle wanted his mother to ride to heaven on a horse because she owned livestock and shouldn't take her last journey on foot. He had one of his gentle mares in mind and asked that we young men send the horse on behalf of my grandmother. My mother pulled me aside and said, *"Do not pull the trigger because you are a horseman."* My brother and I found the grazing mare and he shot it behind the ear.

My grandmother rode horseback to the spirit land of northern Canada where all Navajos go in death. When we returned, the family asked us how the mare died. She did not kick we said. *"That is good, it did not suffer. Which direction did it fall?"* It fell with its head pointing towards Gray Ridge we responded. *"Good, the horse fell with its head pointing north. That is good, that is the direction our mother will travel"*, they said. My grandfather lasted another two years. With his passing, their band of one hundred twenty sheep, twenty five cattle and thirty something horses passed into history. I moved to Idaho that summer of 1983. I have always meant to return to my home. When I am able to visit my home of Nazlini, I hike the healed over horse trails of my youth to my grandparent's various homes and visited the faded, remnant structures.

Reservation Grass

After the Navajo Wars that ended in 1864, the United States government had encouraged the Navajo to continue raising livestock and issued 14,000 sheep, 1000 goats in

1869, and, 10,000 more ewes in 1872, with a final distribution of 7,500 sheep in 1878 (Bailey and Bailey, 1986). Ultimately, it was Navajo livestock that initiated, by Executive order, the increase of reservation lands, to 27, 425 square miles, making it by far the largest piece of Indian land in the United States (Evers, 1982). Granted freedom and released from Fort Sumner in 1868, the main group of 7,136 Navajo, had only 4,190 sheep and goats and 564 horses (Bailey and Bailey, 1986).

As large as the Navajo reservation was, it was dry country with very little, but much prayed for, precipitation; its remoteness allowed cultural isolation. With most Navajo herding, from the reservation period, 1868 thru the 1960's, livestock kept families together (MacDonald, 1993), keeping intact the language, religion, and culture. Livestock fed the population of the Navajo tribe, which continued to grow through into the 21st century (Donovan, 2011). The language continued to thrive, with the very old communicating, and passing down traditional education to the very young (Benally, 2005). The Blessingway ceremonies for health, long life, and beautiful horses and healthy sheep were intact (Wyman, 1970).

In 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt, implemented the New Deal in response to the Great Depression (Parman, 1976). For the Navajo, the New Deal focused on soil conservation as it was feared sedimentation from eroded Navajo lands would endanger the new Boulder Dam (Nez and Avila, 2011). The soil conservationists believed Navajo livestock overgrazing the land led to serious erosion. The result was the implementation of the Navajo Stock Reduction program of the 1930's.

In 1933, the Navajo sheep population reached a high of 1,350,000 sheep units of livestock. At that point the United States found out they should research the sheep in Navajo control. They found out that the Navajo Reservation only had grass enough for 560,000 sheep units of livestock (Pitroff, no date available). As a result of these studies, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, initiated a livestock reduction program, and, put Navajos to work for wages on conservation projects to compensate them for livestock culled by the agency. While the bureau did succeed in reducing the number of sheep and goats by half between 1934 and 1944, the program earned Collier the reputation as the last enemy of the Navajo (Manning, 1996).

My grandmother recalled as a teenager the times when she let the herd out of the night corrals for morning grazing. By the time the last of the herd was leaving the corrals, the leaders were topping the ridge, two miles away. My grandmother did not speak English. I remember as a youngster, her stories of *"John Colly"* (John Collier). She told of the herds being shot and left to rot because prices were too low to warrant shipping.

These events led to present day grazing permit laws. There are 12,400 grazing permits in existence since issued in the 1930's and no new ones have been issued to this day. My grandmother's permit said 40 sheep, ten horses or ten head of cattle. My mother, too young at the time of the permit distribution managed to purchase three permits from aging stockmen. I am aware that during my childhood, most family's livestock numbers exceeded the permit limitations. Today those 12,400 permits are held by 4.1 % of the Navajo population. In 1950, 22 acres of Navajo land was needed to support one sheep for one year. Today, 100 acres is needed to support one sheep for one year, indicating increased erosion and overgrazing (Proposed Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act of 2014, 2014).

I asked my mother once*, "I was wondering if my grandparents and great grandparents were worried about overgrazing and were their livestock forcibly reduced?"* My mother did not hesitate, *"the old people were very much against cutting the horse's mane and tail. The long mane and tail represents rain; rain is forage for livestock. The younger people began copying non-Navajos and cut the mane and tails of their horses, bringing drought."*

My mother continued, *"Yes, my grandfather increased his herd until he had over a thousand head. By the time of John Collier, we were down to 40 sheep."* She explained it this way, *"My great grandfather had just died and 4 days had not yet gone by. My aunt was instructed to not let the sheep graze towards the north. It was on the north side of the creek that the burial had taken place. The hogan my great grandfather had died in had been burned to the ground. My aunt, a teenager, had unwittingly let the sheep graze where they were forbidden."*

She continued her story, *"As the herd grazed on, and, around the ashes of the burned hogan, a whirlwind sprung up from the ashes. The startled flock fled in two directions from the whirlwind. Half of the herd fled south and the other half fled in the direction towards the north."* The whirlwind was the sign that the funeral rite was not observed in the proper manner. My mother's aunt had mistakenly broken protocol for which there would be a reckoning.

"Within the year of this happening during the funeral, my aunt was herding the same band of sheep on the other side of Big Grey Ridge. There, at the base of Pillow Mesa, she lost half of her herd, returning to the pens that evening with a much smaller band of sheep. Her

mother saddled a horse and went back in the direction of the grazing route to find the missing flock. The old lady did not find the sheep and had to retreat to the near side of the canyon to avoid a massive flash flood from a torrential rainstorm. Darkness and rain prevented further searching that day.

The next day they learned of their missing herd scattered for fifteen miles down a neighboring wash where a flash flood had carried them. All of the sheep were dead. There is a narrow canyon coming out of Pillow Mesa, on the other side of Big Gray Ridge. This canyon is called Horse Caught Between The Rock. The canyon is very narrow and at the far end there is a waterfall during flooding. At the base of the falls there is often a pool of water for some time after the floods have gone. The canyon is wide enough for a thirsty horse to walk all the way to the pool. But after the horse drinks, it can turn around but it becomes unable to leave the canyon due to its increased belly size from drinking. It becomes wedged and many horses have died in that canyon.

The lost sheep were in that canyon when the flood descended upon them. My family had lost half of their herd." I had never heard this story. My mother continued, *"After my grandmother died of old age, all of her sons, daughters, and relatives divided the remaining herd."* My mother's mother received ten sheep. *"When I was a little girl, that was what we had, ten sheep. My father built a stone house for a man in Wood Springs and was paid forty sheep."*

My mother continued her story, *"It was then that the livestock reduction occurred. The people were issued grazing permits from the BIA at that time. We were given a permit for forty sheep because that is what we had at that time. Many people who didn't have any*

stock borrowed animals from each other in order to qualify for livestock permits. Some people even rounded up stray horses and corralled them and were issued permits."

My mother would not give John Collier credit for the reduction of Navajo livestock. Nor would my mother say that we overgrazed the land because we had too many livestock. *"It was we Navajos ourselves,"* my mother said, *"We did not follow the instructions of the Holy People. That is what led to drought. That is what led to overgrazing. If we adhere to our Navajo religion and culture, we will live in beauty on our land with our livestock".*

The last thirty years has seen a steady increase of Navajo professionals in various fields. Regarding the range, the Navajo Nation has initiated a range improvement program that will eventually cover the entire reservation of 17 million acres. This program entails fencing, rest of overgrazed allotments, installation of a new monitoring system, and a GIS based resource inventory. The Department of Natural Resources of the Navajo Nation collaborates with NRCS and BIA in the design and implementation of this program. The Navajo Nation initiated efforts to acquire technology for the support of producer based monitoring (Pitroff, no date available).

There is a new paved highway that cuts through the middle of the prairie dog town near my sister's home and there is now barbed wire fence and cattle guards preventing intrusion by livestock. This new road has effectively cut our old pastures in half. There is no longer a horse trail over the low pass where I rode and, many times, carried my lariat on foot looking for my hobbled horse. The livestock on the other side of the new highway are stuck with the old windmill that has been there ever since I can remember. The creek waters stock on our side of the new road. There is a significant decrease in livestock in Nazlini now. As

the old folks pass on, the younger people have lost interest in the daily herding of sheep. Yet, the Navajo are continuing to balance the traditional ways with the realities of mainstream America.

As a kid during the 1960's and a teenager in the 1970's, I rode horses for thirty miles in any direction I chose. I loved the freedom of our isolation. I could, in those days, jump onto the back of an unbroken bucking horse and ride it by holding onto nothing but mane. My mother was raised with livestock but at the age of fifteen, she signed up to go to school. When she returned home she got a job and never let go until her retirement. She moved into a new housing complex in a street type setting and was happy. My sister still lives with her family at the old place. She has five churro sheep and two horses she keeps penned twenty-four hours a day. I think my sister likes horses but keeps the sheep only because her mother always asked how the sheep are doing.

From the defeat of some 8,000 Navajo in 1864 by the U.S. Government, the Navajo people have multiplied to more than 300,000 souls today. *"The success of human beings on earth is attributed largely to the animals that fed, clothed and carried them and cultivated their fields…Historically, the great livestock countries of the world have supported the most advanced civilizations and have been the most impressive and powerful (Campbell, no date)."*

The Navajo Reservation has not seen much rain for many years. There are very few loose cattle and horses in Nazlini today. Sheep herding has become nonexistent. There are deep gullies where soil has washed away. Russian thistle is common over much of the lands.

The time for the Navajo to, again, adapt to life situations is at hand. The resilient Navajo culture and modern education will hopefully stabilize the ranges of the Dineh.

It is a new era for modern Navajo. During the times of famine, livestock procured from the Spanish had made the Navajo, the Lords of the Earth (Clark, 2001). With the defeat from the United States of America in 1864, the Dineh realized a raiding economy was no longer possible. The rebuilding of livestock brought economic and cultural autonomy for the next one hundred years providing growth for the Navajo people while other Native American tribes decreased in population and culture (Gillmore, 1953). There was a time when the Navajo pastured their stock on all of northern Arizona, northern New Mexico, southwestern Colorado and the lower one third of Utah. The modern Navajo Nation is located in northwestern New Mexico, Northern Arizona, and southern Utah. The Navajo reservation is comparative in size to the state of West Virginia but now consists of only half of the traditional pastures (Holiday and McPherson, 2005).

Poco

When I was eight years old, my father bought me a wild two year old colt. I consider Poco a *"real horse",* a Navajo horse bred among a band of free roaming horses at the base of Black mesa's Fish Point. I named him Poco, after the famous quarter horse, Poco Bueno. He was broke for me and I grew up on him. I rode him for fun, ceremonials, looked for cattle, sheep, and rounded up many horses with him. He was my favorite companion through high school and my first years at college in Durango, Colorado.

Poco was originally brown and later turned gray. He was of local breeding, an Indian pony that stood about 15 hands high. He was light boned and had amazing endurance. I could ride him 30 miles a day at a jog and a lope. I once hitched him up to my grandmothers two horse wagon when one of her horses played out. I harnessed him and led him for about 20 yards while he was hitched with the still hitched horse. When it was apparent that he was not going to spook I drove my grandparents' home with him in harness. I was proud of him. I packed mule deer bucks out of the mountains with him and he was a calm assistant.

Years later, I had moved to Idaho and Poco must have been in his late twenty's or just turned thirty years. He was old and almost white with age but healthy. He was beginning to change his grazing range and favoring the nearby woodlands and canyons of Nazlini. He was not seen often on the open plains which was his original preferred grazing grounds.

My dad explained to me that Poco had started wandering off by himself in his old age and was ready to die. *"Why let him die for the coyotes to pick his bones when his last act would be to buy us a few groceries? Horses were given to us by the Sun so that we may make a living,"* my father said to me. It took me several months to understand that Poco did help my parents in his last days. It was not easy. It was an eye opening lesson that I will never forget. Since that time I have owned many horses and have sold old horses at the stockyards rather than have them die of old age in pasture.

I won't raise horses for the express purpose of slaughter but every horse that I own should have economic value. It is wasteful to raise beautiful horses for an eminent appointment with scavengers. Prior to domestication, horses were a valuable staple and hunted for consumption. The first domesticated horses may have only been kept as a food

source for meat and milk. Not until about 3000 BC were horses used for hauling and riding (Hirst, 2011). As the relationship between humans and horses developed they have become modernly thought of as companion animals rather than livestock.

In recent years the classification of horses and their uses has become a very controversial subject. In 2007, horse slaughter plants were banned from the United States (US). The action was influenced by companion animal enthusiasts. Not only was horse slaughter banned in the US but so was the consumption of horse meat (Whiting, 2007). Horse meat is considered a delicacy and consumed by countries such as Italy, France, Belgium and Japan. The United States had been exporting horses to slaughter in Mexico and Canada and to Japan. Canadian horse slaughter plants still ship most of their product to Europe with a smaller fraction being consumed domestically. Horse slaughter is more common in Mexico than in the US and is used for domestic consumption (Charlton, D., 2008).

Although slaughtering of horses is banned in the US, horses are transported to Canada and Mexico for slaughter. There are regulations for proper transportation of horses. On July 29, 2010 the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee passed H.R. 305, the Horse Transportation Safety Act, which significantly improved horse transportation in the US, prohibiting horses from being transported in motor vehicles with two or more levels stacked on top of each other (Jen, 2011). The US horse slaughter ban and strict regulations have limited horses transported for slaughter, creating a negative effect on the economy and the horse market.

The mare was historically the first of its species to be exploited by man as breeder. It was she that was staked out for wild stallions to service and it was her domestication that led

to the easy taming of her resulting foal. Not long ago, the horse in many ways was regarded as the most important domestic animal, being used in all types of farming, in transport, in war and, as food (Jankovich, 1971). Mechanization of farm equipment and transportation has rendered the horse obsolete in most modern countries. Today the horse is still used for work in parts of the world as well as for sport and recreation and therapy. Horse breeding today is very much alive and well. Well-bred performance horses command high prices. Distinguished representatives of certain breeds are in high demand for breeding.

The New Nez Perce Horse

As I grew I would run during the hottest part of the day because my father, the Sun, favored those who ran during the time he was closest to earth and bestowed upon them beautiful horses. I remembered my grandmother's teachings that it was the Sun who gave the Navajo horses. I have now owned over three hundred horses and currently keep a breeding herd of ten breeding mares, three stallions, and four geldings. They are not the breed of my youth but they possess the characteristics that my grandparents and mother admired, long distance running horses. When I first began to raise blooded horses I acquired mares from California, Idaho, Missouri, Ohio, Nevada, Wyoming, and Washington. I studied pedigrees of Appaloosas, American Quarter horses, Thoroughbreds, Paints, draft breeds, pony breeds, and happened on the Akhal-Teke horse of Turkmenistan (Jankovich, 1971).

My life changed when I started working for the Nez Perce Tribe as a professional horseman. Within ten years I developed a new breeding program, taught Nez Perce youth horse management, revived long dormant Nez Perce ceremonies involving horses, and

created the Nez Perce Horse Registry which is in existence today. I relied on the teachings of my Navajo elders during my youth to establish the Nez Perce Horse Program. The traditional horsemanship of the old time Nez Perce people was very much like how my Navajo ancestors, thought of, and handled horses. Historically, the Nez Perces, as did other tribes west of the Mississippi River, including the Navajo, utilized the same type of horse that had the same origins in that they originated from the original Spanish imports beginning in 1493.

When I moved to Idaho I decided to raise Appaloosa (Haines, 1963) horses. The Nez Perce People are renowned for having developed this special breed of horse. I decided I would raise black and white colored Appaloosa horses. A Nez Perce elder told me the Nez Perce never raised Appaloosa horses. Other Nez Perce elders stressed that their ancestors never bred and raised Appaloosa horses as a breed. They did selectively breed excellent horses as noted by the explorers Lewis and Clark in 1805 and 1806. The Appaloosa Horse Club breed registry was incorporated in 1938 in Moscow, Idaho, and during the 1960's was the third largest breed of horses in the United States. I didn't listen to the elders as I wanted to breed registered Appaloosa horses.

The Appaloosa horse became a part of Nez Perce Indian history. The Nez Perce people, in their language, call the Appaloosa horse Maumin. Some historical Nez Perce traded the Morman settlers of southern Idaho for a white mare with mottled skin, white sclera, and striped hooves. When brought home and bred to regular colored stallions, the mare produced offspring with white blanketed hips, covered with spots. The white mare was purchased to be used as a horse, not to establish a new breed. Due to this white mare there became spotted horses among Nez Perce herds as there were also other spotted horses among other tribal herds.

Claude Thompson, Francis Haines, George Hatley and other non-Nez Perces, concentrated on mating spotted horses to each other, named and formed the Appaloosa breed registry in 1938 (Haines, 1963). The Nez Perce themselves after the War of 1877 with the United States government, lost all of their lands, horses, and horsemanship. The Appaloosa breed of horse was marketed as the Nez Perce war horse that successfully out ran the U.S. Army for 1,300 miles. The Appaloosa paradigm profits from the trauma of the Nez Perce people (Rachel Wapsheli, Personal Interview). There is no turning back from the story that the Appaloosa is Nez Perce.

I bought black and white Appaloosa mares throughout the United States and acquired The Lucks In, a black and white Appaloosa stallion sired by Boston Mac (AQHA), a black running quarter horse, and was out of the mare, Chipeta Doll, an own daughter of Bright Eyes Brother, a champion of champions Appaloosa stallion. The Lucks In was top 5 at the World Championship Show in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. I owned a black mare with a white blanketed hip that was the last daughter of Stud Spider. Stud Spider was owned by the actor, James Brolin. I bought a daughter of Ha-Dar Shado and had her shipped from Ohio; she was black and white. I owned a black blanketed daughter of Mr. Mystique, also a world champion halter stallion. I had an appendix Quarter horse mare (Quarter horse crossed with Thoroughbred), Trucklin Rose, who was a granddaughter of the Thoroughbred Truly Truckle and her sire was by Easy Jet, the world champion Quarter race horse.

The Appaloosa Horse Club (ApHC), the registry for Appaloosa horses, allows out crossing with registered horses from the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA), Thoroughbreds (JC), the Arabian Horse Registry (AHR), as well as other horses registered

with the Appaloosa Horse Club. My horses were of excellent quality and I raised and sold very nice Appaloosa horses.

The name Appaloosa sounds of native origin but it is not, but then again, it could be. North of the Snake River and Lewiston, Idaho, and Clarkston, Washington, is an area of once native grasslands called the Palouse Prairie. Palouse in French means meadow. Also, downstream from Clarkston, Washington, on the Snake River lived a people closely related to the Nez Perce. Their name is Palus which is pronounced exactly like Palouse. Additionally, Palu means people in the Nez Perce dialect. A band of Palus fought alongside the nontreaty Nez Perce during the War of 1877 with the United States.

Guy Lamb, a white man, living on the Snake River below Clarkston, Washington, owned a blue roan stallion with a white blanket and spots on its hips. This stallion, Knobby, was foaled in 1918 (https://spotted.horse/2016/06/04the-breed.). Guy's neighbor, Floyd Hickman, owned Spot, a sorrel spotted mare which they bred to Knobby, producing the spotted stallion, Little Dan. Sam Fisher, a Palus Indian neighbor of Guy and Floyd, sold a mare to Hickman. Sam Fisher, a full blooded Palus Indian bred spotted horses in the Palouse region of the lower Snake River. The breeding and ownership of these, and similarly spotted horses became popular throughout the western United States. In 1939, the horse breed registry, Appaloosa Horse Club, was incorporated in Moscow, Idaho, on the eastern flank of the Palouse Prairie to keep an official list of specific breeding with known parentage.

Bob Browning of Farmington, New Mexico, made contact with the Nez Perce tribal leaders during the early 1990's and donated sixteen registered Appaloosa horses so the tribe could restart their horse culture. A non-profit corporation was formed to provide care of the

horses. A grant was acquired from the Administration for Native Americans to be administered by the Nez Perce Tribe. I was hired to run the horse program, teach Nez Perce youth horsemanship, implement and establish an equine breeding program, and re-establish dormant Nez Perce ceremonies using horses. The sixteen donated horses remained under separate care with the newly incorporated Chief Joseph Foundation. The grant application was originally submitted by the new Chief Joseph Foundation, was denied due to no track record. The application was resent for the following selection round by the Nez Perce Tribe. Awarded, the Nez Perce Tribe decided to keep the grant within the tribe. The Chief Joseph Foundation without a grant, kept the donated horses and I had to find my own program horses.

In 1995, the Nez Perce tribal government started the new Nez Perce breed of horse financed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the nonprofit First Nations Institute. The horse combined with the Appaloosa and rare Akhal-Teke, the exceptional Turkoman horse, native to Turkmenistan, Central Asia, which is known to run 120 miles a day for up to 10 days in a row. Its stamina and endurance is phenomenal. There are 6,600 Akhal-Teke horses worldwide today with most horses in Turkmenistan and Russia, very few are in America. The modern breeding program brought back the legacy of the Nez Perce as legendary horse breeders to present day rather than being remembered past tense, romantically. The historical Nez Perce horse descended from Spanish horses that were enhanced with Barb, Arabian, and Turkoman blood.

The application to fund the Nez Perce horse breeding program was created by Isabelle Bond, Upward Bound Program, and The University Of Idaho. Isabelle and her staff worked untold hours fulfilling the requirements for the Administration For Native Americans

and successfully attained the grant award from among hundreds of applicants. When reading in the New York Times of the Nez Perce launching a breeding program with its interest in the Akhal-Teke breed of horse, Hans Sprandel, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, donated nine purebred and part bred Akhal-Teke stallions, mares, and geldings to the tribe. In 1995, it was thought that there were only several hundred Akhal-Teke horses in America. It was these two individuals that made it possible for the Nez Perce to create a new horse. The Appaloosa Horse Club advocated for the tribe to support its registry; that it was preserving the old Nez Perce horse and was not in favor of the tribe developing a new breeding program.

I always remembered the tribal elders saying the Nez Perce did not develop the Appaloosa horse. All literature pertaining to horse breeding and Appaloosas credited the Nez Perce people with creating the breed. The Appaloosa Horse Club, the registry for keeping breeding records of Appaloosa horses was incorporated in 1938. One of my duties was to create a horse breeding program. I decided to listen to the elders and recreate a new Nez Perce horse, a horse that would bring fame back to the Nez Perce people themselves, rather than being a credit, past tense. The original Nez Perce horse as noted by the explorers, Lewis and Clark, were comparable to Virginia Coursers, the Thoroughbred.

The Akhal-Teke breed of horse, native to Turkmenistan, is one of three breeds of horses recognized as true hot blooded horses. The other two hot blood breeds are the Thoroughbred and the purebred Arabian horse. The North African Barb horse is also considered a hot blooded horse. The English Thoroughbred, a derivative of the Barb, Arabian, Turkoman (Akhal-Teke), and native English Galloway mares is the man-bred hot blood. Hot blooded horses are thin skinned desert evolved horses with a higher flight instinct,

thus, running horses first, with physical characteristics that define true running horses (Jankovich, 1971).

The Akhal-Teke was first introduced to the Americas in 1979. They are one of the rarest breeds of horses in the world. The combination of the Akhal-Teke and the modern Appaloosa would result in a new Nez Perce horse. My grandmother's description of the real horse came true for the Nez Perce people, the *"real horse"* of Spanish origin. The Spanish (Spain) Andalusian horse ridden by Conquistadors, that came to what was to become New Mexico and Arizona, was bred from Turk (Akhal-Teke), African Barbs, Arabians, crossed with horses that had northern European ancestral Forest Horse blood.

The Empty Saddles Ceremony

I worked for the Nez Perce Tribe for ten years running the tribal horse program. The new Nez Perce horse is a fine animal but remains relatively unknown. The historic Nez Perce horsemen traveled on horseback as far as South Dakota, for war. The old Navajo were documented raiding Pawnees in Nebraska. Both tribes rode real horses. The original horses imported by the Spanish had high levels of hot blood. These were the horses my grandmother described.

During the spring, summer, and fall of 1877, the Nez Perce were pursued by the United States Army. Young Nez Perce warriors had retaliated against, and killed the white men that had murdered their fathers and taken over their lands. The Nez Perce at the same time had just been forced out of their beloved Wallowa Valley, Oregon, homeland. The people were attacked at White Bird, Idaho, and chased through the Bitter Root Valley of

western Montana, engaged at the Big Hole where 90 Nez Perces were slaughtered. The survivors made it to Yellowstone, Crow country, Montana, and were surrounded at the Bear Paw Mountains, 40 miles short of the Canadian border and freedom. In the late 1970's a group of Nez Perce returned to the Bear Paw National Battlefield and paid homage to their ancestors lost to gunfire. Since then the Nez Perce travel to each battle site annually to pay their respects.

On August 9-10, during the late 1990's before the annual Nez Perce Veterans Pipe Ceremony, Big Hole National Battlefield, Montana, the Nez Perce Young Horseman Program was invited to bring horses and participate in the ceremony. I was director of the program and asked the veterans and prominent Nez Perce elders who were all men, what they wanted done with horses at the ceremony. They all indicated riding horses in full Nez Perce traditional regalia around the pipe ceremony as it was being conducted would be good. The problem was parading is in victory and celebration. Approximately 70-90 Nez Perce women, children, elders, and warriors were ambushed and killed by soldiers at the Big Hole battle. The Nez Perce beat back the soldiers, killing many, allowing their families to get away to safety but it was not something to celebrate.

I related my dilemma to a Nez Perce lady elder wondering how we should perform this horse ceremony appropriately. Her response was that as a young girl she witnessed at Pendleton, Oregon, a memorial ceremony using horses by the sister Umatilla tribe. The Nez Perce and Umatilla share the same language, customs, and religion. A prominent elder had passed a year previous to this ceremony and the surviving family was ready to rejoin the community ceremonially. A horseback rider dressed in full traditional regalia and leading a saddled horse adorned with the deceased's war bonnet and buckskin clothes and moccasins

was led around the ceremonial lodge three times at a walk accompanied by appropriate songs as the family and witnesses stood by. At the conclusion of the ride the family gave items to those in attendance.

The late Nez Perce elder, Alta Guzman, was the one who provided the appropriate memory and gave us the instruction on how to use horses at the Big Hole ceremony. The ceremony had not been conducted on the Nez Perce reservation since the turn of the century or earlier. Not having saddle horses but four Akhal-Teke stallions and one Appaloosa stallion at the time, we conducted the ceremony on foot, leading each stallion saddled, with a Pendleton blanket draped over their backs.

The night before the ceremony, I constructed a staff adorned with ninety eagle feathers to represent the fallen in 1877. During the ceremony this staff was carried by the late Allen Moody of Kooskia, Idaho, World War II veteran. The 14-20 year old Young Horseman students, each leading a stallion, and I followed, circling the pipe ceremony. The ceremonial leader, Wilfred Scott, called out certain people to step forward and retrieve a blanket off of each horse in memory of those who lost their lives at that location.

Today, over twenty years after the reintroduction of the Nez Perce Empty Saddles ceremony, horses still accompany the veterans to all of the battle sites of 1877. When I hauled stallions only to the first ceremony, I tied three stallions short in a 20’ open stock trailer and braided hay rope into their tails, cross tying them so they couldn’t turn their hind ends on each other and kick. I transported the other two stallions singly in two separate horse trailers. We traveled the five hour trip each way without a problem. At that first ceremony using horses at the Big Hole, I regarded our audience to be the spirits of the Nez Perce who

lived and died at the Big Hole in 1877. They knew the ceremonies and were just beginning to resist the European. Our generation had experienced loss of language and ceremony, social problems, loss of lands, and pressures to assimilate by Christian religions and the federal government for over a hundred years since the battle of the Big Hole.

I have been able to transport young breeding stock from my herd and sell them among my Navajo people and other Indian tribes throughout the western United States. My goal has been to place my horses in the hands of as many horsemen as possible. The Nez Perce Tribe continues the breeding of the new Nez Perce Horse. A documentary film, HORSE TRIBE, was released to public television November of 2014. This film high lights the new Nez Perce horse.

Conclusion

Today present day Navajo regard livestock just as much as did their ancestors. The importance of livestock to the Navajo, historically, and present day, is of significance, economy, religion, culture and livestock are all equally intertwined with Navajo life. Many Navajo are now wage earners. Although herding has been significantly reduced as a way of life, the Navajo still prefers to live on rural home sites not near too many neighbors.

The story of the creation of the horse by the Sun, as recounted by Navajo medicine man, Hatali Natloi (Laughing Singer): He described the first gray horse was made of turquoise, the sorrel was made from red coal, the black horse was made from obsidian, the white horse was made from white shell, and the many colored horse was made from haloitus shell. The horse's mane and tail are black rain. The ears are made of lightening. The stars are

their eyes and different growing plants are their faces. The fetlock feathering is made of eagle plumes (Mathews, 1906). Aileen O'Bryon interviewed Sandoval (Old Man Buffalo Grass) in 1928, and recorded the Suns visit to the Navajo people's sacred mother, White Shell Woman. He rode up to her on a white horse with black eyes. The bridle was white as was the saddle. The rider wore white moccasins, white leggings and clothing. Their marriage brought forth the twin boys, Slayer of Enemy Gods and Born for Water, who were gifted horses from their father, later ridding the land of monsters so that when man came, they could live in safety and prosper (O'Bryan, 1928). These origin stories are but a small portion of the whole story, it is from these stories that form the foundation of Navajo society and life way beliefs and customs.

When the Navajo received horses it brought forth a great advantage to the people. Guided by the holy people our horses brought forth a sense of wealth and prosperity to the livestock owners. Not only did the Navajo benefit from the presence of the horse but all man-kind. The history of my people has been greatly attributed to the horse and with it the survival of my tribe, from overgrazing and livestock reduction our coexistence with horses perseveres.

The modern confinements of fencing and roads on the Navajo reservation result in new and unknown pasture conditions that were not present in the days of my youth. Education and Navajo beliefs and customs provide an outline at which to overcome the declines of the horse industry. With the banning of horse slaughter, the industry has fallen and with that the economy. This shows that not only does the horse affect us individually and directly but also on a national scale.

I have been fortunate to have been raised among livestock and taught the teachings of our people. It is with these sacred animals that I have lived my life, and I will continue to do so. Their effect on the country is apparent, and their impact on the environment is that they are part of the environment, and their history is environmental history. I raised my children with horses. All of my children enjoy beautiful horses. I am confidant my children will continue to breed our horses, the real horses.

The Nez Perce Tribe continues the memorials by horseback where they honor the warriors of the past and present. The Nez Perce descendants who never surrendered during the War of 1877 remain on the Piegan reserve near Brockett, Alberta, Canada, have received gifts of the new Nez Perce horse from the tribe in Lapwai, Idaho. Navajo horsemen are running these horses in long distance races in Arizona and New Mexico. I have remained true to my Navajo Sovereignty.

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CHAPTER THREE: TREATIES, NAVAJO RESERVATION GOVERNANCE, HORSES, AND GRAZING

The Navajo people have been successful in regaining lands lost to the federal government during the late 1800's. The Navajo reservation now consists of more than 27,000 square miles in northeastern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico, and a good chunk of southern Utah. Tribal membership has grown from and estimation of 9 to 12000 people in 1868, to the 2011 Census of 300,048 tribal members (Bureau, U.S. 2010; Donovan, B. 2011). Many Native American tribes in the United States have not grown in population and may have become fewer in number. But lately, the tribal council of the Navajo Nation has been plagued with violations. Navajo lawmakers, for the most part, are now very well educated. The traditional leadership that was once crucial to Navajo sovereignty may be in jeopardy. In its stead modern politics are ruling the day in current tribal governmental affairs. Serious land issues are on the plate of tribal law makers without input from the tribal citizen. This paper follows the development of Navajo government in to current times as well as federal government policies that have hurt and helped the Navajo people.

Traditional Navajo Governance

A young girl on horseback had to make a decision that was life threatening, yet by making the right decision and following her decision correctly, she could save herself and her family from enemies well known for killing Navajo people, or enslaving them. The girl, taught from the age of a toddler, the responsibility of self-governance, had to make a decision instantly. Mexican raiders were traveling north by horseback and were armed, looking for

slaves and had murder on their minds. Mexicans only came to the Chinle country on horseback looking for plunder. This was not their homeland.

The Mexicans had not seen the girl on horseback. She was with her family who were on foot carrying packs intent on hiding safely from the approaching enemy. The family moved stealthily east towards the Chinle Wash to the cover of thick cottonwood growth for cover. The girl's personal initiative pressed her to ride boldly in to the path of the oncoming horsemen waving her scarf above her head. Seeing her they gave chase as she sped towards the steep upright wall of Red Grass Mesa. The grade of the Mesa wall though clay, with bands of horizontal rock, offered little footing for a horse and rider.

The Mexicans eagerly gave chase with the girl leading them away from her vulnerable family. The enemy thought her cornered to the base of the mesa. She spoke to her horse, asking its help to escape safely and for her family to make their escape. She faced her mount towards the mesa and raced towards it at a gallup, then scrambled towards top of the almost impossible incline. Almost at the top, her horse stumbled, and with a fierce renewed effort began scratching its way to the top with its rim toed hooves.

Reaching the top, the girl galloped her charger back and forth above the edge of the cliff, swirling her scarf above her head while whooping the call of the young maidens during their ceremonial run. The Mexicans ran their horses part way up the mesa but couldn't go further, skidding back to the bottom. Outraced and outsmarted, they lumbered off in search of lesser warriors. The girl loped west towards the safety of Black Mesa and her family went safely into hiding. Both parties had made fools of the enemy. In memory of the young girls valor and her adeptness demonstrating autonomy which is bottom line self-control or

governance The exact location and its story is preserved forever with the name “Scratched To The Top”.

Today the highway from Many Farms but runs north to south by passing “Scratched To The Top”. Traffic is steady going in both directions. Drivers are intent on their destinations while keeping a watchful eye out for horses grazing the shoulders of the highway. Known to just a few passersby and, now, mostly the older local inhabitants, is a history of the young girl raised in the spirit of self-governance.

Those Navajo who undertook the training to become warriors and or practitioners of not only the Nightway ceremony, but of the Blessingway, the Enemy Way, the Mountain Top Way, the Shooting Way, to name but a few were regarded as leaders of the people. In addition, some were brought up from childhood to be leaders of the people and were taught to be great orators, teaching the people the morals and ethics to live in harmony in all activities.

The rules of ethical behavior that governed the Navajo are based on sacred law laid out by the Holy People (Benally, 2006). Benally writes that the stories, songs and memorized handed down prayers provide the guidelines that trained leaders in their roles. The traditional leaders of the Navajo represented the teachings handed down by the Holy ones by having knowledge of the sacred ceremonial ways. These leaders provided guidance, morals to be lived by, and education in the proper ways of living in a harmonious way.

Leadership and governance among the Navajo has been in existence since the time of the emergence stories. In the very beginning, before ceremonies like the Nightway came into existence and before there were the Navajo (Wyman, 1975), there was one holy being named One Who Walks Alone. Alone, the deity brought together those who were to become the

Holy People and began preparing them for roles in leadership and governance, above all were First Man and First Woman. A second set of leaders were organized and were named The Twelve Who Walk. These became among others, the grandfather, Talking God. These Holy People and others appointed, and guided those who were to become the Navajo through four successive worlds, the first black, the second blue and the third and fourth yellow and white.

Before and after contact with the Spanish Europeans in 1540, the Navajo people lived in geographically determined natural communities, locations where resources were available to make a living (Zolbrod, 1984). Other natural communities of Navajo lived in the same region but were distinct from each other. The people lived in family groups and extended clan relations with leadership accorded to those that were trained in ceremonial knowledge, providing protection, knowledge and wisdom. Held together by language, religion, and like customs, the Navajo identified with each other as a sovereign nation. They made alliances with, and developed a trade economy with surrounding tribes with different languages and customs. At times, the Navajo raided their neighbors for food and girls to insure genetic diversity and to promote growth of their families (Wetherill, 2007).

Traditional Navajo governance was based strictly on the teachings from the Holy People. The Navajo lived in bands of natural communities, each with their own sets of leaders of peace and war. Those who chose to undertake the knowledge of war ceremonials and became regarded in warfare were approved to leadership (Wilkins, 2013). The leaders of peace were accomplished practitioners of the Blessingway ceremony (Wyman,1970). These people restored through ceremony, individuals who became out of harmony with themselves, and their natural surroundings. The leaders of peace were of excellent moral character, well

respected, addressing issues and objectives that were then approved by the people through unanimous democratic consensus (Benally, 2006).

There were occasions when representatives of the whole nation came together to address issues concerning the people as a whole. The ceremonial Naachid, to gesture, brought together the most renowned of the Navajo leaders (Acrey, 2005). This ceremony convened with twelve leaders of peace and twelve leaders known for their knowledge of war ceremonials. This ceremonial was thought to have been last performed in 1857 (Benally, 2006). There is almost no known information about it other than people who had witnessed the ceremony as small children and passed down the oral information. The Naachid was conducted to discuss and implement actions on matters relating to making peace with foreigners, hunting, war, agriculture, and well-being of the people. The Naachid ceremony brought together leaders of the Navajo natural communities in a regional or national setting that provided governance for all of the Navajo people (Wilkins, 2013). In 1969, a Navajo leader trained exclusively in the traditional ways passed on at the age of seventy five near Pinon, Arizona (Benally, 2006). Many other traditional leaders throughout Navajo country, who spoke exclusively in the Navajo language, were reaching old age during that era. Today, modern Navajo leaders trained in Anglo-American concepts of government constitute the law makers of the modern Navajo Nation government.

Navajo vs. Spanish, Mexican, American Federalism & Treaties

It is not difficult to imagine the Spaniards enemies of all native peoples in the upper Rio Grande River country immediately upon their invasion. Fray Marcos De Niza, a Catholic priest guided by his Moorish guide, Estevan, arrived at Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico, in 1539,

seeking seven cities reportedly constructed of gold (Fergusson, 1951). In hind sight, it was probably not the right decision for De Niza to send Estevan on ahead to make contact with the Zuni people. Arriving at the village, Estevan did not waste any time in demanding women and tribute. Estevan was promptly put to death (Locke, 1976). The Navajo undoubtedly knew of this event. Francisco Vasquez De Coronado, leading a large column of soldiers riding horses, arrived from the south the following summer of 1540, and over powered the Zuni villages. These first two acts of the Spaniards set the precedent for their relationship with the Navajo and other native peoples of the region for the next three hundred and six years. Mexico declared independence from Spain in 1821 but from the Navajo point of view, there was no difference between a Spaniard and a Mexican (Iverson, 2002). In 1846, Colonel Stephen Watts Kearney marched his troops in to the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico territory claiming all of the lands for the United States.

Walter R. Echo-Hawk in his book, In The Courts Of The Conqueror, The 10 Worst Indian Law Cases Ever Decided, writes of the continual atrocities beset on the indigenous peoples of North America by the European since 1492 (Echo-Hawk, 2010). Through violence, policy, and court proceedings not meant to provide justice for American Indians, the Anglo-European systematically and emphatically endeavored to commit genocide and ethnocide. The Spanish and subsequent American invasion of traditional Navajo territory is justified according to European laws and ideologies concerning "primitive and barbaric" peoples. Echo-Hawk writes:

> *…Colonization…a euphemism for imperialism based upon the presumed responsibility of white people to exercise hegemony over nonwhite people, to impart Christianity and European values, thereby uplifting the inferior and uncivilized peoples of the world. In this ethnocentric view, non-European cultures are seen as childlike, barbaric, or otherwise inferior and in need of European guidance for their own good…*

> *…In the United States, the alleged altruistic motives of the white man's burden took on spiritual clothing under the hubris of Manifest Destiny. This doctrine invoked divine sanction for settling the frontier and justified the stupefying impacts on Native people. Under this view, American expansion was inevitable and Indians would simply vanish before oncoming pioneers…*

A year after the Spanish colonists settled their villages in 1598 and 1599, at the confluence of the Chama and Rio Grande Rivers, an additional 80 soldiers came to reinforce the town due to Navajo attacks (McNitt, 1972). The Spanish immediately indentured the Rio Grande Pueblo villages and assigned Catholic priests to each village to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. In 1610, San Gabriel was abandoned and moved 30 miles south to a more defendable position and renamed Santa Fe. In 1608, Navajos are documented to be raiding San Gabriel for horses (McNitt, 1972). In 1680, the Pueblo people successfully organized a revolt to Spanish authority with the Spanish retreating to El Paso, Texas. Twelve years later the Spanish returned and reclaimed their colonies. Many pueblo people during this time retreated to the mountains for safety among the Navajo. It is during this time, according to scholars that the Navajo adopted livestock as a means of making a living while, at the same time, learning how to weave from the Pueblo refugees (Bailey, 1986). If the Navajo were raiding for horses in 1608, they would have at that time, perceived the value of sheep and cattle as an on hand supply of protein, rather than wait 72 years before becoming a people that adopted herding.

The Spanish were gluttonous for minerals, land, and slaves (Echo-Hawk, 2010). The Navajo became the supreme target for Spanish, and later on, Mexican slave raiders. During all of this time, the traditional Navajo governmental structure remained secure. Navajo natural communities remained stable under the ceremonial leadership of the Peace and War head men. The Naachid, and other sacred gatherings provided governance that extended to

the regional and national levels of the Navajo Nation. (Wilkins, 2013). The Spanish, Mexicans, and later, the United States, not understanding Navajo government, would appoint a Navajo as chief of all the Navajos and make treaties with him. These treaties were never honored by the Navajo as no single person not of their choosing and not trained in Navajo ceremonials, would be recognized as their leader. It is quite probable that during, meetings of the Navajo, among the Navajo, they encouraged the foreigners to employ their treaty makings to secure time for rest and resupplying resources needed to defend themselves.

For hundreds of years the Navajo and the Spanish, then the Mexicans, engaged in continued warfare with raids for livestock and slaves and reprisal raids that never ceased. Jennifer Nez Denetale, in her book, Reclaiming Dine' History writes (Denetdale, 2007):

> *By the 1860's, slave raiding had reached an all-time high since the American military encouraged such enemies of the Navajos as the Utes, Comanches, and New Mexicans to attack Navajos, which they eagerly did because Navajo women and children were very valuable in the slave markets. As late as the 1880's, well into the reservation period, Navajos were still looking for family members in New Mexico households and insisting that the Indian agents assist them in their search for captive women and children.*

On October 8, 1953, the Navajo Nation Council, the governing body of the Navajo people, during session, at the urging of Bureau of Indian Affairs officials, adopted a resolution defining enrollment criteria for membership of the Navajo Nation. Today, to be eligible for enrollment with the Navajo nation, one must have at least one fourth Navajo blood. During the Council meeting, while discussing criteria for enrollment, the question came up about descendants of Navajos captured in the prior century and taken into slavery (Spruhan, 2007).

At the October 8, 1953 Navajo Council meeting regarding membership requirements for the Navajo Nation, representatives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs brought to the

attention of the Council that people from southern New Mexico and northern New Mexico were seeking membership with the Navajo Nation. These people said their grandparents were former Mexican slaves. Sam Ahkeah, Chairman of the Navajo Council, during 1946 – 1954, while presiding over that particular meeting, added that some people taken into slavery had decided to stay with their captors when offered freedom (Spruhan, 2007):

> *My grandmother went to Fort Sumner, while her sister, she was captured and taken to Taos, New Mexico. She was there eight years while and, after [the Navajos] returned [from Fort Sumner], there was a party of Navajo people gotten up and they went East through New Mexico, hunting up these young men and women who had been captured, to get them back into the Tribal fold. This sister to my grandmother was in Taos and the party came around and asked her if she would be willing to come back home and she consented and came back with a party of fifty or more young men and women but there was a great number of them who would rather not come back because they were married and thought they were happy over there, so did not come back…*

If the one town of Taos, New Mexico, held that many Navajo captives after the wars were over, one wonders how many Navajos were captured and held in other Mexican towns. Just think, from the early 1600's through the late 1800's, slave trading of Navajo people was a lucrative Spanish / Mexican business. Navajos retaliated and held slaves as well but it is thought for every 20 Navajo slaves taken, the Navajos held one slave in return (McNitt, 1972).

My late uncle, while herding sheep as a boy in the natural community of Nazlini, Arizona, found a Mexican spur among the rocks of Grey Ridge. The spur was shaped to fit a small heel and had unusually large rowels, a Mexican slave raider spur from the 19th century or earlier. Two miles east of the spur finding is a 30 foot sand stone spire. Within reach of an outstretched arm are numerous names and dates carved into the soft sandstone. All of these names are from local folks and inscribed since the 1920's and 30's. One inscribed name is much higher than the rest. The name is Spanish. About 75 yards beyond the sandstone spire

are the skeletal remains of six forked stick hogans, Navajo dwellings. These people were attacked by slave raiders during the 19th century or earlier and those not murdered were taken prisoner. A young girl taken later escaped and made it home. She witnessed a slave raider stand in his saddle and etch his name, which explained why the writing was higher than the rest.

A Spaniard, Francisco de Vitoria (1480-1546) drafted laws during the 16th century that acknowledged native peoples of having sovereign rights to their lands but Europeans that were first to encounter the natives and their lands had rights over other Europeans that came later on and not against the native owners of the lands. Vitoria also added that only if the natives voluntarily gave up their lands or if defeated militarily in a "just war" could they (the natives) lose their lands (Echo-Hawk, 2010). This recognition by the Spanish set the precedent of future relations with Europeans and Native nations in those indigenous peoples of North America were lawful entities to be dealt with by treaty (Wilkins, 2013). Vitoria's laws set the precedent for the English colonist's dealings with the natives of the Atlantic North America. These laws justified the European occupation of native lands, the genocide of native peoples, and with the blessings of Christianity, to assimilate native survivors into mainstream white America. This European ideal that Native North Americans were inferior were manifested in treaty negotiations calculated for cessation of native land ownership and destroying native religions, culture, and government. In one form or another, these policies are alive and well today.

Beginning in 1706, the Navajo leaders signed four treaties with the Spanish government, the last treaty taking place on August 21, 1819. These treaties were for alliance, peace, trade, and the exchange of prisoners. The Mexican government entered into six

treaties with the Navajo from October 9, 1822, through March 24, 1844. The purpose of the Mexican / Navajo treaties was to be for peace, trade, and return of all white captives. On November 22, 1846, the Navajo leaders entered into the first of nine treaties with the United States whose objective was again, peace and the return of all Navajo captives. In addition, the United States set boundaries for a Navajo reservation in three of the later treaties. The Treaty of 1850 and 1868 were ratified by the Senate (Wilkins, 2013).

On August 18, 1846, United States Army General Stephen Watts Kearney marched his troops into the town of Santa Fe, claiming control of the territory, its citizens as well as the native populations of the territory for the United States (Acrey, 2005). The United States announced their protection of the people and their property of all peaceful inhabitants against their enemies, the Utes and the Navajo (Denetdale,2007). Subsequent treaty making between the Navajo and the United States were not successful as the representatives of the Army did not have full consent of all Navajos to provisions of the treaties. One of the provisions of the treaties was for the Navajo to return white slaves but there were no terms in the treaties of returning Navajos taken into slavery by the Mexicans. The result was war for the next 18 years resulting in imprisonment of most of the Navajo people at Fort Sumner, New Mexico from 1864 – 1868.

In 1823, the United States Supreme Court, in the case *Johnson v. McIntosh,* established that European Americans, the United States government, held the rights of ownership to all native lands and that Native Americans were mere occupants of their original lands. Based on that court proceeding, President Andrew Jackson and Congress in 1830 enacted the Indian Removal Act which authorized the removal of native peoples from their original homelands to reduced lands (Echo-Hawk, 2010). In 1862, James H. Carleton,

governor and commander of the New Mexico Territory, acting on General Edward R.S. Canby's advocating removal of the Navajo to a reservation not their homeland, in accordance of the federal policy of removal and according to federal law that the Navajo were not legal owners of their lands, set in motion the plan to relocate the Navajo on a reservation at Fort Sumner, New Mexico (Denetdale, 2007).

In the summer of 1863, General Carleton launched his military campaign against the Navajo people. He enlisted the services of Colonel Kit Carson who with over 700 New Mexico volunteers invaded Navajo lands. Ute and Pueblo peoples as well as Mexican – Americans and Anglo – American citizens were encouraged to join Carson's scorched earth campaign. Navajo camps were attacked, killing or capturing them, burning their homes and crops, and rounding up their livestock. Approximately 8,500 Navajos were forcefully marched to Fort Sumner, New Mexico, and imprisoned for four years (Bailey, 1986). General Carleton's plan was to teach the Navajos to become peaceful farmers, learn the virtues of Christianity and send their children to American schools (Denetdale, 2007). Carleton planned to turn Navajos into white men but 2,500 Navajos died while incarcerated at Fort Sumner and Carleton's plan failed.

Ch'il Haajini (Manuelito), Daagha Yazhe (Barboncito), Daagha'ii (Delgadito), and many other Navajo leaders encouraged the imprisoned Navajo to keep their spirits up and to believe and pray for the positive that they will return to their own country. These same leaders kept in contact with those Navajo who never surrendered and provided instruction to them to remain safe and to conduct ceremonies for the release of the Navajo prisoners. At all times during incarceration, Navajos escaped to update the free Navajos of the state of affairs at Fort Sumner. The free Navajo also sent couriers into the prison camp, unbeknownst to the

guards, with information (Big Horse, 1990). Through prayers and ceremony of the Navajo leadership, the people were allowed to return to a much diminished reservation within their own lands. On June 18, 1864, the people began their 470 mile march to their homelands after signing the Treaty of 1868 on June first (Acrey, 2005).

A total of nine treaties were forced on to the Navajo people by the United States government. Of the nine treaties, two were ratified by Congress. The Treaty of 1849, also known as Washington's Treaty, ratified in 1850, lawfully placed the Navajo under the jurisdiction of the United States, gave New Mexico territory claim over Navajo territory, and gave the United States the right to set boundaries of Navajo lands (Wilkins, 2013). The Treaty of 1868 was signed by 29 traditional Navajo leaders who, with their people, had been prisoners for the previous four years (Acrey, 2005). The Navajo leaders agreed to a much diminished reservation within their own homelands, compulsory education of Navajo children, the building of carpentry and blacksmith shops, chapels, and other key assimilation provisions.

Treaties are vital to Native Americans today as they are the bottom line documents that give protection as well as recognition by the United States as sovereign, although dependent nations (Echo-Hawk, 2010). Through treaties, the American public gained lands for settlement and set aside lands for the exclusive use of Indian peoples. The Navajo treaties confirm the international standing of its people, affirms their national sovereignty and right to self-government. When the Navajo gave up lands to the United States through treaties, anything not expressly surrendered, supposedly remained with the people and their descendants (Wilkins, 2013). Although the Supreme Court turned its back on the state of Georgia's attack on the Cherokee, where thousands of Cherokee people were forcibly

removed from their homelands to Oklahoma territory during the 1830's, the court said in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (Echo-Hawk, 2010):

> *This Court has recognized the distinctive obligation of trust incumbent upon the Government in its dealings with these dependent and sometimes exploited peoples…In carrying out its treaty obligations with the Indian tribes, the Government is something more than a mere contracting party. Under a humane and self-imposed policy which has found expression in many acts of Congress, and numerous decisions of this court, it has charged itself with moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust. Its conduct, as disclosed in the acts of those who represent it in dealings with the Indians, should therefore be judged by the most exacting fiduciary standards.*

The federal government, according to the Navajos and other Native nations, must uphold its treaty obligations and commitments (Wilkins, 2013). If the government or other parties does not legally or morally engage in activities that protect Native rights or their lands and resources, they can be called in to court to face their actions. Justice Raymond D. Austin, Navajo, served on the Navajo Nation Supreme Court from 1985 – 2001, wrote the Navajo Treaty of 1868 reaffirms the socially distinct status and political attribute as a sovereign nation, with all the sovereign powers within the larger sovereign United States (Austin, 2009). Austin goes on to say that the Navajo suffered trauma and tragedy without equal and contrary to non-Indian belief, treaties did not give anything to Indian Nations. Treaties recognized the preexisting sovereign status of Native peoples, the significance that predates the United States itself and contain promises made by the United States in exchange for nearly all of the lands in the United States.

The Reservation Government

When the Navajo were released from Fort Sumner in 1868, they were legally under the auspices of the United States government. Upon their return to a diminished Navajo reservation the people began to rebuild their lives. The first Indian Agent Theodore Dodd,

began distributing rations and clothing to the impoverished people. The following year, in November of 1869, the government issued 14,000 sheep and 1,000 goats, at two apiece to the Navajo people (Bailey, 1986). Subsequent distributions of livestock and farm seed were distributed in as they became available.

Many Navajos returned to their former homelands although those areas were outside the boundaries of the new reservation. The traditional Navajo leaders of the war and incarceration era were kept in place by the government until they succumbed to age by the year 1900 (Acrey, 2005).

Immediately after the signing of the Treaty of 1868 and the return of the Navajo to their former lands, S.F. Tappon, federal peace commissioner, solicited John Ward to propose a system of Navajo government (Young, 1978). Ward recommended that each natural community select three of its most influential headmen to be held responsible for its citizens. This system of Navajo traditional government had successfully met political needs in their dealings with other tribes, the Spanish, Mexicans, and although imprisoned by the United States, this structure won the Navajo their own lands for a reservation. Ward suggested a Tribal Council to be selected from these locally supported traditional leaders. The federal authorities had no intention of creating a strong Navajo self-government. The Navajo Indian agent wanted a leadership that would be more subordinate to become more assimilative towards white civilization and administrated his policies heavy-handedly. The federal government controlled all facets of Navajo politics and appointed leaders of their choice to fulfill their goals of colonialism (Benally, 2006). It was not until 1927 that the Superintendent of the Leupp Navajo Agency, John G. Hunter, picked up on Ward's recommendation and developed local community branches of government known as

Livestock Improvement Associations. These groupings of local natural community involvement in governmental affairs evolved in to the Chapter systems where officials could be more efficient on collaboration of key topics.

Traditional Navajo leadership was intact amid the people in the early years of the new reservation. Traditional governance would remain strong among the Navajo well in to the 1960's. An example of traditional leadership is found in the autobiography, Son Of Old Man Hat (Dyk, 1938). Son of Old Man Hat was born at Fort Sumner, New Mexico. As an infant he returned to Navajo land with his mother and relatives and was reunited with his aunt's husband, Old Man Hat, who had remained free during the people's imprisonment. Old Man Hat immediately took his family to Black Mesa, their former home, which was outside the boundaries of the new reservation.

When Son of Old Man Hat was yet a boy, news came to the families of their natural community that two Navajos had murdered a white man and the soldiers were coming from Fort Defiance, Arizona, the headquarters of the Indian agent. The people had just finished planting their crops of corn, squash, and melons out on the open valleys where there was abundant moisture. The news came again that the soldiers were camped nearby, panicking all of the families into driving all of their sheep, cattle, and horses towards the safety of Black Mesa. Clouds of dust rose as people relentlessly drove their stock towards the woodlands and safety.

Old Man Hat made the decision to ride towards the soldiers with peaceful intent. Other riders joined him and asked him to represent them when they approached the soldiers. Old Man Hat was accompanied by fifty riders. All of the Navajo shook hands with the soldier leader and were given assurance they were safe and to have their families return to

their corn fields. The soldiers knew the identity of the murderers and knew of their approximate hiding location. Returning to their worried families, Old Man Hat brought news of his meeting with the foreigners and that there was peace. Relieved, the families began herding towards their homes they had abandoned in fear. Old Man Hat's encounter with representatives of the federal government was traditional government. Armed soldiers were met with diplomacy to ensure the safety of innocent people.

It was not until the early 1920's that a formal Navajo government was formed by the federal government (Bailey, 1986). Outside interests lobbied the federal government to look for oil and minerals on the Navajo reservation. The Treaty of 1868 stipulated that ¾ of the adult Navajo men had to agree to any actions regarding Navajo lands (Young, 1978). In order to grant oil leases, the Navajo Business Council was formed in 1922. Three men were appointed to the first Council by the Indian Agent. This Council operated at the will of the federal Indian Agent.

The primary economy of the Navajo during the early 1900's was livestock production. The traditional leaders and the federal government encouraged the Navajo to be self-sufficient, so much so that the Navajo reservation was increased in size several times through executive order extensions. Other Indian tribes, at the same time, fell victim to the Dawes Act, losing most of their reservation lands to homesteaders. The Dawes Act was implemented to assimilate native peoples to mainstream society (Wilkins, 2013). The Navajo, being self-sufficient, grew stronger in their traditional religion, language, and culture.

Federal policy towards American Indians began to loosen up during the 1920's and 30's. The government's insistence on assimilating Native peoples into mainstream America

somewhat loosened (Young, 1978). The Secretary of Interior established a Committee on Indian Affairs to investigate the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the government agency responsible for American Indians. Based on their findings, the Meriam Report published in 1928, brought attention to the hard conditions of reservation life. The Merriam committee stressed greater self-government for Indian communities.

John Collier was appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933 by President Franklin Roosevelt and immediately worked towards improving conditions for Native Americans. John Collier had been instrumental in helping the Pueblo peoples of New Mexico and had a sincere respect for Indian culture and traditions. His work brought into effect the Indian Reorganization Act on June 18, 1934 (Acrey, 2005). Collier believed the Act would "rehabilitate the Indian's economic life and give him a chance to develop the initiative destroyed by a century of oppression and paternalism." (Wilkins, 2013). The Act prohibited further allotment of Indian lands and authorized the Secretary of the Interior to create new lands for Indian peoples or expand existing reservation boundaries. In addition, the Act called for Indians to adopt constitutions and tribal governmental by-laws.

Unfortunately, for Collier, the Navajo people voted against the Indian Reorganization Act mainly because of the Navajo Stock Reduction. The Navajo reservation, although expanded, became seriously overgrazed and, at the time of the Indian Reorganization Act, Navajo livestock were slaughtered by federal officials in an attempt curtail erosion (Bailey, 1986). The Navajo compared the stock reduction program with their imprisonment at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, from 1864-1868. Navajo herds were reduced from 1,053, 498 in 1933 to 449,000 in 1946 (Wilkins, 2013). The Navajo continued to raise livestock into the 1970's. By that time many of the older Navajos who lived exclusively off of livestock began to

succumb to old age. At present the Navajo Council is again addressing overgrazing by rounding up feral horses on the reservation. A new proposed Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act of 2014 is currently on the lawmaker's table. The Navajo people, in general, seem to be distrustful of the new proposed grazing policies. The rounding up of horses and shipping them off to slaughter houses does not sit well with many Navajo people.

Although John Collier, through the Indian Reorganization Act, attempted to help the Navajos to adopt a constitution, it was rejected by vote. The tribal members during this time also lost their trust in the Navajo Council, believing the council supported the government's stock reduction program. Later on, 1938, with approval by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Navajo Council voted themselves into office and the Secretary of the Interior issued a set of by-laws that have been, more or less, used by the tribal government to this day. At present, the Navajo Nation does not have constitution and by-laws in place. The Navajo voters have never formally recognized the Council as the governmental entity authorized by the people to exercise those powers on their behalf (Wilkins, 2013).

The 1934 Taylor Grazing Act was enacted to protect public lands from overgrazing and erosion. The Act provided for dividing the lands into grazing districts (Bailey, 1986) . During this time many Navajos were living with their herds off of the reservation in Arizona and western New Mexico. Collier continued to advocate for Navajo land expansions but was met with distrust from The Navajos and opposition from non-Navajo New Mexico ranchers. The Taylor Grazing Act authorized the newly established Grazing Service to take control of federal lands adjacent to Navajo allotments. This Act enabled domination of Navajo stockmen by non-Indian grazing officials. Additional lands were added to the reservation in Arizona, but no other additions were made in the State of New Mexico. Presently, with lands

throughout the western United States, at a premium, it looks unlikely that any more lands will be added on to the Navajo reservation.

Livestock no longer supported Navajo families as had been before World War II (Acrey, 2005). The people were forced in to the wage economy. The Navajo-Hopi Long Range Rehabilitation Act was passed by Congress in 1959. This Act authorized the spending of $88,570,000 and an additional $20,000,000 to construct roads, schools, hospitals, water systems, and housing on the Navajo and nearby Hopi reservations. This funding allowed the relocation of Navajo families in big cities off of the reservation. The idea was to put Navajos in mainstream jobs where they could make a decent living Acrey, 2005). By 1960, the educational needs of all Navajos were being provided.

When John Collier's job finished as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, other federal lawmakers proceeded to implement the termination of Treaty rights for several American Indian tribes. The action would "free from Federal supervision and control" over designated Indian Tribes (Wilkins D. E., The Navajo Political Experience, 2013) deemed self-sufficient. Congress also enacted Public Law 280 in 1959 to give several states full criminal control and some civil governing over Tribes within those states. Fortunately, the Navajo were not included on that list but lost certain control over water rights to the State of Arizona. The termination policy was abandoned during the early 1960's and replaced with programs benefiting the Native American. The Navajo Nation expects Congress to live up to the terms of the Treaty of 1868.

The Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 and the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, were both policies that greatly supported the concept of American Indian self-sufficiency. The 1960 Civil Rights Act mercifully prevented States from

assuming jurisdiction over Indian country without prior agreement of the tribal governments themselves (Echo-Hawk, 2010). Historically and politically, state governments have proven to be not friendly towards Indian tribes within their state boundaries. The Self- Determination Act provides for the permanent institution of self-governance for tribal governments. That is where the Navajo Nation government is today, continuing to develop as representative of its tribal citizens, with a few setbacks that hopefully, will be corrected in the near future.

The Navajo Nation continues to evolve (Wilkins, 2013). By the 1980's Navajos with college degrees were not unheard of. The Chairman of the Navajo Council, during the 1970's and 80's, had amassed extreme political power over the Council. This resulted in the riots of 1989 in Window Rock, Arizona, capital of the Navajo Nation. Two people died during these riots resulting, partly on a federal prison sentence of the Chairman. In 1989, the Navajo Council amended Title II of the Navajo Code to reduce the power of the Navajo Chairman over the Tribal Council. The amendment provided well intentioned changes so future Navajo leaders would not be able to consolidate their power. The Chairman no longer could preside over the Council or appoint Council members to Standing Committees. The Speaker of The House of Representatives was selected to preside over the Tribal council.

In 2002, Dine Fundamental Law was officially adopted by the Navajo Nation. These set of laws called on the traditional views of handling law and order to be utilized in modern Navajo Courts. The creation narratives and the philosophy of the traditional leaders developed these policies. These laws are a statement of sovereignty by the Navajo Nation. Although these fundamental laws were enacted, many Navajo people now believe in Christian faiths or the Native American Church (Bailey, 1986). The fundamental laws are

based on the traditional religion and teachings and could be construed as not representative of modern Navajo philosophy.

During the 1990's four Navajo presidents (renamed by the title II Amendments) were forced to resign for ethics violations. Then in 2009, the Navajo people, not pleased with Navajo Council performance, voted to reduce the number of elected tribal council men from 88 to 24. It was during this time as well that an independent special prosecutor was brought in by the Navajo Attorney General to investigate wrong doings by the Council. The investigation found that 87 of the former Council members charged with fraud by funneling funds towards family members (Wilkins, 2013). These wrongdoings have become a part of the modern Tribal council. As of yet, no formal charges have taken place other than the forced resignation of the Speaker of the House in April, 2014, for admitting his part in fraud.

On May 29, 2015, The Navajo Nation Tribal Council issued a press release that stated the Navajo Nation Board of Election Supervisors approved by vote, 8 – 0, a ballot language initiative that will allow Navajo tribal voters the right to amend or retain a portion of the Navajo Nation Election Code that references whether or not the President and Vice-President elect of the Navajo Nation should be a fluent speaker of the Navajo language. The law as it is currently written requires the elected President and Vice-President of the Navajo Nation to be a fluent speaker of the Navajo language and to be able to read and write using the English language. The referendum is approved for voting to take place on July 21, 2015. If Navajo voters approve the referendum, the Navajo President and Vice-President may not be required to be a fluent speaker of the Navajo language in future elections (Council, 2015).

The recent approved referendum approving a possible change in Navajo law that could release future Tribal leaders from being required to be fluent speakers of the Navajo

language indicates that Navajo traditional culture could be changing as is its traditional uses of tribal lands. The Navajo have entered the world of modern politics, of campaign strategies, debating, arguing American Anglo of ways getting ahead, are fast becoming routine order for Navajo politicians. During the year 2010, there were 173,667 Navajo people residing on the Navajo reservation (Bureau, 2010). The Navajo reservation land base, set aside by the United States Government, for the exclusive use of enrolled members of the Navajo Nation, consists of 27,425 square miles in the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah (Evers, 1982). The Navajo people numbering over 300,000 have become modern day wage earners in general, and by doing so, are becoming more acculturated with mainstream America and therefore are no longer predominately raising livestock as all the Navajo people did before World War II (Bailey, 1986).

Having wrote livestock husbandry in decline, three summers ago, my children and I drove up on 72 Navajo horseback riders near Wood Springs, Arizona, as they were riding with the carrier of the sacred rattle on the first afternoon of the traditional Enemy Way Ceremony, the ceremony that requires the use of horses. During the 1970's horsemen for the same ceremony usually numbered in the teens. This ceremonial ride occurred in 2012 with 72 riders. All across the reservation during very recent times of the summer Enemy Way ceremony, there are now many horseback riders participating, much more than during the 1960's, 70's, and 80's. The Navajo religion is very much intact and that religion, which is also a Navajo culture, respects and loves horses.

The Budget and Finance Committee, of the Navajo Nation Council, issued a press release on June 9, 2015, addressing the current feral horse round up program first implemented in 2013. The Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture, a tribal government

program, provided the updated report. In fiscal year 2013, the Navajo Nation Council appropriated 3.1 million dollars to the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture and the Navajo Nation Department of Resource Enforcement to conduct feral horse round ups and to come up with plans to address overgrazing and issues regarding livestock. Most of these horses are unbranded and those that are branded are thought to have been abandoned by their owners. The Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture estimates there are 70,000 to 80,000 feral horses on the Navajo reservation. After two years of conducting horse round ups, the programs involved currently have a carryover of $539,000. Many Chapters, local branches of the Navajo Nation government, who once supported by resolution, the roundup of horses, rescinded their resolutions and have come to oppose the horse round ups (Agriculture, Report on Feral Horse Round Up, 2015).

At issue is the tribal government not representing the Navajo people. Although elected by tribal voters, they continue to govern on behalf, of the people, rather than by the will of the people. The feral horse issue is continuing to be very controversial. Granted, Navajo lands are now limited and the population of the people continues to grow. Range management measures need to be in effect but he people need to be included in the decision making. After fighting federal policies designed to assimilate the Navajo people in to mainstream America for over 100 years, it seems the Navajo Nation Council has become an enemy of its own people.

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