Virginia DeJohn Anderson. C*reatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. 322. Paper $19.95.

Virginia DeJohn Anderson takes a unique approach to studying colonial history by shifting the focus to the actions of animals instead of people. Anderson, Professor of Colonial and Revolutionary American History at the University of Colorado, Boulder, argues that livestock have been wrongfully relegated to mere background characters in history. She shows that interactions between animals and humans produced not only environmental change, but also shaped human behavior: free ranging livestock often caused conflicts between Native Americans and European colonists. Typically, colonial history centers around themes of religion, politics, trade, and epidemiology. Anderson's inclusion of animals into Early America adds a new, overlooked perspective.

The book is thematically divided into three sections and follows the actions of the Algonquian speaking natives of the New England and Chesapeake regions, the colonists, and livestock that arrived there in the seventeenth century. The first section explores how animals fit into Native American and English cosmologies. Native Americans infused animals with a spiritual power and hunting animals required reciprocity. This stands in stark contrast to colonists, who believed that dominion over animals was natural and divinely sanctioned. Until Europeans asserted their control, the New World remained a strange and unwelcome place.

Section two focuses on agricultural practices. Domestication of animals had been around for centuries and was ingrained in the European ethos; for them, owning livestock was a sign of civility. Colonists believed that once animal husbandry was established in the Americas, Native Americans would have a proper model to follow and finally break free from their "inferior" methods. However, the open, unconstrained land quickly turned livestock feral and upset the colonists' dichotomy between civilization and savagery. The last section examines the conflicts between colonists and natives, brought about by freely roaming English farm animals destroying Native American crops. Negotiations between the two groups were tense, but also served as learning

opportunities. Cooperation did not last long, and European expansion only deepened over time. Despite native efforts to adopt European domestication principles, the uneasy relationship grew violent.

Anderson acknowledges that the historical record heavily favors colonists. Much of her primary source base consists of personal accounts from colonists, local records, and treaties with Natives. In order to strengthen her argument that Native Americans were active participants in this untold chapter of the Early American past, Anderson relies heavily on scholarship by Alfred Crosby, William Cronon, Daniel Richter, and Jared Diamond. *Creatures of Empire* is a significant addition to the study of Early America. By centering animals in the colonial narrative, Anderson has created a unique methodology to study the relationship between colonizer and colonized throughout the Americas.

Scott Wong