

- Plains
 - Extensive grasslands across America's mid-season
 - High plains (west)
 - Short grass; a lot of bison (16 mill)
 - Little surface water, few trees
 - Prairie plains (east)
 - Tall grass; a lot fewer bison
 - Widely spaced river valleys flowing east.
- Plains Indians lived off the bison
- Bison provided the necessities of life.
- Plains Indian culture
 - A new way of life
 - After Euro-American contact: mid 1600s to late 1800s
 - Horse revolutionized plains culture
 - Ice Age Horses
 - With out horses- few Indian high plains
 - Reintroduced by Spanish (SW)- 1600s (found throughout the plains by 1750)
 - Horses attracted groups to the plains (form of wealth and a means of exchange)
- **Crow**
 - Absdroke (what they call themselves)
 - Children of large big beaked birds
 - Misinterpreted as crow but likely raven of mythical bird (thunderbird)
 - Nomadic bison hunters
 - Tobacco- grow small amount for symbolic purposes, only men smoked tobacco did not smoke what they grew.
- Origins
 - Crow share ancestry with Hidatsa Indians (Prairie Indians)
 - Both speak "Missouri Siouan" language
 - Oral traditions claim they split CA. 1700; probably much earlier
 - Differences suggest split occurred before 1700
- Nomadic Life
 - Horses made them mobile
 - No home base (camps instead)
 - Everything and everyone moved
 - Longest camp time during winter
- The ideal plains house
 - Crow lived in teepees
 - Pole framework covered with bison hides
 - Transportable
 - Travois- frame used to carry things; dragged by horses
- Equipment
 - Leather containers
 - Parfleche
 - Small collapsible box made of bison rawhide
 - Bison stomach to heat and cook
 - Pemmican
 - Bison pounded into boulder then add bison grease. Food/ eaten; trail mix
- Weapons
 - Bow and arrow for hunting and war primary weapon

- Continued after gun
 - Bow redesigned (made smaller)
 - Metal/ steel tips replace stone
 - Rapid-fire repeating rifle changed things
 - Bison neck used to make shields
- Clothing
 - Mostly buck skin (not bison) deerskin
 - Bison robes (winter)
 - Moccasins (leather, buckskin)
 - More beadwork and frills on clothing (women)
- Guardian spirits
 - Spirit everywhere
 - Communication to spirit world open to everyone
 - Vision quest (male warriors only)
 - Seek out spiritual helper
 - Way for warrior to attract spirit helpers
 - Find isolated spots (example: up in mountains)
 - Fast, prayer, and self torture/ body mutilation
 - Item for sacred bundle (feather, bone, rock, etc.)
- Medicine bundle
 - Contained power
 - Good health, good fortune, success
- Spiritual Aid
 - Also important to women
 - Dreams
 - Never self torture
- Sundance
 - Various forms: done by all plains but all different
 - Sioux
 - Every summer
 - Good of the community
 - Themes of unity and renewal
 - Crow
 - Infrequent
 - Sponsored by whistler (person)
 - He seeks a vision for revenge
 - Entire community involved
 - Lodge built with center pole
 - Sundoll placed midway up on pole through doll whistler will gain vision of revenge
- *Whistler asking for plan of revenge and power to carry it out *
- Social organization
 - Matrilineal and exogamous clans (1 clan forbidden- fathers clan)
 - Widely distributed
 - But patrilocal
 - Crow kinship system
 - Mother-in-law avoidance (can not interact with, be in same teepee, etc.)
- Raiding
 - Real glory= acts of valor in raiding
 - A way to meant to:
 - Gain social status

- Achieve position of leadership
- Organized by raid leader (small party)
- 3 reasons for a raid:
 1. Gain honor and prestige
 - a. Intertribal raiding was almost a sport in the plains
 - i. Context/ arena to perform personal exploits
 - ii. After horse arrived this started
 - b. Warriors sought coup
 - i. Damage/ humiliation
 - ii. Coup- demonstration of bravery in "battle"
 - iii. "Battle" acts ranked in value
 1. Touching a live enemy in combat was highest with out touching you
 2. Others: person who touches dead enemy gets coup, stealing combat from enemy
 - iv. Counting coup (recorded and recited)
 - v. Means to gain status
 - vi. War philosophy
 2. Desire for loot
 - a. Stealing horses
 - i. Idea for raid came from a dream
 - ii. Travel great distance and raided at night
 1. Younger men watch horses at night
 - b. All loot belonged to leader.
 3. Revenge (intent to kill)
 - a. Avenge the death/ killing of a "family" member
 - i. Killed enemy man
 - ii. Women and children not killed
 - iii. Kidnapped women and children- groom them into Crow and women forced to marry into Crow
- 4 feats of glory (war deeds)
(Deeds chief must do to be considered bandleader)
 - A chief must have achieved these:
 1. Scored first coup
 2. Stole horses from enemy
 3. Led a successful raid
 4. Snatched enemy's weapon in combat
- Political Organization
 - Tribe was major social unit (Tribe= Crow)
 - Moved in smaller bands (40-60 people)
 - Bands gathered- bison hunted and rituals (during summer, when bison were grazing)
 - Bandleaders (for each band)
 - Had fulfilled the 4 feats of glory
 - Loose term- chief
 - Position based on personal achievements
 - Influential, but lacked total power most decisions logistics; cannot punish people
- Sodality
 - Men's social group that crosscut and unites scattered bands (Crow definition)
 - After 1850 – 2 primary Crow sodalities